

Anti-Corruption Drive in Georgia:

The Case of the Georgian Police System



November 2015

Astana, Kazakhstan



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Cover image

Officers of the Patrol Police Department

Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

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*C*orruption and hypocrisy ought not to be inevitable products of democracy as they undoubtedly are today in many countries.

~ Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)
Famous “no violence” – fighter for Indian Independence

*P*ower tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

~ Lord Acton (1834-1902)
Famous British Historian and Member of Parliament

*C*orruption optimi pessima.

~ Latin proverb (Corruption of the best is the worst)

Executive Summary

Civil service reform is a key component of the Georgian Government's reform policy agenda. The Civil Service Reform Concept Note, approved by the Government, sets forth the main directions of the civil service reform strategy. The strategy aims to establish a governance system free of nepotism and corruption and an effective civil service system capable of delivering quality and impartial public services to the citizens of Georgia.

The anti-corruption efforts in the Georgian Police Force are an important part of the reform drive in the Georgian civil service, as the risks for corruption were much higher in the law enforcement entities. Thus, significant initiatives have been undertaken over the past ten years transforming the Georgian Police Force into one of the most corruption-free institutions in the country today.

This case study reveals that preventive actions and other measures implemented have considerably reduced the risks in the case of the Georgian Police Force. The positive results achieved are basically attributed to two major factors: [a] implementation of severe disciplinary actions against offenders; and [b] fear of one losing their job in a labour market characterised by chronic high unemployment.

The findings of this case study – although it is only an initial attempt in analysing occurrence of corruption – confirm that the implementation of legal, administrative and personnel policies reforms by the Ministry of Internal Affairs is a good example of the fight against corruption. For instance, the declared and strictly observed zero-tolerance policy against corrupt practices and the enforcement of severe disciplinary and other repressive measures made the tackling of systemic and endemic corruption in the country possible.

In sum, the case study highlights the fact that success can be achieved in a relatively short period of time, provided that a strong political will exists and concerted efforts are orchestrated and coordinated by the Government in achieving the goals it has set. Additionally, the evolution of a virtuous cycle of reforms helped to rebuild the government's credibility, as well as the role the political and administrative leadership played in changing the mind-sets of the actors involved, both inside and outside the government system.

However, success in fighting corruption does not mean that corruption has been completely eliminated, or that there are no more corruption risks still present. Further drastic reforms must remain part of an on-going effort, requiring vigilance by government authorities in sustaining the momentum, and by maintaining the active involvement of citizens, civil society organisations and the mass media in monitoring the performance of the police force and reporting problems and incidents as they occur.

Regardless of the fact that Georgia's anti-corruption related reforms are the product of a unique historical turning point in the country, its anti-corruption strategy and actions are replicable in other places and in different historical junctures. The Georgian experience may serve as a good example for other countries, which plan, or have initiated, anti-corruption related reforms. Many of the ways Georgia implemented its reforms – including the development of a virtuous cycle of reforms, which in turn, built early credibility for the government – are replicable actions, which it seems they can contribute in the drive against corruption.

Introduction

Defining corruption is a rather difficult task, as no unique definition exists. This task is further exaggerated as defining corruption, in the framework of the organisation, or in the context of the public or the law usually leads to different conceptions of corruption. What is generally accepted, however, for any act or activity to be considered corrupt: *“it must involve an abuse of entrusted (public) power for private or political gain”*.¹

The World Bank defines corruption as *“the abuse of public office for private gain”*.² The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) describes the concept as: *“the misuse of public power, office or authority for private benefit – through bribery, extortion, influence peddling, nepotism, fraud, speed money or embezzlement”*.³ The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) refers to corruption as: *“the promise, offering or giving (solicitation or acceptance) by a public official, directly or indirectly, of an undue advantage, for the official himself/herself or another person or entity, in order that the official acts or refrains from acting in the exercise of his/her official duties”*.⁴ By the same token, the Council of Europe explains corruption as: *“requesting, offering giving, or accepting, directly or indirectly, a bribe or any other undue advantage or prospect thereof, which distorts the proper performance of any duty or behaviour required of the recipient of the bribe, the undue advantage of prospect thereof”*.⁵

