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Perceptions of the Role of Armenian Civil Society in Countering Corruption

Research Project Report

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Caucasus Research Resource Centers – ARMENIA

Corruption in Armenia: Exploratory Research Based on the 2008 Armenia Corruption

Household Survey

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List of Acronyms

AMD – Armenian dram

ANOVA – Analysis of variance

FH – Freedom House

GONGO – Governmentally Organized Non-Governmental Organization

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

TI – Transparency International

USAID - United States Agency for International Development

WB – World Bank

WGI – Worldwide Governance Indicators

Executive Summary

The main task of the study is to provide Armenian NGOs involved in anti-corruption activities with an assessment of

- a) Corruption-related opinions about NGOs;
- b) The size and socio-demographic characteristics of population groups from which NGOs could recruit anti-corruption activists

The study evaluates the perceptions of the respondents towards the Armenian NGO sector's ability to fight corruption and comes to the conclusion that there is a general positive perception of NGO sector as free from corruption and capable of combating corruption in Armenia, but this perception is not grounded in concrete knowledge of NGOs activities. For instance, many respondents could not name an NGO that would be active in anti-corruption sphere. A large proportion of Armenians would not approach an NGO with corruption-related grievances simply because it would not occur to them to do so.

The study also identifies three somewhat overlapping population groups, more likely to actively engage in anti-corruption activities, and maps their socio-demographic characteristics. It shows that urban residents with higher education and upper-middle income are the more likely to actively counter corruption, Yerevan and Tavush being geographically the most active geographic regions.

Introduction

One of the most vivid debates in current political science and development studies is the question of the role of civil society. Enthusiasts of civil society praise it as a potential agent of democratization and development “from below,” capable of mobilizing local resources to address burning issues. Critics of civil society are highly skeptical of its abilities, particularly in weak democracies, and in post-soviet regions with hindered civic traditions.

The efforts of Armenian civil society to address the corruption problem represent an interesting case study in the general debate on the importance of civil society. To what extent can Armenian Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) contribute to anti-corruption efforts? This partially depends on the amount of public support they can harness. If people perceive the NGO sector as trustworthy (not corrupt itself, giving correct information about corruption, capable to fight corruption and so on) the NGOs involved in anti-corruption activities can benefit from public support and implement projects aimed at public. If, on the other hand, the public perceives the NGO sector as corrupt itself and having no will in combating corruption, it is unrealistic for NGOs to expect any public support. In this case they should adjust their anti-corruption strategies accordingly (either try to gain public support or focus their activities elsewhere). Hence, the question of public support is of ultimate importance for NGOs.

If NGOs want to involve the public in countering corruption in Armenia, there is also another type of information they can use efficiently: in addition to knowing the general level of public support, it is useful to identify the group of people who are more likely to engage in anti-corruption activities. Such people are particularly needed, if anti-corruption pressure is to be mounted by the public. Thus, if we know more about active people willing to counter corruption (for instance their age, education, income, and other distinct characteristics, if there are any) we can design programs and policies to target and subsequently mobilize a specific group of people for a better outcome.

To wrap up the general argument: the success of civil society depends on its close ties with the population in general, and with groups of population, likely to engage in anti-corruption activities, in particular. The opinions about NGOs are an important starting point and a reflection of existence or absence of these ties with the general population. The existence of active groups and their opinions about NGOs are the second important aspect. The 2008 Armenia Corruption Household Survey provides invaluable information about civil society related opinions and perceptions of Armenians. From these opinions and perceptions the potential of Armenian civil society to counter corruption via involving the public can be

estimated. That was the goal of the exploratory research project, the outcomes of which are presented in this report. The report is structured as follows: I. Literature Review and Background Information; II Methodology and Description of the Sources; III Results; IV Conclusion and Policy Recommendations.

I. Literature Review and Background Information

1.1. Civil Society and Corruption

Civil society, defined as a sphere of social activities and organizations outside the state, the market and the private sphere that is based on principles of voluntarism, pluralism and tolerance (Anheier 2004; Diamond 1999; Salamon, Sokolowski and List 2003) has been in the focus of numerous scholarly and policy-related democratization debates for the past two decades. Some scholars describe it as one of the most important agents of democratization (Bernhard 1993; Diamond 1999; Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti 1994; Karatnycky and Ackerman 2005; Shin 2006). Others consider it irrelevant or of minor importance (Berman 1997; Dowley and Silver 2002; Kumar 1993; Skocpol 1999).

The task of measuring the impact of civil society on democracy (if indeed there is any impact) is not an easy one. Both civil society and democracy are complex entities that interact on many levels. Civil society can influence democracy related institutions and/or the political culture of a given country in a number of ways (Diamond 1999; Fung 2003; Warren 2001). Hence, a scholar may try to capture that influence from various perspectives: from general country-level analysis to specific case studies. One of the ways to examine the question of importance of civil society for democracy is to look at a specific policy area or democracy-related social problem civil society is trying to address in a given country. This research project has focused on one such important policy area: corruption in Armenia.

Corruption, while not a new phenomenon at all, has attracted a great deal of attention, especially starting from 1990s. Similarly to many complex social problems, there is a definitional debate as to what corruption really means (Theobald 1990). A simple and most popular definition of corruption is that corruption is the abuse of public power for private benefit (Tanzi 2002).

Corruption is a major hindrance to democratization, as it undermines some of the most basic democratic principles of equality and rule of law. The case of civil society anti-corruption activities is a good testing case of civil society's potential to contribute to democratization.

There are two ways civil society organizations could address a societal problem: they could try to work directly with the government (propose policies or laws, lobby, partake in governmental projects or commissions, etc.) or they could try to mobilize the public and in this way put an indirect pressure on the government to address the issue. This study focuses on the second way: the impact of civil society on the public. In the particular case of the

Armenian civil society and the problem of corruption, the assumption is that the amount of public support Armenian NGOs can harness depends on public perception of these NGOs as worthy of supporting. Judged from the perceptions of the Armenian public, to what extent can Armenian civil society mobilize the public to counter corruption? In order to assess the NGOs popular support base, the following research questions are formulated.

RQ 1: How are NGOs perceived in relation to corruption issues in Armenia?

RQ 2: Do people, willing to counter corruption in Armenia, constitute a distinct group different from the general population?

In order to answer these research questions, the 2008 Armenia Household Corruption Survey data is analyzed. The results are presented in Section III of this report. Before turning to the core findings, some background information on Armenian civil society and the issue of corruption over the past decade is presented.

1.2. Armenian Civil Society

Previous studies have demonstrated that post-communist civil society is significantly weaker than in other parts of the world (Bernhard and Karakoç 2007; Howard 2003). Armenia is no exception to this general pattern of post-communist legacy.

Under Soviet system grass-roots activities were organized and controlled from above; most of NGOs could be described as GONGOs (governmentally organized NGOs). The more or less active and independent civil society started to develop in Armenia in late 80s and early 90s. Environmental protection is usually mentioned among the first issues that newly formed NGO-style groups would advocate in the early stage of NGO sector development in Armenia. (Blue, Payton and Kharatyan 2001). Voluntary groups and organizations for humanitarian assistance and relief were created as a response to earthquake of 1988. War in Karabakh, refugees and severe economic crisis added to scope of the tasks that were addressed by NGOs. International NGOs began to work in Armenia in 1990 and also served as example organizations (Blue, Payton and Kharatyan 2001). For 1995 the number of registered organizations was roughly estimated to be around 900 (Dudwick 1997). In late 90s the numbers reached some 2300 NGOs registered with Ministry of Justice since 1991. In 1999 re-registration was required, and the numbers of officially registered NGOs shrunk dramatically: there were around 500 registered NGOs in 2001 (Blue, Payton and Kharatyan

2001). According to the most recent USAID NGO Sustainability Index report, there are currently around 4000 public (non-governmental) organizations and foundations registered in Armenia. Of these only 10 percent are estimated to be active (USAID 2008). Thus, the numbers of NGOs operating in Armenia have been quite volatile since independence, being a good example why numbers of civil society organizations registered in a country are not to be considered as a valid estimate of the state of given civil society (Fowler 1997; Holloway 2001; Howard 2003, 50-52).

