

# DEFENDING TRANSPARENCY

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AN ADVOCATE'S GUIDE TO  
COUNTERACTING DEFENCE CORRUPTION





**Transparency International (TI) is the world's leading non-governmental anti-corruption organisation, addressing corruption and corruption risk in its many forms through a network of more than 100 national chapters worldwide.**

**Transparency International Defence & Security (TI-DS) works towards a world without corruption in defence and security.**

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# CONTENTS

Jargon Buster	4			
Introduction	8			
<b>PART 1: UNDERSTAND IT!</b>		<b>11</b>		
Corruption and its impact on global security	12			
The impact of corruption in the defence and security sectors	14			
What are the aspects of good governance in the defence sector?	16			
Security sector reform	18			
Corruption and the arms trade	20			
Defence procurement	22			
Access to information	23			
Whistleblowing	24			
Illicit financial flows	25			
Military spending	26			
Military operations	27			
Private actors	29			
Private military and security companies	32			
Key agreements and conventions	33			
Gender and corruption: the Women Peace and Security agenda	36			
<b>PART 2: PLAN IT!</b>		<b>37</b>		
Top ten tips for a successful advocacy strategy	38			
<b>TOOL 1</b> The advocacy cycle	39			
<b>STEP 1:</b> Understanding the problem	40			
<b>TOOL 2</b> Problem tree	41			
<b>TOOL 3</b> Political economy analysis	42			
<b>TOOL 4</b> Conflict analysis	43			
<b>STEP 2:</b> Setting the direction: Establishing aim and SMART objectives	47			
<b>STEP 3:</b> Action plan - targets, tactics, types of strategies, messages, communications and activity plan	50			
<b>TOOL 5</b> Power mapping	53			
<b>STEP 4:</b> Implementation	56			
<b>TOOL 6</b> Risk categories	60			
<b>PART 3: DO IT!</b>		<b>61</b>		
<b>TOOL 7</b> Summary of advocacy and campaigning activities	63			
<b>TOOL 8</b> Tools for successful lobbying	68			
<b>TOOL 9</b> Key tips for effective lobbying	69			
<b>TOOL 10</b> Ten tips for lobbying meetings with state officials	70			
<b>TOOL 11</b> Checklist for recommendations	71			
<b>TOOL 12</b> Top tips for good messaging	75			
<b>TOOL 13</b> Tips for writing a press release	78			
<b>TOOL 14</b> Top tips for talking with journalists Young advocates	79 82			
<b>TOOL 15</b> Guiding principles with mobilising young activists	84			
<b>TOOL 16</b> How to become a young anti-corruption advocate	85			
<b>TOOL 17</b> Top tips for expert outreach	90			
<b>TOOL 18</b> Advocacy flowchart	94			
Further Resources	96			
Annexes	98			

This toolkit is designed for advocates, activists and stakeholders engaged in advancing good governance and anti-corruption standards in the defence and security sectors, as well as advocates working in neighbouring agendas, like development, human rights and peace and security. It provides practical guidance, resources, and best practices to navigate the complexities of corruption in the defence and security sectors.

Users can utilise this toolkit as a comprehensive reference manual, with sections dedicated to understanding key concepts, planning advocacy strategies, and implementing actionable initiatives. It also covers topics such as security sector reform, corruption in arms trade, military spending, but also stakeholder engagement and advocacy tactics, aiming to empower users in advocating for robust governance and transparency in the sector.

## JARGON BUSTER

### CORRUPTION

Abuse of entrusted power for private gain. Corruption can be classified as grand, petty and political, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector in which it occurs.

#### GRAND CORRUPTION

Acts committed at a high level of government that distort policies or the central functioning of the state, enabling senior officials and politicians to benefit at the expense of the public good.

#### PETTY CORRUPTION

Everyday abuse of entrusted power by low- and mid-level public officials in their interactions with ordinary citizens, who often are trying to access basic goods or services in places like hospitals, schools, police departments and other agencies.

#### POLITICAL CORRUPTION

Manipulation of policies, institutions and rules of procedure in the allocation of resources and financing by political decision makers, who abuse their position to sustain their power, status and wealth.

### ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The right by law — often through freedom of information legislation (acts or laws) — to access key data from the government and other public bodies. Major decisions such as budgets, project approvals and evaluations are typically published although citizens can use access to information laws to petition for more materials to be released. These laws can also be used to attempt to obtain information about decisions public bodies have previously published nothing about.

### AUDIT

An internal or external examination of an organisation's accounts, processes, functions and performance to produce an independent and credible assessment of their compliance with applicable laws, regulations and audits.

### BRIBERY

The offering, promising, giving, accepting or soliciting of an advantage as an inducement for an action which is illegal, unethical or a breach of trust. Inducements can take the form of gifts, loans, fees, rewards or other advantages, such as taxes, services, and donations.

### COMPLIANCE

Refers to the procedures, systems or departments within public agencies or private companies that ensure all legal, operational and financial activities conform with current laws, rules, norms, regulations and standards.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A situation where an individual or the entity for which they work, whether a government, business, media outlet or civil society organisation, is confronted with choosing between the duties and demands of their position and their own private interests. Individuals do not necessarily have to act on conflicts for them to be a problem — often the perception or appearance of one is enough to damage public trust.

### CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Procedures and processes for how private sector organisations are directed, managed and controlled, including the relationships between, responsibilities of and legitimate expectations among different stakeholders, namely the board of directors, management, shareholders and other interested groups.





## JARGON BUSTER *continued*

### DEBARMENT

A procedure where companies and individuals are excluded from participating in or tendering projects. Governments and multilateral agencies use this process to publicly punish businesses, NGOs, countries or individuals found guilty of unethical or unlawful behaviour.

### DEFENCE & SECURITY SECTOR

Parts of a country's government and industry focused on protecting its citizens. The defence sector typically involves the armed forces, such as army, navy and air force, as well as the private or state-run companies involved in producing weapons and other military equipment. The security sector includes non-military institutions tasked with ensuring public safety or national security, such as the police, border forces, counter-terrorism and intelligence agencies.

### DEFENCE EXCEPTIONALISM

The tendency to treat the defence & security sector as an exception to the norms and standards applied to other sectors, particularly concerning transparency, accountability, and oversight. Defence exceptionalism is rooted in the belief that the sensitive nature of national security requires a level of secrecy and discretion not demanded elsewhere. While some level of confidentiality is indeed necessary for maintaining national security, this notion can sometimes lead to reduced scrutiny and oversight, potentially creating an environment where corruption can thrive.

### DEFENCE GOVERNANCE

The set of rules, regulations, and institutions that oversee the management and use of defence resources. It includes the processes and mechanisms by which the defence sector is held accountable to the public and to elected representatives. 'Good defence governance' is essential to ensuring that defence resources are used for their intended purpose, that the defence sector is accountable to the public, and that the military operates in a democratic and ethical manner.

### DEFENCE INSTITUTIONS

The structures, organisations, and entities responsible for a nation's defence and military operations. This includes the armed forces (such as the army, navy and air force), as well as the ministries, departments, or agencies overseeing national defence policies, budgeting, and procurement.

### ETHICS

Based on core values and norms, a set of standards for conduct in government, companies and society that guides decisions, choices and actions.

### EMBEZZLEMENT

When a person entrusted with assets in a public institution, organisation or private company dishonestly and illegally appropriates, uses or traffics funds or goods for personal enrichment or other activities.

### EXTORTION

The act of utilising, either directly or indirectly, one's access to a position of power or knowledge to demand unmerited cooperation or compensation as a result of coercive threats.

### FRAUD

The act of intentionally deceiving someone in order to gain an unfair or illegal advantage, which could be financial, political or otherwise. Countries consider such offences to be criminal or a violation of civil law.

### GOVERNANCE

A concept that goes beyond the traditional notion of government to focus on the relationships between leaders, public institutions and citizens, including the processes by which they make and implement decisions. The term can also be applied to companies and NGOs.

'Good' governance is characterised as being participatory, accountable, transparent, efficient, responsive and inclusive, respecting the rule of law and minimising opportunities for corruption.

### INTEGRITY

Behaviours and actions consistent with a set of moral or ethical principles and standards, embraced by individuals as well as institutions, that create a barrier to corruption. See 'ethics'.



## JARGON BUSTER *continued*

### LOBBYING

Any activity carried out to influence a national or local government or institution's policies and decisions in favour of a specific cause or outcome. These outcomes can be positive for the public good or only benefit a select few. Even when allowed by law, lobbying can become distortive if disproportionate levels of influence exist — by companies, associations, organisations and individuals. Lobbying can be done in-person, by sending letters and emails, or through social media.

### MONEY LAUNDERING

The process of concealing the origin, ownership or destination of illegally or dishonestly obtained money by hiding it within legitimate economic activities.

### NEPOTISM

A form of favouritism based on acquaintances and familiar relationships whereby someone in an official position exploits their power and authority to provide a job or favour to a family member or friend, even though he or she may not be qualified or deserving.

### OFFSETS

Offsets are arrangements or side deals made between a purchasing government and a foreign defence company in connection with a major arms sale. Such side deals can include mandatory co-production, licensed production, subcontractor production, technology transfer, and foreign investment. They are usually a requirement by a purchasing government and would not exist without a prospective or completed weapons sale. The large amounts of money involved in offsets make them particularly susceptible to corruption.

### OVERSIGHT

The process of independently monitoring and investigating — internally or externally — the operations and activities of a government agency, company or civil society organisation to ensure accountability and efficient use of resources.

### PATRONAGE

A form of favouritism in which a person is selected, regardless of qualifications or entitlement, for a job or government benefit because of political affiliations or connections.

### PROCUREMENT

A multi-step process of established procedures to acquire goods and services by any individual, company or organisation — from the initial needs assessment to the contract's award and service delivery.

### REVOLVING DOOR

The process by which individuals move, in either direction, between positions in public office and jobs for private companies or other organisations in the same sector. If not properly regulated, the 'revolving door' can be open to corrupt abuse.

### RULE OF LAW

Legal and political systems, structures and practices that condition a government's actions to protect citizens' rights and liberties, maintain law and order, and encourage the effective functioning of the country.

### SOLICITATION

The act of a person asking, ordering or enticing someone else to commit bribery or another crime.

### STATE CAPTURE

A situation where powerful individuals, institutions, companies or groups within or outside a country use corruption to influence and shape a nation's policies, laws and economy for their own benefit.

### TRANSPARENCY

The characteristic of governments, companies, organisations and individuals of being open in the clear disclosure of information, rules, plans, processes and actions. As a principle, public officials, civil servants, the managers and directors of companies and organisations, and board trustees have a duty to act visibly, predictably and understandably to promote participation and accountability.



## JARGON BUSTER *continued*

### WHISTLEBLOWING

The sounding of an alarm by an employee, director, or external person, in an attempt to reveal neglect or abuses within the activities of an organisation, government body or company (or one of its business partners) that threaten public interest, its integrity and reputation. The term in English is largely positive although many languages lack a similar concept with the same connotation.

### OTHER TERMS

#### ADVOCACY

Transparency International defines advocacy as the critical and constructive engagement with all stakeholders to promote change and end corruption. It means influencing and engaging people to find ways to challenge, change or compromise laws, policy or practices with constructive arguments.

Lobbying, as defined above, is an advocacy tactic amongst others.



#### CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning is a sequence of purposeful actions aimed at attaining a specific objective, such as influencing changes in government policies or increasing public awareness of particular corruption concerns. Campaign activities encompass a wide range of methods, including:

**Public demonstrations and gatherings**, such as marches, rallies, and concerts, which serve to engage and mobilise the public.

**Letter-writing and email campaigns directed at government officials and decision-makers** to express concerns, convey demands, and advocate for change.

**Media outreach strategies designed to raise public awareness** and garner support for the campaign, including press releases, interviews, and social media initiatives.

**Research and documentation efforts, including data analysis**, essential for providing factual and evidentiary support to amplify our advocacy endeavours.

**Direct lobbying of government officials and decision-makers**, involving direct interactions, such as face-to-face meetings or phone calls, to influence policies and decision-making processes.

**Establishing partnerships and collaborations with other civil society organisations** and relevant stakeholders to strengthen the collective impact of the campaign.

#### CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OR ENHANCEMENT

Learning process by which individuals, groups and organisations, institutions and countries develop, enhance and organise their systems, resources and knowledge.





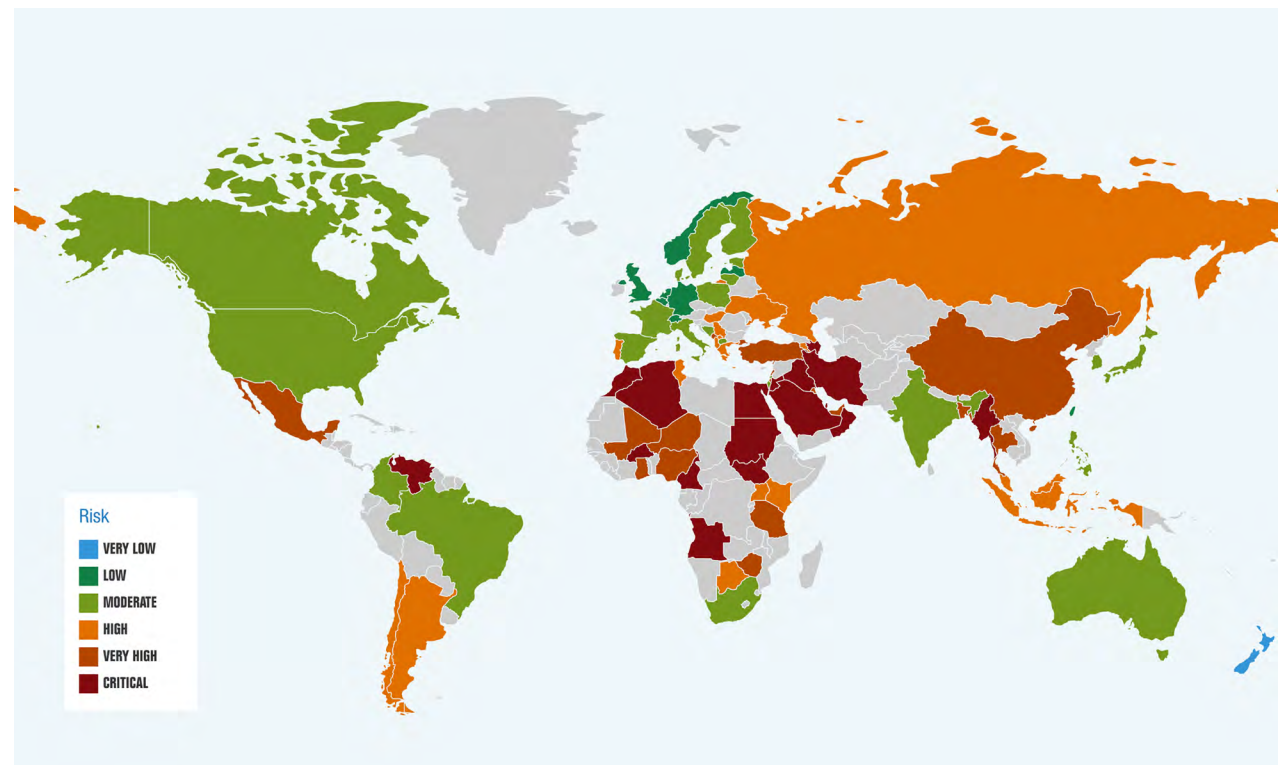
# INTRODUCTION

Corruption, defined as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain, exerts a profound and far-reaching influence on economic development, political stability, and prevention of conflicts. Corruption not only exacerbates societal inequalities but also leaves entire groups feeling excluded and hopeless. This in turn weakens countries and makes governments and public institutions less credible and effective. The consequences are extremely serious and can potentially trigger violent conflicts as well as undermining the foundations of peaceful coexistence.

In the defence and security sectors, corruption presents an especially difficult challenge. While corruption can impact all areas of governments and public institutions, it thrives in environments where there are large budgets, unchecked discretion in decision-making and a lack of transparency. These all feature in the defence & security sectors, which typically operate with a high degree of secrecy, minimal oversight, more discretionary powers and concentrated decision-making.

Over the past two decades, global defence spending has seen a steady upward trajectory. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in 2023, world military expenditure rose for the ninth consecutive year to an all-time high of \$2.443 trillion.

Despite increased global defence spending, in many countries transparency and good governance in the sector is not improving. Transparency International Defence & Security's 2020 Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) revealed that of the 86 countries assessed worldwide, nearly half (36) exhibit weak or non-existent institutional resilience against corruption. Only one country demonstrated 'very robust' integrity and strong safeguards (TI-DS 2021). Rising defence spending, combined with poor governance, further increases the susceptibility to corruption in a sector that already faces heightened risk.



The defence and security sectors, despite their key roles in safeguarding democratic accountability, upholding the rule of law, and protecting human rights, often remain exempt from the regulatory and transparency checks and balances applied to other sectors. The widespread presence of clauses in freedom of information laws that allows information to remain classified under the guise of 'national security' is a pervasive issue – even in countries that have otherwise strong rights around access to information. These clauses are frequently overused, resulting in information that should be public instead being classified; and there is also confusion over what 'national security' exemptions really cover. This exceptional treatment of the defence and security sectors circumvents established anti-corruption safeguards and makes them even more vulnerable to corruption.

The impact of corruption on the legitimacy of state institutions extends to the international arena, posing a direct threat to global peace and security. Its corrosive effects can ultimately lead to the failure of fragile institutions that malign actors wish to undermine. Where governments prioritise self-enrichment over providing essential services, where economic opportunities for ordinary citizens are constrained by kleptocratic elites, or where law enforcement orchestrates organised crime rather than combatting it, poverty, inequality, disenfranchisement, and violent extremism thrive.

In the defence sector, corruption erodes the efficiency of security forces, fosters public disillusionment, and undermines the social contract and the rule of law. This ultimately empowers non-state actors and extremist armed groups. Corruption also depletes state resources, perpetuates a deficit in transparency and accountability, and reduces the overall effectiveness of the defence sector. The adverse effects of corruption in defence and security go beyond national borders and impact neighbouring countries as well as global security. Corruption in the defence realm is also used as an insidious form of statecraft for military elites and officials, destabilising even the most robust democracies. Studies have consistently revealed a direct link between corruption and instability, with six of the ten countries with the worst scores on Transparency International's 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index also ranking among the ten least peaceful nations on the 2020 Global Peace Index.

## THE TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

Transparency International (TI) is a global movement dedicated to combating corruption and promoting transparency, integrity, and accountability in both public and private sectors. Founded in 1993, TI has grown into a formidable force with Chapters and affiliates operating in over 100 countries worldwide.



Being present in such a vast number of nations underscores the universality and urgency of the fight against corruption. It signifies a collective commitment to fostering good governance, strengthening democratic institutions, and empowering citizens to hold their leaders accountable. Moreover, TI's global reach enables it to facilitate cross-border collaboration, share best practices, and advocate for systemic reforms on a global scale. By uniting individuals, organizations, and governments across diverse cultures and contexts, the Transparency International movement embodies the belief that together, we can build a world where corruption is no longer tolerated, and integrity prevails.



The importance of transparency and accountability in defence and security is paramount given the sector is responsible for what should be the top priority for any government: keeping its citizens safe.

Advocates play a significant role in ensuring good and transparent governance within the defence & security sectors, and their contribution cannot be overstated. Civil society must actively shape policies and practices that promote accountability and transparency, acting as a catalyst for change by amplifying the voices of concerned citizens, organisations, and international stakeholders dedicated to eradicating corruption. Through their efforts, advocates exert pressure on decision-makers and raise public awareness, creating an environment less conducive to corruption.

This toolkit is designed to equip advocates with the essential tools to start your advocacy in anti-corruption in the defence & security sectors. It is a comprehensive resource designed to equip stakeholders with the necessary knowledge, tools, and strategies to effectively address corruption within this key but often obscure sector.

- **Part 1** provides essential knowledge of the areas that you might encounter.
- **Part 2** provides guidance on various aspects of advocacy, including identifying key stakeholders, conducting research and analysis, developing messaging and communication strategies, and leveraging advocacy techniques to bring about meaningful change. It also provides practical tools and samples for your work.
- **Part 3** outlines how to put your advocacy into action to affect change. This section includes strategies for engaging with officials, how to effectively communicate your message and guidance for young advocates.





# PART 1

# UNDERSTAND IT!

Corruption and its Impact on global security	12
The impact of corruption in the defence and security sectors	14
What are the aspects of good governance of the defence sector?	16
Security sector reform	18
Corruption and the arms trade	20
Defence procurement	22
Access to information	23
Whistleblowing	24
Illicit financial flows	25
Military spending	26
Military operations	27
Private actors	29
Private, military and security companies	32
Key agreements and conventions	33
Gender and corruption: the Women Peace and Security agenda	36

# PART 1: UNDERSTAND IT!

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the areas you are likely to encounter in your work to promote transparency and accountability in the defence and security sector. By understanding these issues, you will be better equipped to develop effective strategies and recommendations to combat corruption and enhance the integrity of the defence sector. This section also includes an overview of what can be done to address corruption in each of the areas covered, as well as links to resources that provide more detailed information.

## Corruption and its Impact on Global Security

Corruption and conflict are closely linked. Corruption is both an outcome and a driver of conflict, with considerable impact on the governance of the defence sector. While discussions on corruption have been central to international development since the mid-1990s, the full scope of its influence on international security has not received the attention it deserves.

Corruption in defence squanders resources, weakens military capabilities, undermines strategic readiness, and jeopardises the safety of troops. Moreover, corruption erodes trust and confidence in defence institutions, which are vital components of any democracy. Citizens must trust their defence institutions, especially when the threat of conflict looms.

Corruption is more than just financial mismanagement; it erodes societies at their core. Researchers and policymakers have diligently worked to grasp the intricacies of corruption and its destructive effects. The full extent of the complex connections between corruption and international insecurity have not been explored thoroughly, however it is clear that they are linked.

Corruption's adverse effects extend beyond economic growth, leading to the diversion of essential aid and the weakening of governance structures. The end of the 20th century saw an optimistic consensus in Western foreign policy – one that anticipated that increasing global wealth, a more interconnected world, and greater participation in democratic economies would herald a fairer, more open, and prosperous global order. However, these aspirations for democratic peace have been confronted by an unforeseen foe: systemic corruption.

Globalisation and the growth of transnational financial services have empowered well-organised but corrupt governments to conceal ill-gotten wealth while exploiting their own populations on an industrial scale. This phenomenon cuts across all regions of world. Citizens of post-colonial states with democratic aspirations, for example, have often found themselves disenfranchised as kleptocratic regimes, serving the interests of a select few, took control of state machinery. From China and Pakistan to Egypt and Myanmar, small elite groups diverted state resources for personal gain, causing immense suffering to billions of people globally. The presence of these deeply entrenched corrupt elites in state institutions also exerts influence over global politics and security, posing a threat to the foundations of the rules-based international order.

The accumulation of wealth and influence by individuals and narrow interest groups not only leads to public grievance and resentment but also fosters disillusionment and distrust in government institutions. This in turn bolsters non-state actors, including organised crime groups and terrorist organisations. The unchecked concentration of power can trigger civil unrest and regional conflicts, often with far-reaching global implications. The Arab Spring protests and uprisings and Euromaidan protests in Ukraine showcase how grand-scale corruption can create apparently stable but inherently fragile states, susceptible to conflict and violent regime change, thereby generating regional security challenges.

In several cases, corruption has been the underlying cause of a state's inability to address insecurity and the inability of international actors to offer effective assistance. In Kenya, systemic corruption undermined the country's capacity to respond to insecurity, indirectly facilitating attacks by Al-Shabaab in 2014. Policymakers are now recognising that corruption played a pivotal role in the failure of two of the bloodiest wars of the 21st century – Iraq and Afghanistan, where huge amounts of money meant for rebuilding and strengthening government and armed forces were stolen or misused. Military

leaders, analysts and former advisors have repeatedly cited corruption as a critical factor in explaining the failure of stabilisation, peacebuilding and capacity-building efforts. Consequently, there is growing acknowledgment that corruption should be a top national security priority.