In order to develop a strategic action plan for fighting corruption, it is necessary to understand the types and nature of corruption. Three types of corruption are distinguished in the relevant literature⁶:

- a. **Systemic**, when corruption is incorporated within a whole or particular sections, e.g. border control department, judiciary, police, customs and tax offices, etc;
- b. **Institutional**, where the institution affected is tolerant of corrupt practices; and
- c. **Individual**, where a person is prepared to undertake illegal actions because its work place provides opportunities to exploit its position for personal gain.

At the systemic level, corruption is related to change in social values of a society and its organisations. At the institutional level, corruption issues are related to professionalism, management culture, and professional ethics. Whereas, at the individual level it is related with the identification of the individual's role in its work place. Corruption can also be characterised as planned or spontaneous, situational or regular.

An anti-corruption strategy usually includes both preventive and repressive measures. The first are focused on personnel related practices entailing recruitment, position changes, and training, whereas the latter are used to seek out and discipline offenders, who go against the legal and ethical norms put in place, by law or otherwise.

¹ Rose-Ackerman, Susan (2006), Political Corruption and Reform in Democracies: Theoretical Perspectives, in Junichi Kawata (Ed.): Comparing Political Corruption and Clientelism, Hampshire, Burlington, pp 45-61.

² World Bank (2007), Strengthening the World Bank Group Engagement in Governance and Anti-Corruption, Washington DC.

³ UNDP (2004), Anti-Corruption Practice Note, New York.

⁴ United Nations Convention against Corruption (2004), New York; see in Philip Gounev, Rositsa Dzhekova, and Tihomir Bezlov, Study on anti-corruption measures in EU Border control, (2012), Centre for the Study of Democracy (Project 1 EOOD).

⁵ Council of Europe, Civil Law Convention on Corruption (1999), Strasbourg; see in Philip Gounev, Rositsa Dzhekova, and Tihomir Bezlov, Study on anti-corruption measures in EU Border control, (2012), Centre for the Study of Democracy (Project 1 EOOD).

⁶ Philip Gounev, Rositsa Dzhekova, and Tihomir Bezlov, Study on anti-corruption measures in EU Border control, (2012), Centre for the Study of Democracy (Project 1 EOOD).

Similarly, in some cases, an anti-corruption strategy may involve different approaches. The approach which aims to influence employees, not only to recognise the interests of the organisation, but also to adopt them as their own, and hence to behave professionally, fall under the “rational-empirical” strategic approach. On the other hand, the “power-coercive” strategies emphasise the supervisors' formal and, often authoritarian, power, which is used to achieve results by providing incentives and punishments. Last, “normative-educational” strategies rely on social science-based approaches, which emphasise the involvement of employees in organisational efforts striving to change the behaviour of individuals in the long run.⁷

Therefore, an organisation – in the process of selecting the most appropriate strategies and measures to implement its strategy for the fight against corruption – should consider the specific environment within which it operates, as well as other related factors and causes, which may characterise its structure and operations. It should also consider institutional preconditions and personal moral aspects.

A reasonable anti-corruption strategy should incorporate both external and internal controls. In this

context, it should be borne in mind, that internal control mechanisms are aimed at understanding the moral factors, whereas external control mechanisms are more of a technical nature, i.e., use of financial and other incentives.

Taking into consideration the types of corruption (individual, institutional, systemic) and connecting them with the notions of internal and external controls, the following matrix is derived. The information presented in the matrix allows for proper identification of the factors contributing to the existence of corruption, and it depicts appropriate anti-corruption measures; which, in turn, may assist in determining the scope of the anti-corruption strategy adopted.⁸

However, numerous discussions on the topic of corruption, and various proposals on how to combat it reveal that there is no ready-made recipe for overcoming the problem. The basics and the magnitude of corruption change with time and prevalent circumstances. Thus, it is always necessary to analyse the specific social, economic, cultural, organisational and other factors, which will inform the formulation of a suitable strategy to fight corruption at any point in time and setting.