The development of civil society in Armenia can hardly be described as a success story. After reaching a certain level, qualified as “mid-transitional” according to USAID NGO Sustainability Index, it has remained on that level with little change. Freedom House Nations in Transit Civil Society score for Armenia has remained constant at 3.5, which, according to Freedom House ranking system qualifies as “partially free.”¹ Figure 1 plots the USAID NGO Sustainability Index and Freedom House Nations in Transit Civil Society scores for Armenia.

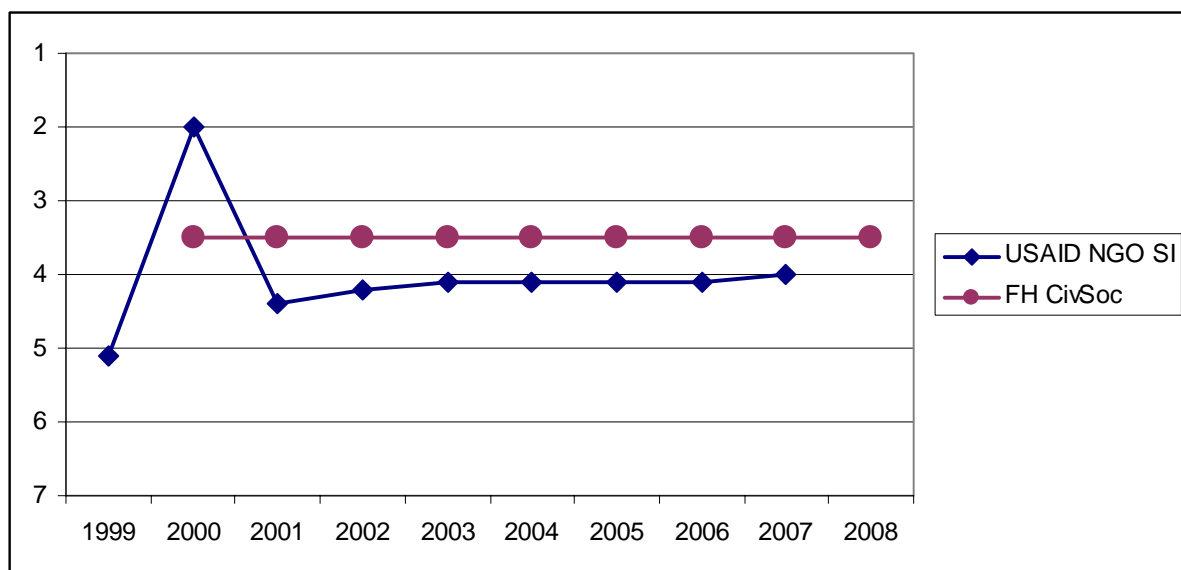


Figure 1: Civil Society in Armenia: The Time Trend

Despite that numerous NGOs mushroomed in Armenia since its independence, it is hardly justified to speak of a vibrant civil society. The description of Armenian NGO sector by Dudwick (1997) remains more or less accurate reflection of the situation, despite being more than ten years old.

¹ Both USAID NGO Sustainability Index and Freedom House use a scale from 7 to 1, where 7 means complete lack of development/freedom and 1 means fully consolidated and active civil society. Thus, the development of Armenian civil society has reached some kind of transitional, half-consolidated, partially free stage and has stagnated at that stage.

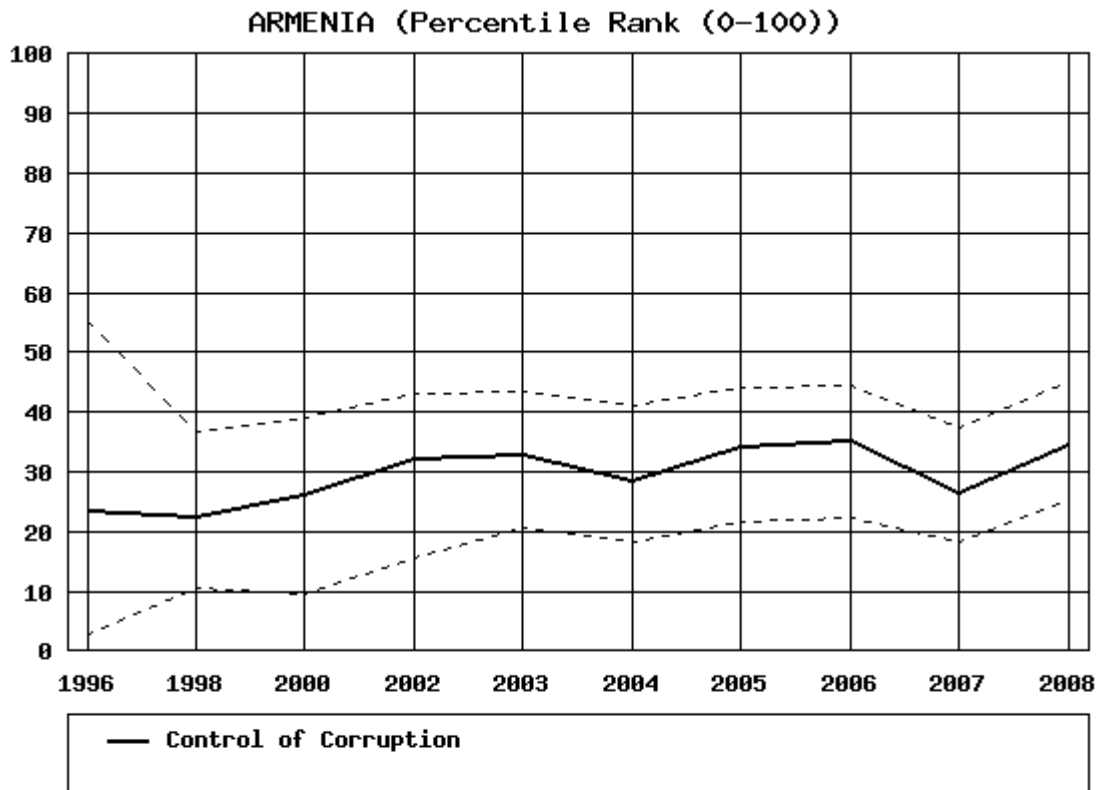
Most of them are short-lived and diffuse, led by one or two members of political or economic elite (or their wives), with a small and fluid membership. At best, they are clusters of friends and acquaintances interested in pursuing a common goal... The groups frequently split over competition between leaders or changes in their mission. Similar organizations tend to compete for resources ... rather than collaborate or share resources (Dudwick 1997, 98).

The influence of civil society on government policies is quite limited. Some NGOs advocate passage of specific laws and legislative initiatives but they have not been very active or successful in lobbying efforts, until recently (Danielyan 2001). USAID (2008) describes a minor improvement in Armenian NGO sector for the year 2007, attributed to somewhat more coordinated efforts of NGOs and their rising professionalism, which might, if continued, lead to a slow progress. So far, Armenian civil society remains weak. Nevertheless, it exists and attempts at solving societal problems. Corruption is one of the issues that a number of Armenian NGOs are involved with.

1.3. Corruption in Armenia

Information about levels of corruption in Armenia over the past decade is available from the World Bank (WB) and Transparency International (TI) datasets. The World Bank assesses corruption worldwide as a part of its Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) Project². Levels of corruption in Armenia according to WB Control of Corruption index are presented in Figure 2. The chart shows percentile rank i.e. it indicates the percentage of countries worldwide that rate below Armenia. Higher values indicate better performance, in this instance: less corruption. The dashed lines indicate the statistically-likely range of the Control of Corruption indicator at 90 percent confidence level.

² Control of Corruption is one of these indicators. Detailed information about the methodology, access to data and to an interactive chart-builder is available from the website: <http://info.worldbank.org>.



Source: Kaufmann D., A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi 2009: Governance Matters VIII: Governance Indicators for 1996–2008

Note: The governance indicators presented here aggregate the views on the quality of governance provided by a large number of enterprise, citizen and expert survey respondents in industrial and developing countries. These data are gathered from a number of survey institutes, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations. The WGI do not reflect the official views of the World Bank, its Executive Directors, or the countries they represent. The WGI are not used by the World Bank Group to allocate resources.