Despite the widespread recognition of corruption's destructive influence, combating it is not a prominent feature of mainstream foreign and security policy agendas. Security assistance continues to be directed to countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt with limited scrutiny over how the money is used. Stabilisation missions tend to focus on preparing partner security forces for battle without adequate assessment of whether these forces are acting in the public interest.

Even after the violence has ended, the legacy of corruption can undermine peace settlements as elite networks originating from conflict move to fill the vacuum left for political and economic control. Corruption, often hidden in secrecy, can give rise to competition between states, potentially triggering arms races and even facilitating nuclear proliferation. In some cases, corruption is wielded as a foreign policy tool to undermine the sovereignty and security of targeted states. Even in countries where corruption appears to have minimal impact on daily life, financial systems and interventions can inadvertently incentivise corrupt practices, ultimately impacting their security and internal legitimacy.

**“If we'd been able to reform the defence forces - turn them into institutions that people trusted - maybe the Houthis wouldn't have had so much success, so quickly, and been able to reverse the progress we were starting to make after the revolution. But the people didn't trust the government, it was too corrupt, and they didn't believe that the security forces were there to protect them. If we had been able to change that, Yemen wouldn't witness this crisis.”**

*Saif Al Hadi, TI Yemen*

## ? What can be done?

Address corruption and kleptocracy as a development issue: Recognise that development challenges stem not only from resource shortages but also from corruption and weak institutions, which perpetuate poverty and inequality. Focus on addressing these underlying issues rather than simply increasing resource allocation.

Address corruption and kleptocracy as a core security issue: Fighting corruption is central to fighting other security threats. If not taken seriously, corruption will continue to harm the achievement of any policy objectives. Embed anti-corruption in peace and security frameworks and policies.

Commit to the values of transparency, oversight, and accountability: Secrecy creates opportunities for corrupt networks to thrive and facilitates state capture. Ensure access to information and transparency, including in security matters. Restrictions on access to information based on national security grounds should be the exception. Additionally, invest in oversight and accountability mechanisms by supporting anti-corruption institutions in post-conflict and fragile states to dismantle corrupt networks. Provide expertise and empowerment to these institutions to enhance their effectiveness.

## i Find out more



[The Fifth Column: Understanding the Relationship Between Corruption and Conflict, Transparency International Defence and Security, 2017.](#)



## The impact of corruption in the Defence and Security Sectors

Corruption in defence and security institutions has a particularly detrimental impact on human, state, and international security. In this sector, corruption can fuel tensions and has become lynchpins of recruitment narratives, which position non-state actor groups as a legitimate alternative to corrupt governments and elites. Assets stolen through corruption can be used to finance further crimes, including violent extremist and terrorist acts. All of this is facilitated by the fact that in defence and security, often little to no attention is given to transparency and accountability, due to it being considered a 'national security' concern for governments.

Its effects can be directly visible, such as predatory security forces mistreating the populations they are entrusted to protect. In other cases, the secretive nature of the sector conceals the direct impact of corruption until much later. For example, nearly \$9million meant to be spent on equipment for the Nigerian military in its fight against Boko Haram was stolen by corrupt officials in 2014. In either scenario, when corruption damages military structures, they become unable to respond effectively to insecurity and violence. Failure in this context is especially catastrophic, as weakened, corrupt forces create an environment where groups like Boko Haram, ISIS, and organised crime can thrive. In Nigeria, the full extent of the corruption scheme and its impact was [only revealed in court proceedings a decade later](#). The consequences of such failures are too significant to be ignored by the security and development communities. To establish and maintain peace and security and create conditions for development, addressing defence and security corruption, especially in fragile and conflict-affected states, must be a top priority.

The defence and security sector is highly vulnerable to corruption compared to other sectors, for four key reasons: high levels of secrecy, vast sums of money involved, extreme complexity and unusually close links between the public and private sectors. The impact of defence corruption is not victimless. When corruption takes hold in institutions, we see public officials turning a blind eye to criminality, and end up with poorly equipped security forces unable to protect citizens.



# 10 WAYS CORRUPTION CAN HARM PEOPLE'S LIVES

- 1 Corruption in defence drives conflict and undermines security.** It can lead to mass displacement, exile, community divisions, and more violence that can destroy lives and livelihoods.
- 2 Corruption in defence can encourage and enable excessive use of military force by states.** It can empower corrupt regimes to repress minorities and dissenting voices, and contribute to states taking unnecessarily aggressive action with grave repercussions for human security and lives.
- 3 Corruption in defence fuels armed violence.** It can lead to proliferation and diversion of weapons into the hands of armed groups, organised crime networks, and militias, leading to violence that often harms civilians.
- 4 Corruption in defence erodes public trust in government institutions.** When people lose confidence in their defence institutions and their ability to provide protection and uphold the rule of law, it can result in unrest and rebellion, even playing into the hands of extremist groups.
- 5 Corruption in defence can exacerbate poverty.** It can divert resources away from essential projects in other sectors, such as poverty reduction and clean energy initiatives, and public services such as healthcare and education which are crucial for improving living standards.
- 6 Corruption in defence can deepen social inequalities.** Those who can afford to pay bribes or are part of patronage networks often benefit at the expense of the less privileged. It can also exacerbate gender, race, and other intersecting inequalities that undermine human security.
- 7 Corruption in defence blocks progress towards achieving sustainable development goals.** It undermines the achievement of peace, justice and strong institutions that form the cornerstone of achieving sustainable development.
- 8 Corruption in defence can lead to human rights abuses.** It can empower personnel to use excessive force or violence against civilians with impunity, and block effective routes to reporting and accountability, impeding the course of justice for victims of abuses.
- 9 Corruption in defence increases gender-based violence.** Corrupt defence and security forces permit abuses of power that increases the risk of various forms of sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual extortion, that adversely impact women and girls.
- 10 Corruption in defence can lead to procurement of substandard equipment and insufficient safety standards.** This puts people's lives at risk – both military personnel, who are ill-equipped for the task at hand, and civilians, whose military is unable to effectively protect them.

## What are the aspects of good governance of the defence sector?

The fundamental principles that define good governance and integrity in the defence and security sector are institutional independence, oversight, transparency and civil society engagement. These principles are the cornerstone of our mission.



### Institutional independence

The imbalance of power among different actors in defence institutions can lead to situations of undue influence, where certain parties leverage their status or position to coerce others into making decisions that may not align with the state's best interests. This could happen in a range of situations, including the acquisition of new weaponry or equipment, the export of arms, or legal proceedings against individuals accused of misconduct. Any situation in which a process of scrutiny or decision-making is not independent can lead to undue influence. Independence of defence institutions protects against undue influence and helps safeguard the national interest.



### Oversight

Oversight functions exist in the form of anti-corruption bodies, audit functions, and/or parliamentary committees, but defence institutions have historically enjoyed frequent exemptions from this degree of scrutiny due to national security to safeguard sensitive information. Oversight mechanisms instil confidence that systems are resilient against undue influence and efficient in the face of resource challenges. Well-functioning oversight mechanisms ensure that national defence decisions around operations, budgets, personnel management, and arms acquisitions are robust and aligned with strategic needs. Most importantly, oversight detects problems early and prevents the erosion of defence and security institutions.



### Transparency

Transparency is the key to better governance. Not only does it improve oversight mechanisms, but it also streamlines processes for greater impact and efficiency. The absence of transparency breeds mistrust in government and undermines oversight. A lack of transparency over military capability, defence budgets, and acquisitions can increase the risk of arms proliferation, which in turn creates the potential for instability and pressure to increase defence spending. Keeping certain aspects classified may be necessary, but opacity should be a well-justified exception, not the rule.



### Civil society engagement

Active participation of civilians in defence matters relies on an engaged and informed civil society. Equally essential is a defence sector that is open to interaction with civil society organisations. Effective involvement of civil society enhances the planning capacity of defence sectors and improves military performance by generating external accountability and monitoring, and by offering relevant expertise that is not always readily available within military institutions. Public trust in institutions is bolstered by engagement with civil society groups and openness to public debate of defence policy and strategy.

## ? What can be done?

**Advocate for the promotion of transparent and accountable governance of the defence sector, nationally and globally:** Ensure that efforts to enhance governance encompass the defence sector, which often lacks implementation of good governance norms. Promote the adoption of defence governance standards, including transparency, accountability, and inclusive policy formulation, on a widespread scale. Support leaders who prioritise accountability and transparency, and invest political and diplomatic attention in their success.

**Address 'defence exceptionalism' and strengthen oversight over security institutions:** Combat defence exceptionalism – the notion that the defence and security sector should be except from transparency norms - by integrating defence governance into broader institution-building and accountability reforms, particularly in post-conflict states. Recognise that predatory defence institutions can contribute significantly to insecurity if not redirected towards providing security for the population. Prioritise oversight through mechanisms such as parliamentary defence committees, state audit offices, and civil society organisations. Invest in empowering and enhancing the capacity of supreme audit institutions, as they are proven to be effective anti-corruption measures. Strengthening military capability must be accompanied by controls on the exercise of military power to mitigate risks. Foster connections between the military and civilians to ensure that security forces remain ultimately accountable to the society they serve and protect.

## i Find out more



[GDI 2020 Global Report: Disruption, Democratic Governance, and Corruption Risk in Defence Institutions](#)

[Government Defence Integrity Index \(GDI\)](#)



## Security Sector Reform (SSR)

Security Sector Reform (SSR) is a political and technical process aimed at applying the principles of good governance, of which anti-corruption is one, to the security sector, to enhance its effectiveness and accountability. It aims to improve a country's ability to meet its security needs while upholding democratic norms, good governance, transparency and the rule of law.

Many multilateral actors, such as the UN and the EU, support SSR efforts and have issued guidance documents to define and streamline their approach. SSR provides a key opportunity to address corruption because of its emphasis on oversight, governance and the rule of law. However, existing SSR frameworks and approaches either overlook entirely or fail to sufficiently prioritise corruption as a core cause and consequence of conflict. Our 2023 analysis of these frameworks, [Securing Progress: Mapping opportunities for Anti-Corruption in Security Sector Reform Frameworks](#), found that SSR is typically still approached as a primarily technical task, overlooking its intensely political reality. Despite corruption being a key issue in power structures in the security sector, tackling it often gets too little attention in SSR processes: it's either seen as something to fix later or overlooked entirely.

Many focus on 'train-and-equip' approaches, which involve providing targeted training and new equipment, but this prioritises the tactical readiness of security forces over building accountability and institutional integrity. Our research has found that a failure to sufficiently integrate anti-corruption and prioritise institutional integrity has undermined the success of past SSR efforts. For example, a UN-led SSR programme in Niger saw some progress in improving the effectiveness of the country's security forces, but corruption and weak governance hampered efforts. Rising insecurity, fuelled by weak defence governance, was one of the contributing factors to a coup by the country's presidential guard in 2023.

### **Integrating anti-corruption within SSR initiatives means incorporating it as a core cross-cutting component, rather than treating it as a standalone issue.**

Anti-corruption should be seen as an integral dimension of the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of SSR policies and programmes. The goal is to address corruption as a root cause of conflict and insecurity, and to reinforce security. The key principles for integration of anti-corruption are:

1. Recognition of anti-corruption as a fundamental principle of SSR by integrating anti-corruption standards into SSR policy frameworks and approaches.
2. Conducting comprehensive corruption risk assessments in the security sector and designing reform efforts accordingly.
3. Engagement with civil society throughout design, implementation and monitoring.

## Key elements to improve anti-corruption in SSR processes:



**1. Policy Recognition:** Recognise anti-corruption as a fundamental principle of Security Sector Reform by integrating anti-corruption standards into policy frameworks and codes of conduct.



**2. Corruption Risk Assessments:** Conduct comprehensive corruption risk assessments in the security sector, considering gender dimensions and previous anti-corruption efforts. Collaborate with national actors and specialists to integrate corruption analysis into SSR assessments.



**3. Independent Oversight Mechanisms:** Establish independent oversight bodies to monitor and evaluate anti-corruption measures, ensuring sufficient independence, resources and authority for investigations and recommendations.



**4. Public Financial Management:** Incorporate public financial management reforms into SSR processes, improving governance and accountability. Enhance capacity in areas such as resource allocation, budget reliability, financial transparency and audits.



**5. Transparency and Accountability:** Promote transparency by requiring regular reporting of security sector budgets, expenditures, and procurement. Conduct independent audits and evaluations. Apply general public procurement frameworks to the security sector, with reasonable restrictions based on national security concerns.



**6. Whistleblower Protection:** Implement comprehensive protection mechanisms for individuals reporting corruption, providing secure and confidential reporting channels. Offer legal protections, incentives and confidentiality throughout the reporting and investigation processes.



**7. Investment in Personnel and Capacity Building:** Implement anti-corruption measures in personnel management, including vetting processes and codes of conduct. Provide specialised training to raise awareness of corruption risks and promote ethics and professionalism.



**8. Civil Society Engagement:** Engage civil society organisations and stakeholders in the design, implementation and monitoring of SSR processes. Foster meaningful participation and consultation to reflect diverse needs and promote transparency and accountability.



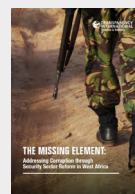
**9. Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks:** Establish frameworks to monitor the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures in SSR processes. Regularly evaluate progress, address challenges and publish evaluation reports to ensure transparency and accountability.



**10. International Co-operation:** Promote international cooperation and align with anti-corruption standards and guidelines. Collaborate with international organisations, regional bodies, and donor countries to share best practices, expertise and resources in combating corruption within SSR processes.

*i*

### Find out more



[The Missing Element: Addressing Corruption through Security Sector Reform in West Africa](#)

[The Common Denominator: How Corruption in the Security Sector Fuels Insecurity in West Africa](#)

[Anti-corruption in Security Sector Reform: The key to sustainable peace and stability](#)

[Securing progress: mapping opportunities for anti-corruption in security sector reform frameworks](#)

## Corruption and the Arms Trade

The global arms trade, which reached a value of \$2.44 trillion in 2023, plays a significant role in international security. U.S. defence companies alone account for some \$162 billion in exports each year. While most arms trades are legal and pragmatic, some involve corruption, which can cause serious harm. Corruption in the arms trade includes bribery during procurement processes and unauthorised arms transfers, even to countries or groups subject to international sanctions, often facilitated by secrecy in the global financial system. But corruption in the international arms trade goes much further than bribery, inflated prices, and kickbacks to divert public funds. Government officials in countries receiving arms may divert some of the provided weapons, services, or investments to provide backing for political, territorial, or factional purposes. Officials or companies in supplying countries may also use their authority to manipulate defence procurement in purchasing countries to favour them over other suppliers. This can result in buyer countries obtaining faulty, overpriced or unnecessary military equipment.

### Defence offsets

Defence offsets are side deals made between a purchasing government and a foreign defence company in connection with a major arms sale. They are an inducement offered by a defence company and/or a requirement by the purchasing government and would not exist without an arms sale. Offsets typically involve defence companies investing in the local defence industry or other economic sectors in the purchasing country. Offsets can be direct, that is tied to the specific equipment or service sold, or indirect, a broad investment unrelated to a specific contract.

Offsets are one of most prone areas to corruption of the international arms trade.

Corruption in arms trade has serious and far-reaching consequences, placing weapons in the hands of violent groups, fuelling conflict, and causing widespread suffering.

Moreover, corruption distorts budget priorities. It incentivises purchasing governments to divert funds from essential services to defence, enriching a select few while depriving

citizens of basic services. In regions like the Middle East and North Africa, where our research has found many countries face a high or critical risk of corruption in their defence sectors, arms sales exacerbate insecurity and authoritarianism, perpetuating a cycle of instability.

In exporting countries, defence companies often resort to bribery to secure lucrative contracts, perpetuating a culture of corruption. Massive lobbying by defence firms and undue influence efforts further entrench these practices, posing significant ethical and humanitarian concerns.

Arms deals tend to be surrounded by high levels of commercial and national security, making them particularly susceptible to the risk of corruption. Corruption in the arms trade inflates the cost of weapons acquired by nations to defend themselves, and can lead to a reduction in the quantity, or quality, of equipment. This results in unnecessary or unfit procurement, and ultimately misuse of public funds. Widespread and systematic corruption also undermines the ability of states to prevent the diversion of weapons from their intended end-users to unauthorised or unlawful users, exacerbating and perpetuating violence.

Addressing corruption in the arms trade is essential to prevent human rights abuses and promote international security. By holding perpetrators accountable and introducing transparency measures, governments can work towards a more ethical and sustainable arms trade landscape.

To combat corruption in the arms trade, transparency on arms sales is crucial, with annual reports on approved and exported arms to all countries around the world, including detail on the type of weapons. Implementing corporate beneficial ownership laws and registries can help identify and prosecute corrupt actors, while enhanced due diligence checks on arms transfers can mitigate illicit activities.

Supplier countries must introduce comprehensive laws, policies, and regulations to oversee arms transfers, prevent irresponsible arms brokering, defence company bribes, unwanted re-transfers, and corruption-based diversion.

Despite existing national, regional and international regulations to control international arms transfers, these efforts do not fully address the associated corruption risks.

## The risk factors for identifying corruption in arms transfers are:

- 1. Weak private and public reporting on proposed arms transfers:** Governments may fail to require companies to provide information on all parties, including brokers, involved in a proposed arms sale. They may also have weak requirements for companies to list the beneficial owners of key parties, itemise the prices, or indicate any political contributions. This information can be critical for governments to identify corruption. Additionally, vague and inconsistent public reporting on proposed and authorised arms transfers can complicate critical parliament and public oversight of arms sales.
- 2. Undisclosed and ill-defined military justification for arms:** A country might purchase advanced fighter jets without a clear explanation of why they need them. This could suggest the purchase is more about personal gains or kickbacks rather than genuine defence needs. Similarly, a country may request to buy quantities of a weapon that does not fit the needs of the military, which could suggest officials within the country may intend to resell some of the weapons for profit.
- 3. Unfair military promotions and salaries:** A high-ranking military officer might receive a sudden, unjustified promotion or a significant salary increase shortly after facilitating a major arms deal. This could indicate that the promotion or pay raise is a form of bribe or reward for ensuring the deal went through, despite not necessarily being in the country's best interest.
- 4. Underregulated and illegitimate agents, intermediaries and arms brokers:** A defence contract might be awarded through the involvement of an agent or intermediary. Their involvement can facilitate illegal activities like kickbacks, with minimal oversight due to lack of regulation.
- 5. Ill-monitored defence offsets:** In an arms deal involving defence offsets, there might be little to no oversight on how these offsets are delivered or valued. This could lead to inflated claims about the value of how these offsets, benefiting individuals or companies at the expense of the state.
- 6. Undisclosed, mismatched, or secretive payments:** A government might make payments for an arms deal through a complex network of offshore accounts and shell companies, making it difficult to trace the flow of money. This sort of arrangement could be used to hide bribes, launder money, or divert funds.

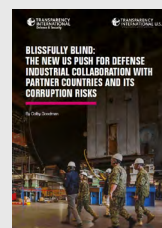
## ? What can be done?

**Close loopholes in arms export policy:** Vulnerability to corruption can lead states either making wasteful purchases or allowing weapons to be diverted, fuelling conflict. Supplier states should leverage their influence to advocate for the adoption of more robust defence governance standards. Additionally, enhancing the transparency of exports empowers citizens and oversight institutions in recipient countries to conduct their own scrutiny.

**Enhance detection measures, including transparency:** Governments should invest in proactive measures to detect corruption risks in arms transfers and develop robust procedures for investigation. This includes allocating resources, requiring companies disclosures, to identify corrupt actors [...] crucial steps. Public reporting on proposed and authorised transfers around the world are essential for verifying that such transfers are not corrupt.

**Tailor risk assessments to identify corruption risks:** This involves scaling assessments based on transfer type, frequency, and recipient, as well as producing comprehensive reports on global corruption challenges. Annual internal corruption risk assessments and reliance on embassy officials and independent analyses are essential for thorough evaluations.

## i Find out more



[Blissfully Blind: The new US push for defence industrial collaboration with partner countries and its corruption risks](#)

[Holes in the Net: US arms export control gaps in combatting corruption](#)



## Defence Procurement

Defence procurement is the process through which authorities in the field of defence acquire the various goods or services they need to perform their duties and missions..

The term 'defence exceptionalism' is often used in relation to defence procurement processes, referring to the positioning of the sector as exceptional - that is being exempt from standard regulations on transparency and public access to information based on national security reasons.

Arms deals involve vast amounts of state budget, sometimes disbursed over long periods of time and following secretive decision-making processes. While classification of information on national security matters is an increasingly important question given growing security concerns around the globe, opaque procedures, and limited oversight mechanisms, can foster corruption risk. In addition, the usually large size of defence budgets, together with opacity around planned and actual acquisitions, as well as negotiations and lobbying, make the sector highly susceptible to corrupt practices.

As defence acquisitions are routinely exempt from standard disclosure practices, tenders may be evaluated and completed with little to no transparency. This may result in purchases with high costs but with questionable strategic purpose, severe delays and cost overruns, allowing undue and political influence to dictate procurement requirements as public policy is captured by private interests, resulting in single sourcing and contract misconduct. As a result, substantial amounts of public funds, that could have been used otherwise for essential services, may be siphoned off through ineffective or unnecessary procurement projects. This can undermine a country's capacity to provide security and damage public trust. Enhancing transparency and access to information on the entire procurement cycle can help significantly reduce corruption risk. Improving scrutiny by oversight institutions and increasing external involvement in the procurement planning process both help mitigate opportunities for corruption at key junctures of the process.

However, given the sensitivities attached to the procurement of goods that can impact on national security, efforts to enhance defence procurement transparency have had limited success.

### ? What can be done?

**Ensure transparency and ethical behaviour:** Tender boards should operate transparently, with clear criteria and procedures for evaluating bids and awarding contracts. Simultaneously, systems and incentives should be developed to encourage ethical behaviour among defence contractors. Fostering a culture of integrity and accountability within the defence industry is crucial for upholding ethical standards. Additionally, establish independent oversight mechanisms to monitor and evaluate defence procurement processes, ensuring fairness and integrity throughout.

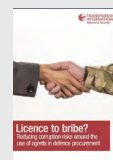
**Make procurement bulletproof:** Ensure that defence procurement practices adhere to robust legislative frameworks to uphold transparency and accountability.

**Make procurement strategic:** Implement a strategic approach to procurement that aligns with national security objectives and long-term planning goals.

**Make it open:** Promote open competition in procurement processes wherever feasible and provide clear justifications for single sourcing decisions to maintain transparency and fairness.

**Limit the use of agents and intermediaries:** Implement stringent regulations on the use of agents and intermediaries in defence procurement or consider eliminating their use altogether to minimise the risk of corruption and undue influence.

### i Find out more



[Licence to Bribe? Reducing corruption risks around the use of agents in defence procurement](#)

[Single Sourcing: A multi-country analysis of non-competitive defence procurement](#)

## Access to information

Access to information is an essential tool in combatting corruption and building institutional integrity. It enables external oversight, facilitates informed participation of the public and civil society in public debates and development of policy, and it brings corruption risks – and actual incidents of corruption – to light, facilitating the push for accountability and reform. Despite robust and widely agreed international and national anti-corruption and freedom of information legislation that governs public sectors, the defence sector remains secretive and lacking a fundamental level of transparency that is crucial to ensure accountability. Such legislation frequently contains national security exemptions that are vague, undefined or overreaching and provide defence institutions with a sweeping mandate to classify information by labelling it critical to national security. Findings from our Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) show that in most countries there is a long way to go to make mechanisms for accessing information from the defence sector effective. Of the 86 countries assessed in the GDI 2020, almost half were found to be at high to critical risk of corruption in relation to their access to information regimes.

No institution should be given a blanket exemption to responding to information requests—even in the name of national security. While some information in the sector may need to remain classified, secrecy should be a well-founded exception, not a rule. Exceptions must be proportionate and necessary, and transparency should remain the default approach. Defence institutions should have in place rigorous and publicly available rules for withholding information. They should be accompanied by clear criteria and process for public interest and harm tests that can help balance genuine needs for secrecy with overall public interest, as set out in the Global Principles on National Security and the Right to Information (the Tshwane Principles<sup>1</sup>). Defence institutions should proactively make certain types of information available to the public and to independent oversight bodies. This should include key information related to defence strategy, budgets, expenditure, audit reports and procurement data. The interest of preventing, investigating, or exposing corruption should be considered an overriding public interest, as corruption not only wastes public resources, but also seriously undermines a country's national security efforts.