	Internal Controls	External Controls
Individual Level	Moral consciousness	Technical organisational prevention Disciplinary proceedings
Institutional Level	Professional Ethics	Supervisors' authority exercised
Systemic Level	Core values: religion, ethics	Criminal liability

⁷ Poerting, Peter und Werner Vahlenkamp (1998), Strategien gegen Korruption, in Kriminalistik, 52. Jg., S. 733-743; see in Robert Mischkowitz, Heike Bruhn, Roland Desch, Gerd-Ekkehard Hubner, Dieter Beese Einschätzungen zur Korruption in Polizei, Justiz und Zoll, Ein gemeinsames Forschungsprojekt des Bundeskriminalamtes und der Polizeiführungsakademie Bundeskriminalamt, Wiesbaden, 2000.

⁸ Robert Mischkowitz, Heike Bruhn, Roland Desch, Gerd-Ekkehard Hubner, Dieter Beese, Einschätzungen zur Korruption in Polizei, Justiz und Zoll, Ein gemeinsames Forschungsprojekt des Bundeskriminalamtes und der Polizeiführungsakademie Bundeskriminalamt, Wiesbaden, 2000, P. 343.

The Case Study and its findings

This case study aspires to contribute to research on the state of corruption in the country. Unlike Georgia, the topic has become the subject of many empirical studies in countries such as the United States, and several European states. In those countries, conducting research on issues related to the police system has a long tradition. It is precisely this tradition that has created the ground for conducting a similar research in Georgia.

The case study chronicles the anti-corruption effort and reform measures that have transformed the Police Force of Georgia since the Rose Revolution assumed the government of the country. Its focus is on “how” reform measures were implemented successfully. In other words, how did the new government make reforms happen? In terms of timing, this study coincided with a time period in which there has been a wide discussion about reforms and fighting corruption in the Georgian civil service.⁹

The research was conducted through a series of interviews using a survey questionnaire. Its findings confirm that systemic corruption is essentially eliminated. The occurrence of corruption, nowadays, seems to be more spontaneous based on situational events, rather than being a planned systematic phenomenon. According to the respondents, the citizens' willingness to personally benefit through bribing police officers is quite low. Attempting to use personal connections and contacts in interactions with the bureaucracy is a phenomenon still observed, but its magnitude is not significant. The research also indicates that sensitivity levels concerning the issue of corruption, as well as the awareness on several aspects of the issue have increased significantly over recent years.



A new police station. Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia.

However, this trend needs to be reinforced, so that corruption is eventually eradicated or reduced to a truly insignificant level. Increased sensitivity of police officers about corruption issues combined with proper and systematic training are important tools in sustaining the momentum. Continuous communication on the issue with citizens is also essential to further reinforce positive trends observed.

Survey results indicate that respondents recognized the need for the combined use of preventive and repressive measures, in order to yield desired results. In this context, interview responses revealed that the preventive measures employed proved rather successful. Open buildings, electronic record keeping, administrative simplification, and the use of closed circuit video cameras in administrative proceedings, undercover surveillance and regular testing for drugs all helped in reducing corruption incidents in the police force.

Additionally, a revamped recruitment mechanism for civil servants has also been an important factor, contributing to the success of the anti-corruption drive. Specifically, the creation of a selection committee whose members all have equal voice in the selection process, the establishment of electronic testing and interviews to determine the intellectual

⁹ The debate has culminated to the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Council to address anti-corruption issues in the country. Following its establishment several cases of corrupt practices were found out in the civil service.

ability of recruits were all considered as successful measures in the drive against corruption. Moreover, the practice to highlight exemplary actions, increase awareness among the police force staff on the subject of corruption, constant staff rotation and the establishment of a system of internal controls all seem to have played a role in reducing corruption in the police force.