Figure 2: Corruption in Armenia according to World Bank

The graph is generated using the online graph builder http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/sc_chart.asp# accessed on July 8, 2009.

The graph shows that Armenia ranks fairly low, with some minor upward and downward trends. Roughly about 65 percent of countries perform better than Armenia in terms of corruption.

Transparency International (TI) has been assessing corruption in Armenia since 1999 with a gap of two years in 2001 and 2002. The scores of Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International for all available years in Armenia are plotted on the graph below³ (Figure 3). The Index has a range of zero (complete corruption) to ten (no corruption whatsoever).

³ The data are taken from the Transparency International website accessed on July 8, 2009 http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/previous_cpi

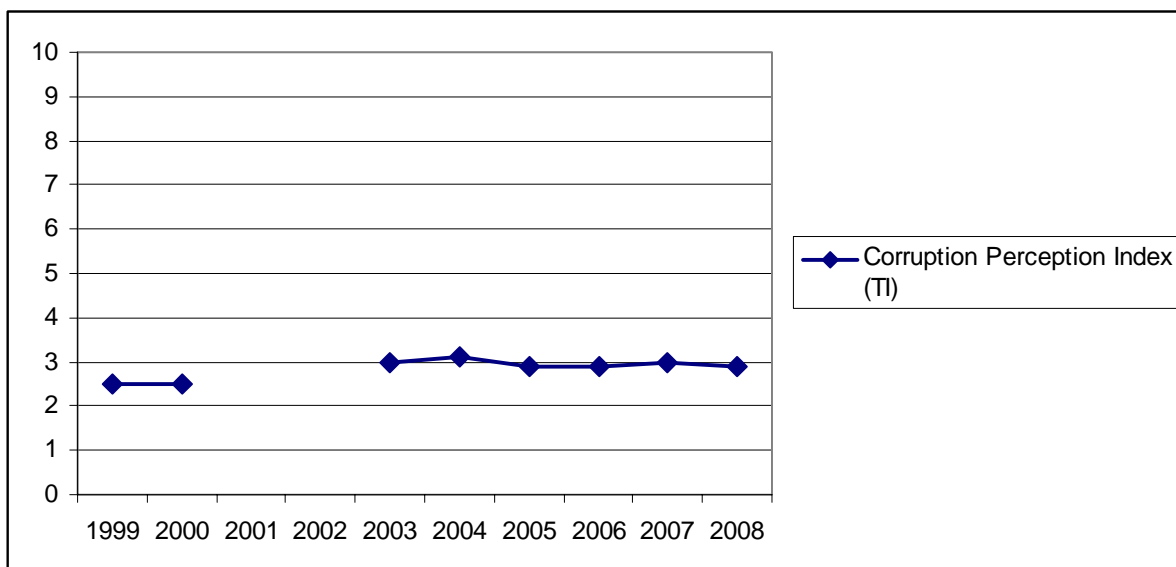


Figure 3: Corruption in Armenia according to Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index

According to the TI Corruption Perception Index, Armenia shows fairly high levels of corruption with no visible improvement over the past decade: a picture similar to that obtained when using the WB measurement of corruption.

In addition to measurements of corruption, developed by international organizations, one can look at what people think about the state of affairs in their respective country. Below are the perceptions of Armenians towards corruption, as reported in Armenia Household Corruption Survey 2008. There are two questions that capture the perception of corruption as a serious problem in Armenia. The first question (Q4 in the questionnaire) simply encourages the respondents to identify the most important problem facing the country, while the second question (Q5) solicits a direct assessment of the problem of corruption. The results are the following:

Q4. What are in your view the most serious problems that are facing Armenia as a country today⁴?

Only one percent (16 people) thinks that corruption is the most serious problem facing the country today. Most people mention unemployment, poverty and political instability. In the list of options given as a first choice answer to this question, corruption is the ninth from the top. It is obviously not a very prominent choice. However, since the question permits recording of a second and a third reply of the respondent, some additional interesting insights are gained from looking at people's ideas about the second and the third most important problem facing Armenia today. Three percent (46 people) of respondents named corruption

⁴ Open-ended question, up to three responses accepted.

as the second most important problem. This time corruption is sixth on the list of most popular answers. When asked about the third most important problem, 11.4 percent (19.1 valid percent⁵ 117 people) mention it as the third most important problem in the country. This time corruption is the top problem.

As the responses to this question demonstrate, the problem of corruption comes to people’s minds after some other problems are mentioned. It does however figure prominently as the third choice of an important problem. Also, when asked directly about corruption, it is evaluated as a serious problem, as the analysis of replies to the next question demonstrates.

Q5. In your opinion, how serious of a problem is corruption in Armenia?

The responses to the question have a range of one (very serious) to four (not at all serious). The mean response value is 1.43, meaning that on average people consider corruption to be rather a serious problem. The details are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Perceptions of Corruption as a Problem in Armenia

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Very serious	976	63%	66.5%	66.5%
Somewhat serious	372	24%	25.3%	91.8%
Not too serious	98	6.3%	6.7%	98.5%
Not at all serious	21	1.4%	1.4%	99.9%
Corruption does not exist	1	0.1%	0.1%	100%
Total Valid	1468	94.8%	100%	
Don't know	81	5.2%		
Total	1549	100%		

As the table demonstrates, the majority of the people (63 percent) think that it is a very serious problem; taken together 91 percent of respondents think that it is either a very serious or a somewhat serious problem in Armenia as of today.

As was demonstrated above, international organizations have described Armenia as a fairly corrupt country for the past decade. The Armenian population, while immediately concerned with problems of unemployment, poverty and political instability, does consider corruption as quite a serious problem. Thus, we are faced with a societal problem, worthy of most serious efforts of civil society.

⁵ Valid percent is the percent calculated by excluding “don’t know”, “refuse to answer” and other types of missing data. It is additionally mentioned in this report in cases when it is different from the ‘normal’ percentage by a value of at least 2, and in all the tables.

In 2003 Armenian government seemingly made corruption a high-priority issue. Anti-Corruption Strategy and Implementation Action Plan, incorporating some 100 measures, was finalized and approved. In June 2004 the Anti-Corruption Council and its Monitoring Commission were formed to support the implementation of anti-corruption policy. The Monitoring Commission includes NGO representatives: a testimony to the fact of involvement of Armenian civil society in corruption problem. In addition to that, twelve working groups of NGOs were established under the Monitoring Commission in 2005, though they did not function in 2006 (Transparency International Armenia 2006).

Corruption is a major problem in Armenia, hindering both economic development and democratization processes. Among other players, Armenian civil society tries to address this problem, thus, providing a good case study of the potential impact of civil society on democratic consolidation. To what extent is Armenian civil society successful in reaching out to the public and gaining their support? The results section of this report explores this question. The methodology and the data sources used in this research are described in the next section.

II. Methodology and Description of the Sources

In the course of this research a number of data sources were used. This section provides information concerning each of these sources.

To provide background information about the development of Armenian civil society, the USAID NGO Sustainability Index and the Freedom House “Freedom in the World” civil society scores were used. To map the development of corruption in Armenia, Transparency International Corruption surveys and World Bank governance indicators were used. The information about these data sources is presented below.

USAID NGO Sustainability Index focuses exclusively on post-communist countries. The data is available for 29 countries and regions for the years 1997-2007. The data for Armenia starts from 1999. The method of data generation is the following: experts assign scores to seven various dimensions of civil society⁶, these are then averaged to produce a score from seven (low or poor level of development) to one (very advanced NGO sector) (USAID 2006).

Freedom House is a US-based non-governmental organization that is, according to its mission statement, committed to support and expansion of freedom in the world. *Nations in Transit*⁷ is one of Freedom House (FH) programs, focused on post-communist countries. The methodology is similar to the main FH projects: *Freedom in the World*. For each country several indicators are produced, based on expert assessment of the situation for the current year. One of such indicators is the Civil Society score that varies from one to seven, with one meaning highly developed and active civil society while seven means non-existent civil society in the given country for the given year. Scores are available for 29 post-communist countries and territories for the years 1997-2007.

World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators reflect the statistical compilation of responses on the quality of governance provided by a large number of enterprise, citizen and expert survey respondents in industrial and developing countries, as reported by a number of survey institutes, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations (World Bank Group 2007)⁸. The list of sources that provide the data for the Governance Indicators and other methodological details can be found in (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzii 2006).