<sup>1</sup> GLOBAL PRINCIPLES ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION ("THE TSHWANE PRINCIPLES") finalized in Tshwane, South Africa issued on 12 June 2013. These Principles were developed in order to provide guidance to those engaged in drafting, revising, or implementing laws or provisions relating to the state's authority to withhold information on national security grounds or to punish the disclosure of such information.

### ? What can be done?

**Limit blanket exemptions:** No institution should be exempt from responding to information requests, even in the name of national security. While some information may need to remain classified, secrecy should be an exception rather than the rule. Exceptions should be proportionate and necessary, with transparency as the default approach.

**Proactive disclosure:** Defence institutions should proactively make certain types of information available to the public and independent oversight bodies. This includes key information related to defence strategy, budgets, expenditure, audit reports, and procurement data.

**Clear classification rules:** Defence institutions should have clear and publicly available rules for withholding and classifying national security information. This framework should include safeguards such as time limitations on classification and guidance on balancing public interest against potential harm, ideally in line with the Global Principles on National Security and the Right to Information (the Tshwane Principles).

### i Find out more



[TI-DS factsheet: Access to information](#)

[Government Defence Integrity Index \(GDI\) 2020](#)

[Global Principles on National Security and the Right to Information \(the Tshwane Principles\)](#)

TI-DS's [Classified Information](#) study

## Whistleblowing

An increasing number of countries now acknowledge the importance of whistleblowers and have introduced laws to protect them. Whistleblowing in defence and security is, however, a particularly sensitive issue. The legitimate need to safeguard classified information which could undermine national security means that many of these laws, where they do exist, do not apply to people working within defence and security institutions. Furthermore, the fact that whistleblowing is an act of dissent means that it is often taboo within military cultures characterised by respect for authority.

Whistleblowing relating to corruption in defence and security can, however, highlight weaknesses in defence and security, decrease risk, and increase efficiency. It can save money, save reputations, and save lives.



### ? What can be done?

Defence and security institutions should:

**Identify the appropriate limit of national security information classifications** in line with the Global Principles on National Security and the Right to Information (the Tshwane Principles), and apply exceptions to whistleblowing protection in other sectors only in accordance with these.

**Provide secure channels for internal reporting of concerns**, including an alternative to the regular reporting chain, and an authorised independent route.

**Actively encourage whistleblowing** through training, information, and guidance.

**Ensure that whistleblowers are afforded protection** from retaliation, discrimination or disadvantage for reporting evidence of corruption, in the public interest.

### i Find out more

Transparency International's Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) provide free and confidential advice and support to victims and witnesses of corruption, and may be able to act as a simple, safe reporting channel for whistleblowing in defence and security.

You can find contact information for ALACs around the world [here](#).

[Progress \[Un\]Made – Defence Governance in Central and Eastern Europe](#)

## Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs)

Illicit finance is both a catalyst and an enabler of conflict and insecurity. Whether to maintain followers or to purchase weapons and supplies, capital is essential, and illicit financial flows (IFFs) provide this. They are typically integral to the financing of insurgent and terrorist groups, often used to fund military interventions and occupations, and can enable the bypassing of sanctions, arms or trade embargos in conflict contexts. Illicit finance is also used as a weapon of strategic corruption, funding political interference and undermining democracy. Furthermore, illicit finance undermines state legitimacy, and both the capacity and interest of states to provide security for their citizens.

The Wagner Group, a Russian state-funded private military group that engages in mercenary-type activities, is an example of how illicit financial networks can combine with military activity to pose a threat to national and international security. With operations in various conflict zones, the Wagner Group relies on IFFs to fund its activities, including recruitment and arms purchases, often in defiance of international laws and sanctions.

The term IFFs refers to cross-border exchanges of value, monetary or otherwise, which are illegally earned, transferred or used. These flows originate from various sources, including tax evasion, abusive profit-shifting, trade mis-invoicing, human and drug trafficking, and corruption. IFFs are a product of economic globalisation, and the removal of capital controls that used to raise financial borders between countries but which limited investment and economic growth.

IFFs are frequently subject to money laundering: the illegal process of making 'dirty' money appear 'clean'. Money laundering involves surreptitiously injecting dirty money into the legitimate financial system (through cash businesses, false invoicing, or use of trusts and offshore companies), concealing the source of the dirty money through a series of transactions intended to make tracing as hard as possible, and extracting clean money through, for example, payments to fake employees, loans to shareholders that are never repaid, or company dividends.

The main feature of IFFs is that they are deliberately hidden: financial secrecy is key.



### ? What can be done?

**Strengthen beneficial ownership transparency** and enhance the ability of financial crime authorities to investigate and detect IFFs.

**Cooperation and information-sharing** between 'source' and 'destination' countries is vital: tackling illicit finance requires global partnerships for a global problem.

### i Find out more

[The Financial Action Task Force \(FATF\)](#) is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog. FATF promotes global standards to mitigate the risks, and assesses whether countries are taking effective action. Progress against FATF's standards should be a priority for all countries.



## Military Spending

Defence spending forms an integral part of the processes around defence procurement. It can be divided into two sub-categories – budget planning and actual defence spending. Generally, governments publish three broad categories of budget documents:

- 1) The initial budget adopted prior to the start of the fiscal year.
- 2) A revised budget, released during the fiscal year that shows changes in priorities.
- 3) The key document on actual expenditure, published at the end of the fiscal year that shows how much was actually spent in comparison to the budget.

While most governments publish some form of budgetary information at the start of the fiscal year, data on actual defence spending is often much more difficult to access. The variance between the initial budget and actual expenditure can be significant and obscure spending practices facilitated by limited transparency, weak legislative oversight and defence exceptionalism can significantly increase corruption risk. Opaque security sector budgets and related processes undermine fiscal sustainability and the timely implementation of reforms such as Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Security Sector Governance (SSG) strategies.

One tool that can help bridge this gap and strengthen institutional resilience in defence spending processes are Public Financial Management (PFM) frameworks. PFM refers to the set of laws, rules, systems, and processes used by governments to mobilise revenue, allocate funds, undertake public spending, account for funds, and audit results. It is commonly conceived of as a cycle of six phases beginning with policy design, moving to budget formulation, approval, execution, accounting, and ending with external audit.

A well-established PFM system can ensure high levels of transparency and accountability when handling government finances, maximising the efficient use of limited public resources. In addition, good practice requires that the vast majority of actual defence spending is fully disclosed in a timely manner - at best within six months after the end of the financial year. There may be exceptions made for legitimately sensitive areas, but there should be clear and robust oversight of the full budget by other suitable authorities.

### ? What can be done?

**Adopt a comprehensive budget that has full scrutiny:** Ensure that the defence budget provides detailed information on expenditure across various functions, including personnel, military research and development, training, procurement, maintenance, and administrative expenses and such is scrutinised by parliament and the public.

**Manage expenditure risks:** Proactively publish details of actual spending on defence and security in disaggregated form, in addition to budgets. Include internal and external audits in ongoing reviews of defence ministry expenditures.

**Transparency in expenditure:** Minimise expenditure on secret items, providing extensive information to legislative committees or members of the legislature on all spending in this regard and prohibit off-budget expenditures by law, and if they occur, ensure they are recorded in respective budgets.

**Scrutinise arms export processes:** Establish a well-scrutinised process for arms export decisions that aligns with relevant articles of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and includes an assessment of corruption risks in the importing country before making arms export decisions, requiring mitigation measures if necessary to manage corruption risks effectively.

### i Find out more



[Trojan Horse Tactics: Unmasking the imperative for transparency in military spending](#)

## Military Operations

Corruption can be a determining factor in the success or failure of a military operation, and can exacerbate insecurity in the operating environment by inadvertently strengthening corrupt networks. Rather than being treated as a secondary issue by militaries, identifying and countering corruption risks should be a strategic priority. Military operations often occur in places affected by corruption, meaning that an operation that is not prepared to address corruption risks on deployment can both suffer from corruption within their own forces, and exacerbate existing corruption in the operating environment. This can have devastating consequences, both for the ability of missions to achieve their objectives and for security and stability more widely, as the influx of resources that typically accompany missions increases corruption risk in the operational theatre.

Corruption in military operations is often overlooked, or its impacts and risks underestimated. Our Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) 2020 found that countries around the world have extremely limited institutional resilience to corruption when it comes to military operations. Two-thirds of countries assessed in the GDI were found to be at critical risk of corruption in their military operations. This means that there is significant potential for corruption to undermine military operations on the frontline, be they aimed at securing peace internally or abroad.

## CORRUPTION RISK PATHWAYS AND EXAMPLE MITIGATION MEASURES

### 1. Corruption within mission forces

*eg. ghost soldiers, diversion of resources*

Codification of ethical standards accompanied by internal investigative structures and sanctions

Deployment of expert personnel capable of monitoring corruption within missions

### 2. Relations with host nation stakeholders

*eg. corrupt local networks, militias*

Investing financial support carefully and applying conditionality

Cooperating with civil society (for increased oversight and likelihood of whistleblowing reports of wrong-doing)

### 3. Supporting host nation defence forces with high levels of corruption risk

*eg. misuse of defence funds, patronage in recruitment*

Choosing partners carefully: marginalising spoilers, supporting change agents

Strong integrity standards among mission troops and their ability to notice and report corruption among partner forces

### 4. Corruption in sustainment and contracting

*eg. outsourcing of services, contracting in field*

Transparency in contracting to enable external scrutiny

Limiting reliance on agents and intermediaries

### 5. Armed forces undertaking civilian functions

*eg. delivery of humanitarian resources*

Strong integrity standards among mission personnel to prevent creation of new opportunities for corrupt networks

Supporting development of civil society oversight mechanisms to help create longer-term accountability

Militaries should include anti-corruption in forward planning of operational activity, identify corruption risks in the operating environment and implement preventative mitigation measures. Particular attention should be paid to corruption within mission forces, relations with host nation stakeholders (such as local networks and militias), supporting host nation defence forces with high levels of corruption risk, corruption in contracting during a mission, and armed forces undertaking civilian functions (such as delivery of humanitarian resources). Crucially, anti-corruption should be embedded as a priority in the overarching military doctrine that guides all aspects of military planning, operations and monitoring.

## ? What can be done?

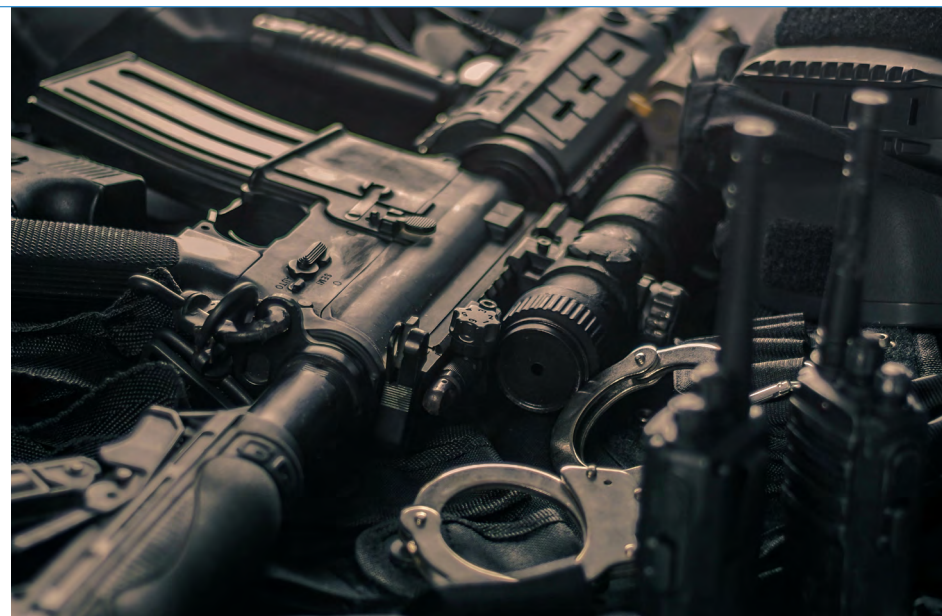
**Embed anti-corruption in military doctrine:** Prioritise the integration of anti-corruption measures within the overarching military doctrine to foster a culture of integrity and accountability throughout military operations.

**Plan for tackling corruption:** International organisations such as the United Nations, NATO, the African Union, and regional organisations, along with individual countries' intervention forces, should recognise the threat of corruption and incorporate counter-corruption initiatives into their planning for operations.

**Mitigate corruption risk in contracting:** Take corruption risks into account when contracting on missions, ensuring that procurement processes and contracts are designed to minimise opportunities for corrupt practices.

**Provide anti-corruption training:** Ensure that military planners and personnel deployed on missions receive comprehensive anti-corruption training to recognise, prevent, and address corrupt practices effectively.

**Conduct corruption risk assessment:** Prior to mission deployment, conduct thorough corruption risk assessments of host countries to identify potential vulnerabilities and implement appropriate mitigation strategies.



## i Find out more



[TI-DS factsheet: Corruption risk and military operations](#)

[Interventions anti-corruption guidance](#)

[An Assessment of Corruption Risks in UN Peacekeeping Operations](#)

## Private actors

### Understanding Beneficial Ownership:

Beneficial ownership refers to the individuals who ultimately own or control an asset, such as a property or a company. While legal ownership may be held by an entity or organization, the beneficial owner(s) are the true owners behind the scenes.

Collecting beneficial ownership information is crucial for transparency and accountability. It helps reveal potential conflicts of interest, prevents money laundering, and combats corruption. By knowing who truly benefits from an asset or entity, authorities can ensure fair practices and enforce regulations effectively.

In the highest risk markets, where oversight and transparency is weakest, these disclosures are the only way the opportunities for corruption can be comprehensively addressed.

The private sector plays a critical role in defence and security in crisis and conflicts. Companies develop, produce and trade in weapons and supporting services, which frequently reach or affect fragile contexts. Companies increasingly perform defence and security duties outsourced by governments, and advise governments on defence policy. To do this they are supported by supply-chains and a myriad of other private sector services: consultants, brokers, legal professionals, and financiers. Most states, including those facing conflicts and crisis, would be unable to deliver on their defence and security obligations without the private sector's involvement. While frequently beneficial, this intensive cooperation and reliance inevitably creates significant corruption risks due to disproportionate and often unaccountable influence of corporates on policy and decision making, and insufficient public oversight of private sector delivery of defence and security duties. Private military and security companies specifically operate in a legal vacuum and can post a serious corruption risk.



### What are agents, and why do they pose a risk?

Transparency International Defence and Security defines agents as individuals or entities authorised to act for, or on behalf of, a company to further its business interests, for example in sales or marketing, and in (or with) a foreign country or foreign entity. The terms 'agent', 'advisor' and 'broker' are often used interchangeably, but the authority to act on behalf of the company's interests in the pursuit of contracts distinguishes this type of third party from other intermediaries, such as consultants and lobbyists.

Although agents can play a vital and legitimate role in defence transactions, there is substantial evidence from recent and historic investigations that such actors can facilitate and engage in corrupt activity. In particular, agents pose inherent risks due to their ability to act independently to serve their own interests and due to the close links they often have with decision-makers, which can lead to inappropriate influence on the procurement process.

In the defence sector, corruption allegations against major companies persist, with detrimental effects reaching far beyond financial losses. When scandals emerge, they often implicate senior politicians, eroding public trust in government institutions. The scale of corruption within military contracting diverts substantial resources, as seen in the infamous South African Arms deal, which cost billions while essential services like healthcare suffered. Corruption also disrupts markets, inflates costs, and pushes away honest businesses, further exacerbating the problem.











## CASE STUDY

The South African Arms Deal, also known as the Strategic Defence Package, was a multi-billion-dollar transaction that began in the late 1990s, where South Africa purchased advanced military equipment, including warships, submarines, light combat aircraft, and helicopters from various international defence companies.

The deal was marred by allegations of widespread corruption, involving kickbacks, bribes, and other illicit practices. High-ranking officials, senior politicians and major defence firms were implicated in the scandal. Investigations and legal proceedings subsequently revealed complex networks of financial transactions intended to influence the deal's decision-making process.

Efforts to mitigate corruption risk have been made, yet it remains a pervasive issue in international arms deals. While compliance measures have improved, they may not be sufficient to root out corruption entirely. Greater transparency and disclosure are essential for effective oversight and risk reduction.

**We have outlined 10 key areas where increased transparency can help mitigate corruption risk.**

	LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE	SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT	
	INTERNAL CONTROLS	AGENTS, INTERMEDIARIES AND JOINT VENTURES	
	SUPPORT TO EMPLOYEES	OFFSETS	
	CONFLICT OF INTEREST	HIGH RISK MARKETS	
	CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT	STATE OWNED ENTERPRISES	

## ? What can be done?

Companies should ensure that they have a robust ethics and anti-corruption programme. They should also elevate their commitment to corporate transparency through meaningful disclosure on their website of:

**Management of high-risk areas:** Develop procedures and activities to manage and prevent corruption in high-risk areas such as the supply chain, agents and intermediaries, joint ventures, and offsets. Publicly acknowledge the corruption risks associated with these practices.

**Corporate political engagement:** Disclose details of corporate political engagement, including political contributions, charitable donations, lobbying activities, and public sector appointments in all active jurisdictions, particularly in high-risk sectors.

**Transparency in ownership:** Disclose beneficial ownership structures, fully consolidated subsidiaries, and non-fully consolidated holdings. Commit to not engaging with businesses that operate with deliberately opaque structures.

By making this information publicly available, companies demonstrate their commitment to transparency and accountability. This allows stakeholders, including governments, auditors, employees, and the public, to hold them accountable. While confidentiality for commercial and security reasons is important, industry leaders have shown that greater disclosure is feasible.

## i Find out more



[Defence Companies Index on Anti-Corruption and Corporate Transparency 2020](#)

[Defence Companies Index on Anti-Corruption and Corporate Transparency 2020: Key findings](#)

[Out of the Shadows: Promoting openness and accountability in the global defence industry](#)

[Defence Industry Influence on European Policy Agendas: Findings from Germany and Italy](#)

## Private, Military and Security Companies

The private military and security company (PMSC) industry has undergone explosive growth since the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, ballooning in value from an estimated \$100 billion in 2003 to \$224 billion in 2020, with expectations to double by 2030. However, regulatory oversight has failed to keep pace, leading to heightened risks of fraud, corruption, and violence on a global scale. Urgent action is needed to address these challenges.

Instances of corruption and illegal activities within the PMSC sector have been reported, fuelling conflicts and exacerbating instability. For example, a former CEO of a major US PMSC pleaded guilty to bribing Nigerian officials for a \$6 billion contract in the Niger Delta, while operatives from the Wagner Group have been implicated in planting explosives and summary executions in Libya. Some PMSCs are expanding their services into countries with weak defences against corruption, creating a perfect storm of risks.

PMSCs operate in a complex landscape, providing military and security services in conflict zones and fragile environments. The status of their personnel in armed conflicts is determined by international humanitarian law, and they are protected against attack unless engaged in combat functions.

The Wagner Group, while not a typical PMSC, engages in mercenary-type activities and poses significant challenges due to its reported connections to the Russian state, scale of operations, and human rights violations. Its activities underscore the need for robust regulation and accountability in the PMSC sector.

Our research has found PMSCs pose significant corruption risks, including conflicts of interest where they serve as advisors to foreign military units that procure their services, and the potential for inflating security needs to secure contracts, leading to unnecessarily aggressive actions by authorities. They can enhance the coercive power of corrupt governments, intensifying repression and foreign military actions, and may partner with government officials owning PMSC services, driving violent competition for resources. PMSCs might coerce foreign companies into paying kickbacks for government contracts, bribe officials to influence decisions, and broker foreign PMSCs' participation in conflicts, supporting groups that contribute to violence. Additionally, their involvement in illicit activities like arms trafficking and their funding through opaque channels further exacerbate these risks.

The global momentum to regulate PMSCs is growing, driven by concerns over human rights violations and the extension of foreign influence into fragile states. Existing regulatory initiatives like the Montreux Document and the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers, while a step in the right direction, are non-binding and insufficient to address the magnitude of risks. Enforceable standards are needed to effectively regulate the industry.



### What can be done?

To avoid the mentioned risks and improve the governance and oversight of the activities of PMSCs, standards should include:

**Make PMSC contracts and their international work more transparent**, ensuring weapons and equipment trades follow arms control rules.

**Increase checks on PMSCs** by higher government authorities, assigning top officials to watch over PMSC dealings with government departments.

**Establish parliamentary oversight** for domestic and international PMSC services.

**Strengthen mechanisms to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption**, ensuring protection for whistleblowers and maintaining the integrity of national judicial systems.

**Mandate disclosure of PMSCs' beneficial ownership** and subcontracting practices.



### Find out more

[Hidden Costs: US private military and security companies and the risks of corruption and conflict](#)

[Defence Companies Index on Anti-Corruption and Corporate Transparency](#)

[Out of the Shadows: Promoting openness and accountability in the global defence industry](#)

## Key agreements and conventions

International norms are like guideposts, outlining expected conduct for both governmental and non-governmental entities on a global scale. These norms come in various forms, ranging from voluntary codes of conduct to legally binding agreements. Those working towards better governance in defence and security should familiarise themselves with these global standards to effectively address corruption issues.

When it comes to international norms governing defence and security, governance, peace, and human rights, we can broadly categorise them into three groups:

**Security-Related Instruments:** These frameworks provide guidelines for state and military conduct on specific topics. However, they do not offer comprehensive solutions for defence governance, and their geographic scope might be limited. An example is the NATO security policies that outline how member countries should conduct their military and security operations.

**Anti-Corruption and Governance Reform Instruments:** While they aim to address governance issues, these instruments may not fully apply to the defence sector. A prominent example is the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), adopted in 2003, which is the only legally binding global anti-corruption instrument.

**Human Rights instruments:** The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example, sets out basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled, influencing how security forces should respect human rights in their operations.

As advocates, understanding the nuances of these international norms is crucial for effective advocacy against corruption.



The overlap of peace and security, human rights and anti-corruption highlights a key challenge. Corruption is often treated in isolation, with its connections to peacekeeping, human security, and defence governance overlooked. In reality, corruption is intricately linked to these areas and can hinder progress toward several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). International humanitarian law, which includes the Geneva Conventions and additional protocols, governs military conduct during conflicts, especially concerning the protection of civilians in war zones. Many of its provisions have been widely accepted by member states.

Despite these vital documents and agreements, essential instruments like the UN Charter, UN Security Council Resolutions, the Arms Trade Treaty, UN Human Rights Treaties and Conventions, and the OECD Code of Conduct allocate only limited attention to curbing corruption within defence and security. As an advocate, it's crucial to understand these frameworks and utilise them effectively in your efforts to push for stronger anti-corruption measures.



## The United Nations (UN) Charter and UN resolutions



The United Nations Charter, the foundational document of the United Nations, is arguably the most prominent body of international law. It grants the UN the authority to address a wide range of global issues due to its distinctive international character and the authority vested within it. This pivotal document encapsulates the fundamental principles of international relations, including the sovereign equality of States and the prohibition of using force in global affairs.

Article 1 outlines the UN's purpose, including under Article 1.1 to maintain international peace and security. It is further mandated to take necessary measures and collaborate internationally to prevent conflict and eradicate any threats to peace.

The UN operates primarily through two key entities: the Security Council and the General Assembly. These principal organs of the UN are entrusted with responsibilities related to upholding international peace and security, as designated by member states. UN resolutions are “formal expressions of the opinion or will of United Nations organs”. If passed by the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, or the Human Rights Council, resolutions are published as individual documents, and as part of annual or sessional reports by other UN bodies. Only UN Security Council resolutions are legally binding.

The Security Council's resolutions are individually documented. Member States have granted the Security Council extensive powers, some of which are not possessed by other UN international bodies. This authority includes the capacity to make binding decisions applicable to all Member States.

However, when it comes to addressing corruption in the context of international peace and security, the Security Council's resolutions offer only surface-level treatment. For example, Resolution 2151 on global peace and stability merely makes a passing

reference to corruption, acknowledging that “anti-corruption measures” are a crucial element of stabilisation and reconstruction. The absence of comprehensive anti-corruption considerations in the Security Council's Resolutions leaves a significant void in the international normative frameworks related to global peace, security, and anti-corruption efforts.