There was no evidence of corruption violations in 2014 among the staff of the Border Police of Georgia. One major explanation may be the fear the Border Police personnel have in losing their jobs, as there are limited employment opportunities available in the areas they serve. Almost 98% of the Border Police of Georgia as well as of the state border zone personnel is recruited locally from areas which offer very limited employment opportunities either in the public or private sector. Thus, civil servants serving in these units are very cautious in crossing the line and be accused of corrupt practices, as their desire to keep

Historical setting

Before the year 2003, corruption ruled over the police system in Georgia. This was mainly due to the prevailing political and economic situation in the country. Low salaries of public employees, often unpaid for months, created fertile ground for corruption. Police officers, who had no income at all, were pushed to become part of organised crime or take part in drug dealing, or at least support criminal activity through their inactivity. Traffic police inspectors, in particular, profited from money gained through the imposition of fines, although most of this money was transferred to higher levels of the Police Force hierarchy.¹¹

their stable jobs is high. Another finding of the study is that there is a positive effect from the implementation of systematic detection of corruption cases in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the disciplinary action taken once a case has been established. Such cases are reported internally through the audit unit of the Ministry or by citizens.¹⁰

In sum, the research conducted has revealed that the approach adopted by the Government yielded positive results. Tackling the causes and factors, already mentioned, has made it possible to deal with corruption in the Georgian Police Force. The majority of respondents placed much emphasis on the activities which promoted the consciousness of the individual. Training on rules of accepted conduct and ethics also turned to be critical in promoting this change in attitude and behaviour. In this connection, early adoption of such principles by the leadership of the organisation helped to develop an accepted model of behaviour by all personnel serving in the Ministry.

According to polls conducted at the time, Georgian police officers were inferred as the most corrupt public officials. Seven out of ten drivers surveyed by GORBI in 2000, said that they were asked to pay bribes to the Police.¹² In fact, distrust of the Police was so high in the country that citizens did not report crimes, and as a rule they would contact people who were closely connected to criminals and offer them reward money in exchange for the return of their property. At the same time, high-level officials in the law enforcement system enjoyed a close relationship with the “thieves in law”, who even protected their business.¹³

¹⁰ The most common factors for incidents of corruption to occur in the Ministry of Internal Affairs are: [a] poor working and material conditions; [b] lack of adequate knowledge of the problem; and [c] misunderstanding of obligations towards one's supervisor. Deficient control and shortcomings in existing legislation were named as less important factors.

¹¹ Lewan Isoria, Obstacles of Police Reform Implementation, “The 24 Hours” No 64 (07.03.2003).

¹² The fight against corruption in public services, Chronicle of the reforms in Georgia, World Bank 2012.

¹³ Lewan Isoria, Obstacles of Police Reform Implementation, “The 24 Hours” No 64 (07.03.2003).

Following the manifestation of the Rose Revolution in 2003, the new political situation created a new reality conducive to legal and other reforms. The government that emerged was armed with an overwhelming popular mandate. Saakashvili received more than 90 per cent of the vote, and his party, the United National Movement, won about 68 per cent of the seats in Parliament. The people were demanding changes, which led Georgia to make significant progress in tackling and reducing corruption in a short period of time. Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer ranked Georgia first in the world, in the year 2010, in terms of the relative reduction in the levels of

corruption, and second in the world in terms of the public's perception of the government's effectiveness in fighting corruption.

Hence, there are many useful lessons, which could be drawn from the Georgian experience. These lessons are presented below. However, not everything that Georgia has done may be replicated in other countries, with different institutional and political context. Yet, there are many useful lessons, which could be taken, and once adopted could be applied in other countries facing similar challenges in tackling pervasive corruption in the civil service.



Photo courtesy of the Civil Service Bureau of Georgia



Newly equipped Georgian Police officers. Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia.

The anti-corruption drive in the Police Force of Georgia

How did the government do it? The narrative that follows addresses this question. It describes the “how” of the anti-corruption reform efforts that have helped Georgia become a success story in the anti-corruption front.