⁶ These dimensions are: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, infrastructure and public image.

⁷ The data is available from the Freedom House website: <http://www.freedomhouse.org>.

⁸ The data is available from the website: <http://web.worldbank.org/>.

Transparency International is a global civil society organization with a mission of fighting corruption in the world. It was founded in 1993. Today it encompasses a global network, including more than 90 locally established national chapters and chapters-in-information (Transparency International 2009a). TI Corruption Perceptions Index ranks 180 countries by their perceived levels of corruption, as determined by expert assessments and opinion surveys. Data for the years 1995-2008 is available from the organization's web site⁹ (Transparency International 2009b).

To answer the main research question the **2008 Armenia Corruption Household Survey** dataset is used. The survey includes 1549 respondents representing adult population in all administrative regions (Marzes) in Armenia¹⁰.

In the *2008 Armenia Corruption Household Survey Questionnaire* I have identified a set of questions that provide information about the perceptions of NGOs as non-corrupt, having a potential to combat corruption, etc. There are also questions about behavior (have reported corruption to an NGO, would do so, etc.). These questions are used as measurements of the public support of NGOs to answer the first research question.

For the second part of research, groups of people who are more likely to engage in anti-corruption activities have to be identified. I chose to focus on three somewhat overlapping groups of respondents:

1. People who contribute to corruption-free environment by refraining from corrupt activities
2. People who express their willingness to engage in anti-corruption activities
3. People who claim to have already done something against corruption¹¹.

These three groups are identified using questions Q19, Q22, Q42 and Q43. Socio-demographic characteristics of these groups are explored and compared with the general population characteristics in order to answer the second research question.

⁹ http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/previous_cpi

¹⁰ The dataset and detailed information about the survey are available at Caucasus Research Resource Centers Armenia website: <http://www.crrc.am/index.php/en/159>

¹¹ The original idea of the research was to focus on people who have done something against corruption: more specifically, reported incidents of corruption, but that group proved to be too small for any meaningful statistical analysis, as demonstrated in the corresponding section of the Results chapter.

III. Results

3.1. Perceptions of NGOs in Terms of Corruption: Descriptive Results

Are Armenian NGOs perceived as free from corruption? Do people see them as capable of combating corruption? Are people willing to cooperate with NGOs to improve the situation? Do people know which NGOs they could contact in case of need? The next section presents the descriptive results for the number of NGO related questions and summarizes the public perceptions of NGOs related to corruption issues.

3.1.1. General Perceptions of NGOs

Q10v: How common is corruption in NGOs?

Range: 1 (very common) – 4 (very rare). Mean value 3.22. Most people think that NGO sector is free from corruption. Details are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Perceptions of Corruption in NGOs

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Very common	61	3.9%	8.9%	8.9%
Somewhat common	91	5.9%	13.3%	22.3%
Somewhat rare	165	10.7%	24.2%	46.4%
Very rare	366	23.6%	53.6%	100%
Total Valid	683	44.1%	100%	
Don't Know	852	55%		
Refused	14	0.9%		
Total Missing	866	55.9		
Total	1549	100%		

Q10B. First, second and third most corrupt sector/service: NGOs are not mentioned as a first choice at all. Top three first choices for the most corrupt sector are: healthcare (polyclinics, hospitals, etc.), electoral system/processes and police (excluding traffic police). Once person (0.1%) mentioned NGOs as a second most corrupt sector. Three people (0.2%) mentioned NGOs as a third most corrupt sector.

Thus, similarly to the results of the previous question, NGO sector is not perceived as corrupt by majority of Armenians. More than that, there seems to be some positive thinking about the capabilities of NGOs to combat corruption in Armenia¹².

¹² Unless the results presented in the next section are a lip service of respondents wishing to be nice about something they have no strong opinion about.

Q46. Do you agree or disagree that NGOs are capable of combating corruption in Armenia? Range: 1 strongly agree, 4 strongly disagree. Mean: 2.59.

Table 3: Perceptions of NGO Capability to Combat Corruption

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Strongly agree	127	8.2%	10.6%	10.6%
Somewhat agree	532	34.3%	44.4%	55%
Somewhat disagree	251	16.2%	20.9%	75.9%
Strongly disagree	289	18.7%	24.1%	100%
Total Valid	1199	77.4%	100%	
NA	104	6.7%		
Don't know	232	15%		
Refused	14	0.9%		
Total Missing	350	22.6%		
Total	1549	100%		

Cumulatively most people (55 percent) agree that the NGO sector is capable of combating corruption.

Thus, there is a general positive image of NGOs as being free from corruption and capable of combating it. To what extent is this positive image based on knowledge?

3.1.2. Knowledge about NGOs involved in anti-corruption activities

Q44. Do you know of any Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that are active in the domain of fighting corruption Armenia? Only six percent (95 people) know any NGOs active in this sphere.

Table 4: Knowledge of Anti-Corruption NGOs

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Yes	95	6.1%	6.4%	6.4%
No	1347	87.0%	91.3%	97.7%
Don't know what an NGO is	34	2.2%	2.3%	100%
Total Valid	1476	95.3%	100%	
Refused	73	4.7%		
Total	1549	100%		

Q45. Please name any NGOs that you are familiar with that are active in anti-corruption activities in Armenia. Response options for this question were not read out;

multiple responses were accepted. Only 5.6 percent (87 people) could name at least one NGO. Top two NGOs mentioned as the first answer are: Yerevan Press Club (28 people, 1.8 or 32.2 valid percent), AYLA (22 people, 1.4 or 25.3 valid percent). There were also a few people who answered: “I don't remember the name” (10 people, 0.6 or 11.5 valid percent) – that was the third most common answer to the question. In addition to that 17 people (1.1 percent) gave a second answer as well. Top three NGOs named in the second answer are: AYLA (nine people, 0.6 or 52.9 valid percent), Other¹³ (three people, 0.2 or 17.6 valid percent), and Yerevan Press Club (two people 0.1 or 11.8 valid percent). Two people (0.1 percent) came up with a third answer: Yerevan Press Club and FOICA got one mention each. Two people gave a fourth answer: Yerevan Press Club and AYLA got one mention each. One person gave a fifth answer and mentioned AYLA. See Table 5 for the count of how many times each NGO got mentioned in total.

Table 5: Anti-Corruption NGOs Mentioned

NGO Name	Times Mentioned	% of respondents mentioning it
AYLA	33	2.1%
Yerevan Press Club	32	2.1%
Other	12	0.8%
I don't remember the name	10	0.6%
FOICA	9	0.6%
IFES	7	0.4%
TI	2	0.1%
Asparez Club	2	0.1%
Consumers' Rights Protection NGO	1	0.1%
Aqilles NGO	1	0.1%

It is clear that most of respondents do not know any concrete NGO involved in anti-corruption sphere. However, NGOs could remain nameless in the perceptions of the people but still play a role in the public sphere by providing corruption related information. Next question explore the perceived importance of NGOs as information sources.

¹³ Coded like that in the data set

Q13: On which information sources do you base your assessment of the level of corruption in the country¹⁴? Ten people (0.6 percent) mention NGOs as a first source. Top three sources are: information provided by the media, talk with friends and acquaintances, talks with relatives or family. Thirty people (1.9 v, 2.4 valid percent) mention NGO as the second most important source. Some 32 people (2.1 percent or four valid percent) mention it as the third most important source. In all three cases NGOs is the least mentioned source. From this I can conclude that it is but a secondary source of information.

The majority of respondents does not know the NGOs involved in anti-corruption activities and does not consider them a main information source. It would be hard to argue that the general positive attitude towards NGOs recorded in the previous section is based on solid knowledge or personal experience. Perhaps that is the reason why, as the next section demonstrate, most people are unwilling to approach NGOs with their corruption-related grievances.

3.1.3. Willingness to Approach an NGO

Q42c: Willing to report corrupt behavior to NGO anticorruption center: 21.6 percent (273) people responded “yes.” A similar question with a somewhat more personal touch (someone personally being a victim of corruption rather than a general willingness to report corruption) reveals a higher percentage of people willing to approach an NGO, as presented below.

