Dear Reader,

This News Update includes information on (a) ACINET’s Programme of Work for 2009 (p.2); (b) new ACINET memberships (p.4); (c) Training of Trainers for Iraqis on Anti-Corruption Self-Assessment and GAP Analysis (p.4); (d) National Workshop on Investigative Journalism for Written and Audible Media in Yemen (p.6); and (e) a usual stop at Arab anti-corruption highlights (p.7).

Please send your comments and inquiries to the following fax number +961 1 981 645 or to the following address info@arabacinet.org.

Thank you, ACINET’s Team.
ACINET Develops its Programme of Work for 2009

The Regional Support Unit worked with the ACINET Chair. H.E. Dr. Abed SHAKHANBEH to develop the network’s “Programme of Work” for 2009 in accordance with its Charter and Rules of Procedure and based on the consultations that took place in 2008 including the preparatory phase after declaring the establishment of ACINET in Amman on 30 July 2008. The Programme of Work outlines ACINET’s work for 2009 while keeping open the possibility for expanding the Programme based on the demand of ACINET members and depending on the availability of financial resources.

The Programme of Work is divided to four main components:

First, developing capacity on self assessment and measurement of corruption and integrity for governmental and non-governmental actors.

Second, increasing knowledge on witness and whistleblower protection.

Third, increasing knowledge on national anti-corruption strategies and the role of different stakeholders.

Fourth, strengthening knowledge networking at the national, regional and global levels, with a view to enhancing partnerships that benefit governmental and non-governmental actors in the Arab region.
Below is a list of key events for this year. Other activities will be supported including the development of knowledge products that will be published in hard copy and on ACINET’s website, which is currently under development:

1. Workshop on “Witness and Whistleblower Protection”
2. Regional Seminar on Measuring Corruption and Integrity (for governmental practitioners)
3. Second Anti-Corruption Regional Community of Practice Meeting.
4. Regional Workshop on “National Anti-Corruption Strategies and the Role of Different Stakeholders”
5. Regional Seminar on Measuring Corruption and Integrity (for nongovernmental practitioners)

The Programme of Work will be implemented in full with the support of UNDP’s Programme on Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR). Additional support may be provided by other actors to expand the Programme in line with ACINET’s mission and objectives.

For more information, please visit www.arabgov-initiative.org.
ACINET Membership Continues to Expand

The Accounting Court in Tunisia, which is headed by the Honorable Ms. Faiza KEFI joined ACINET. The Regional Support Unit received the letter of accession on 28 January 2008 raising the number of ACINET members to 20 independent governmental anti-corruption bodies from 12 Arab countries.

The Accounting Court was established by the 1959 Constitution as a body with a judicial nature to ensure the needed independence, impartiality and objectivity to carry out its role and be an effective partner in promoting good public expenditure.

For more information about the Accounting Court, please visit its website (only available in Arabic with French and English sections under construction)

www.coursdecomptes.nat.tn/ar.

Training of Trainers for Iraqis on Anti-Corruption Self-Assessment and GAP Analysis

The United Nations Development Programme’s Country Office in Iraq (UNDP Iraq) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) jointly organized training of trainers for Iraqis on Anti-Corruption Self-Assessment and GAP Analysis in the United Nations Development Programme’s Country Office in Iraq (UNDP Iraq) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCC) and to promote the development of a national anti-corruption strategy in Iraq.

UNDP Iraq and UNODC worked together to develop a comprehensive training program for trainers of trainers on anti-corruption self-assessment and gap analysis. The program aimed to build the capacity of trainers to conduct effective self-assessments and identify gaps in anti-corruption efforts.

UNDP Iraq and UNODC provided technical assistance and support to help trainers develop their skills and knowledge in the areas of anti-corruption self-assessment and gap analysis. The trainers were trained on the methodology, tools and techniques required to conduct effective anti-corruption self-assessments and identify gaps in anti-corruption efforts.

UNDP Iraq and UNODC also provided support to help trainers develop their capacity to conduct effective self-assessments and identify gaps in anti-corruption efforts. The trainers were trained on the methodology, tools and techniques required to conduct effective anti-corruption self-assessments and identify gaps in anti-corruption efforts.

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a training of trainers’ session on the concept and methodologies of self assessment in relation to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). The session was organized in Amman (Jordan) on 4-8 January 2009 with the participation of practitioners from the Commission of Integrity and the Board of Supreme Audit in Iraq.

The session focused on improving the understanding and the ability of participants to use self assessment tools and specifically the “In-depth Needs Assessment Tool for UNCAC Implementation”, which was developed by UNDP’s Programme on Governance in the Arab Region (UNDP-POGAR) in cooperation with UNODC as a new more comprehensive assessment tool compared to the “UNCAC Self Assessment Checklist” that was developed in 2007.

This new assessment tool, which is still under testing, aims at promoting new approaches that would provide Arab countries with concrete tools to (a) examine current legal and institutional frameworks in a scientific and objective manner, (b) develop reform action plans and technical assistance programs, and (c) contribute to the preparation of country reports submitted to the Conference of State Parties. The new tool adopts an analytical approach that allows the dissection of UNCAC articles with a view to providing users with more detailed

This news update was prepared with the support of UNDP-POGAR.
A national workshop on “Investigative Journalism for Written and Audible Media in Yemen” was organized on 24 Jan 2009, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme’s Country Office in Yemen (UNDP Yemen) and in cooperation with the Supreme National Authority to Combat Corruption (SNACC), the Ministry of Planning and the Yemeni Female Media Forum (YFMF). The workshop the first component of the Project on “Strengthening the Capacity of the Media and CSOs in Transparency” in Yemen, which is being implemented by UNDP Yemen. The workshop focused on training 20 journalists from different media institutions representing the various Governorates. It provided training on investigative journalism skills and on how to execute media investigations and assessment questions. The current model used in the training session is composed of independent sets of questions. In each set, the user finds detailed questions that aim at collecting more specific information in countries that volunteer to use this tool, which is expected to play a key role in enhancing technical assistance in the future.


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Arab Anti-Corruption Highlights

• The Jordanian Anti-Corruption Commission (JACC) in Jordan launches its website: In the context of its efforts to carry out its functions, especially those related to promoting knowledge on anti-corruption issues, the Jordanian ACC launched its website at www.jacc.gov.jo.

The new website includes information on the JACC’s law, the national anti-corruption strategy in Jordan and the related actions plans. It also enables the presentation of notifications on corruption cases and other complaints. For more information please visit the website.

• The Supreme National Authority to Combat Corruption (SNACC) in Yemen discusses a draft national anti-corruption strategy: SNACC is currently working to develop it’s national anti-corruption strategy in cooperation with the World Bank. The Deputy-Head, Dr. Bilqis ABOU-OSBA reviewed the main obstacles and boundaries.

• The latest Arab anti-corruption highlights include:

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- The Supreme National Authority to Combat Corruption (SNACC) in Yemen discusses a draft national anti-corruption strategy: SNACC is currently working to develop it’s national anti-corruption strategy in cooperation with the World Bank. The Deputy-Head, Dr. Bilqis ABOU-OSBA reviewed the main obstacles and boundaries.
components of the draft strategy with World Bank officials and promised that SNACC will invite all partners involved in the control and anti-corruption efforts to discuss the draft before being finalized and adopted. Dr. ABOU-OSBA highlighted that this is in line with SNACC’s interest in strengthening partnerships against corruption at the national, regional and global levels.

For more information, please visit the website at www.snaccyemen.org.