Existence of a strong political will

A strong political will was essential in the fight against corruption in the Georgian Police System, which was driven and also supported by strong citizen support. The overwhelming mandate from voters and the new political reality bolstered Georgia's new leaders will to act quickly and forcefully. Thus, the radical steps taken by the ruling party to reorganise the traffic police, which was a symbol of corruption were met with success. In other words, the success of the entire reform effort derived from strong political will and commitment, backed by the comprehensiveness, pace, boldness and sequencing of the reforms, and most importantly, the strong role of the executive body in implementing them.

Explicit definition of corruption by law

To effectively address and prevent corruption in the civil service, it is important to properly understand what it is, and how it is defined. For this purpose, the term corruption was explicitly defined in the Georgian Law. According to Article 3 of the Law of Georgia on the Conflict of Interests and Corruption in Civil Service, corruption in the civil service, is defined as “*the abuse of power and opportunities related to that power by a public official for the purpose of obtaining property or other material benefits forbidden by the law, or transferring this benefit to him/her or providing assistance in its procurement and legalisation*”.¹⁴

Enactment of legislation

Enacting legislation to regulate the reforms was also considered essential. New laws were quickly adopted, such as the Law of Georgia on “*Conflict of Interest and Corruption in the Civil Service*”, passed in 2005. This law introduced the main principles of detecting, preventing, and avoiding conflicts of interest and incidents of corruption in the civil service. It also introduced the basic principles of legal responsibility and the mechanisms for reprimanding the lawbreakers. Consequently, the Law established the ways and means to prevent, reveal, and suppress cases where conflict of interest and corruption practices were revealed in the civil service. It also set forth the general principles delineating the responsibilities of persons involved in corruption cases and the mechanisms imposing punishment and other repressive measures to those, who were found to act against the law. The Law also mandated the submission of property status declarations by public officials.¹⁵

Other legislation introduced several other and rather efficient anti-corruption measures. For example, fines imposed under the Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia were no longer paid on site. An offender paid the fine at a bank upon receipt of the fine notice. Similarly, border control officers were not permitted to carry cash in excess of 80 GEL¹⁶ in any currency at any time, according to a provision of the Internal Act. A new Police Law has also been enacted. This new law differentiates between response and preventive police measures and it establishes a transparent legal framework for the implementation of preventive measures by the police.

¹⁴ The “Offence of Corruption” is an action, which contains elements of corruption and entails a disciplinary, administrative or criminal liability prescribed by law.

¹⁵ Article 1 of the Law on Conflict of Interest and Corruption in the Public Service.

¹⁶ 80 Georgian Lari are approximately equivalent to USD 35.

Application of a zero tolerance policy

The Government viewed its strong-handed approach towards establishing law and order in the country as essential to making people think differently, by destroying respect towards the criminal underworld, and demonstrating consistently the authority of the formal legal institutions over informal ones. Between 2006 and 2010, 180 members of the “thieves' world”¹⁷ were arrested, prosecuted and convicted. If a person resisted arrest, they could be shot, according to a Decree of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which came into force in 2005. For the “thieves-in-law”, implementation of the new law was devastating. They were very quickly neutralised before they had any chance to organise their resistance.

Furthermore, in order to prevent perpetuation of corrupt behaviour, secret police agents were deployed among the police force to monitor the behaviour of police officers. These secret agents were usually deployed as partners of police officers and were instructed to disclose any incidents in which their partners violated the law. Police officers were offered bribes, and through this method the bribe-takers were revealed, and punished severely; an action which served as a very clear message to the new recruits of the zero-tolerance policy in place.¹⁸

Establishment of credibility

Rapidly adapting a zero-tolerance policy against manifestations of corrupt behaviour and demonstrating quick and clear results were essential in establishing credibility and keeping the window open for the medium and long-term objectives to be met. The police reforms were not just about stamping out corruption. They were also aimed at restoring the credibility of formal institutions, by transforming the once notoriously corrupt institution of the Police into a citizen-friendly service.