Q47A.If you were ever victimized by a corruption case, would you approach an NGO-run anticorruption center to get assistance? It is interesting to note that quite a number of people (22 percent) replied “don’t know.” One fifth of the population is undecided about approaching an NGO. Majority of those who did give a reply, said “no” as Table 6 demonstrates.

¹⁴ Respondents could select up to three information sources from the list provided.

Table 6: Willingness to Approach an NGO for Assistance

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Yes	506	32.7%	46.8%	46.8%
No	576	37.2%	53.2%	100%
Total Valid	1082	69.9%	100%	
NA	104	6.7%		
Don't know	344	22.2%		
Refused	19	1.2%		
Total Missing	467	30.1%		
Total	1549	100%		

This is not a very encouraging picture for NGOs. The amount of undecided people, however, gives food for thought: while these are perhaps the people that could be easier persuaded to cooperate with NGOs as compared to those who made up their mind and picked the “no” option. To find out more on the motivation of those who would, and would not approach an NGO if victimized by a corruption case, the answers to the next two open-ended questions (Q47B and Q47C) are examined and presented in Tables 7 and 8. In both cases the large amount of missing data is explained by the fact that the questions were only asked if the respondent replied correspondingly “yes” or “no” to the question Q47A.

Table 7: Reasons for Approaching an NGO for Assistance

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Because I trust them that they will help me	247	15.9%	51.1%	51.1%
To protect my rights	63	4.1%	13%	64.2%
Other	63	4.1%	13%	77.2%
Because I am not able to solve the issue by myself	57	3.7%	11.8%	89%
To prevent such cases in the future	33	2.1%	6.8%	95.9%
Because they are fair and not corrupt	20	1.3%	4.1%	100%
Total Valid	483	31.2%	100%	
NA	1032	66.6%		
Don't know	29	1.9%		
Refused	5	0.3%		
Total Missing	1066	68.8%		
Total	1549	100%		

Table 8: Reasons for Not Approaching an NGO for Assistance

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
I am not sure if such NGOs will help me because they are weak	265	17.1%	58.6%	58.6%
I don't trust them	67	4.3%	14.8%	73.5%
Other	62	4%	13.7%	87.2%
I am afraid to be prosecuted	25	1.6%	5.5%	92.7%
I am not used to applying for help to such places.	19	1.2%	4.2%	96.9%
It is not acceptable in our society to apply for help	14	0.9%	3.1%	100%
Total Valid	452	29.2%	100%	
NA	727	46.9%		
Refused	265	17.1%		
Don't know	105	6.8%		
Total Missing	1097	70.8%		
Total	1549	100		

It is interesting to note that trust is the top reason for approaching an NGO, while lack of confidence in NGOs (being not sure whether an NGO is capable to help) is the most important reason for not approaching an NGO. Trust, or rather, lack of trust is also the second most important reason for not approaching an NGO. Clearly, trust is an asset, the importance of which for civil society is hard to underestimate. It seems to be the decisive factor why people would or would not contact NGOs.

3.1.4. Awareness of NGOs as Potential Assistants in Combating Corruption

If not asked directly, do people think about NGOs as potential assistants in case they are confronted with corruption issues? The next set of questions explores that aspect of corruption-related perceptions of NGOs.

Q33: What can you personally do to reduce corruption? Response options for this question were not read out; multiple responses were accepted. As a first option 50.4 percent or 54 valid percent (781 people) said there was nothing they could do, two other top responses were: abstain from paying bribes for public services and refuse to make favors to

officials or to their relatives¹⁵. “Report corrupt behavior of public officials to NGO ACC” is the fifth response from the top: 0.8 or 0.9 valid percent (13 people) mention it as their first choice action against corruption. Only 16.8 percent (260 people) gave a second option; reporting to NGOs is the seventh from the top with some seven people (0.5, 2.7 valid percent) saying they could do that. Also 3.1 percent (48 people) came up with a third option: seven of these (0.5 or 14.6 valid percent) said they would report corrupt behavior to an NGO. Only 0.5 percent (seven people) came up with a fourth answer, not mentioning NGOs. That makes a total of 27 people (1.7 percent) thinking about reporting corrupt behavior to an NGO.

Q35.1. What institution(s) would you contact to report a corrupt act by an official?

Response options were not read out, multiple responses were accepted. Top three answers for the first reply were police, public prosecution office and courts. “NGO anti-corruption centers” is the last option: 0.1 percent (two people) mention it as their first choice. Some 13.3 percent (206 people) gave a second answer; NGO is second from the bottom with 0.1 percent (one person) as the second choice. Also 6.5 percent (101 people) gave a third option; 0.1 or two valid percent (two people) would report to the NGO as a third choice. Twenty four people (1.5 percent) came up with the fourth answer, but NGO was not mentioned. Sixteen people (one percent) gave a fifth choice with 0.1 or 6.3 valid percent (one person) mentioning NGOs. Six people (0.4%) could think of a sixth option, 0.1 or 16.7 valid percent (one person) would report to NGOs. Thus, only seven respondents (0.4 percent) thought of contacting an NGO in case of corruption without prior prompting.

Q37. During the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household reported a corrupt act by a public official? The descriptive statistics for this question are reported in Table 9. Only one percent of respondents have reported a corrupt act in the past 12 months. From those fifteen people who did, no one forwarded their complaint to NGOs¹⁶.

¹⁵ It is interesting to note that if “don’t know” is not defined as missing value during the analysis it becomes the second top choice for this question: 6.8% (98 people) don’t know what they could personally do to reduce corruption.

¹⁶ Question Q38 provides information as to which organizations was the report or complain about corrupt act by a public official forwarded. No NGOs are mentioned.

Table 9: Instances of Reporting a Corrupt Act

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Yes	15	1%	1%	1%
No	1493	96.4%	99%	100%
Total Valid	1508	97.4%	100%	
Don't know	30	1.9%		
Refused	11	0.7%		
Total Missing	41	2.6%		
Total	1549	100%		

Thus, it is evident that very few people report corruption, and none of them have contacted an NGO in the past 12 months. However, when the time span is enlarged some corruption reporters to NGOs are identified.

Q43c: Have reported corrupt behavior of public officials to NGO anticorruption center: 0.8 percent (12 people) replied “yes.” This, still, is quite a low number. Thus, if not asked directly about NGOs, very few people think about approaching NGOs. Nonetheless, when offered a choice of services NGOs could provide, people are showing interest in these, as the last section of the descriptive analysis of the perceptions of NGOs demonstrate.

3.1.5. Interest in NGO assistance

Q48. Which of the following types of anti-corruption assistance would you want NGOs to provide to you? Response options for this question were made available to the respondents; multiple answers were accepted. Only 2.4 percent said they would like nothing of the services offered. Majority of people gave multiple answers, indicating their interest in services provided by NGOs. It is difficult to judge, though, how much of that interest is genuine rather than just an agreement to take what is offered. There is a pattern in choosing answers that makes me think that people picked whatever was offered in the order that it was offered. The sum of all instances of mentioning a given assistance type is presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Types of Assistance Requested from NGOs

Type of assistance	Mentioned	%
Information about citizens' rights in the area of corruption	868 ¹⁷	56%
Information about citizens' obligations in the area of corruption	539 ¹⁸	34.8%
Information about anticorruption legislation	401 ¹⁹	25.9%
Information about institutions you may complain about officials' corrupt behavior	292 ²⁰	18.8%
Free legal advice to formulate your corruption complaint	239 ²¹	15.4%
Free legal support in collecting information and evidence related to corruption cases	151	9.7%
Free legal support in development and submission of corruption case documents	136	8.8%
Free representation in court	175	11.3%
Anticorruption awareness activities	202	13%
Anticorruption education activities	288	18.6%
Other	11	0.7%
Nothing/none of the above	37	2.4%
Information about cases when corruption acts are found	1	0.1%
Alleviate the paperwork/administrative procedures	1	0.1%

Free representation in courts seems to be relatively important, as it does not confirm to the general decreasing pattern. There were more people choosing it, 'before' the 8th option, meaning that at least some people would read through the list and skip some options that seem less important for them compared to free representation in the courts. Observing the pattern that most people choose the first option as their first choice, the second option as their second choice and so on, I would recommend that in the future the answer options for this

¹⁷ 866 people mentioned as a first choice, 2 people as a second choice. It is also the top option on the card, thus there is a risk of this answer being suggested to the respondent. Still, looks like this is the most urgent one that people pick right away.