## The United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)

The United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) is the only legally-binding, international anti-corruption treaty. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2003, UNCAC has been

in force since December 2005 and is governed by the UN Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The treaty is remarkable due to its reach, with currently 190 State Parties and the scope, covering many different types of corruption in the public and private sectors and recognising the value of both preventative and punitive measures. It also addresses cross-border corruption and the need for international cooperation to end it.

UNCAC has five main parts: preventive measures, criminalisation and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange. For CSOs working in countries that have signed and ratified UNCAC, the treaty can provide a helpful tool for engagement with political actors: CSOs play a central role in monitoring and supporting UNCAC implementation.

The UNCAC could have wielded more influence in defence and security matters were it not for its explicit exemptions related to ‘national security’. These exemptions curtail the state's obligation to safeguard the “freedom to seek, receive, publish, and disseminate information concerning corruption” if it intersects with concerns about national security. Governments often exploit this rationale in broad assertions justifying secrecy.



## The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crimes (UNTOC)

Organised crime and corruption are often closely connected. Corruption enables organised crime to thrive, and through organised crime, corrupt networks are built and sustained. Despite their overlap, they are mostly treated as separate issues in research, policy and practice, and are thus governed by two different legal instruments, UNCAC and UNTOC.



UNTOC entered into force in 2003. It contains few actions on corruption – most prominently Articles 8 and 9 which mandates corruption to be treated as a crime including punitive measures for undue influence on public officials. For those working in the defence and security sectors, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition is of particular interest as the only legally-binding instrument to combat those practices. It addresses the prevention and elimination of arms diversion and theft, which can be enabled by corruption.

UNTOC provides a similar basis to influence policymakers as UNCAC, and its Conference of the State Parties provides an equal opportunity to push for decisions and resolutions to enhance its implementation.

## Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Anti-Bribery Convention

To eliminate bribery in international business transactions, the OECD established the Anti-Bribery Convention which entered into force in February 1999. As the only international instrument targeting the supply side of bribery activities, the Anti-Bribery Convention sets legally binding standards to penalise bribery of foreign officials in international business transactions. All 38 OECD countries and 6 non-OECD countries have adopted the Convention.

In 2021, the OECD Anti-Bribery Recommendation was released which is an additional document to the Convention and includes new measures to prevent, detect, investigate and criminalise this type of bribery. It is the product of an extensive review of the previous 2009 Anti-Bribery Recommendation conducted by the OECD Anti-Bribery Working Group and brings together lessons learnt from the implementation of the Convention in the different countries.

The Convention provides standards that can be applied to the prevention and criminalisation of corruption in the arms trade. However, the Convention does not explicitly prohibit national security exemptions and does not address defence exceptionalism, which raises the danger of regulations being bypassed in this sector.

## Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) defines itself “an international treaty that regulates the international trade in conventional arms and seeks to prevent and eradicate illicit trade and diversion of conventional arms by establishing international standards governing arms transfers”. It entered into force in December 2014 and has been so far ratified by 113 states.



Corruption risks exist at different stages of arms transfers and are subsequently addressed at various points throughout the document. Most notably, corruption is referenced in Article 15.6 which encourages international cooperation as well as national action to prevent transferred arms from falling prey to corrupt activities, and can provide a legal basis for action in this field. Additionally, Article 6.2 addresses the risk of illicit trafficking of conventional arms, 7.1 references UNTOC, and 11.5 is on arms diversion.

Despite these explicit references, there is scope for the ATT to address corruption in the arms trade more thoroughly and explicitly. The annual Conference of the State Parties is a good opportunity to influence development and implementation of the treaty.



## Gender and Corruption: The Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Gender issues have become increasingly central to concerns with peace and security since the early 2000s. The 2004 Convention Against Corruption is entirely gender blind, meaning it does not consider how men and women might be affected differently by corruption. This is despite requirements on the part of the international community to mainstream a gender perspective across all UN activities. These requirements derive from the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and the Women Peace and Security Agenda, all of which were adopted or established prior to 2004. There are a number of gender-related normative frameworks, legal agreements and strategies that are relevant to gender, security, and corruption.

Corruption has a range of gender dynamics that produce different experiences, perceptions, risks of exposure, and impacts for different groups of women, men, girls, boys, and sexual and gender minorities. Several frameworks are outlined below to help states in their efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. They address gender inequality, sexual and gender-based violence, and violence against women. These are crucial for fostering anti-corruption, integrity, and accountability among defence and security actors.

### The Women, Peace and Security Agenda

The adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 in 2000 marked the start of what is known as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, which is a significant global normative framework on gender equality and empowerment of women. This Agenda acknowledged the relationship between the security of women and the security of states and comprises ten resolutions that set out a normative framework for action to address the adverse effects of conflict on women, to promote their participation in peace processes, and more broadly to promote gender equality. While the agenda is framed under 'women' rather than gender, the agenda itself is the core site of advancing gender mainstreaming across international peace and security issues. By the end of 2022, 104 countries and territories adopted National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security to demonstrate implementation of the agenda, especially by elaborating their gender mainstreaming strategies. National Action Plans are the main framework for country-level commitments and can be used by advocates to push for change.

Much of the agenda focuses on conflict and post-conflict contexts, defence and security issues, and promotion of peacebuilding and sustainable peace. None of the resolutions specifically refer to corruption, but some do refer to security sector reform:

- Resolution 1820 (2008) connects protection from violence to security sector reform efforts (para.10).
- Resolution 1888 (2009) acknowledges the importance of addressing sexual violence in security sector reform (para.2) and indicates the need for expertise on sexual violence in conflict to be integrated in security reforms (para.8).
- There are additional UN documents that reinforce this connection: Security Council Resolution 2151 (2014) and Resolution 2553 (2020) acknowledge the importance of women's participation in all stages of security sector reform, and the 2021 Report of the UN Secretary-General on WPS included attention to women's representation in the defence sector.

# PART 2

# PLAN IT!

Top ten tips for a successful advocacy strategy	38
<b>TOOL 1</b> The advocacy cycle	39
<b>STEP 1:</b> Understanding the problem	40
<b>TOOL 2</b> Problem tree	41
<b>TOOL 3</b> Political economy analysis	42
<b>TOOL 4</b> Conflict analysis	43
<b>STEP 2:</b> Setting the direction: Establishing aim and SMART objectives	47
<b>STEP 3:</b> Action plan - targets, tactics, types of strategies, messages, communications and activity plan	50
<b>TOOL 5</b> Power mapping	53
<b>STEP 4</b> Implementation	56
<b>TOOL 6</b> Risk categories	60



## PART 2 - PLAN IT!

This chapter provides you with a comprehensive guide to planning a successful advocacy strategy. It begins with tips and guidance on how to clearly define the problem you aim to tackle, with a series of tools to assist in this critical first step. You'll learn how to create a detailed action plan, covering targets, tactics, strategies and messages. It also includes steps for effective implementation and methods for evaluating your plan's success through monitoring and evaluation. By following the steps in this chapter, you'll be equipped with the essential tools to develop and execute an impactful advocacy strategy.

<b>TOOL 1: The advocacy cycle</b>	Illustrating the systematic process for effectively planning, implementing, and evaluating advocacy efforts.	Page 39
<b>TOOL 2: Problem tree</b>	Identify and analyse the root causes and effects of a central issue to develop targeted advocacy strategies.	Page 41
<b>TOOL 3: Political economy analysis</b>	Examine the political, economic, and social factors influencing an issue to inform strategic advocacy planning.	Page 42
<b>TOOL 4: Conflict analysis</b>	Assess the dynamics, stakeholders, and underlying causes of a conflict to develop informed advocacy strategies.	Page 43
<b>TOOL 5: Power mapping</b>	Identify key stakeholders and their influence to strategically target advocacy efforts.	Page 53
<b>TOOL 6: Risk categories</b>	Classify potential risks to anticipate and mitigate challenges in advocacy efforts.	Page 60

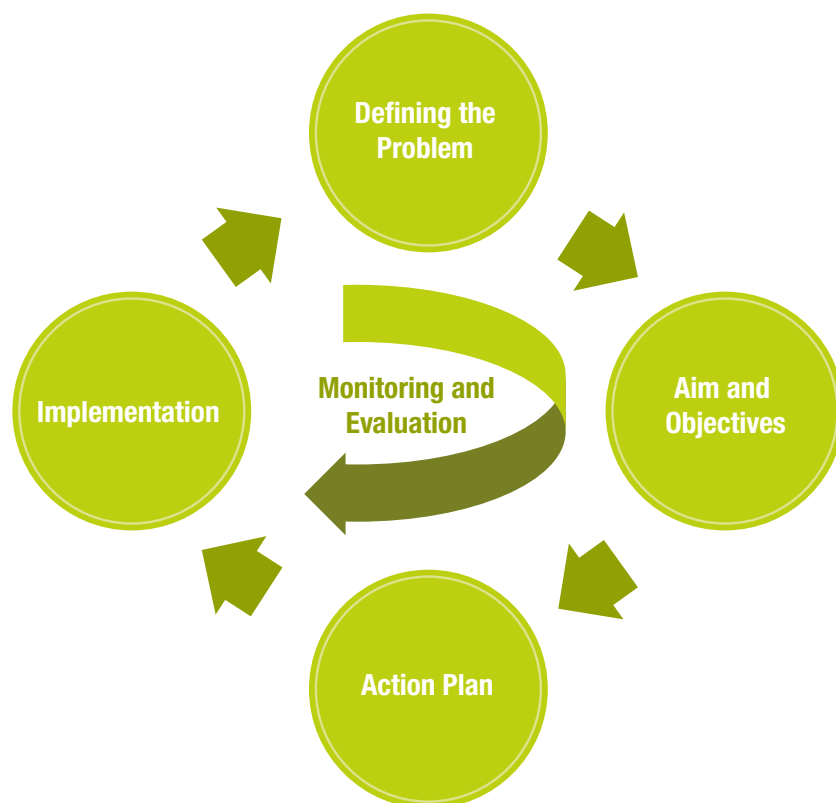
### TOP TEN TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY STRATEGY

[Annex I](#) contains a one-page template for building your own advocacy strategy.

- 1. Define your vision:** Clearly outline your long-term goals and aspirations.
- 2. Grasp the problem and solutions:** Understand the issue at hand and identify potential remedies.
- 3. Assess the external landscape:** Analyse the surrounding context and factors influencing your cause.
- 4. Harness internal resources:** Recognise your organisation's strengths and capabilities.
- 5. Strategise your actions:** Plan your approach by setting aims, objectives, outcomes, activities, and measurable indicators, including a plan for what to do in case of failure, and in case of success, next steps.
- 6. Conduct thorough research:** Investigate both the problem and possible solutions to inform your advocacy efforts.
- 7. Craft compelling messages:** Develop key messages and policy recommendations tailored to your audience's knowledge level. The key message pyramid in [Annex II](#) is a helpful way to visualise how one consistent overall message can be tailored to different audiences.
- 8. Employ diverse tactics:** Utilise a range of methods such as digital campaigns, lobbying, and media engagement, ensuring they complement each other and are adapted to your objectives and audience.
- 9. Execute your plan:** Implement your planned activities effectively and efficiently.
- 10. Monitor and evaluate:** Continuously assess the progress of your strategy's implementation and make necessary adjustments for maximum impact.

## TOOL 1 THE ADVOCACY CYCLE

### Blueprint for change: developing your strategy



Advocacy and campaigning against corruption in the defence and security sector is not merely a tactic or a singular event; it's a comprehensive set of activities aimed at realising your organisation's vision for change. Effective advocacy should leverage all organisational strengths, engage key stakeholders, take advantage of windows of opportunity, and evolve over time.

It's crucial to carefully consider what you aim to achieve, break down objectives into manageable goals, and structure activities into a cohesive and impactful plan. This involves determining the desired outcomes, identifying responsible parties, establishing timelines, and implementing mechanisms for tracking progress. Flexibility is essential to adapt to changing circumstances. This breakdown in manageable steps is crucial when advocating in the defence & security sector as it is often fast-changing and operates in the shadows. It's essential to make sure you understand the problem you need to tackle and that you have clear influencing pathways that will allow for setbacks and quick changes, while remaining safe.

**To achieve success in advocating for change in the defence and security sector, you will need to:**

- 1. Know what you want to change:** Identify the desired change. Clearly define what aspects of corruption in the defence sector you aim to address.
- 2. Know how you can make that change:** Determine your strategies. Identify effective approaches for achieving the desired change, such as policy advice, outreach to those who have influence, national advocacy, and state-to-state advocacy.
- 3. Know who can make that change:** Identify key actors. Recognise individuals or groups with the power to enact change.
- 4. Know how to influence them:** Develop influencing tactics. Devise strategies to persuade and influence key stakeholders.

Carefully crafting your vision is key: Outline what changes you're aiming for and establish clear goals, desired outcomes, and ways to measure success. Identify potential allies, select appropriate methods and activities, and establish mechanisms for monitoring progress and reassessing assumptions. Flexibility, continuous learning, and a readiness to take calculated risks are essential for developing impactful advocacy strategies.

## STEP 1 – Understanding the problem

The first step in developing your advocacy and campaigning strategy is to clearly define the problem you aim to tackle. This involves analysing the context and the issue thoroughly and drawing insights from reliable evidence. Be as precise as possible. What exactly is the issue? What needs to be changed or improved? What potential solutions exist?

### Here are some questions and points to consider when defining the problem:

- Seek strong and unequivocal evidence, grounding your analysis in reliable sources.
- What evidence do we currently have, and what additional information do we need to gather?
- Examine the current context thoroughly. For example, if you are working on conflict issues, do a conflict analysis, a gender analysis and a political economy analysis.
- Identify prevalent problems and violations of rights. Chapter 1, 'Understand it' can be used for reference.
- Investigate the underlying causes.
- Determine who holds responsibility and identify the key stakeholders.
- Where can the system be changed – and where is it resistant to change?

### Understanding the problem – a real-world example:

Our 2020 research, "The Missing Element: Addressing Corruption in West Africa's Security Sector Reform," explores the main enablers of defence and security corruption in West Africa and makes the case for stronger anti-corruption measures in SSR efforts in the region.

**Before starting the research, we first sought to understand the problem.**

#### Our approach involved:

- ✓ Understanding the intersection of corruption, conflict, and instability in the region, particularly within ongoing SSR processes.
- ✓ Identifying five key corruption risks threatening SSR effectiveness.
- ✓ Proposing solutions such as tailored SSR assessments and integrating anti-corruption measures into SSR strategies.
- ✓ Drawing evidence from various sources including the Government Defence Integrity Index, literature reviews, and interviews with stakeholders.
- ✓ Engaging key stakeholders including West African SSR policymakers, the UN Inter-Agency SSR Task Force, and commissions from the AU and ECOWAS.
- ✓ Emphasising a comprehensive approach that extends beyond enhancing security forces' effectiveness.

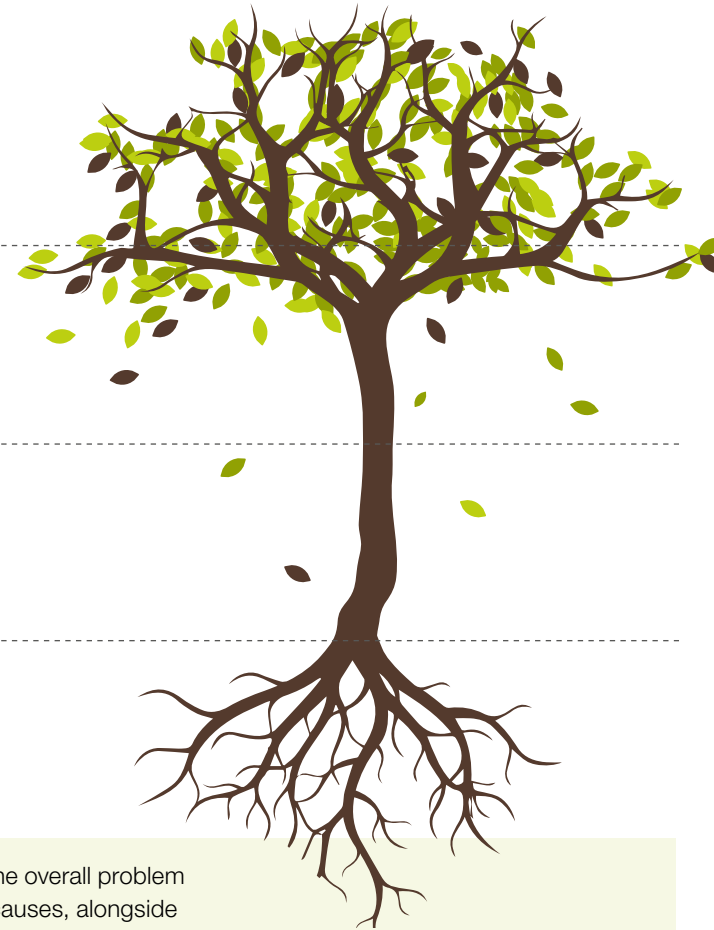
## TOOL 2 **PROBLEM TREE**

The country is vulnerable of attack of insurgencies;  
people are not adequately protected

Funds are diverted from essential functions, including  
defence and security; the army is ill-equipped or soldiers  
are shown in the staff lists but they don't exist

Funds are thrown at "fixing" the problem to tight  
deadlines, leading to the need to hire subcontractors  
that themselves hire corrupt individuals

Corruption across the defence sector remains  
unaddressed



There are '**problem tree analysis**' tools that can help you define the overall problem and the specific causes and impacts. Through your analysis of the causes, alongside a context analysis and conflict analysis, you can identify the specific solutions to the problem and therefore define your goal and objectives.



## TOOL 3 POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS

### 1. What is PEA and why is it useful?

Political economy analysis (PEA) is a process that aims to identify and explain the underlying power dynamics that help or hinder reforms in a specific political context. This can help you and your team better understand why things work in a certain way, who holds power and how they are using it. This knowledge is an essential part of building a realistic path to change and pinpointing the individuals and groups to best engage. PEA makes use of a wide array of concepts, questions, and analytical tools to systematically study the political context and unveil the main drivers of change.

**The main goal of PEA is to identify the following, as well as to explain the dynamic interdependencies between them:**

- 1) **Structural and contextual factors:** such as history, geopolitics, any socioeconomic issues the country/region is facing, government(s) spending and any other unique challenges that shape the political and institutional environment. Please note that these factors are often constantly unfolding and hard to influence.
- 2) **Formal and informal processes or 'rules of the game':** which refer to how 'real processes' work or how actors engage with each other, including through any formal and informal systems. On the formal side these can include constitutional and legal frameworks, while informal systems include norms, social traditions, values, and any patterns of behaviour in society. These can be hard to discern for anyone outside of the studied context.
- 3) **Key stakeholders or actors and their incentives, ideas or beliefs:** identify the agents of change and what motivates their behaviour. These agents can include individuals, organisations or groups that have power to not only act on, but also influence decisions – essentially everything that translates to 'political will'. This level of analysis can also uncover stakeholders who are persistently excluded from political processes and bargaining mechanisms. It can also reveal previously covert networks of influence among those with power. It is key to understand that both the agents and their incentives can be affected by current events and changing circumstances.

### 2. How do you conduct PEA?

Depending on the specific project requirement, budget, timeline and team expertise, PEA can vary from a low-cost rapid task to a more in-depth research-based study. The process can be a planned, focused activity or an ongoing task constantly developing and informing work in real-time.

However, there are three key questions that PEA will usually address:

- (1) **What** is the underlying issue that you are trying to address?
- (2) **Why** are things this way?
- (3) **How** can you address this issue?

In-depth analysis will usually start with a definition of the top-level issue or question that requires further investigation, focusing on both long-term drivers of change and short-term variables. The next step is setting the scope of the exercise. Whether that specific issue is at a global macro level, sectoral, local, or organisational level, to successfully unpack, it is essential to define the focus of the analysis. This is followed by studying the different factors as described above including organisational culture, formal and informal rules and processes, stakeholders' interests, and incentives, as well as beliefs. At every level of the analysis, it is crucial to challenge your own assumptions and use triangulation to avoid confirmation bias.

### 3. How PEA can support corruption risks assessments

PEAs can help the understanding of corruption risks in specific contexts by complementing data from corruption risk assessments. Combining these analytic approaches helps the design and implementation of mitigation measures that consider prevailing political and power dynamics, identifying opportunities to address corruption risks, and highlighting key stakeholders who may support or oppose interventions.

**“The overarching goal of the CRAs is to map *what and how* corruption risks [...] and the goal [of] the PEAs was to understand *why this happens*.”**

*Basel Institute on Governance*

## TOOL 4 CONFLICT ANALYSIS

Conflict analysis is a tool used to understand the underlying issues and dynamics of conflicts, helping to inform international and national interventions and minimise potential harm in initiatives like defence governance reform. This means a step-by-step process as follows:

### STEP 1 Analysis - understanding the context the organisation is operating in

#### Typical analysis categories include:

**Institutions:** political institutions and traditions; access to decision-making and shaping; governance arrangements; women's formal representation in parliament, police, military etc.

**Power:** forms of, relationships to, experiences of, for example:

- Visible power: held by those in official positions or recognised authority.
- Hidden power: held by those who seek to hide and protect their interests, privilege and authority.
- Invisible power: dominant ideologies, values and social norms that shape peoples' expectations and behaviour.

**Interests:** geopolitics, private sector/business.

**Actors:** interests and positions of protagonists, belligerents, pro-peace actors, feminist movement/s, non-violent movements, influential figures.

**Regulation:** legal frameworks and policies; formal status of women.

**Resources:** natural resources, and control of resources.

**Conflict and peace factors and drivers (connectors and dividers):** systemic political exclusion, economic inequalities, forms of power, militarism, notions of masculinity and femininity, group dominance, gender-based discrimination; prevailing social-cultural ideas and norms of relevance to conflict prevention, resolution, and management; sub-national/local mediation including women's roles.

**Catalysts of conflict and violence (predictable, unpredictable/unanticipated):** coups, election violence, hyper-masculinities, disasters, arms proliferation, violence against women as part of group grievance-revenge cycles.

**Dynamics:** means and forms of conflict, intensity, duration, types, and prevalence of violence (structural and physical), gendered dimensions and understandings of vulnerability, in/dignity, humiliation.

**Impacts of violence:** displacement, weapons proliferation, increase in gender-based violence.

**Interventions:** Reform processes, past agreements, peacekeeping, SSR, Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration programmes, etc.

**Options and scenarios:** pathways, strategies, feasibility, inclusion entry points to elevate legitimacy of civil society actors, accountable reformers.

**STEP 2****Reflection - understanding the interaction between interventions and the context**

It's crucial to understand the impact of interventions by organisations and individuals both on the context and vice versa. When analysing your intervention against the context in a conflict sensitive way, a key element to look out for is any shift in power or interests that the intervention will create, or is dependent on, and what impact these changes will have on exacerbating or reducing conflicts. Central to this step is the 'do no harm' principle, which involves identifying elements that might escalate conflicts or help bridge divides. The goal is to ensure that any action taken supports civil society at the sub-national and national levels, helping address root causes of conflict without making the situation worse.

**STEP 3****Action - act upon this knowledge to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts on conflict**

The final step is putting in place measures and actions (including non-action) to avoid reinforcing power and conflict dynamics, and interventions that narrow or close spaces for inclusive peace and security. A detailed risk assessment is integral to identifying potential and actual negative impacts – and identifying ways to mitigate or avoid the risks and impacts. These must include a mix of external and internal risks – environment/context and within the organisation itself.

**Q****Don't forget to ask these questions:**

- What is the security and conflict situation in the country?
- Are particular groups affected – or implicated – more than others? How?
- Is there any evidence of the role of corruption (in any sector) in relation to conflict and insecurity? And of the role of defence sector corruption/poor defence governance specifically?

## Gender analysis

Gender analysis helps organisations understand how gender roles, relations, identities, and power structures influence various issues. It involves examining differences in gender roles, needs, and opportunities to address inequalities and promote inclusion. Adopting a 'do no harm' approach mitigates risks and enhances program effectiveness. The aim is to promote gender equality and human rights, however there is limited evidence on gender's relationship with corruption and anti-corruption strategies. Developing gender analysis enhances understanding and supports evidence-based practices. Different types of gender analysis, such as situational analysis and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) analysis, are used to address various situations and needs. They help ensure that programmes consider diverse experiences and challenges faced by different people and promote inclusivity.