The new Police Force looks in no way like the former one. The old force was replaced by younger and fitter police men and women¹⁹, who no longer wore solid

Soviet era uniforms but new and attractive ones, and were driving new cars equipped with the latest on-board computers. Police buildings were also revamped to look more professional. About 60 Police Stations in Tbilisi and in the regions were either newly constructed or renovated to look more open and more inviting, some with glass exteriors and bank-teller like windows, suggesting a more transparent approach. Surveillance cameras were installed all over Tbilisi, as well as in other major cities of Georgia along the streets and highways, which enabled the police and the citizens to prove whether there was a violation of the law or not.



New Police personnel. Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia.

The Government also introduced a new system for the payment of traffic fines through deposits in commercial banks, thus limiting opportunities for police officers to take and handle money. It also established vehicle service centres, which are one-stop shops for issuance of drivers' licences and vehicle registrations, with an emphasis given in providing a quick and courteous service to citizens. Moreover, the Government introduced a 24-hour hotline service for citizens to report inappropriate behaviour or any demands for bribes from police officers, in order to revamp the relationship between citizens and the police.

Through these measures, trust in the police has been gradually restored. Fifty three per cent of respondents surveyed by the 2011 Crime and Security Survey assessed the police force as good, and another thirty four per cent assessed it as fairly good.²⁰

¹⁷ A term used widely in the ex-Soviet Republics to describe the underworld and organized crime groups.

¹⁸ The fight against corruption in public services, Chronicle of the reforms in Georgia, World Bank, 2012.

¹⁹ 15% of the patrol police consisted of women.

²⁰ GORBI 2011.

New personnel recruitment

The professional development of the Police personnel remained a high priority. However, creating a new, professional, and service-oriented police force required many individuals, possessing new skills and attitudes. Massive recruitment was needed.²¹ To attract people to staff a more professional force, one completely untainted by corruption, the Government recruited new officers from universities and from law school programmes and required them to pass an examination. However, the primary criteria for selection were no previous government experience and a clean criminal record. Once they were selected, the new recruits underwent a two-month long vocational training, which included English language courses, at the Police Academy. To train these employees in a short period of time was a formidable task, and the duration of their training was eventually reflected in their capacity to act as police officers.

Creation of a new training structure

To eradicate corruption the existing Police Academy was dismantled and was replaced by a completely new structure and organisation, in order to provide a transparent and objective examination system. However, it was rightly assumed that corruption could not be eliminated if the Academy personnel was not compensated adequately. For this reason, changes were made in the labour remuneration system and as a result the salaries of the Academy's personnel was increased fourfold. This steep rise in salaries was made possible by introducing structural changes and optimisation of personnel employed. For example, the total number of personnel employed in the Academy was drastically reduced from 650 previously, to 159 under the new structure.²² The nearly tenfold increase in salaries, the emphasis on developing a service culture among the new recruits, and the focus on

professionalism all helped to change the incentive structure in a positive manner.

Provision of anti-corruption focused training and introduction of a Code of Ethics

Survey results show that police officers recruited shortly after the Rose Revolution in 2003 were not provided with appropriate training in connection with corruption issues. However, at a later stage, professional training programmes were developed specifically for police officers, which included special training courses on corruption issues.²³ A training programme was developed for district police officers, and implemented by the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which included a 16-hour course titled "Police Code of Ethics and Standards of Relations with Citizens", and an 8-hour course titled "Corruption and Malfeasance". Moreover, an 8-hour training course titled "Human Rights and the Police Code of Ethics" was developed within the training programme aimed at the Border Police of Georgia, the Land Border Defence Department and the border guards/controllers. Additionally, the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs offers anti-corruption training programmes for the Police Force on a regular basis. The training programme for the Police Department officers includes a 2-hour course on the Georgian Law on Conflict of Interest and Corruption in the Civil Service and Malfeasance. Furthermore, a 4-hour training course on corruption and malfeasance is offered targeting officers for promotion in the Police Department. Similarly another 8-hour training course on corruption and malfeasance is provided to detectives – investigators serving in the Georgian Police Force. Anti-corruption training also includes the implementation of ethical norms in police activities, through the introduction of a Code of Ethics²⁴ distributed to all personnel in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

²¹ In August 2004, 2,400 new police officers appeared in the streets. During the same period 16,000 traffic inspectors were summarily dismissed in one day, and the Government refused to grant them any guarantee of legal or social protection.