¹⁸ 46 people mention it as the first choice, 492 people as a second choice. This being a second response option on the card, it strengthens my worry that the responses are primed by the order of response options in the questionnaire. Was it ever randomized?

¹⁹ Same pattern in choosing answers occurs: most people choose it as a third option, it being the third option on the response list (77+97+225+2). Looks like people have no real opinion and just tick things off as they are presented to them.

²⁰ Numbers of people who chose it as the first, second, etc options summing up to the total: 51+67+64+108+2. Forth is the largest choice. Perhaps people just tick off everything they find necessary. Why not? You could use all kind of information if it is provided for free.

²¹ 41+41+42+40+74+1. Same pattern repeats itself for options 6, 7 and 8

question are randomized. On the other hand, it is plausible that people are interested in all kinds of assistance an NGO could provide without having strong priorities.

3.1.6. Corruption-Related Perceptions of NGOs: Wrapping Up

There is a general positive perception of NGO sector as free from corruption and capable of combating it. Some 20 to 30 percent of respondents claim to be willing to approach an NGO either to alert it to corruption issues or when personally victimized by corruption. However, few people know any NGOs involved in anti-corruption activities. NGOs also do not figure prominently as a source of corruption related information. Very few people think of approaching NGOs unless specifically prompted if they would do so. From the tiny percentage of people who did report a corrupt act in the past twelve months no one approached an NGO with such a report. When asked if they had ever reported corrupt behavior to a NGO anti-corruption center, twelve people reported having done so. However, people express interest in various types of assistance NGOs could provide. All in all, the picture is mixed: people are not well informed about NGOs and undecided about approaching them on one hand. On the other hand there is a general positive attitude and a demand for corruption-related assistance that NGOs can use to strengthen their links with the public.

3.2. Important Population Groups

Three different groups, potentially important for NGOs involved in anti-corruption activities and planning to enlist popular support, can be identified using some of the questionnaire items. It is plausible to assume that in order to combat corruption, an NGO could rely on honest people who would not give, neither take a bribe. Alternatively, it could try to address people who express willingness to do something against corruption, or, better still, who have already done something to combat corruption in Armenia. These three groups can be identified in the surveyed population, using questions Q19, Q22, Q42 and Q43. The working titles for these sub-groups of population are ‘honest people’, ‘potential anti-corruption activists’ and ‘anti-corruption activist.’

Their socio-demographic characteristics are explored in the next sections.

3.2.1. Honest People

Two questions in the questionnaire²² allow us to estimate how a respondent would react, if offered to take, or asked to give a bribe. The percentages of people who would abstain from corrupt practices are presented in Table 11. People seem more honest when it comes to not taking bribes (71.9 percent), while when requested to give a bribe a lesser percent (40.9) would refuse to do so.

Table 11: Percentages of People Who Would Accept or Offer a Bribe

	N	%	Valid %
Would take a bribe	422	27.2%	27.5%
Would not take a bribe	1114	71.9%	72.5%
Total valid Q19	1536	99.2%	100%
Missing for Q 19	13	0.8%	
Would give a bribe	901	58.2%	58.7%
Would not give a bribe	634	40.9%	41.3%
Total valid Q 22	1535	99.1%	100%
Missing for Q 22	14	0.9%	

In addition to analyzing these two questions separately, it is also interesting to see how many people are consistently honest, refusing both types of corrupt activities. To do that, I have composed a simple ‘honesty score’ by recoding answers to questions 19 and 22 so that “one” means the respondent would not take/give a bribe (other answers recoded to zero); after that I summed up the values for the two variables, thus getting a score with a range from zero to two. People, who neither would take nor give a bribe, have an honesty score of two, while those who would engage in either of the corrupt activities would score one. The score of zero means the person would both take and give a bribe, should an opportunity arise. The honesty score is presented in the next table. One can see that people are not strictly consistent in their behavior: 39 percent would either take or give a bribe, while 36.5 percent would do neither. The smallest of the three sub-groups is those who would both take and give a bribe: 22.9 percent.

²² Questions Q19 and Q22 in the questionnaire

Table 12: Honesty Score

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
0	354	22.9%	23.2%	23.2%
1	604	39%	39.6%	62.9%
2	566	36.5%	37.1%	100%
Total Valid	1524	98.4%	100%	
Missing	25	1.6%		
Total	1549	100%		

3.2.2. Potential Anti-Corruption Activists

In the survey people were provided with a list of activities and asked whether they would be willing to do these (Q 42) or have ever done any (Q43). While the second group of respondents that claimed to have done something against corruption is discussed in detail later, this section provides information on those who expressed their willingness to act against corruption. To define the group of potential anti-corruption activists, Q42 was recoded: “yes” option was coded as one; other types of answers were coded as zero. The frequencies are presented in the next table.

Table 13: Willingness to Act against Corruption

Type of Activity	Yes	No
Abstain from paying bribes for public services	75.0% (N 1162)	25.0% (N 387)
Refuse to make favors to officials or to their relatives related with my job	60.8% (N 942)	39.2% (N 607)
Report corrupt behavior of public officials to NGO anticorruption center	17.6% (N 273)	82.4% (N 1276)
Report corrupt officials behavior to competent authorities	15.6% (N 242)	84.4 (N 1307)
File lawsuit against the corrupt official	12.1% (N 188)	87.9 (N 1361)
Participate in awareness campaigns against corruption	20.4% (N 316)	79.6% (N 1233)
Participate and support an anticorruption educational campaign	27.8% (N 430)	72.2% (N 1119)

A large group of people (75 percent) is willing to abstain from paying bribes and a somewhat smaller but still significant group (60.8 percent) is willing to refuse job-related

favours. There is also some interest in awareness and educational campaigns. People are quite reluctant to report corrupt officials and file lawsuits against them. Small as it is, the group of people willing to approach an NGO is somewhat larger than the group of people willing to report corruption to competent authorities. This is an interesting finding and a sign to NGOs that they could use the trust and their good image to encourage people willing to combat corruption to come forth and speak out.

In addition to the simple description, I have summed up all seven options to get a ‘willingness’ score: i.e. the more of the activities mentioned above is a person willing to undertake, the higher the score of that person, to the maximum of seven (zero meaning the respondent would engage in none of the mentioned types of anti-corruption activities). The distribution of the willingness score is presented in the next table.

Table 14: Willingness to Act against Corruption Score

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
0	307	19.8%	19.8%	19.8%
1	206	13.3%	13.3%	33.1%
2	520	33.6%	33.6%	66.7%
3	162	10.5%	10.5%	77.1%
4	156	10.1%	10.1%	87.2%
5	76	4.9%	4.9%	92.1%
6	37	2.4%	2.4%	94.5%
7	85	5.5%	5.5%	100%
Total	1549	100%	100%	

As it is evident from the first row of Table 14, the group of people willing to do nothing to combat corruption is relatively small (19.8 percent). Mean value for this score is 2.29, meaning that on average people are willing to engage in two different types of anti-corruption activities. From the previous table we know that people are willing to abstain from paying bribes and making job-related favours. Thus, there is some willingness to resist corruption by personally steering clear of corrupt acts.

3.2.3. *Anti-Corruption Activists*

To express willingness to act against corruption is one thing. To actually do something is quite another story. In this section the information on the group of people who claim to have acted against corruption is presented. It is important to keep in mind that this is

self-reported behavior. There is no guarantee that the respondents really did what they report having done.

Q43: which actions have you taken in the past to combat corruption? Coding for all answers was reversed so that 1 is yes, 0 is no.