**Gender analysis approaches vary based on resources and expertise. Simple methods exist to start, with five key guidelines:**

1. Recognise diverse experiences of women, men, girls, boys, and sexual and gender minorities.
2. Employ an intersectional approach considering intersecting identities, such as race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, and disabilities.
3. Combine quantitative and qualitative data for comprehensive analysis.
4. Use participatory methods to involve different groups in project design.
5. Integrate gender analysis throughout project phases for effectiveness.

## Q

### Don't forget to ask these questions:

- How does gender shape the experiences and impacts of conflict and/or defence sector corruption in your context? (Are women, men and sexual and gender minorities affected differently by policies/ practices/experience of these things on the ground?)
- To what extent are men, women and sexual and gender minorities involved in responding and finding solutions to issues of corruption and conflict? (Are the particular experiences of different genders already on the government's and civil society's agenda? Are women's voices reflected in public debate and civil society initiatives?)
- Are there current opportunities (in policy, legislation, public and civil society initiatives) to advance the participation of women and minorities and address issues of the gendered impact of conflict and corruption?



Once you have a gender analysis in place, programming can be adjusted to help identify and mitigate challenges in the five following domains:

1. **Access** to resources, assets, opportunities, services, benefits and infrastructure, and how gendered division of labour and gender roles affect access.
2. **Decision-making** at individual, household, community, societal, and governmental levels.
3. **Participation** in social, economic and political affairs and the ability to influence these domains.
4. **Systems** that enable or constrain promotion of gender equality and social inclusion, including institutions, laws and policies.
5. **Wellbeing** and safety from sexual and gender-based violence, other forms of violence, and all forms of stigma and discrimination.

These five domains offer a clear thematic focus to help organisations mitigate harm against project stakeholders and identify ways to promote gender equality and social inclusion. By thinking about these domains, you can also enhance anti-corruption advocacy strategies by ensuring they include consideration of the gender dynamics affecting access, decision making, participation, systems, and well-being.

Two models, **Needs, Access, Participation, Resources and Impact (NAPRI)** and **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)**, cater to different organisational capacities.

### Needs, Access, Participation, Resources and Impact (NAPRI) analysis

NAPRI is a model [developed by DCAF](#) to support a simple gender analysis. It focuses on five areas: needs, access, participation, resources and impact. Organisations can use the information collected within this tool to evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of interventions and policies within specific contexts. It can also be a tool for participatory gender analysis, where key stakeholders and project participants support data collection and analysis.

### Country profile Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) analysis

GESI analysis adopts an intersectional approach to gender assessment. This approach ensures that diverse individuals, including women, men, girls, boys, and sexual and gender minorities, are taken into account. It recognizes that these groups are not homogenous entities and have varied experiences and needs.

GESI analysis aims to:

- Promote gender equality by challenging norms and expectations and addressing power imbalances in structures, institutions, societies, communities, and households.
- Enhance social inclusion by recognising the diversity within each group, considering factors such as age, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, beliefs, and socio-cultural contexts (intersectionality).
- Achieving these goals involves improving understanding of gender inequality and social exclusion in the context of corruption, compiling lessons learned from GESI initiatives in anti-corruption strategies, and identifying opportunities to enhance GESI in anti-corruption efforts.
- More information on how to conduct a country profile GESI analysis in anti-corruption programming on defence & security [can be found here](#).

## STEP 2 – Setting the direction: Establishing aim and SMART objectives

Advocacy aims for impactful change. Once you have clearly understood the issue, the next step is to determine the specific change your organisation aims to achieve. This clear goal forms the foundation of your advocacy strategy. Without a well-defined goal, the strategy may falter, leading to inefficient use of resources.

Organisations often have a specific vision and mandate that define, and may limit, their actions. Setting a clear, overarching goal guides your advocacy efforts toward long-term change. Success hinges on establishing clear, achievable goals that align with your strategic aims.

In contrast to goals, objectives are measurable and tangible milestones that are built upon clearly identifiable actions. While a goal represents the destination of the journey, such as achieving a society free from corruption or a defence sector without impunity, an objective marks a milestone reached along the way, such as the amendment of a law on access to information.

To assess the usefulness and feasibility of an objective, a set of five criteria can guide your objective-setting process. Employing the method of developing 'SMART objectives' - those that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound - can ensure the quality of your objectives and, consequently, your strategy.

**As a rule, you can be bold in your vision and goal, but to increase the effectiveness of your campaign, make each of your objectives SMART.**

### **S**PECIFIC

Clear and unambiguous, indicating exactly what is expected, why it is important and who is involved.

### **M**EASURABLE

Include specific criteria for measuring progress.

### **A**CHIEVABLE

Realistically achievable within a given timeframe and with the available resources.

### **R**ELEVANT

Address the scope of the problem and feature appropriate steps that can be implemented within a specific period of time.

### **T**IME-BOUND

Include a specific timeframe for achieving the objective.

## SMART Objectives Example:

The advocacy team of the NGO 'Anti-Corruption Global' (ACG) has recently started working on anti-corruption in the defence sector and is developing an advocacy strategy.

The team's starting point for an objective is the aim to "achieve stronger anti-corruption legislation", which will now undergo the SMART objective-setting process.

Factor	Definition	Example
<b>S</b> PECIFIC	<p>Narrow down what exactly it is you want to achieve and who within your team will be working on achieving it.</p> <p>The more detailed the objective is, the better.</p>	<p>"Stronger anti-corruption legislation" is too broad to be a tangible objective, so ACG decides to narrow this down to a specific policy area (access to information), add the sector specification (defence), and limit the objective to a specific area within the sector (procurement):</p> <p>The objective is to improve access to information on defence procurement.</p>
<b>M</b> EASURABLE	<p>Objectives need to be quantifiable. Making an objective measurable means to decide on which data indicates that the objective has been achieved: is it the publication of two reports, or three?</p>	<p>To make the objective quantifiable, ACG decides to specify in how many countries they are aiming to achieve change:</p> <p>The objective is to improve access to information on defence procurement in five countries.</p>
<b>A</b> CHIEVABLE	<p>For an objective to be achievable, it needs to lie within the scope of what your organisation or team can deliver.</p> <p>This means looking inwards: What resources and skills can you put into achieving the objectives? What is lacking, and what can you source externally?</p>	<p>After carefully reflecting on budget, internal team capacities, other competing priorities, alliances and networks, as well as the situations on the ground in the target countries, ACG discover that aiming to achieve legislative change in five countries might not be technically feasible. They decide to narrow it down to three countries:</p> <p>The objective is to improve access to information on defence procurement in three countries.</p>

Factor	Definition	Example
<p><b>R</b> ELEVANT</p>	<p>Several factors determine if an objective is relevant.</p> <p>Firstly, internal factors: Does it align with the overall mission, values and vision of the organisation? Does it help to advance strategic priorities? Is it an interest of the team?</p> <p>Next, the external factors: Is it addressing a crucial gap? Is there public demand for this change? Does it have momentum that can be built on? What would the impact be if the result is achieved?</p>	<p>After consultation with external partners from civil society in the three target countries, ACG learns that lack of whistleblower protection in the defence sector is a higher public concern, due to multiple scandals in recent years.</p> <p>There is a larger coalition to advocate for change on whistleblower protection and the issue seems more relevant. AGC decide to change the target policy area to whistleblower protection:</p> <p>The objective is to strengthen whistleblower protection in the defence sector in three countries.</p>
<p><b>T</b> IME-BOUND</p>	<p>Making an objective time-bound means setting a deadline for its achievement. This can align with the overall timeframe of a strategy, but can also be longer or shorter.</p>	<p>ACG is developing an advocacy strategy for its work on the defence sector for the next year, but realises that this goal is unlikely attainable in that time frame given the resources and political landscape. They decide that a realistic deadline for achievement is three years:</p> <p>The objective is to strengthen whistleblower protection in the defence sector in three countries within the next three years.</p>

## STEP 3 – Action plan: Targets, tactics, types of strategies, messages, communications and activity plan

As advocacy is an ongoing **process rather than a one-off event**, the key to successful advocacy lies in crafting an 'advocacy strategy' that is executed over time with creativity and perseverance.

### Target Analysis

Power analysis, or stakeholder mapping and prioritisation of targets is an essential step in the development of your action plan. After properly understanding the context of a situation, the next step is now to identify the targets of your advocacy work. A target analysis is a helpful tool to identify the key decision-makers and influencers that need to be targeted to achieve change on your objective(s).

Advocates that are familiar with the term 'stakeholder mapping' might ask what the difference is between that and target analysis. In contrast to stakeholder mapping, which identifies all actors involved in a cause, regardless of their relevance to the topic and their position, a target analysis identifies the key decisionmakers that can bring about the desired change, and the people and entities that can influence decisionmakers to take actions towards change.

**Decisionmakers in defence, security and governance can be:** Heads of state; heads of government; defence, security and foreign ministers; ministers of the interior and social development; defence company executives; private military and security company executives; high-ranking military officials; and heads of federal government institutions where applicable.

**Influencers in defence, security and governance can be:** Journalists/media; researchers / academia; defence industry and trade associations; defence lobbying groups; opinion leaders; civil society organisations and networks; veteran associations; faith-based groups; community leaders; and community associations.

For a successful target analysis, you need to understand:

#### The system

Understand the decision-making process behind the change that you want to make.

#### The people

Learn who the key individuals are that you need to target.

#### The access

Find out how accessible the key decisionmakers are from your position, for example how easy it is to be heard by them.

#### The intermediaries

For those individuals who you do not have access to, identify who has influence over them to identify intermediate channels of influence.



### Is your target the right target?

In the realm of defence and security, hierarchies, rankings, and decision-making processes vary significantly from one country to another. It's essential to invest time in researching and understanding who your true target audience is. Take into account the intricacies of each context to identify the key stakeholders and decision-makers that hold sway over your objectives. By pinpointing the right audience, you can tailor your approach effectively and maximize the impact of your efforts.

### Carrying out your target analysis

First, map out all the individuals who can influence the course of this strategy:

- Who can bring about change?
- Who are they willing to help?
- Who will be potential blockers?
- Who will be your champions and your objectors?
- Who has the power and authority?

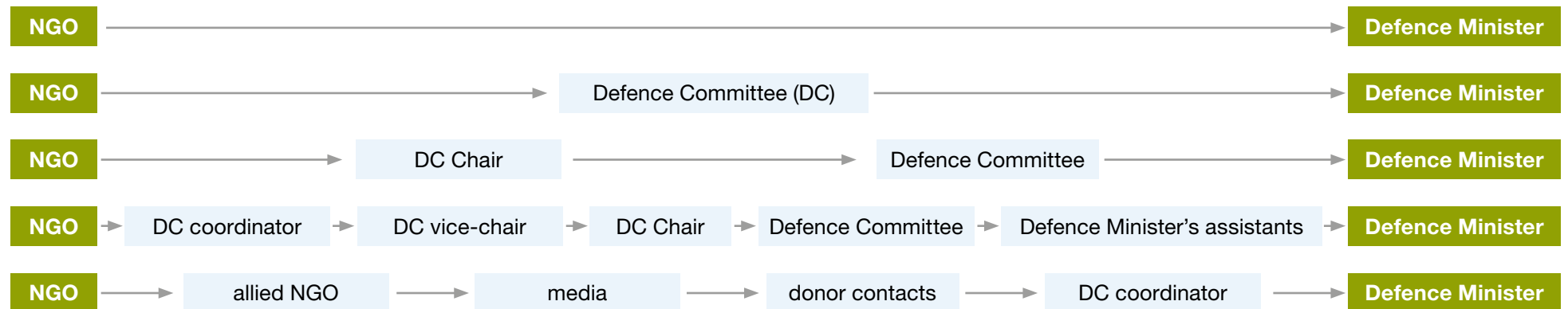
Depending on the country you are working in, or the timing, targets could be the parliamentarians that are part of the defence committee, the minister of trade or the minister of defence, prime minister or president, or the ambassador representative in an international forum.

**These are the DECISIONMAKERS or PRIMARY TARGETS.**

Next, ask yourself if you have direct access to these individuals. If not, what will be your channels of influence? Peer pressure or state-to-state pressure could be a very effective channels, or the media, academics, law associations, regional and international bodies.

**These are the INFLUENCERS or SECONDARY TARGETS.**

In some cases, you might have direct access to your key target(s). If you don't, you will need to identify who has influence over your target and break down those channels of influence until you have identified a feasible entry point. Often, there will not only be one way to gain their attention, and you will be able to activate multiple channels of influence in parallel.



## Power analysis

A power analysis helps to identify the key allies and key opponents to your objective. It is a mapping of stakeholders distinguished by their level of influence, or power, over your objective, and the likelihood of them supporting you in achieving it.

To conduct a power analysis, you will need to first list all stakeholders in relation to your objective: Who will be affected by the change you are aiming to achieve, and how?

Based on the knowledge you gain about each stakeholder and your own objective, distinguish between those who you assume to be in favour and those who are likely to be in opposition of your work. This will decide their distribution on the horizontal axis of the power analysis, as illustrated below.

Next, you will need to map the stakeholders according to the amount of power they have to assert their interests. After all stakeholders have been allocated, the power analysis can help you to identify who are potential allies – which will be those in support of your position – and who will be potential blockers.

You might want to consider:

**Allies:** keep them informed and equip them with resources, such as data and briefings.

**Blockers:** monitor, but do not waste resources on engaging with them.

**Undecided:** this is where you should focus all your effort.



## TOOL 5 **POWER MAPPING**

Once you have mapped out your targets, the next step is to understand their power. You can do this by analysing the level of influence of your targets and their position towards your objectives. Are they supportive of your calls, or are they likely to oppose them?

High Influence	Medium Influence	Low influence
Blocker	Undecided	Neutral champion

### Devise your influencing strategy and decide your tactics

Examples of **influencing strategies** include:

<b>Agenda setting</b>	<p>Bringing an issue to the attention of policymakers and putting it on the agenda. This could be shifting the terms of debate on important issues of public concern or raising a neglected issue up the policy agenda.</p> <p>For example, put the corruption implications of the activities of private military and security companies on the agenda of the working group that regulates them.</p>
<b>Skills enhancement</b>	<p>Empowering activists by strengthening and supporting the capacity of advocates and groups to have their voice heard, participate in decision making and secure their rights.</p> <p>For example, organising workshops to understand the nexus of corruption and conflict and what it can be done.</p>
<b>Awareness raising</b>	<p>Directing attention to facts, data and other compelling evidence around an issue that requires solutions.</p> <p>For example, writing a report about how corruption in military operations impacts security. Other examples of awareness raising are media work and social media campaigning.</p>
<b>Knowledge building, policy development or technical assistance</b>	<p>Building the capacity of state institutions to engage and adopt institutional reforms.</p> <p>For example, producing a policy paper on undue influence by the defence private sector, making submissions to multilaterals or to parliaments, or sending a position paper to national or regional authorities.</p>

<b>Grassroots community building</b>	Supporting, testing and scaling up development solutions – often from the grassroots.  For example, Transparency International Defence and Security's network in West Africa, which works with local organisations to address corruption in the region.
<b>Convening powers</b>	Convening stakeholders to enable dialogue and exchange of practices and expertise.  For example, convening a roundtable discussion of experts in EU on Security Sector Reform.
<b>Activism/mobilising people's power</b>	Supporting social movements and civil society, women's rights and youth organisations.

Examples of **influencing tactics** include:

<b>Research and policy development</b>	Developing and stating an organisational position on an issue, including publishing research and policy papers, and recommending what should be done to address it.
<b>Lobbying and direct advocacy</b>	Building relations, organising and attending meetings, writing lobbying letters or other direct communication with decisionmakers and influential people in government, business and other institutions and organisations.
<b>Convening dialogues</b>	Convening and facilitating engagement and dialogue with key stakeholders and decisionmakers in a change process.
<b>Supporting community engagement on issues</b>	Critical awareness raising activities, participatory and shared learning events.
<b>Supporting women and men to become change-makers and influencers themselves</b>	For example, through leadership development programmes.
<b>Communications and media</b>	Developing powerful messaging and narratives, engaging with and using local, national and international media and communication outlets, social and digital media and other communication channels.

<b>Alliances and network building</b>	Supporting, funding, convening and participating in civil society and women's networks and social movements to achieve common goals.
<b>Supporting civil society organisations</b>	Providing core funding and technical advice and capacity building.
<b>Mobilisation and people's power campaign</b>	Organising public rallies and events, email petitions and mass social media actions, or mobilising celebrities and other external influential people.
<b>Supporting community engagement on issues</b>	Awareness raising, transformative education, community organising and leadership development.



## Finding your target audience

A target audience is a group of people whose interests, objectives and/or characteristics align with or are similar to yours. Based on this, they are likely to be receptive of your messages and will be likely to engage with your work.

A target audience and a target play different roles in advocacy. A target is someone you aim to involve in your cause, while your primary aim with a target audience is to ensure they hear your message.

By defining your target audience, you will get to know them and can tailor your strategy, tone and content of the message. This gives insight into who your target audience is, and how to understand what they want you to solve.



## STEP 4 – IMPLEMENTATION

The type of advocacy activities you undertake will depend on your resources, the context and the window of opportunity. To select activities that will most efficiently lead to impact, assess your organisation's own resources and capabilities, the context, the upcoming opportunities and lessons from previous experiences. Then choose the advocacy activities that fit your role, objectives and can more effectively reach your targets.

You might use a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) or some of these questions to guide your assessment:

- Which activities are going to deliver the most impact for the lowest investment?
- Which activities will add value?
- Which activities can be linked to the external opportunities to increase their impact?
- Which activities align with other organisational priorities?



**Advocating for change might require that you maintain a certain level of flexibility. When developing your action plan, be ready for instances where the political context changes and plan for that - you might need to pivot!**



You can choose from a range of activities from direct influence (lobbying) on the target, or other type of direct engagement with the authorities, such as writing letters, lobbying meetings, providing technical assistance or advice, or inviting officials to participate in events. You could also choose to engage with the public and undertake campaigning activities, like raising awareness, writing newsletters, organising stunts, marches, or activities in universities. Or you can use digital campaigning, such as targeted social media action, an online petition, or email outreach. Strategic communications and media work can also be used to reach to a broader group of people through press releases, opinion pieces, and blogs.

The “**DO IT**” chapter of the toolkit provides further details on implementation.

## Cross-cutting: Monitoring and Evaluation

A systematic approach to **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)** is critical to better adapt advocacy campaigns to a context as well as evidence how a campaign has brought about change.

MEL refers to the practices within a programme to:

- **Monitor** ongoing activities and progress against the planned objectives throughout implementation. This includes the systematisation of data collection, analysis, and reporting. Monitoring is in essence understanding what is happening.
- **Evaluate** the programme's overall outcomes or impact at a particular point in time, usually at the end or mid-way through a programme. Put simply, evaluation is understanding how change has happened or why it has not.
- **Learn** from programme's successes and failures, or more generally to provide upskilling opportunities across the team.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning are inherently interlinked:

- Continuous monitoring of activities allows for iterative learning within the programme.
- Data gathered via monitoring systems is often the starting point of an evaluator's assessment.
- The findings of an evaluation will often provide the basis for learning and monitoring systems within new projects.

### MEL and complexity

The wish to evidence a programme's work should be grounded in an acceptance of the complexity within which advocacy takes place. Fluid social, cultural, and political contexts mean that any attempt at certainty ("this change is all because of our work") must be left behind. MEL systems should not be presented as a means to measure "what really happened," nor as a tool to take credit with precision.

Instead, campaigners should consider the following when setting up their MEL systems:



#### Accept uncertainty

Evidence related to how a campaign or strategy has or has not achieved change will often be subjective rather than definitive, where some degree of uncertainty is inevitable. This may relate to the degree to how it has contributed to the change, or even if the change happened at all. As such, you should accept uncertainty by thinking probabilistically in your analysis, substantively consider alternative explanations and the role of other actors and interests within the given context, and gather as much robust data as possible.



#### Plan for unpredictability

Planning tools such as Theories of Change, while useful at making a programme's logic explicit, often assume overly linear causal paths, an overly static socio-political context, and an overly simple advocacy field. Campaigners should, instead, design MEL systems with flexible, iterative, deliberative processes that challenge notions about how change happens.



#### Avoid 'root cause' thinking

Most advocacy takes place in contexts that make results unpredictable and in which the level of control that a single actor or group of actors can exert over the situation is highly limited. Theories of change and other planning approaches that assume a predictable course and that overestimate the influence of an individual actor can miss essential analysis of how change might happen. Clear answers, certain judgments, and simple tools are appealing, but they ultimately are not going to result in good representations of reality, nor will they provide the knowledge advocates need to develop their effectiveness.

## Monitoring

In 2014 Transparency International, developed and adopted a new approach to monitoring the impact of anti-corruption work. Designed to be sufficiently flexible to capture the different change processes, it consists of two complementary elements:

- 1. Impact matrix:** An analytical lens that is used regularly and systematically in projects and initiatives to monitor progress in achieving change that leads to a reduction in corruption, to understand how we can increase the effectiveness of our work and maximise impact.
- 2. Impact reviews:** In-depth impact assessments that zoom in on relevant trends and correlations identified through ongoing monitoring using the impact matrix. These impact reviews focus on particular areas and capture lessons that are not identified by monitoring. Impact reviews, which are few in number and detailed in their scope, apply a rigorous methodology to the subject area to test assumptions made by the Transparency International movement regarding anti-corruption changes and impacts.

## Evaluation

These are more in-depth, objective assessments, often focused on six key areas (often referred to as the OECD DAC criteria) of a programme: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of results:

- 1. Relevance:** Is the programme doing the right things?
- 2. Coherence:** How well does the programme fit?
- 3. Effectiveness:** Is the programme achieving its objectives?
- 4. Efficiency:** How well are resources being used?
- 5. Impact:** What difference does the programme make?
- 6. Sustainability:** Will the benefits of the programme last?

Evaluation meetings across teams and organisations are a great opportunity for coalitions and partners to discuss how outcomes were reached. These meetings can also shed light on areas that can improve partnerships, or be used to take informed strategic decisions at key milestones in your plans.

## Learning

Learning can be captured either by compiling the evaluation findings into reports, or learning logs, or by holding standalone learning activities such as sessions with key stakeholders. Learning can cover either thematic areas specific to the problem, any approaches that supported or hindered success (such as a specific way of engaging officials or communities), or any internal processes (such as cost savings or operational considerations). Whilst capturing learning is important, it is even more essential to use the learning in your following initiatives and should therefore make sure that learning is properly archived and disseminated.

## Risk Management

Advocating for any social, political or economic change is inherently risky. Any campaign that threatens the status quo will inevitably have opponents who may seek to discredit evidence, proposals, or the organisation. In some circumstances, the security and freedom of advocates themselves can be threatened. The defence and security sector is no exception, and its high levels of corruption and secrecy can be especially dangerous for advocates. Organisations should be aware of what risks they, their programme, and their employees may run into.

The Risk Management Framework can be a helpful tool to manage the safety of all staff as well as the successful implementation of a strategy. The role of the Framework is not to prevent or eliminate risk, but rather to help advocates avoid unnecessary or unacceptable risks by helping them identify and respond to those risks appropriately. Conversely, the Framework should also help a programme from being overly cautious, where advocates may fail to take advantage of opportunities to catalyse change due to excessive risk-aversion. For an example of risk management table go to [Annex III](#).



## TOOL 6 RISK CATEGORIES

Risk Categories	Guiding questions	Examples
Human Resources	Are there risks relating to personnel or staff management?	Insufficient staff resources resulting in high rate of turnover and loss of institutional knowledge.
IT Systems	Are there risks relating to the organisation's data and IT systems?	Hacking, data theft, or other type of third-party compromising of IT systems.
Legal	Are there risks relating to legal issues the organisation may be subjected to as retaliation for its work?	Libel for causing or potentially causing harm to an individual or company's reputation.
Political	Are there risks relating to government backlashes against the organisation and/or partners because of the campaign?	Restrictions on the ability to operate, or threats against continued license to operate.
Programmatic	Are there risks relating to the direct management of the project?	Poor risk identification structures may result in faulty programme management.
Reputation	Are there risks relating to reputational harm among your staff, constituencies, donors, partners, and other stakeholders?	Credibility risk if the campaign has little or no impact. Other examples: hostile media or public reactions; loss of community; damage to relationships with other civil society, national, and international NGOs.
Security	Are there direct security risks?	Surveillance (communications, physical), damage to assets and property, threats and intimidation, arbitrary detention or prosecution, violent attacks, kidnapping, or killing.
Strategy & Governance	Are there risks relating to the programme's overall strategy or governance?	Assumptions in the theory of change were incomplete, resulting in difficulty reaching the strategic goal of the programme.