²² Lewan Isoria, Reforms at the Academy of Internal Affairs, *The 24 Hours*, No. 279 (24.11.2004).

²³ Training programmes on anti-corruption still need to be enhanced further, as it has been revealed through studies that they are short in duration not allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the topics and issues involved; and that they only cover legal aspects such as the analysis of legal norms, and thus insufficient in developing the necessary skills a police officer needs to act effectively and professionally at all times.

²⁴ Ethics and Rules of Conduct of Civil Servants are available on the website of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana at <http://www.regionalhub.org/en-us/E-Journal.aspx>

Cultivation of a new civil service culture

Another important way of tackling corruption in the Georgian Police system was to achieve a new understanding of how public services are delivered. For example, getting a driver's licence or registering a vehicle has been simplified. Before the reforms, one could possibly “buy” a driver's licence for one hundred United States dollars (the bribe was literally paid in US dollars). Thus, the Government established service centres on the “one window” principle, where an eligible citizen could get a driver's licence and register a vehicle by interacting only with courteous personnel providing the required services quite fast.

The use of new technologies was a key component in implementing such initiatives as part of the anti-corruption drive. Their adoption eliminated many of the direct contacts between public officials and citizens, reducing opportunities for bribery to occur. The use of new technologies also helped in streamlining delivery of public services by simplifying the transaction process; as well as making it easier to monitor speed and efficiency of the delivery of public services.

In sum, the Government undertook systematic efforts to cultivate a new culture in the delivery of public services across the civil service. The adoption of contemporary training methods and techniques, and the improvement of the infrastructure through which public services are delivered promoted a new type and kind of a police officer possessing a strong sense of public duty.

Reinforcement of internal control systems

Attention was also placed on the General Inspection Department, a structural unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia. This Department carries out internal control activities and has an oversight over the Ministry's other units. The Department Head reports directly to the Minister of Internal Affairs. The Department is responsible for identifying breaches of ethical and disciplinary norms within the Police Force of Georgia, as well as for revealing improper perfor-

mance of duties and other unlawful actions, and carrying out appropriate for each case responses. The Department also evaluates the reasons and causes of unlawful and inappropriate actions committed by the Ministry's staff and it develops recommendations in order to prevent such actions occurring again in the future. Additionally, the Department operates a hotline, with the aim to ensure effective communication between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the citizens. Through this mechanism, citizens may report any wrongdoings they may observe, assisting the Ministry's staff to detect illegal actions undertaken by members of its staff.



Georgian Patrol Police officers present women with flowers on International Women's Day. Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia.

Strategic use of communication

Very early in the reform drive, political and government leaders used mass media effectively. The Ministry of Internal Affairs run a public relations campaign aimed at making the public aware of the friendly and approachable police officers serving in the new Police Force. Characteristically, an advertisement presented a handsome policeman kissing his wife; another featured an adoring elderly woman cooking breakfast for her police officer son, before he raced off for duty. Additionally, the Ministry of Internal Affairs systematically broadcast arrests of civil servants accused for corruption. In sum, it seems that the effective communication of mass media helped to spread the message that corruption was no longer tolerated, contributing to a change of people's views and attitudes about what behaviour was acceptable and what was not.

Conclusions

It seems that the policies implemented to combat corruption in the Police Force of Georgia may serve as a good example of successful anti-corruption policy implementation and reform in the civil service. Measures such as the adoption of a zero-tolerance policy and imposition of severe disciplinary action on offenders contributed a great deal in tackling systemic corruption practices. Clear and precise legislation on conflict of interest and corruption issues put in place at an early stage of the anti-corruption drive has also helped in implementing the anti-corruption strategy of the Government.