Table 15: Types of Anti-Corruption Activism

Type of Action	Yes	No
Abstain from paying bribes for public services	32.0% (N 496)	63.6% (N 985)
Refuse to make favors to officials or to their relatives related to one's job	22.6% (N 350)	72.6% (N 1125)
Report corrupt behavior of public officials to NGO anticorruption center	0.8% (N12)	93.0% (N 1441)
Report corrupt officials behavior to competent authorities	0.4% (N 6)	93.7% (N 1452)
File a lawsuit against the corrupt official	0.2% (N 3)	93.6% (N 1450)
Participate in awareness campaigns against corruption	0.6% (N 9)	93.0% (N 1441)
Participate and supporting an anticorruption educational campaign	1.2% (N 19)	92.9% (1439 N)

Similarly to the case of potential activists, the replies to the seven options were summed up to produce the 'activism' score to see how many people have done more than one action and to map different degrees of individual activism. The score varies from zero (haven't done any of the actions mentioned above) to seven (have done all the seven types of actions). The frequencies for the activism score are presented in the next table.

Table 16: Anti-Corruption Activism Score

	N	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
0	991	64%	64%	64%
1	251	16.2%	16.2%	80.2%
2	286	18.5%	18.5%	98.6%
3	16	1%	1%	99.7%
4	3	0.2%	0.2%	99.9%
5	1	0.1%	0.1%	99.9%
7	1	0.1%	0.1%	100%
Total	1549	100%	100%	

Mean value for the anti-corruption activism score is 0.5. Sixty four percent of the population hasn't done anything to combat corruption, not even abstained from giving bribes and doing favors. Some 16.2 percent of respondents have done something to counter corruption, 18.5 percent have done at least two things.

3.2.4. Relationship between the three Groups

Thus, the three groups of populations have been mapped: the 'honest people,' the potential and the actual anti-corruption activists. How do these three populations relate to each other? To assess that, we can check if the three corresponding scores correlate with each other. If people who have a high honesty score, also score high on willingness and activism scores, that means the three populations largely overlap: the same people are likely to be honest, willing and active in anti-corruption issues. No correlation would mean that the populations do not overlap or do so only to a small insignificant extend. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in the next table.

Table 17: Relationship between the Three Population Groups

	Anti-corruption activities score	Honesty score	Willingness to act against corruption score
Anti-corruption activism score		0.074* (N 1524)	0.268* (N 1549)
Honesty score	0.074* (N 1524)		0.043 (N 1524)
Willingness to act against corruption score	0.268* (N 1549)	0.043 (N 1524)	

Entries are Pearson Correlations.

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Honestly and willingness do not correlate. That means that honest people are not necessarily the ones who are also willing to act against corruption. On the other hand, those who report willingness to act against corruption do not necessarily abstain from taking and giving bribes. Activism does correlate both with potential activism and with honesty. The anti-corruption activists seem to be most important from the three groups. It is intuitively plausible that people who do act against corruption are the ones who are most needed if a public resistance to corruption is to be mounted with any success. Also, this group apparently correlates with the two other groups, meaning that people who act against corruption are also

the people who are more likely to be willing to do so²³ and are also likely to remain honest in terms of corruption. Thus, the rest of the analysis focuses on this group and explores it in terms of its distinctiveness from the general population.

3.2.8. A Closer Look at the Anti-Corruption Activist Group

Do anti-corruption activists possess some characteristics that make them different from the rest of the population? This question has a practical relevance. If indeed they do, and these characteristics are known, the NGOs could target these specific sub-groups of population (for example people with higher education, urban residents, young people etc.) The questionnaire provides some socio-demographic information on the respondents, making it possible to analyze these characteristics and create the socio-demographic portrait of anti-corruption activist. The following variables are included in this part of the analysis: gender, age, urban vs. rural residence, education, income and the geographical region. For all these variables mean values of anti-corruption activism score (shortly referred to as “activism”) were compared across various groups by means of T-Test or ANOVA. Below are the results of the analysis.

In terms of **gender** no significant difference between levels of activism of men and women are to be observed. Both genders are equally engaged or disengaged in anti-corruption field.

Age is measured in two different ways in the dataset: as the actual age of the respondent (D2 *How old were you on your last birthday?*) and as an age group. Both variables were checked for a relationship with activism, with no significant results. There is no linear relationship between actual age and activism scores; ANOVA analysis shows no significant differences between the mean values of activism for different age groups. People of all ages have an equal probability of acting to counter corruption.

A comparison of mean levels of activism in **urban vs. rural** residential areas by means of T-Test demonstrates that urban residents are significantly more active in countering corruption. The difference is significant at 0.001 level ($t = 6.93$, $df = 1547$). The mean values for both groups are presented in Table 18.

²³ This is not as trivial as it sounds. People who have acted in the past could have had bad experience or gone through major disappointments, which would lead to their disengagement and unwillingness to act again.

Table 18: Relationship between Ant-Corruption Activities and Urban/Rural Residence

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Activism Score	Urban residents	1045	.68	.902	.028
	Rural residents	504	.36	.720	.032

Similarly to the measurement of age, there are two ways of recording respondents' level of **education**. There is a continuous variable recording the years of formal education the respondent had completed. In addition to that, respondents can be grouped into categories corresponding to the highest level of education received. The second variable (D4) can be treated both as a dichotomous and as a continuous data, since higher levels of education receive higher coding. As a first step of finding out if education is related to anti-corruption activism, both measures of education are treated as continuous variables and a correlation analysis is carried out. The results are presented in Table 19.

Table 19: Education and Anti-Corruption Activism, Part 1

	Anti-Corruption Activism
Highest level of education	0.095* (N 1549)
Years of formal education	0.090* (N 1549)

Entries are Pearson Correlations.

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Both education measures show a weak but statistically significant positive correlation with the activism score, suggesting that people with higher level of education and more years of formal education are also those who score higher on anti-corruption activism score, having done something to counter corruption in Armenia. In addition to correlation analysis ANOVA test was done to compare activism between various educational groups. The tests shows statistically significant differences in the levels of anti-corruption activism between different educational groups: $F(7, 1538) = 4.60$; $p < 0.001$. The post hoc test (Tukey) shows that the difference is between those with completed higher education on one hand, and those with secondary education (both incomplete and complete) on the other hand. People with higher education have a significantly higher mean anti-corruption activities score of 0.75, while people with secondary education have the lowest mean scores of 0.47. The remaining educational groups fall in between these two values. Thus, ANOVA test only partially replicates the results of the correlation analysis: those with higher education are more active; however the relationship is not strictly linear. Those with primary education have a mean value of 0.56 being on average more active than people with secondary education are. Mean

values of anti-corruption activities score for each educational group are presented in Table 20.

Table 20: Education and Anti-Corruption Activism, Part 2

Level of Education	Mean Anti-corruption Activism Score	N	Std. Deviation
No primary education /less than 4 th grade education	0.09	11	0.302
Primary education /1-4 th grades	0.61	41	0.802
Incomplete secondary education /5-9 th grades	0.47	137	0.796
Completed secondary education /10/11 th grades	0.47	517	0.784
Secondary technical education	0.56	385	0.900
Incomplete higher education /1-3 rd grades/	0.73	95	0.904
Completed higher education	0.75	341	0.917
Post-graduate degree	0.79	19	0.855
Total Valid	0.58	1546	0.860

Respondents' **income** was estimated using their description of the financial situation of the household (D9). Similarly to the type of education variable, household income category can be treated as a pseudo-continuous measurement, since higher income group received higher coding. Correlation analysis shows a statistically significant positive relationship between household income and corruption activism: Pearson $r = 0.11$, significant (two-tailed) at 0.01 confidence level. A more appropriate test for this case, however, is ANOVA, which show some interesting difference in levels of activism between different household income categories: $F(6, 1459) = 3.49$, $p < 0.01$. The post hoc test (Tukey) shows that the group, which is distinct in terms of its activism is the group of household monthly income of 120.001 – 24.000 AMD. Respondents belonging to this category have a mean activism score of 0.78 which is significantly higher than activism scores of three lower monthly income groups: Up to 15.000 AMD, 15.001 – 30.000 AMD and 30.001 – 75.000

AMD. So, if the groups are numbered, as in Table 21, the statistically significant difference of means is found between the following groups: “1” and “5”, “2” and “5”, “3” and “5”.