# PART 3

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# DO IT!

<b>TOOL 7</b> Summary of advocacy and campaigning activities	63	<b>TOOL 13</b> Tips for writing a press release	78
Research and analysis for advocacy	64	<b>TOOL 14</b> 10 tips for talking with journalists	79
Engaging with officials	67	Young advocates	82
<b>TOOL 8</b> Tools for successful lobbying	68	<b>TOOL 15</b> Guiding principles with mobilising young activists	84
<b>TOOL 9</b> Key tips for effective lobbying	69	<b>TOOL 16</b> How to become a young anti-corruption advocate	85
<b>TOOL 10</b> Key tips for lobbying meetings with state officials	70	Expert outreach	88
<b>TOOL 11</b> Checklist for recommendations	71	<b>TOOL 17</b> Top tips for expert outreach	90
Campaigning and mobilising people power	72	Advocacy in difficult or hostile environments	91
Communications corner: Storytelling, inspiring stories, media and social media	73	<b>TOOL 18</b> Advocacy flowchart	94
<b>TOOL 12</b> Top tips for good messaging	75	Further resources	96

## PART 3 - DO IT!

This chapter is designed to help you put your advocacy into action with practice with practical, actionable advice. It covers the key aspects of executing your strategy, starting with the importance of research and analysis for effective advocacy. It also includes advice on engaging with officials and advice on how best to get your message across in lobbying meetings, as well as tips on crafting impactful communications. It also includes guidance on mobilising youth activists to amplify your efforts.

<b>TOOL 7: Summary of advocacy and campaigning activities</b>	Examples of different tactics and activities to influence policymakers and decisionmakers.	Page 63	<b>TOOL 13: Tips for writing your press release</b>	Tips for creating concise, engaging and newsworthy statements to communicate your advocacy messages to the media.	Page 78
<b>TOOL 8: Tools for successful lobbying</b>	Practical techniques and strategies to effectively influence policymakers and decisionmakers.	Page 68	<b>TOOL 14: 10 tips for talking to journalists</b>	Advice and dos and don'ts on effectively communicating your message and building relationships with journalists.	Page 79
<b>TOOL 9: Key tips for effective lobbying</b>	Advice and best practices to enhance the impact and efficiency of lobbying efforts.	Page 69	<b>TOOL 15: Guiding principles when mobilising young activists</b>	Strategies for engaging, empowering, and sustaining youth participation in advocacy efforts.	Page 84
<b>TOOL 10: Key tips for lobbying meetings with state officials</b>	Essential advice to improve the effectiveness and impact of your lobbying activities.	Page 70	<b>TOOL 16: How to become a young anti-corruption advocate</b>	Steps and strategies for youth to actively participate in and lead efforts against corruption.	Page 85
<b>TOOL 11: Checklist for recommendations</b>	Step by step checklist to ensure proposed advocacy actions are clear, actionable, and aligned with strategic goals.	Page 71	<b>TOOL 17: Top tips for expert outreach</b>	Advice on engaging and collaborating with experts to strengthen and support your advocacy initiatives.	Page 90
<b>TOOL 12: Risk categories</b>	Top tips for good messaging	Page 75	<b>TOOL 18: Advocacy flowchart</b>	The step-by-step process of planning, implementing, and evaluating advocacy efforts.	Page 94

## TOOL 7 SUMMARY OF ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING ACTIVITIES

Advocacy tactic	Advocacy activity	Purpose
Advocacy towards state officials	Lobbying   Meetings   Letter writing	One-on-one discussions with decisionmakers to influence them to change policy, practice or behaviour.
Awareness raising, communications and campaigning	Social media campaigns   Workshops and seminars   Blogs and articles   Press releases   Petitions   Public demonstrations	Enhance your organisation's credibility and legitimacy as an advocate by promoting its public image and visibility. Deliver persuasive, evidence-based and solution-oriented messages to the public, decisionmakers, stakeholders and those who influence them.
Communication for behaviour change	Background briefings   Opinion pieces   Blogs and featured articles   Targeted social media posts   Graphics to simplify complex topics	Create an enabling environment for effective implementation of policy changes to protect the rights of right holders and anti-corruption activists, including lawyers, journalists, as well as to allow their voices to be heard at the highest level.
Outreach, developing coalitions / alliances	Collaboration with like-minded groups   Events   Campaigns   Sharing strategies and intelligence	Generate organisational support and momentum behind issues, connect messengers with decisionmakers, and utilise diversity to achieve common advocacy goals.
Building a robust argument	Research and analysis   Publications   Policy development   Recommendations	Illustrate the underlying causes and solutions to a problem, and draw recommendations which can be addressed by decisionmakers and stakeholders.
Expert engagement	Convening groups of experts or community leaders   Building a network of thought leadership   Produce joint policy papers	Support the work of Transparency International's activists so their voices can be heard and acted on by decisionmakers and stakeholders. Expert voices may have the ability to influence state officials.
Social mobilisation	Produce human stories   Events   Organise roundtable discussions   Collaborative research	Engage multiple levels of society, including actors in ministries of defence, parliaments, law enforcement and those who are marginalised, as allies and partners in tackling corruption.
Conferences/ events	Attending major anti-corruption conferences like the International Anti-Corruption Conference Hosting side events or roundtables	Bring together a variety of stakeholders and decisionmakers to highlight the causes and identify the solutions to the issue, with follow-up that includes concrete and immediate action.

# RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS FOR ADVOCACY

Thorough research and credible evidence are essential for impactful advocacy against corruption in the defence and security sector. By understanding existing evidence and building upon it, activists can shape strategies that drive meaningful change. This section outlines how you can harness research to strengthen your advocacy efforts.

Advocacy strategies should be informed by existing evidence on effective ways to combat corruption. In the field of anti-corruption, there is increasing emphasis on building an evidence base.

Understanding what approaches work for combating corruption is difficult, especially in a sector like defence and security where the inherent secrecy and gaps in evidence make solutions such as strengthening anti-corruption measures and building integrity difficult to measure. However, these challenges are not insurmountable.

In the defence and security sector there is a small but growing evidence base for anti-corruption work. Over the last two decades, more experience of implementing anti-corruption measures has been accumulated, especially by those involved in defence and security reform. Below we provide links to some further resources with examples of successes and lessons learned from past work.

## Types of Research

### Primary Research:

Primary research entails gathering original data directly from the source. This involves firsthand information obtained directly from individuals who are directly involved or impacted by the issue at hand. If primary research is chosen, it is essential to determine whom to interview or survey, what questions to ask, and how to conduct the research. It's crucial that the selection of participants is broad and representative of the entire population, considering factors such as gender, age, household situation, and other pertinent characteristics to ensure accurate conclusions. Relying solely on the viewpoint of a single individual or a specific group should be avoided to maintain objectivity and comprehensiveness.

### Analysis:

Analysis involves delving into the gathered research, posing critical questions, and identifying patterns, themes, and discrepancies. This process enables us to distil the information into key findings and recommendations that can inform our advocacy efforts. While analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of our research, it's important to strike a balance between data collection, analysis, and actionable steps. It's easy to get caught up in gathering and analysing data without taking concrete action. Therefore, it's essential to ensure that we have gathered sufficient information to guide our actions without being overwhelmed by excessive data.

### Secondary Research:

Secondary research involves utilising existing sources of information that have been previously recorded. This type of research relies on second-hand information obtained from various sources such as websites, books, reports, consultations, statistics, or data compiled by other researchers. Often referred to as 'desk-based' research, secondary research offers a wealth of knowledge accessible through readily available resources. When conducting secondary research, it's imperative to identify reliable and credible sources. This may involve consulting reputable websites, research reports, or seeking recommendations from experts in the field. Familiarising oneself with the issue and the available sources facilitates staying updated on any changes or developments in the information landscape.

## What is the role of research in advocacy?

### Shift attitudes, norms, and behaviours:

- ✔ Understanding existing attitudes and norms: Conduct research to identify and comprehend prevalent attitudes, beliefs, and social/gender norms, including how they evolve over time.
- ✔ Identifying influences on behaviour change: Investigate factors that either facilitate or hinder shifts in behaviours and policy implementation.
- ✔ Spotlighting positive outliers: Identify and showcase examples of individuals or groups exhibiting positive behaviours that could inspire broader adoption or scale-up efforts.

### Setting the policy agenda and altering debate dynamics:

- ✔ Documenting issues and impacts: Document the problem at hand and its human/environmental repercussions.
- ✔ Proposing new perspectives: Present novel angles on familiar issues, highlighting hidden or neglected aspects to reshape public discourse.
- ✔ Building the case for change: Provide moral, legal, political, and practical arguments advocating for policy reform.
- ✔ Presenting viable alternatives: Offer evidence-based policy and practice alternatives that would be both effective and feasible to implement.

### Driving policy and practice change in government and the private sector:

- ✔ Highlighting human, gender, and environmental impacts: Showcase the real-life impacts of policies and practices through the experiences of local communities.
- ✔ Advocating for feasible alternatives: Demonstrate why proposed policy and practice alternatives are viable and likely to succeed.
- ✔ Addressing behaviour barriers: Identify and address behaviours that impede the effective implementation of policies.

### Empowering civil society voice and strategies:

- ✔ Contextual analysis and trend assessment: Conduct research to analyse the socio-political context and identify emerging trends.
- ✔ Evaluation of advocacy strategies: Assess the effectiveness of various advocacy approaches to determine what works and what doesn't.
- ✔ Knowledge sharing and learning: Disseminate findings from research and practical experiences to strengthen civil society advocacy efforts, fostering continuous learning and improvement.

Using evidence-based research to support your arguments is a key way to persuade others to support your cause. Such evidence makes your case for change stronger to both decision-makers and supporters. Data shows that using insider advocacy strategies, such as lobbying and participation in policy forums, and backing them up with facts is important but is not the only way to achieve change. Evidence should therefore back up a range of different strategies like public campaigns, raising awareness, engaging with media, and coalition building.

Many impactful campaigns begin with a comprehensive campaign report setting out the problem and proposing solutions. This overarching report provides the necessary evidence to persuade target audiences and galvanise allies around a shared cause. It also serves as the foundation for crafting other communications materials tailored to specific audiences. As the campaign progresses, shorter updates such as policy briefings can be developed, targeting various audiences while referencing the original report.

### In your advocacy, set out:

- ✔ The need for additional evidence, if any.
- ✔ The types of research likely to resonate best with target audiences.
- ✔ Strategies for engaging audiences and framing evidence to maximise influence, utilising methods such as human stories, infographics, compelling statistics, and diagrams.

**TOP TIP!** It's crucial to value different types of knowledge and expertise, not just the ones that fit traditional formats. For example, although written evidence is commonly preferred, direct conversations with decision-makers can also be very influential.



## The GDI as a roadmap for your advocacy

The Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) is the world's leading assessment of corruption risks in government defence institutions. It assesses the quality of institutional controls to manage the risk of corruption in defence and security institutions. It is based on the idea that better institutional controls reduce the risk of corruption.

The GDI aims to set good practice standards for the governance of the defence sector. It provides a framework of good practice that promotes accountable, transparent, and responsible governance in the defence and security sector. The GDI assesses and scores nearly 90 countries across five risk areas: financial, operational, personnel, political, and procurement, before assigning an overall score.

It is also a tool for evidence-based advocacy by civil society organisations, research institutions, international organisations and investors. As an assessment of the weaknesses in the institutional controls of a country's defence and security sector, the GDI is a useful tool for civil society to collaborate with ministries of defence, the armed forces, and with oversight institutions – from parliaments to anticorruption commissions and audit bodies – to support them in working towards transparency and integrity.

As well as using the overall score and findings to highlight the need for integrity and call for strengthening of anti-corruption controls in your country's defence sector, you may choose to focus on certain key risk areas or indicators, particularly where these align with your chapter's advocacy priorities.

### Potential areas of interest that may tie into national work:

- Political oversight (parliamentary oversight, audit bodies etc)
- CSO involvement in the defence sector
- International and domestic anti-corruption instruments
- Transparency and availability of budget information
- Whistleblower protection
- Conscription and recruitment
- Procurement and single-sourcing
- Lobbying controls and conflicts of interest

### *i* Find out more

#### [Transparency International Defence and Security](#)

The TI-DS website has a wealth of materials generated from 20 years of working on this topic. Resources can be filtered by theme: finance, operations, personnel, political and procurement and country.

**“As part of the methodology of our Government Defence Integrity Index, we draw on the contribution of experts with a robust understanding of contextual issues as assessors and peer reviewers. Often the input of academics, defence governance specialists or experienced professionals, beyond enhancing the rigour of our research evidence, has given us a wonderful platform for national advocacy and elevated the standards and precision of our work.”**

*Michael Ofori-Mensah, Head of Research, Transparency International – Defence & Security*

## ENGAGING WITH OFFICIALS

Lobbying, in the context of anti-corruption in the defence sector, involves direct engagement with decision-makers to influence policies, regulations, and practices related to national security and defence. It's about advocating for changes that enhance transparency, accountability, and effectiveness within the defence and security sector.

Lobby meetings provide a vital avenue for stakeholders, including advocacy groups, industry representatives, and concerned citizens, to directly communicate their perspectives and recommendations to decisionmakers in the defence and security sector. These meetings offer the opportunity to convey nuanced insights, address concerns, and build consensus on critical issues that affect national security and defence governance.

Lobby meetings should target a range of stakeholders involved in defence governance, including government officials, legislators, defence contractors, military leaders, and representatives from relevant oversight bodies and civil society organisations. Engaging with decision-makers at various levels ensures a comprehensive approach to advocating for improvements in defence governance.

Identifying the right individuals or groups to engage with during lobby meetings is crucial. These may include government officials at various levels, corporate leaders, community influencers, or international stakeholders, depending on the nature and scope of your advocacy efforts. It's essential to target decision-makers who have the authority and influence to address your concerns effectively, or individuals and groups that can influence those with authority.

Engaging in lobbying involves more than just policy papers and phone calls; it's about building lasting relationships with decision-makers and personally conveying your proposals. **Lobbying is inherently relational**, emphasising the importance of establishing trust and understanding over time.



When preparing for a meeting, clarity and foresight are paramount. You must articulate your objectives clearly, outline the actions you hope the decisionmaker will take, and offer your assistance where needed. It's essential to remember that while you may initiate discussions and present ideas, allowing the decision-maker to take ownership of the proposed changes can be key to their acceptance. Sometimes, relinquishing credit can be a small sacrifice in pursuit of your overarching goals.

**TOP TIP!** When lobbying, it's essential to have a clear understanding of the changes you seek and how they align with your overall advocacy goals. Whether advocating for legislative reforms, policy changes, or shifts in organizational practices, clarity of purpose is key to effectively communicating your message and rallying support from decision-makers.

## TOOL 8 TOOLS FOR SUCCESSFUL LOBBYING

Enhancing your lobbying skills is critical for maximising the impact of your advocacy efforts. Key skills include:

- Crafting persuasive arguments and messages tailored to your audience, including policymakers, those who can influence policymakers, ministries of defence, and armed forces.
- Building rapport and trust with decision-makers through active listening and empathy, being helpful to them, and offering solutions, not just concerns.
- Anticipating and addressing potential objections or concerns.
- Following up consistently to maintain engagement and reinforce key messages.



### Practical Tools for Lobbying:

- **Writing targeted letters or emails:** Clearly articulate your position, supported by evidence and compelling arguments.
- **Developing comprehensive position papers:** Provide in-depth analysis and recommendations to inform decisionmakers.
- **Reaching out:** Use phone calls/emails to initiate contact, request meetings, or provide updates on your advocacy efforts.
- **Arranging and conducting effective meetings:** Prepare agendas, presentations, and talking points to ensure productive discussions.
- **Facilitating visits or interactions with affected communities:** Provide decision-makers with firsthand experiences and perspectives to strengthen their understanding of the issues at hand.
- **Host events or participate as speakers in panels:** This will engage decision-makers, stakeholders, and the public in discussions about defence governance reforms. These platforms offer opportunities to share insights, present evidence, and advocate for specific policy changes in a public forum.

## TOOL 9 KEY TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LOBBYING

- ✔ Know how the process of policy development works, for instance, who is involved in its formulation, implementation and possible change.
- ✔ Identify the right target, research and identify the right person in charge of the portfolio on defence & security, anti-corruption and related issues.
- ✔ Develop a relationship of trust. Introduce yourself and share information, including studies, statistics, suggestions and recommendations.
- ✔ Coordinate closely and establish open lines of communications.
- ✔ Keep in mind that state officials face competing pressures from multiple stakeholders, therefore advocate strategically so that key concerns fit within a specific policy agenda.
- ✔ Make targeted, specific, realistic, achievable requests.
- ✔ Identify the most effective advocacy tools at disposal to communicate a concern or encourage and congratulate officials on positive steps taken.





## TOOL 10 KEY TIPS FOR LOBBYING MEETINGS WITH STATE OFFICIALS

- ☑ Plan the meeting (location, time, delegates, different scenarios).
- ☑ Find out who your interlocutor will be, prepare agenda and materials, such as position papers, leaflets and reports, and distribute them in advance.
- ☑ Allocate enough time for discussion.
- ☑ Introduce yourself, exchange business cards.
- ☑ Initiate the meeting with a positive note.
- ☑ Address your objectives and the desired outcome of the meeting, state a case precisely, and make a request explicit.
- ☑ Ask questions and allow time for answers.
- ☑ Be prepared to anticipate the counter arguments that the official may raise, and to concede some points as required.
- ☑ Provide counter arguments and explain why it is in the interest of the official (or their institution) to respond positively.
- ☑ Offer to provide more information if needed.
- ☑ Keep looking for solutions.
- ☑ Sum up at the end of the meeting, reiterate what was agreed and follow up by sending action points and thank you letters.
- ☑ Deliver what you agreed and stay in touch, monitoring whether any promises by officials have been delivered on.

In lobbying for better defence governance, key areas of focus may include:



## TOOL 11 CHECKLIST FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

**When you are preparing for your meetings with policymakers, make sure your recommendations are robust, based on evidence and pragmatic:**

Does your research or the existing evidence base make a solid case for each recommendation? Do the recommendations clearly correspond to the analysis and evidence presented?

1. Is each recommendation clearly worded, specific and tailored to the context?
2. Are they limited and achievable?
3. Is the recommendation consistent with Transparency International's policy and with requirements under international law?
4. Is it clear which institution/entity is expected to implement each recommendation?
5. Does the institution have the ability to follow the recommendation?
6. Are there realistic short and medium-term recommendations, rather than just those that require long-term changes? Are there too many recommendations?
7. Have we limited the number of recommendations that focus on upholding basic principles or are found in the same form in other reports?
8. Have we researched possible solutions in addition to problems and is this conveyed in our recommendations? These could include suggestions for alternative models or processes, concrete possibilities for legal changes, examples of better practices from other parts of the country or other countries.
9. Have the recommendations been discussed, even in broad terms, with partners or with the people directly affected by the case/situation?
10. Are we following up on implementation of prior Transparency International recommendations?





## CAMPAIGNING AND MOBILISING PEOPLE POWER

People hold immense potential to drive positive change globally, especially when empowered through “people-powered” influencing campaigns. By providing training, opportunities and resources, we can enable individuals to become effective changemakers, fostering larger and more impactful action. Successful mobilisation taps into collective power by motivating and enabling critical masses to take action during crucial moments. Strategies can include disseminating messages and offering various avenues for participation, ranging from low-risk engagements like signing petitions to more significant investments of time and social capital, such as attending or leading events or rallies.

The anti-corruption movement, including tackling corruption to advance peace and security, can mobilise people to take action to challenge the harm, injustice and impact of corruption to their rights, freedom, dignity and security. Tapping into the agency, power and impact of collective action, there are various strategies we can deploy:

**Political pressure:** Influencing governments and politicians through direct communication via emails, letters, calls, and social media can lead to significant shifts in laws, policies and regulations.

**Raising awareness:** Exposing issues through awareness campaigns helps garner support and mobilise individuals to take action, promote reports and campaigning materials.

**Organising:** Identifying, recruiting and developing leadership skills within communities enhances their ability to drive change.

**Volunteering:** Volunteers bring new skills, energy and ideas to campaigns or organisations, contributing to lobbying efforts, media outreach, and campaign execution. Many of our anti-corruption fighters are volunteers.

Ultimately, stories play a pivotal role in shaping attitudes, values, and behaviours, presenting a positive vision of the future and inspiring agency and courage. By replacing old, fear-based narratives with empowering stories that reignite core values like empathy, hope, and creativity, we can drive transformative change in the fight against corruption. To effectively mobilise individuals, we need to choose stories that are relatable and compelling. More on this in the upcoming communications corner.

**“The stories we tell are crucial; for too long, we have fixated on the bureaucratic side of corruption and overlooked the human stories that lie beneath. These are stories of loss, harm, despair, shattered homes, and shattered lives—of broken trust. We must elevate these narratives to give them the justice they deserve. Corruption is not a victimless crime.”**

*Najla Dowson-Zeidan, Advocacy and Engagement Manager,  
Transparency International – Defence & Security*

*i*

Find out more



[Betrayed by the Guardians: The human toll of corruption in defence and security](#)

# COMMUNICATIONS CORNER:

## storytelling, inspiring stories, media and social media

**“Developing a solid evidence base and range of practical, workable solutions is often only half the battle for advocates. Part of the challenge lies in ensuring that the right people hear about them. Effective communication, compelling storytelling, and strategic media engagement are essential parts of any successful campaign. It’s not just about what you say, but how and to whom you say it.”**

*Harvey Gavin, Global Communications Consultant, Transparency International - Defence & Security*

Effective communication plays a key part in the success of your advocacy. Whether it be a television interview of one of your spokespeople or a social media campaign, getting your message out - and making sure it is heard by the right people - is essential.

This section of the toolkit explores how to develop your key messages and tell stories that help inspire change. It also covers how to leverage traditional media in support of your advocacy, tips for working with journalists and how to develop an effective social media campaign.

### Developing your key messages

‘Messaging’ in communications simply means the words that clearly and concisely explain the core values and aims of your advocacy. Your advocacy strategy should have clear and carefully crafted messages. Your key messages explain why the change you want to achieve is important and will articulate the main calls and recommendations that are necessary to happen to achieve your desired impact.

Your key messages are not only informing your audiences. The key messages need to *influence* your audience.

When drafting your message, think on this structure:

1. Statement of the problem and the change needed
2. Evidence to back up your argument – research insights, statistics and data
3. Example or illustration of the problem or solution
4. Call for action

The below quote is from the [press release that accompanied our report Trojan Horse Tactics](#), which explores the nexus between the risk of corruption in the defence sector and rapid militarisation:

**“In an era marked by increasing militarisation, it’s crucial that we confront the deep-seated vulnerabilities to corruption in the defence & security sector.”**

**Statement of problem and change needed:**

The quote identifies the problem: “deep-seated vulnerabilities to corruption in the defence & security sector” due to “increasing militarisation” and calls for addressing these issues to ensure militarisation supports “national and human security.”

**“Our findings clearly indicate that rising military spending is linked with heightened corruption risks, which in turn threaten national and global security. Our previous research has shown how many defence institutions in countries around the world are ill-equipped to manage the higher corruption risks militarisation brings. If militarisation is to achieve the aim of upholding national and human security, these are issues which can no longer be overlooked.”**

**Evidence to back up your argument and expansion of the change needed:**

This part brings in our research findings and what insight they bring to the issue. It also expands on the statement of the problem – increasing militarisation – and the urgency of addressing corruption in defence and security.

