



Regional Forum on
“Strengthening Governance Units for Better Control,
Monitoring and Governance in the Public Sector”



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Resilient nations.*



18 April 2019
Gammarth, Republic of Tunisia

The Republic of Tunisia has created "governance units" by the government Order No. 1158/2016 of 12 August 2016 on "Creating Governance Units". The order stipulates that each ministry should have a unit called the "Central Governance Unit" and governorate capitals, municipalities of the governorate capital, public institutions and public owned companies should have a "Governance Unit". The governance unit of the ministry is attached to the cabinet of the minister, the governance unit in governorate capitals and municipalities of the governorate capital is attached to the general secretariat of the government, and the public institutions and public-owned companies governance unit to the boards of directors. These units were created to strengthen the preventive approach to corruption and to spread integrity and good governance in line with the national plans in this regard, including the National Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Strategy (2016 – 2020).

The functions of the governance units in article 5 of the government order include: ensuring that the principles of governance and prevention of corruption are applied to the structure to which they belong, in accordance with the laws and regulations in force, contributing to the development of national and sectoral programs, strategies and action plans to promote governance and prevent corruption. Also, implementing and evaluating them in accordance with the criteria and indicators adopted in this area, particularly access to information, dissemination of a culture of governance and transparency, integrity and good conduct values, and respect of codes of conducts and professional conduct. Moreover, the functions of governance units include organizing seminars related to governance and preventing corruption, representing the public administration to which they belong in the bodies concerned with governance and fighting corruption, expressing opinion in training programs and strengthening the capacities of public servants especially in the field of governance and prevention of corruption, consultation on draft legal and regulatory texts, both of which are presented to the public structure to which the unit belongs.

In addition, the governance unit shall express its opinion on all matters related to governance presented before it, propose mechanisms and procedures that would best utilize the available resources in accordance with the principles of governance, follow up on corruption cases, decisions taken and their outcome and related statistics, participate in the preparation of questionnaires and sectoral statistics in accordance with international standards in measuring the level of corruption through objective indicators, coordinate with other public administrations responsible of professional ethics, quality, citizens relationship and electronic management, as it relates to the basic functions of units. Article 8 of the above order emphasized that each public structure should provide the necessary human and material resources to accomplish the tasks assigned to the governance unit.

The High Administrative and Financial Control Authority, through its interest in the governance units, seeks to activate its role in line with the aspirations and objectives entrusted to it by the above-mentioned order and within the framework of the general anti-corruption policies, as required by the Prime Minister's Circular No. 26 of 25 September 2017 on the implementation of control and inspection reports. Governance units and the internal control units are considered the core of the public structures and an extension of the work of the High Supervisory Authority as they depend on them to follow up the implementation of the recommendations issued by the Authority to correct shortcomings.

In addition, the governance units play an important role in preventing corruption by following up the recommendations issued by the supervisory bodies and contributing to the efforts exerted in reforming the public administration system. Accordingly, the High Authority relies on the governance units to follow up on the recommendations in accordance with the requirements of Circular No. 26, which stipulates that the monitoring and inspection reports should be given due attention by appointing a coordinator in each public structure to address the Authority and facilitate follow-up to the recommendations contained therein. It was noted that these coordinators and interlocutors were appointed by an absolute majority, among governance units and inspection units personnel.

In this context, despite the issuance of the government decree no. 1158 of 2016 mentioned above, it is still noticeable that there is an urgent need for clear functions of the governance units and coordination of their work with the rest of the units that carry out similar work such as the access to information unit, internal control units and inspection units and others, as well as a need to determine the levels of intervention within the public administration they belong to.

In cooperation with the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET), the High Administrative and Financial Control Authority (HCCAF) launched an initiative to strengthen the governance units in the Republic of Tunisia, with the support of the UNDP Regional Project on Anti-Corruption in the Arab Countries (ACIAC). The initiative highlights the role of governance units in promoting public sector action and supporting the development and implementation of an effective anti-corruption approach that complements the roles of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (INLUCC) and the Governance Services at the Presidency of the Government in this regard. More specifically, the project aims at developing and disseminating a governance guide to enhance governance unit interventions in an integrated manner with inspection units and other relevant internal units, and to develop the capacities of the governance units' staff to acquire skills and knowledge needed to accomplish their mission. It is also expected that the project will help to evaluate

the experience of the governance units in preventing corruption in order to share lessons learned and best practices in this regard in the framework of ACINET.

Accordingly, HCCAF in collaboration with ACINET is organizing a regional forum entitled “Strengthening Governance Units for Better Control, Monitoring and Governance in the Public Sector” on 18 April 2019 in Gammarth, Tunisia. The Regional Forum aims first to identify the status of the governance units and their current functioning, secondly to define the concept of the “governance unit” and its working methodology, and thirdly to develop a preliminary conception of the professional and behavioural reference framework of the governance units.

The Forum will be attended by representatives of the governance units, representatives of the governance units in the governorate capitals and municipalities, public institutions and enterprises and majority-owned companies in addition to representatives of HCCAF, INLUCC and the Governance Services at the Presidency of the Government, as well as specialized experts and activists from the civil society and representatives of counterpart bodies in the Arab region and beyond.

Agenda

Thursday, 18 April 2019

09:30-12:30 Session One: Assessing the Status of Governance Units in light of the Tunisian experience and comparative experiences

Objective: Enable participants to identify the status of governance units by presenting the Government Order No. 1158 of 2016 of 12 August 2016 on "Creating Governance Units", evaluating the experience of its implementation on the ground and in light of comparative experiences

Opening Speech

- Mr. Kamal Al-Ayadi, Chairman of the High Authority for Administrative and Financial Control under the chairmanship of the Republic of Tunisia

Moderator

- Mr. Arkan El Seblani, Chief Technical Advisor, Manager of the Regional Project on Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Arab Countries, UNDP

Presentation on the complementarity of governance units cells functions and monitor and control functions

- Ms. Najla Al-Safi, State Comptroller at the State Comptroller's Office at the Presidency of the Government and formerly a member of the governance unit of the National Railways Company

Presentation on governance units between the legal framework and practice

- Mr. Anis al-Maliki, a former adviser to the governance interests of the former government

Presentation on governance units and their anti-corruption role

- Mr. Mehrez Al-Hafsi, General Secretary of the National School of Administration, the Presidency of the Government

Presentation of the experience of the governorate of Tunisia and the role of governance units in administrative reform and development

- Ms. Laila Al-Jiddi, Director of Corporate Governance and Investor's Advisory Chamber of the State

Experience of the Ministry of Health, Republic of Ukraine

- Ms. Svetlana Musiiaka, Head of the Anti-Corruption Unit of the Ministry of Health

Open discussion on Tunisia's experience and comparative experiences

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30– 15:30 Session Three: Towards a Preliminary Concept of the Governance Units Guide

Objective: Work within groups to develop a clearer concept of the "Governance Unit" in light of practical experience and propose ideas to enhance its working methodology and establish a professional and behavioural reference framework

Three working groups:

- Group 1: The role of Governance Unit in supporting oversight tasks and following-up on the proposed recommendations
- Group 2: Professional and behavioral reference framework of governance units
- Group 3: Complementarity between governance unit and other units

15:30 – 15:45 Break

15:45 – 17:00 Closing Session

Objective: Review and discuss the work of the working groups and submit proposals for the next steps to implement the project

Conclusions

Next steps

Concluding Remarks

- Mr. Kamal Al-Ayadi, Chairman of the High Authority for Administrative and Financial Control under the chairmanship of the Republic of Tunisia