Contributing factors to corruption were virtually eliminated in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The recruitment of qualified personnel, the provision of a stable working environment and the introduction of audit and control mechanisms guaranteed, to a great extent, that corruption practices will not be present in the Ministry. This situation is reinforced by the fact that the Ministry's personnel enjoys a satisfactory pay system and social security plan. In addition, persistent high unemployment rate in the country, instils fear in public employees in losing their jobs, if they were found to act illegally. On the other hand, the "Whistle-blower" provisions²⁵ under the Law on "Conflict of Interest and Corruption in the Civil Service" should also apply to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a government entity excluded to-date.

Furthermore, audit and control measures seem to be important for the prevention of corruption. However, there is a debate going on whether associated functions are to be decentralised from the General Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the heads of individual departments. The idea is to shift responsibility for anti-corruption preventive measures to the middle and upper management levels within a department, so that individuals occupying such positions are responsible for the ethical behaviour of their subordinates. If this practice materialises, middle and upper management level managers and administrators should be provided with training on anti-

corruption measures and indicators, in order to fulfil their role successfully.

Overall, Georgia has proven that success can be achieved in a relatively short period of time, given the existence of a strong political will and concerted efforts orchestrated and coordinated by the Government. Many of the ways Georgia implemented its reforms – including the development of a virtuous cycle of reforms, which in turn, built early credibility for the government – are replicable actions.

However, although Georgia's anti-corruption related reforms are the product of a unique historical turning point, the country's anti-corruption strategy is replicable in other places and historical junctures. The Georgian experience may serve as a good example for other countries, which plan or have initiated anti-corruption related reforms. In fact, similar procedures and methods have recently been introduced in the Ukrainian Police Force, with the assistance of Georgian public servants.²⁶

Activities aiming at changing mind-sets – and the role of the leadership in doing so – are also a transferable notion. Harnessing the media to expose corruption and using mass communication effectively to garner popular support for fighting corruption, are also strategies that other countries can adopt and implement. Most important message is the notion that public services delivery is cleaned up from corruption practices.

Still, anti-corruption reforms are an on-going process, requiring continuous vigilance by the responsible authorities, political and administrative, as well as the active involvement of citizens, civil society and the media in monitoring the performance of the police force, and in reporting problems to the authorities as they occur.

Last, but not least, the claim that "corruption is an organisationally pervasive and historically persistent part of police organisations"²⁷ can no longer hold true, as the Georgian example explicitly indicates.

²⁵ Guidelines on whistleblower protection are available on the website of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana at <http://www.regionalhub.org/en-us/E-Journal.aspx>

²⁶ See Leonid Ragozin, "Ukraine Seeks Help on Police Reform", Bloomberg Business (05.02.2015), <http://bloomberg.com/news/article/2015-02-05/ukraine>; see also Dmytro Zotsenko, BBC Monitoring (09.07.2015), <http://bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-334332788>. The essence of both articles is that reforming the police force will require zero tolerance for corruption, foreign aid, and new infrastructure and equipment.

²⁷ See Andrew Fall, "Corruption and the South African Police Service", paper 150, Institute of Security Studies, September 2007.



Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This case study was first prepared by Professor Paata Turava of the School of Law of the Grigol Robakidze University, commissioned by the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana (ACSH). It was subsequently enriched through the work of the ACSH's Research Team.

Credit is attributed to Dr. Panayiotis Liverakos for his invaluable contribution to this case study and insightful advice. The ACSH is also thankful to the Civil Service Bureau of Georgia for providing continuous support and facilitation in producing this publication, as well as to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia for providing photo images to illustrate the case study.

The Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana (ACSH) was established in March 2013, when representatives of 25 countries, as well as of 5 international organisations, unanimously adopted the Declaration of the Hub's establishment. The ACSH is currently comprised of 31 participating countries. The ACSH is a multilateral institutional platform for continuous exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of civil service development. It aims to stimulate civil service transformation in the region through enhancement of expert networks, capacity building activities, conduct of comprehensive joint research, and dissemination of innovative solutions for the participating countries.



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