**“The evidence-based Government Defence Integrity Index not only identifies key areas of concern but also sets global benchmarks for accountability and transparency. We urge all countries to move towards these standards in response to growing insecurity.”**

**Further evidence and call for action:**

The message is supported by the Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI), an evidence-based tool that highlights key concerns and sets global standards for accountability and transparency. It also provides a clear solution: adopting the standards set by the GDI to reduce corruption risks and enhance security.

## TOOL 12 TOP TIPS FOR GOOD MESSAGINGS

### Good messaging should:

**Be clear and concise.** It should convey your key point succinctly and powerfully, making it easy for your audience to understand and remember. The message should reflect your advocacy goals and resonate emotionally with your audience, prompting them to think, feel, and ultimately act.

**Be tailored to your audience.** It should consider the demographics, values, and concerns of your target audience. Understanding who they are, what they care about, and how they communicate is essential in crafting messages that connect on a personal level. Learn more about adapting your message to your audience with the Audience Pyramid.

**Use compelling stories and data.** Ideally it should combine personal stories with data to humanise your message and reinforce your points with evidence.

**Be consistent and repetitive.** Repetition is not a bad thing when it comes to messaging! Repeating your key messages across different platforms and types of communications make them more likely to be remembered.

### Crafting inspiring stories

Personal stories help your audience empathise and relate with your cause and ultimately take action. They can be used in blogs, reports, and social media.

A compelling, impactful human story answers the basic questions: who, where, when, what, and why:

- **Who is involved?** What is their name, age and occupation? How many people are in their family? These details help the reader build up a mental image of the person involved. Photographs of those involved, if appropriate and safe to do so, are also very helpful.
- **Where does the person live?** Describe their home, community etc. Again, photographs are helpful.
- **When did the problem start?** Are there specific dates when events occurred?
- **What is the problem they face?** How has corruption in the defence and security sectors impacted their lives? How has it made them feel?
- **Why do they have this problem?** Why is corruption in the defence and security sectors a problem in their community, region or country?

## Basic guidelines for writing a story:

- Pretend you are explaining the story to a friend or family member. What would you tell them about the person and the problems they are facing? Remember, you are telling a story, not writing a research report, policy brief or a presentation.
- Include the participant's thoughts and the facts about the problem they are facing.
- Include background information about the problem to help set the scene. If a national or regional conflict has impacted a community, provide factual details such as what led to it, how long it has been going on, how many people have been affected and the different factions or armed groups involved.
- Include descriptive details about the people involved and how corruption has impacted them.
- Be sure to include powerful quotes that tell the story in the participant's own words.
- Explain what can be done to address the issues raised in the story.



For examples of compelling personal stories related to defence and security corruption, see our briefing, [Betrayed by the Guardians: The human toll of corruption in defence and security](#).



## Ethical and safety considerations in storytelling

Using information that might identify individuals could be dangerous in some countries or contexts. You should always ensure you have their express permission before using any information that might identify them.

Photographs and video are important to help illustrate human stories. Make sure you have the expressed permission of everyone who can be identified in photos and video, including people in the background, before using it.

## LEVERAGING TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA IN ADVOCACY

In today's interconnected world, leveraging both traditional and digital media is essential for successful advocacy. Traditional media - such as television, radio, and newspapers - remains influential, especially for reaching a large number of people and establishing credibility. Digital media - including social media, blogs, and podcasts - offers targeted engagement, the ability to interact with audiences and an effective way to mobilise grassroots support.

There are two main types of media work:

**Proactive:** Setting the news agenda or contributing to it through the publication of pre-planned press releases or statements. For example, through the publication and promotion of new research reports or policy papers.

**Reactive:** Responding to events to advocate for change. This could involve providing a statement reacting to news about a conflict or corruption scandal.

This section outlines how to maximize the strengths of both traditional and digital media, ensuring your message resonates powerfully and persuasively.

### Traditional media

Traditional media is a powerful tool for advocacy. It provides a platform to reach and influence large numbers of people, including decisionmakers. Effective engagement with newspapers, radio, and television often starts with a well-crafted press release. This document will serve as your first point of contact with journalists, and provides them with a concise, compelling story that can generate interest and lead to broader coverage.

A press release template that can be adapted for your advocacy can be found in [Annex IV](#).

### Producing an effective press release

A press release is a short summary of your messages or work that can be used to get the attention of journalists and either prompt them to produce a story about or to contact you for further information.

#### What is the story?

Journalists are interested in news stories, something that tells their audience some new, not just general information or generic updates about your organisation. You will always be more likely to see your press release used by media if you can link it (or 'hook' it) to issues that are already in the news.

Some good subjects for press releases include:

- News about publications from your organisation: for example a new research report or policy brief that includes some interesting statistics or analysis.
- Reaction to news events related to defence & security corruption: for example, condemning reports of corruption in the military, or welcoming positive action from the government.
- Insight on an emerging trend: for example, highlighting how current events are evidence of wider, long-running issues that may not be widely publicised yet.
- Calls for change following events in the news: for example highlighting your advocacy demands following a corruption scandal or court case.



## TOOL 13 TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR PRESS RELEASE

- Keep your language simple and clear.
- Keep your press release as short as possible. Long press releases might still be used, but journalists are more likely to read shorter ones.
- Be sure to include a quote from a named spokesperson. Quotes should be as short as possible and directly address the issue wherever possible.
- Do not assume journalists will be aware of your organisation or what it does. A sentence or two in the press release explaining this will be sufficient.
- Avoid jargon and technical language wherever possible. This can be difficult when advocating for change in the defence & security sectors, so if you have to use technical language be sure to briefly explain what it means.
- Where you are citing facts or figures from other organisations, make that clear and include a link.
- Include contact information if journalists want more information, have any follow up questions or would like to schedule an interview.

### Speaking with journalists – dos and don'ts

Speaking with journalists is an excellent way to raise the profile of your work, get media coverage and draw attention to your advocacy, but it can also carry risks.

When speaking with journalists on the phone or in-person, it's important to first establish what, if anything, you are happy for them to use from your conversation. This should be done before the conversation begins.



The below outlines the most commonly used terms – but it's important to note that these phrases sometimes mean different things to different journalists, and they can be interpreted differently around the world. If in doubt, there is no harm in asking.

**Off the record:** any information you give cannot be published, and neither can your name or organisation. You may wish to speak 'off the record' to highlight issues that would warrant further investigation by the media, or to correct misinformation from official sources.

**On background:** any information you give can be used in a story, except for direct quotes. Your name or organisation will not be used. You may wish to speak 'on background' to provide expert context around an issue.

**On the record:** any information you give can be used in a story, including direct quotes and your name and organisation.

## TOOL 14 TOP TIPS FOR TALKING WITH JOURNALISTS

Formal media training and practice is the best way to equip your spokespeople to effectively speak with journalists, but the 10 tips below can help you navigate both phone conversations and radio or television interviews:

- 1** Know who you're talking to, their main audience and the likely questions they will want to ask.
- 2** Dress in clothing appropriate for the tone of the interview and the likely audience of the media outlet.
- 3** Decide and prepare what you want to say beforehand and draw up 2-3 key points you want to get across.
- 4** Prepare and practice some 'soundbites' - short, snappy quotes that include one of your key points or an impressive statistic.
- 5** Avoid jargon, acronyms and technical language wherever possible.
- 6** Stay calm, composed and try not to speak too quickly.
- 7** Practice 'bridging' - the technique of smoothly redirecting the interview away from a question that is less favourable to your advocacy to one of your key points.

**8** For television interviews, maintain good eye contact with the interviewer and avoid looking directly at the camera. Control your body language – excessive movements can be distracting for viewers.

**9** Learn from every interview. Speaking confidently and clearly, especially when there is a television camera running, is a skill that takes a lot of practice. Do not be hard on yourself if it isn't perfect every time. It's worth revisiting interviews after they are published to consider what you could do differently next time.



## Tips for effective media relations

**Build strong relationships:** Providing relevant and timely press releases, background briefings and statements will help establish your organisation as a reliable authority.

**Be available and responsive:** Journalists are often working to tight deadlines so it's important you respond to their requests as quickly as possible. If you agree to providing a quote for their story or arranging an interview with a spokesperson, make sure you fulfil the commitment.

**Involve journalists in your events:** If the event is something you are happy to have publicised and the speakers have agreed in advance, send invites to relevant journalists. Appropriate events include roundtable discussions, report launches or debates.

**Tailor your pitches:** It's important to know the audience of different media outlets so you can adjust your pitch accordingly. For example, a specialist website covering the defence & security sector will likely want more detail on an issue, whereas a national newspaper covering general news might need a more simplified pitch.

**Prepare your spokespeople:** Briefing your spokespeople on the questions they are likely to be asked and the key messages to convey is essential. Putting forward an unprepared spokesperson for interview could damage relations with your media contacts and pose a reputational risk.

**Always follow up:** A brief email checking the journalist has everything they need for their story goes a long way to building relationships.

## Social media for advocacy

Social media is an indispensable tool for advocacy. It allows for new opportunities for engagement and amplification of your message. This section includes tips on how to effectively leverage social media platforms to drive conversations and mobilise supporters.

### Five steps for leveraging social media:

- 1 Define clear objectives:** Start with clear, measurable goals for what you want to achieve through your social media efforts, taking into account your organisation's capacity. Goals could include raising awareness of corruption in defence and security, engaging with supporters and other CSOs, or mobilising for events.
- 2 Know your audience:** Understand who your audience is and what platforms they use. You might need to take different approaches to different platforms in order to tailor your content to your target audience.
- 3 Use storytelling:** Share compelling stories that illustrate the personal impact of corruption in defence and security. Personal stories that highlight the real-life implications are more engaging than just research or data.
- 4 Create shareable content:** Content that is easy to share includes impactful images, and direct calls to action. Encouraging sharing can significantly increase the reach of your messages.
- 5 Consider using social media advertising:** If budget and expertise allow, investing in paid posts allows you to reach audiences beyond your followers. Paid campaigns on Twitter (now X), Facebook and Instagram can be carried out relatively cheaply, whereas LinkedIn tends to be much more expensive.

## Tips for enhancing social media engagement in advocacy:



### Develop a content calendar

Planning the timing and content you will share helps ensure a consistent and strategic approach to posting. A good calendar should include key dates, such as anniversaries of major events, parliamentary debates on corruption-related issues and International Anti-Corruption Day.



### Make use of images and video

Visual content is much more likely to capture attention and be shared than text-only posts. Use high-quality images, infographics, and short videos to get your message across in a compelling way. Where possible, add subtitles to videos as many people browse social media with their volume off.



### Engage with your followers

Responding to comments, questions, and messages promptly creates community engagement and loyalty. Use posts to pose questions to your followers, create polls, and encourage them to share their thoughts and experience related to your advocacy.



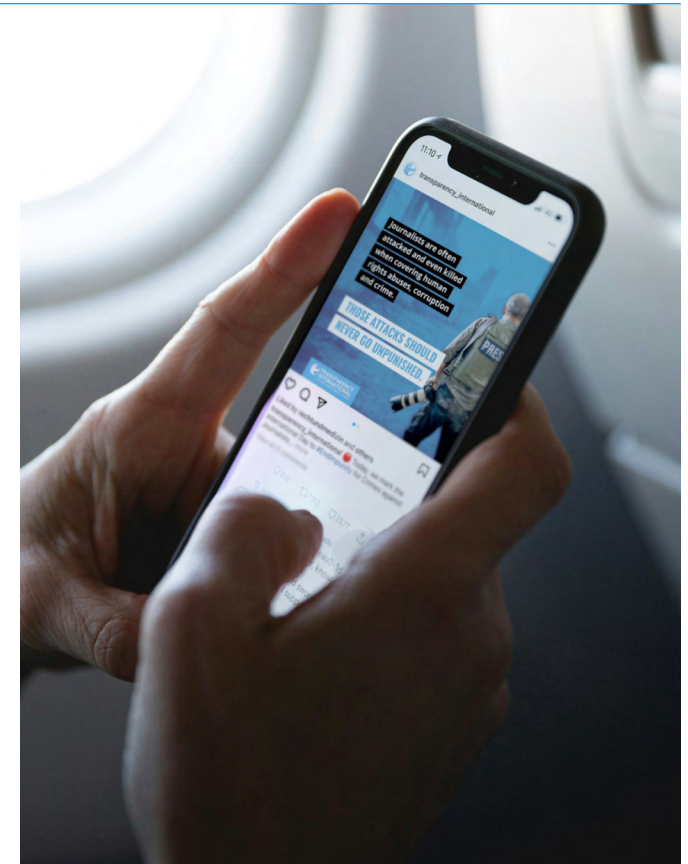
### Utilise hashtags and trends

Using relevant hashtags will increase the visibility of your posts to those interested in specific topics. #corruption, #anticorruption #transparency #accountability, #defence, #peace and the names of countries work well. Monitoring trending topics that align with your advocacy and adapting your posts to them will help you reach a broader audience and attract new followers.



### Monitor and learn

Regularly analysing the performance of your social media activities will quickly help you understand what is working and what is not. Tools like Facebook Insights, Twitter (X) Analytics and LinkedIn's built-in analytics all provide valuable data.



## YOUNG ADVOCATES

**"I remember sitting in a room with policymakers and representatives from defence companies, sticking out like a sore thumb because of my age, as well as my seemingly 'naïve' wishes and passion for a safer world backed by an accountable defence and security sector. However, with thorough preparation and a good understanding of the audience, I delivered my message with precision, and I backed my policy calls with robust and accurate evidence. This shows that even though I am young, I remain equally capable of, and should be empowered, to contribute towards issues of defence integrity. Our future is at stake, therefore no one can take away our rights to be heard meaningfully at all levels. Now is the time for us to have a seat at the decision-making table."**

*Yi Kang Choo, Programme Officer,  
Transparency International Defence & Security*



The world has often been shaped by the unwavering determination and passion of its youth.

Despite the shrinking space for civil society, children and young people remain resolute. Navigating through societal perceptions can be challenging for them, often being viewed as immature troublemakers or unrealistic idealists.

This stigma is particularly pronounced for those under 18, often relegated to the status of 'tomorrow's voices' rather than today's agents of change. Such negative stereotypes pose significant barriers to young people's assertion of human rights, hindering their inclusion in political processes, impeding their representation and the development of necessary skills to defend their rights.

Consequently, many children and young people may feel marginalised and unsupported in their efforts to affect change. Those who dare to raise their voices risk facing oppression, including intimidation, threats, attacks, stigmatisation, and reprisals.

In the anti-corruption movement, we work with and for young people on the issues that are most relevant to their lives. Although young people can be viewed as a single, homogeneous group defined exclusively by age, in reality they have multiple identities shaped by factors such as, but not limited to, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability or nationality.

We need more young people represented in all spheres of decision-making — within government, at the United Nations, in civil society, private sector and academia. And they must be taken seriously. By enabling and empowering the active participation of young people at all levels of anti-corruption work, we aim to create an environment in which they can actively contribute to human rights impact, and public policies that will inevitably have an impact in their future.



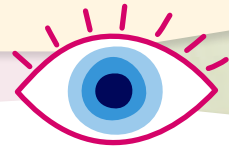


## AM I YOUNG?



Here, 'young activists' primarily refer to individuals aged 15-24 years (UN definition), although this age group can extend up to 35, depending on global socio-cultural, institutional, economic, and political factors.

## OUR VISION



**Children and young people working to demand good values in the military and police, to contribute to our common future our common goals of peace and stability.**





## TOOL 15 Guiding principles with mobilising young activists



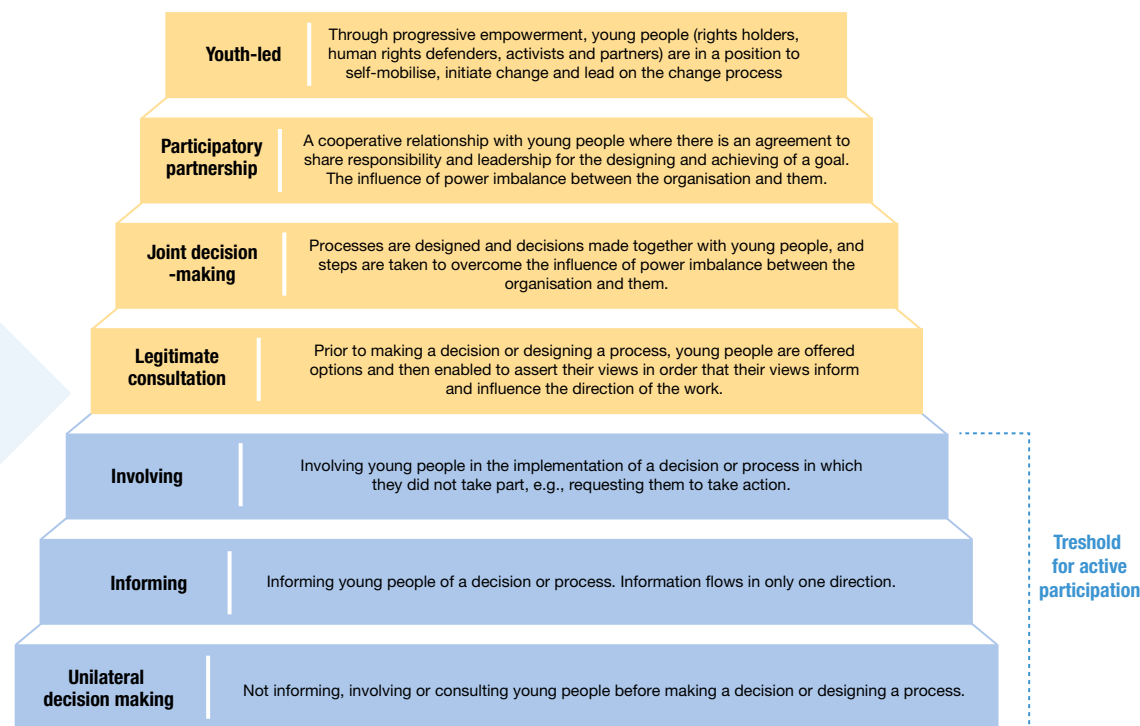
- 1** Champion child and youth participation and leadership
- 2** Build intergenerational respect and trust
- 3** Keep them safe
- 4** Invest in collaboration, growth and upskilling
- 5** Keep your values up: Reduce your environmental footprint, strengthen diverse and intersectional approaches
- 6** Foster spaces to balance well-being
- 7** Power sharing: Include youth in decision-making processes
- 8** Make it a journey to collaborate and progress mutually, not just a one-off, 'good-to-have' engagement
- 9** Provide incentives and recognition

### Don't tell me what to do, but instead, let's work together! Championing youth leadership and participation

Active participation refers to an empowering and enabling practice where young individuals engage in processes and can influence decisions that impact their daily lives. It serves as a mechanism for young people to empower themselves and extend that empowerment to others, embracing the richness of their diversity.

The concept of the 'ladder of participation', pioneered by child-rights academic Roger Hart, delineates various levels of decisionmaking, agency, control, and power accessible to children and young people. Projects aimed at meeting the diverse needs and realities of youth may require different levels of participation, both across different projects and within a single project.

The top four levels of the ladder denote active participation, where individuals have significant decisionmaking authority and agency, while the bottom three levels do not afford such active involvement.



Source: Amnesty International

## TOOL 16 HOW TO BECOME A YOUNG ANTI-CORRUPTION ADVOCATE

- 1 Inform yourself:** Educate yourself about defence corruption issues and their impact on society. Stay updated on current events and learn about different strategies to combat corruption.
- 2 Find your tribe:** Collaboration is key to effective advocacy. Partner with other young groups, government officials, local organisations, educators, and other groups who share your passion for fighting corruption in the defence sector, or in peacebuilding. Together, you can amplify your impact and support each other's efforts.
- 3 Volunteering and taking on responsibility early:** Start building your leadership skills by taking on small responsibilities within your school or community. Whether it's organising events, leading discussions, or initiating projects, taking initiative early on will help you develop the confidence and experience needed to tackle larger anti-corruption and peacebuilding initiatives in the future.
- 4 Inspire others to be activists:** Lead by example and inspire your peers to join the fight against corruption. Share success stories, raise awareness about the importance of activism, and encourage others to get involved. By empowering and mobilising others, you can create a stronger, more unified anti-corruption movement.
- 5 Be as creative as you can!** Be it filming a short video on social media, collecting signatures from your peers to call for more accountability from your elected representatives, or even just creating poems or songs that reflect your hopes and vision – every little thing counts as you find what works the best for you as a young advocate!

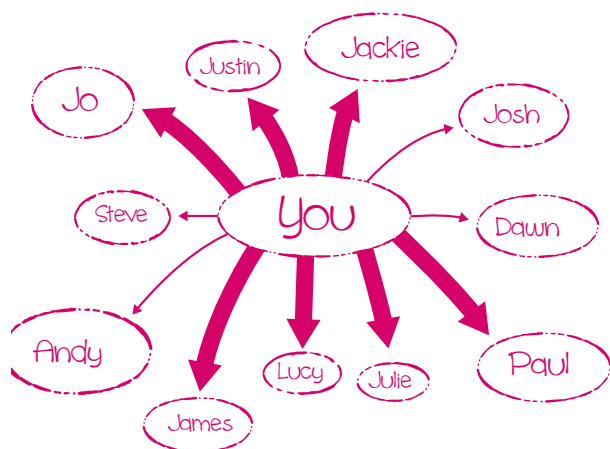


## Mobilising tactfully

**Find your tribe:** Initiating change or impacting policies individually can be challenging. Particularly for young activists, cultivating a circle of trustworthy individuals who believe in your cause is vital to establish a robust campaign or movement. You can attract like-minded individuals by establishing a club or society within your school or university, or by first approaching friends and family who share your values to kickstart your advocacy efforts.

While social media facilitates an easier connection with others to convey your ideas, it's crucial to prioritise your personal safety, especially at the initial stages of your advocacy work. Familiarise yourself well with your prospective collaborators and never compromise your privacy or safety while mobilising and collaborating with larger groups.

**Your tribe doesn't have to be in the niche area of defence and security corruption – it might be under the umbrella of peacebuilding, human rights or improving politics.**



## Potential youth-friendly influencing tactics

**Capacity building:** Organise training sessions or interactive workshops to provide your peers and the wider public with valuable insights into defence governance and integrity practices. Explore collaborative possibilities with established educational institutions.

### Example: Awareness raising in Tunisia

Young people in Krib-Seliana, Tunisia, attended a workshop and shared their ideas to be included in a booklet (in the form of a comic) that was distributed in a debate with high school students and representatives of former Tunisian military officers.



An awareness-raising training day, conducted in collaboration with Bader Youth Club and the Mohammad Ali Youth Complex, focused on the gender approach within the defence sector.

**'Artivism' and cultural expression:** Employ the power of music, poetry, theatre, and film to connect with audiences, ignite discussions, and convey messages more impactfully. Additionally, murals or paintings can foster the expression of ideas and ownership of the changes you intend to make. 'Artivism' could draw less scrutiny compared to other forms of political organising, making it especially valuable for young activists working within constrained civic spaces.

### Example: Anataban South Sudan

In South Sudan, Anataban ('I'm tired' in Arabic) uses art to mobilise young people around peace and reconciliation. The organisation started as a campaign. In 2016, a group of 20 artists produced and shared a song to express their frustration with the country's conflict and send out a call to action to others equally frustrated and seeking change. This sparked a movement that evolved into a registered civil society organisation that now has 810 members across nine chapters in South Sudan and refugee communities in the region. In 2017 it launched the Hagana ('it is ours') Festival, attracting over 5,000 young people from diverse ethnic communities. Over the years the festival grew, reaching 14,000 attendees in 2019.



**Networking and coalition building:** Build connections and alliances at local, regional and international levels to enhance the strength and impact of your movement. You can also join Youth Advisory Boards or networks hosted by multilateral agencies or international NGOs.

**Creating awareness:** Use social media like creating TikTok videos, Instagram live or creative hashtags to help promote public awareness on the changes you are advocating for. You don't need to be a famous influencer or Mr. Beast to advocate on social media!

**Cross movement collaboration:** Collaboration between youth-led groups and intergenerational movements can promote a much more comprehensive and intersectional approach in promoting structural social change.

**Peaceful demonstrations and protests:** Kickstart a youth-led movement or peaceful demonstration by highlighting the key policy asks and recommendations your group is demanding.