Table 21: Relationship between Income and Anti-Corruption Activities

Self-reported monthly household income	Mean anti-corruption score	N	Std. Deviation
1. Up to 15.000 AMD	0.45	93	0.787
2. 15.001 – 30.000 AMD	0.52	290	0.865
3. 30.001 – 75.000 AMD	0.51	486	0.804
4. 75.001 – 120.000 AMD	0.63	331	0.900
5. 120.001 – 240.000 AMD	0.78	226	0.912
6. 240.001 – 360.000 AMD	0.70	33	0.810
7. 360.001 AMD and more	0.86	7	1.215
Total Valid	0.58	1466	0.860

In terms of geographic distribution of anti-corruption activists, different **Marzes** display statistically significant variations of mean values of the activism score, as ANOVA analysis demonstrates: $F(10, 1538) = 18.37, p < 0.001$. The post hoc test (Tukey) shows that Tavush and Yerevan are the two most active regions, where anti-corruption activism score mean is significantly higher than in the rest of the Republic. Next active region is Armavir: it is significantly more active than Lori and Syunig, which, together with Vayots Dzor²⁴ are the three most passive regions. Shirak is more active as compared to Lori and Syunig. Ararat is more active than Syunig; Aragatsotn, Kotayq and Gegharkunik differ only from Yerevan and Tavush by their low levels of activities. Table 22 lists the anti-corruption activists scores for all Marzes.

²⁴ The low activity level in Vayots Dzor as compared to the rest of Armenia except Yerevan and Tavush could be due to statistical error, because Tukey test only shows significant difference between Vayots Dzor and Yerevan and Vayots Dzor and Tavush respectively, but not with other regions.

Table 22: Anti-Corruption Activities in different Marzes

Marz	Mean anti-corruption scores	N	Std. Deviation
Tavush	1.02	66	0.868
Yerevan	0.86	540	0.888
Armavir	0.60	124	0.806
Shirak	0.59	136	0.923
Ararat	0.50	117	0.784
Aragatsotn	0.42	66	0.912
Kotayq	0.36	143	0.884
Gegharkunik	0.26	99	0.664
Lori	0.22	156	0.625
Vayots Dzor	0.21	29	0.620
Syuniq	0.03	73	0.164
Total	0.58	1549	0.860

Taken together, the socio-demographic analysis of the anti-corruption activists group shows that urban residents particularly from Yerevan and Tavush, with higher education and an upper-middle household income between 120.001 – 240.000 AMD are more likely to engage in anti-corruption activities.

IV. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

This research project tried to assess the popular support of civil society anti-corruption activities in Armenia, based on respondents' perceptions of civil society organizations on one hand, and on their willingness to engage in anti-corruption activities on the other hand. The first part of the analysis reveals a mixed picture of what can be described as 'shallow support' of civil society: i.e. people are generally positive about NGOs involvement in anti-corruption activities, but that attitude is not grounded in solid knowledge or experience with NGOs. The second part of the analysis has identified a population group more likely to engage in anti-corruption activities, thus providing organizations interested in popular mobilization some ideas as to where they could focus their efforts for more efficiency.

The first research question, proposed in this study was:

RQ 1: How are NGOs perceived in relation to corruption issues in Armenia?

The analysis of several questionnaire items has demonstrated that in general the perception of NGOs is positive, since they are considered to be free from corruption and capable of combating corruption in Armenia. People are also interested in a variety of corruption-related assistance types NGOs could offer. Thus, NGOs do not have to worry about a general environment: there is no atmosphere of hostility or suspicion towards them among the general public. That is good news. Bad news, however, is that this positive atmosphere does not lead to active cooperation. Some 20 to 30 percent (depending on how the question is phrased) of population would approach an NGO with corruption-related issues. One has to take into consideration the fact that these percentages are obtained when people are directly asked if they would contact an NGO. If they are simply asked what they would do to combat corruption, an option of contacting an NGO barely occurs to them. This is a clear sign that NGOs do not figure prominently in people's minds. NGOs planning to enlist public support for their anti-corruption projects have to deal with this problem: people by themselves are very unlikely to approach NGOs not because they are mistrustful or hostile, but simply because it would not occur to them to do so.

Another major hindrance in the process of public mobilization is the lack of relevant knowledge and information. Even though some people express their willingness to approach an NGO, most of them would not know where to go. Only six percent of respondents know an NGO, active in the sphere of anti-corruption; only five percent could name at least one such NGO. Here, again, NGOs are faced with a problem: the general positive attitude of

people can result in concrete actions only if it is based on relevant information. If NGOs want to enlist public support, they have to make themselves known to the public.

All in all, there is a positive attitude towards NGOs, but this attitude is not based on experience and has not led to action in the past. It remains to be seen whether willingness to cooperate with NGOs, expressed by roughly one fourth of the population, is more than a lip service.

The second research question, formulated in this study was not directly concerned with civil society, rather with people who are more likely to become anti-corruption activists, and thus be of use to civil society. It was formulated as follows:

RQ 2: Do people, willing to counter corruption in Armenia, constitute a distinct group different from the general population?

The study has identified three population groups that partially overlap: the people who refuse to take or give bribes, those who are willing to act against corruption, and those who claim to have acted against corruption in the past. The third group is theoretically and empirically the most relevant. Theoretical decision to focus on anti-corruption activists is justified by the following line of reasoning: honesty and willingness to act against corruption are somewhat weaker commitments as compared to evidence of action against corruption. Empirically, it became evident from the three group comparison, that anti-corruption activism is related to both honesty and willingness to act against corruption, while the latter two are not necessarily related. Thus, anti-corruption activists seem to be the most interesting group. Further analysis has demonstrated that anti-corruption activists do differ from the rest of the Armenian population by a few parameters. Age and gender play no role in determining the level of anti-corruption activism. Men and women of all ages are equally likely to act against corruption. However, residents of urban areas are more likely to act against corruption as compared to their rural neighbors. People with higher levels of education are also more active. Those with upper-middle income are more inclined to act against corruption as compared to lower classes. Also, residents of Yerevan, and, interestingly, Tavush, seem to be particularly active in combating corruption in Armenia. To sum up: an urban resident with higher education and upper-middle income is the person NGOs should target if they want to efficiently mobilize public support. On the other hand, if NGOs have a different goal of reaching out to the most passive strata of the population they should address poor rural residents with less years of formal education.

The following policy recommendations can be suggested based on the results of this study:

- ***NGOs should be more visible.*** People obviously do not know the NGOs active in the anti-corruption sphere. Even though there are a number of people who are willing to approach an NGO, only a tiny percent of population knows where to go.
- ***NGOs should work on building up their social capital.*** They seem to be in a good starting position: people have a positive image of Armenian civil society. This positive image has to be nourished and strengthened, so that it translates into higher levels of trust. Trust emerges as a very important reason why people would or would not approach an NGO. If more people perceive NGOs as trustworthy and capable of concrete positive actions, there is a good reason to expect that more people would be willing to cooperate with NGOs. This brings me back to the issue of visibility: if NGOs act in a way that makes them and their work public, this will generate trust that is based on concrete positive experience and knowledge.
- ***NGOs should develop ways of proving their capability.*** The main self-reported reason why people would not approach an NGO with corruption-related issues is that the respondents did not consider NGOs as capable of assistance. This is not an easy task. An NGO might be very capable indeed, but have no ways of demonstrating that capability convincingly. Winning a court case, or forcing a corrupt official to quit, could be considered good examples. Of course, an NGO has to consider its own priorities. Lobbying for reforms that would significantly reduce corruption is of great importance, but such activities do not necessarily contribute to public perceptions of capability.
- ***If NGOs want to target more active people they should focus their activities on urban residents with higher education and upper-middle income, particularly in Yerevan and Tavush.***
- ***Recommendation to donors: funding NGOs' anti-corruption projects should include a mandatory "public relations" budget category.*** NGOs should be encouraged to actively promote their anti-corruption programs. Funds could be earmarked for that specific process in order to insure successful public campaigns. In this way, hopefully, the next survey on this subject will reveal a higher percentage of Armenians, knowledgeable about NGOs involved in combating corruption. Which

brings me to my last recommendation, addressed to potential donors and researchers alike:

- ***The next wave of Armenia Corruption Household Survey should be carried out in the near future*** to provide invaluable information on the developments of corruption-related public perceptions, opinions, knowledge, etc. to provide Armenian policy-makers and activists with solid information, which would enable them to efficiently address one of the greatest challenges of Armenian reality.

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