#### Example: Protect your vote from corruption

A group of young people led by the Youth and Citizens for Integrity (YCI) lined a main road in Antananarivo, Madagascar holding up signs that read “protect your vote from corruption” and “don't sell your choice” in July 2022.



#### Example: “Why Should We Be Afraid?”

Malaysian students and youth at the forefront of an intergenerational movement led by Bersih – which means ‘clean’ in Malay – across five hugely popular protests since 2007, calling for free and fair elections in Malaysia but also to tackle corruption and the 1MDB scandal, a multi-billion-dollar corruption scheme by high-ranking Malaysian officials.



## Keep yourself safe and healthy

Happiness and activism can co-exist. Being a young activist can be tiring and mentally exhausting at times, so it's vital to ensure that your mental health is being taken care of. Advocating within the defence and security sectors can also be physically dangerous at times, and that's why prioritising your safety and that of your group members above all else is crucial to sustain your campaign effectively.

Here are some things to consider when approaching self-care:

- Know your own limits and establish strong boundaries.
- Recognise the emotional toll campaigning can take and create a list of healing resources.
- Take breaks from news and social media.
- Express gratitude amongst each other.
- Find reasons to celebrate throughout your campaign.
- Bring up self-care regularly in your group.
- Schedule time off.
- Eat, sleep, and drink lots of water.

The Protection Resource Library developed by UNOY Peacebuilders and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders provides helpful methods and resources for safeguarding your personal well-being as a young activist.



#### Find out more

[Youth Activist Toolkit by Advocates for Youth](#)

[Well-Being Workbook for Youth Activists by Amnesty International](#)

[Resources by the Youth Activism Project](#)



## EXPERT OUTREACH

When working on a new topic, or when in need of fresh perspectives on a familiar one, it can be advisable to reach out to external experts on that topic to provide unique insights and join your advocacy efforts. Whilst they cannot do your work for you, they can provide information, materials and recommendations useful to your work that you previously had not come across as well as with independent and strategic guidance. They can also act as a sounding board for new ideas, validating their feasibility and improving

their applicability. Lastly, working with experts can add legitimacy to a project and help increase its visibility. The experts can amplify your message and reiterate it in their own professional channels.

Given the highly technical level of working on defence corruption and the need to contextualise our advocacy calls, Transparency International – Defence & Security uses expert outreach in research, policy development and implementation.

### Steps for expert outreach:

**1. Develop a written strategy:** Outline the objectives, priorities and outcomes you expect to achieve from this exercise. Be clear on what you want answers to, your aims and objectives, and make sure your experts can be clear on what achievements they are expected to contribute to.

#### 1. What is the purpose of your outreach activities?

Are you aiming to gather expert insights and knowledge?  
Are you seeking to build partnerships or collaborations?  
Do you intend to raise awareness about defence corruption issues?

#### 2. What do you hope to achieve?

Are you looking to enhance your department's understanding of defence corruption?  
Do you want to develop actionable strategies or policies based on expert input?  
Are you hoping to establish long-term relationships with key experts in the field?

#### 3. What types of activities are you concerned about under the theme of outreach?

Are you considering organizing expert panels or workshops?  
Do you plan to conduct one-on-one meetings or interviews with experts?  
Are you exploring opportunities for joint research projects or publications?

#### 4. What timeframe does your strategy cover?

Are your outreach activities part of a short-term initiative or a long-term engagement strategy?  
Do you have specific milestones or deadlines for achieving your outreach objectives?

#### 5. Who should be doing these activities?

Are designated team members responsible for outreach efforts?  
Are there specific roles or departments within your organization tasked with coordinating outreach activities?  
Are external consultants or partners involved in executing certain aspects of the outreach strategy?

#### 6. How will you know they have worked?

What key performance indicators (KPIs) will you use to measure the success of your outreach activities?  
Are you tracking metrics such as the number of expert engagements, the quality of insights gathered, or the impact on policy decisions?  
Will you conduct post-outreach evaluations or surveys to gather feedback from experts and stakeholders?

## Steps for expert outreach: *continued*

- 2. Identify who you want to invite:** Determine the specific experts, researchers, academics, and professionals whose insights and expertise are valuable for addressing defence corruption issues.

Consider experts from fields such as law, governance, ethics, military, civil society organisations and academics. Consideration should also be given to different types of expertise, including anti-corruption, conflict and crisis, international humanitarian law, human rights and governance.

Be sure to get a range of views from different world regions, or at national level, from different provinces or regions to get as many perspectives as possible.

- 3. Drive continuous engagement through communication:** Use a variety of communication channels to reach out to experts: Emails, social media platforms, professional networks, and in person meetings. Provide regular updates on your activities, organise in-person or online meetings, share documents from the different organisations, become a convener and a trailblazer.

- 4. Provide value proposition:** Clearly articulate the value proposition of engaging with your project. Highlight how experts' contributions can make a meaningful impact on combating defence corruption, promoting transparency, and strengthening integrity within the sector.

- 5. Foster relationships:** Cultivate long-term relationships with experts by demonstrating genuine interest, respect for their expertise, and commitment to collaboration. Regular communication and engagement will help establish trust and rapport over time.

- 6. Seek feedback:** Actively solicit feedback from experts on your initiatives, policies, and strategies related to defence corruption. Their insights can provide valuable perspectives and help refine approaches for greater effectiveness.

- 7. Evaluate and adjust:** Continuously evaluate the outcomes of expert outreach efforts against predetermined objectives. Use data and feedback to assess the impact, identify areas for improvement, and refine the outreach strategy accordingly.

- 8. Identify a joint action:** Materialise the relationship and the commitment. This can be through an advocacy action, a joint report or letter, or an event.



## TOOL 17 TOP TIPS FOR EXPERT OUTREACH

- 1** Discover your starting point. You might have more experts in your existing circle that you think!
- 2** Begin small, nurture, and witness growth. Don't worry if the initial group is small - it can grow over time.
- 3** Tailor your message to your audience. Remember that for them to stay engaged in the long-term, they will want to benefit from it too, either through networking, access to resources, or status.
- 4** Drive engagement through communications to create your unique community of concern and thought leadership.
- 5** Convert doubters and sceptics into advocates. The experts might not work in defence corruption, but in peace and security, military operations human rights, or crisis response, but you can make the case for them to integrate your key calls into their advocacy work.
- 6** Hit the ground running. Suggest concrete actions and input that you want them to be part of.

**“In our campaign on corruption as a risk to peace and security, we reached out to experts in the field. We convened two roundtables of experts from military, defence, and security, as well as think tanks, academics, and civil society organisations working on crisis response, development, and humanitarian action. It was great to hear different perspectives, gather their insights, and witness the potential for collaborative work to flourish. What I learned is that we don’t need to share identical mandates to collaborate effectively. Each of us brings unique components to the table, contributing to the development of the best solutions.”**

*Emily Wegener, Senior Policy and Campaigns Officer, Transparency International – Defence & Security*

## ADVOCACY IN DIFFICULT OR HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS

Many advocates working on defence governance must do so in hostile environments. At the most extreme, this may require advocates to work in conflict zones where there are severe risks to the physical and mental wellbeing of staff and partners. It is also common for advocates to work in countries where the civic space is highly restrictive and oppressive. This can manifest in various forms of threats to individuals and organisations, for example threats with financial, legal, reputational or safety repercussions.

All civil society organisations and journalists working in these contexts face these risks, but they are accentuated for those working on defence governance. Promoting reform in the defence and security sector involves confronting powerful actors who have tools at their disposal to intimidate advocates. Many military organisations around the world are perpetrators of human rights abuses and may use tactics such as surveillance and arbitrary detention to stifle critics. Protection of national security can be used as an excuse by military and security agencies to disregard citizen rights. Women and gender minorities especially may be targeted for intimidation and can face different forms of abuse, including the threat of sexual violence. High levels of secrecy surrounding the sector can allow these types of abuses to go unchecked.

In this section, we provide high-level guidance on how to work on defence governance in hostile environments. This starts with key considerations around the safety of the organisation, its staff and partners. We then offer ideas on how to adapt advocacy strategies to the realities of these contexts.

**Fragile state:** An economically impoverished country with weak state capacity and legitimacy, leaving its citizens vulnerable to adverse situations, both manmade and natural, referred to as 'shocks'.

**Failed state:** A nation where the government has lost control of its territory, unable to provide security to its citizens or deliver basic public services. It lacks legitimate authority for decisionmaking and fails to fulfill its responsibilities as a member of the international community.

**Failing state:** A country with a government so weak or ineffective that it has minimal practical control over its territory and fails to provide public services. This often coincides with widespread corruption, criminality, economic decline, and an increase in refugees and internally displaced people.

**Conflict-affected state:** A nation where repeated cycles of political and civil violence disrupt political processes, including elections and government administration.

**Oppressive regime:** A political context characterized by unjust or cruel exercise of government authority, restricting citizens' engagement with decisionmaking and political processes.

**“Advocacy should be adapted to hostile environments, but never stopped. Hostile environments, as demonstrated through research, are a boon for those who benefit from corruption. In the complex landscape of defence and security, where corruption undermines national security and erodes public trust, advocacy plays a pivotal role in achieving sustainable peace and human security. It empowers people to voice concerns and demand justice, even amidst environments where using terms like ‘advocacy’ may be discouraged.”**

*Mohamed Bennour, Programme Manager, Transparency International Defence & Security.*

## Protecting individuals and the organisation

The first and primary consideration in working in hostile environments is safety. Your organisation must have protocols in place to protect their staff, the partners they work with, and their own status. Foundational requirements for protecting individuals are:

- Safeguarding policies, including but not limited to:
  - Protocols around travel to dangerous locations.
  - Protocols for individuals to remain in contact with the organisation and trusted external partners.
  - Gender-sensitive policies with mitigants for additional gender-related risks.
- Use of encrypted means of telecommunications.
- Investment in the protection of data, particularly the identities of partners and key informers.
- Crisis management procedures.

Your organisation should ultimately never push individuals to work in situations with which they are uncomfortable.

Organisations themselves can be also targeted for shutdown by military and security agencies. Although this possibility can never be eliminated, there are some steps organisations can take to reduce these risks if they wish to maintain a domestic presence. These include, but are not limited, to:

- Ensuring, as far as possible, that legal and registration documentation is in good order.
- Being transparent about the organisation's activities and sources of funding.
- Adding board members with legal backgrounds.
- Forming relationships with foreign embassies and other influential external partners.

Levels of risk are influenced by the approach and tactics the organisation pursues to fighting corruption. Safeguarding therefore needs to be a critical consideration in the design of an advocacy strategy.



## Selecting the right issues

As outlined in Part 1 of this toolkit, defence governance encompasses a broad range of issues. While this depends on the country dynamics, campaigning on some topics is likely to be much more contentious and therefore dangerous than others.

If the strategy involves engaging with national military and defence institutions, then it may be safer to work on foundational topics. These can lay the groundwork for future reforms when circumstances are more amenable. Examples of relevant topics might include access to information, creating forums for dialogue between the military and civil society, and running training programmes. Also look for opportunities to campaign on topics where some insiders may be incentivised to see reform. Advocacy on corruption issues around salaries and allowances is likely to receive broad support from rank-and-file troops.

Other approaches which directly challenge specific individuals and/or the systems for generating corrupt wealth are much more adversarial. Working on topics such as military ownership of businesses, links between the military and organised crime, and procurement scandals, is likely to elicit strong, hostile responses. These may be avenues advocates still wish to pursue but where the safeguards described above are all the more important. Different tactics may also be necessary.

## Changing tactics

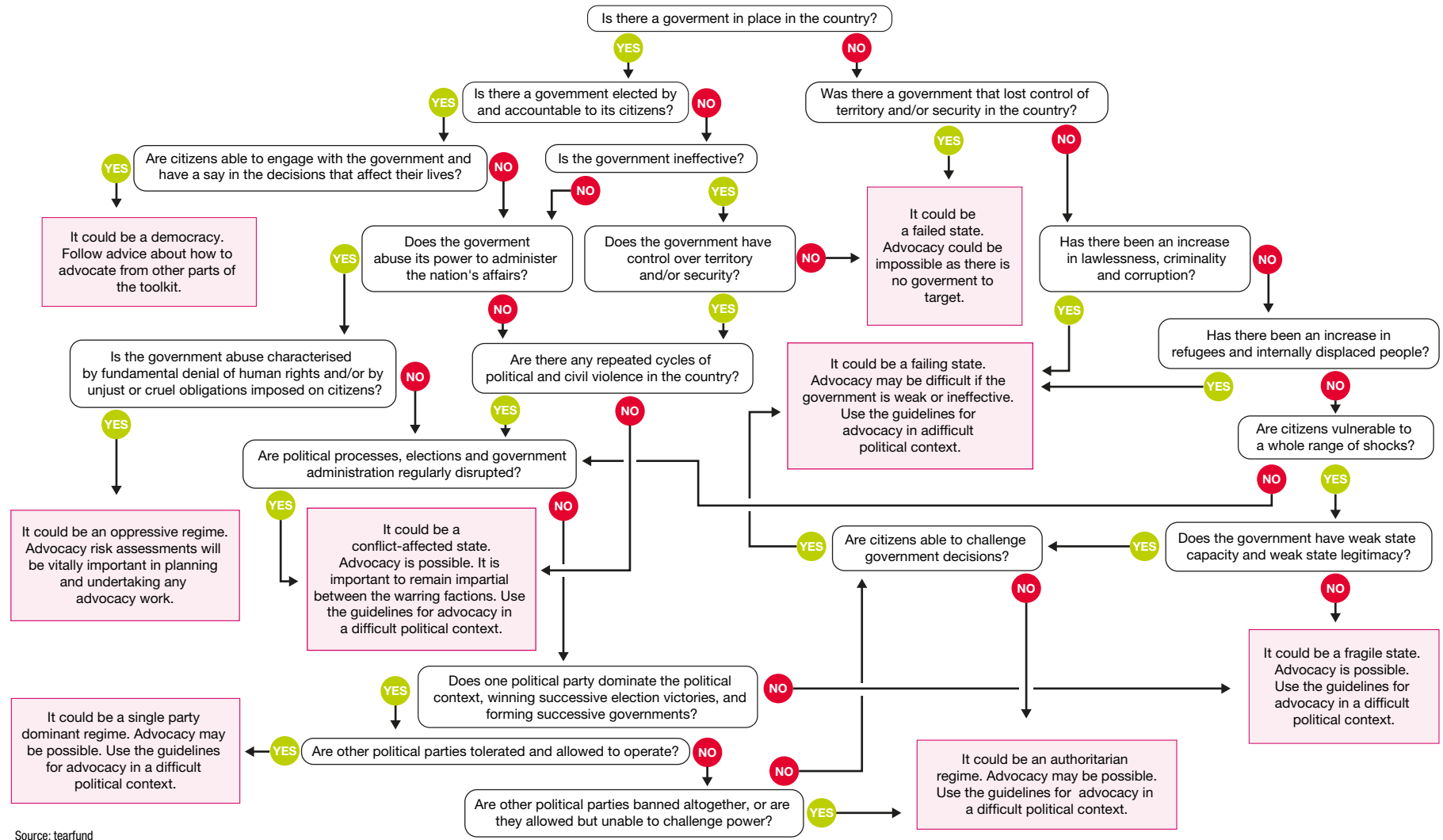
Where the context for domestic reform is difficult, advocates should strongly consider employing tactics which leverage external levers for change. Key tactics include:

- Forming partnerships with international civil society, including journalist networks. These actors can raise awareness and advocate on issues in a way which might not be safe enough for your organisation to do domestically.
- Making international and regional organisations working in the country key targets for advocacy. Multilateral development banks, for example, often have high levels of influence over governments, and should be pushed to look at corruption in defence and security as part of their mandate. Foreign countries providing security assistance should be pressurised to ensure that anti-corruption measures form part of these packages.
- Using international and regional instruments, such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption, as a way of creating dialogue. International review mechanisms of existing anti-corruption commitments may provide an opportunity for civil society to register concerns around defence and security.
- Work with and through diaspora networks to build alliances and prepare the ground for future reforms.
- If sufficient resources can be brought together, consider strategic litigation as a way of putting pressure on government. This involves initiating court proceedings in an external jurisdiction against individuals and firms implicated in corruption.



While this is true of any advocacy campaign, building domestic alliances is especially important in hostile environments. Going it alone increases the safety risks and makes success harder. Even in a defence sector facing critical corruption issues, there may be actors who are in favour of reform. Building relationships with supportive legislators, audit authorities, law enforcement agencies, and other actors in civil society is essential.

# TOOL 18 ADVOCACY FLOWCHART



Source: tearfund



## Equipped to make a difference - final steps

As you reach the end of this advocacy toolkit, you are now equipped with the advice and practical guidance needed to plan and execute effective advocacy strategies. We hope this document has provided you with the tools to define your objectives, create actionable plans, engage stakeholders, and communicate your message powerfully.

With these resources, you are ready to tackle corruption in the defence and security sector. Set out with confidence and determination, knowing that you have the knowledge and strategies needed to drive meaningful change and enhance accountability and integrity in these critical areas. Your advocacy can make a profound impact - use these tools to be the catalyst for change.





## FURTHER RESOURCES

Chayes, Sarah. 2015. *Thieves of State: Why Corruption Threatens Global Security*. New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company.

Institute of Economics and Peace. 2015. *Peace and Corruption*. <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Peace-and-Corruption.pdf>

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR). 2016. *Corruption in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*. Washington DC.

Transparency International-Defence & Security (TI-DS). 2019a. 'Corruption and UN peace operations'. Interventions Anti-Corruption Guidance. London. <https://iacg.ti-defence.org/casestudy/corruption-and-un-peace-operations/>

Transparency International-Defence & Security (TI-DS). 2019b. 'Sustainment and Contracting Protocol.' Interventions Anti-Corruption Guidance. London. [https://iacg.ti-defence.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/1909\\_DSP\\_ContractingProtocol.pdf](https://iacg.ti-defence.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/1909_DSP_ContractingProtocol.pdf)

Transparency International-Defence & Security (TI-DS). 2019c. 'Afghanistan: Corruption and the Making of Warlords.' Interventions Anti-Corruption Guidance. London. <https://iacg.ti-defence.org/casestudy/afghanistan-corruption-and-the-making-of-warlords/>

Transparency International-Defence & Security (TI-DS). 2018. Camouflaged Cash: How 'Security Votes' Fuel Corruption in Nigeria. London. [https://ti-defence.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/DSP\\_Nigeria\\_Camouflage\\_Cash\\_Web2.pdf](https://ti-defence.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/DSP_Nigeria_Camouflage_Cash_Web2.pdf)

Transparency International-Defence & Security (TI-DS). 2017. The Big Spin: Corruption and the growth of violent extremism. London. <https://ti-defence.org/publications/the-big-spin/>

Transparency International-Defence & Security (TI-DS). 2016. Security assistance, corruption and fragile environments: Exploring the case of Mali, 2001-2012. London. <https://ti-defence.org/publications/security-assistance-corruption-and-fragile-environments-exploring-the-case-of-mali-2001-2012/>

Transparency International-Defence & Security (TI-DS). 2021. GDI 2020 Global Report: Disruption, Democratic Governance, and Corruption Risk in Defence Institutions. <https://ti-defence.org/publications/gdi-2020-global-report-disruption-democratic-governance-and-corruption-risk-in-defence-institutions/>

Curbing Corruption, Defence and Security Sector Review, <https://curbingcorruption.com/sector/defence-and-military/>

**This resource combines guidance on implementing an anti-corruption strategy in the sector with lots of examples of reforms from countries around the world.**

Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), Toolkit for Security Sector Reform and Governance in West Africa, <https://www.dcaf.ch/tool-3-good-financial-governance-defence-and-security-institutions>

This series of eight guides on security governance covers several areas relevant to addressing corruption, including financial governance and parliamentary oversight. The guides incorporate examples of countries which have implemented these measures.

U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, <https://www.u4.no/publications?searchPageNum=1>

This library includes a wide range of publications on the causes and pathways of corruption in society, its effects on development outcomes, and

Corruption, Justice and Legitimacy (CJIL) Programme, Blog posts and research, <https://www.corruptionjusticeandlegitimacy.org/post/accomplishing-the-impossible-how-ukraine-advanced-anti-corruption-reforms-in-defense-security>

CJIL publishes evidence and research around the theme of corruption and peacebuilding. The highlighted blog tells the story of work in Ukraine to advance anti-corruption reforms.

NATO, DCAF, Building Integrity and Reducing Corruption in Defence, A Compendium of Best Practices, <https://buildingintegrity.hq.nato.int/Resources.aspx?id=322014339>

This 2010 compendium covers a range of topic areas, including personnel policies, defence budgeting and financial management, and offset arrangements.

Transparency International Helpdesk, <https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/helpdesk/browse>

The TI Helpdesk has published a large number of research briefings on defence and security, in particular related to fragile and conflict-affected states.

International Initiative for Impact Evaluation, Good Governance Through Government Effectiveness, Evidence Gap Map, <https://developmentevidence.3ieimpact.org/egm/good-governance-through-government-effectiveness-evidence-gap-map>

**This resource is not specific to the defence and security sector but it provides links to evidence related to various forms of relevant anti-corruption measures.**

**NAPRI:** DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR and UN Women 2019. Tool 15: Integrating Gender in Project Design and Monitoring for the Security and Justice Sector. Geneva: DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN Women. [Tool 15: Integrating Gender in Project Design and Monitoring for the Security and Justice Sector | DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance](#)

**GESI:** World Vision 2023a. A toolkit for integrating gender equality and social inclusion in design, monitoring and evaluation [Online]. [Accessed 17 October 2023]. [https://wvusstatic.com/evidence/docs/GESI-in-DME-Toolkit\\_English-2023-FINAL.pdf](https://wvusstatic.com/evidence/docs/GESI-in-DME-Toolkit_English-2023-FINAL.pdf).

**Gender-sensitive conflict analysis:** Close, S., Groenewald, H. and Mora, D.T. 2020. Facilitation guide: Gender-sensitive conflict analysis. London: Saferworld and Conciliation Resources. [Gender-sensitive conflict analysis facilitators guide | Conciliation Resources \(c-r.org\)](#)

**Gendered political economy analysis:** Haines, Rebecca, and Tam O'Neil. 'Putting Gender in Political Economy Analysis: Why It Matters and How to Do It'. Gender & Development Network, 9 May 2018. <https://gadnetwork.org/gadn-resources/2018/5/9/putting-gender-in-political-economy-analysis-why-it-matters-and-how-to-do-it>

**Rapid gender analysis for humanitarian programming:** UN Women. 'UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool to Evaluate Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Results in Humanitarian Contexts', 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/05/rapid-assessment-tool-to-evaluate-gewe-results-in-humanitarian-contexts>

**Gender and corruption programming:** UNODC 2020. Mainstreaming gender in corruption projects/programmes [Online]. Vienna: United Nations. Available from: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/Gender/20-05712\\_Corruption\\_Brief\\_ebook\\_cb.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/Gender/20-05712_Corruption_Brief_ebook_cb.pdf)

**Security sector and gender:** Myrtilinen, H. 2019. Tool 1: Security Sector Governance, Security Sector Reform and Gender In: Gender and Security Toolkit. Geneva: DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN Women.

**Defence reform and gender:** Hendricks, C. and Hutton, L. 2008. Defence Reform and Gender In: M. Bastick and K. Valasek, eds. Gender and Security Sector Reform Toolkit. Geneva: DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN-INSTRAW.

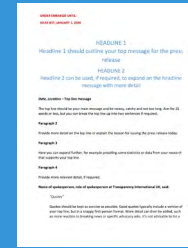
Watson, C. 2020. Tool 3 Gender and Security Toolkit - Defence and Gender [Online]. OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. [Accessed 14 June 2023]. Available from: <https://policycommons.net/artifacts/2110296/tool-3-gender-and-security-toolkit/2865592/>.



# ANNEXES



**ANNEX I**  
Advocacy canvas



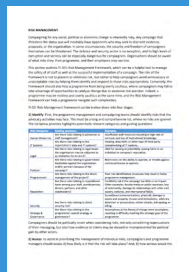
**ANNEX IV**  
Press release template



**ANNEX II**  
Key messages pyramid



**ANNEX V**  
The nexus between corruption, conflict and defence



**ANNEX III**  
Risk management table example