

In the framework of the project “*Promoting integrity and citizen’s engagement at the local level in Morocco*” financially supported by the UK, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme organised two study visits, one for the Instance Centrale de Prévention de la Corruption (ICPC) and Transparency Maroc to France and one for the Institution du Médiateur du Royaume (IMR) to Belgium.

The objective of the visits was to exchange best practices in the fields of citizen engagement, collaboration with civil society and other public institutions, as well as communication. The experiences of peers from France and Belgium shall support the ongoing efforts of the ICPC and IMR to establish joint projects with civil society in Casablanca and Tanger, to elaborate a national integrity portal and to promote good governance in general.

### **Study Visit of the ICPC and Transparency Maroc to France: 19-21 January 2016**

The study visit offered the opportunity to explore various mechanisms for public institutions to interact with civil society. Some French institutions work regularly with civil society, exchanging information and cooperating, but based on informal relations, while other institutions, such as the HATVP have established formal relations. The HATVP accredited three NGOs (Sherpa, Transparency



France and Association pour une démocratie directe) to provide them with a privileged access to submit alerts. The Moroccan delegation learned about the criteria used to accredit an organisation and the advantages such collaboration brings, which include providing citizens with the ability to voice concerns while staying anonym and providing the HATVP with alerts that have been verified by the associations. The CNAPE also has formal relations with a public institution, being a member of the Committee on Children Rights of the French Défenseur du Peuple. Another form of collaboration was presented by Etalab who is responsible for France’s open data portal. Social actors have the ability to contribute data to the website. The meeting also provided the opportunity to receive feedback on the draft national integrity portal. The data published by the HATVP on conflict of interest has also been used by civil society organisations to produce value for good

#### **Study Visit France**

- Association Sherpa
- Service Central de Prévention de la Corruption
- Haute Autorité de la Transparence de la Vie Publique (HATVP)
- Etalab
- Association pour une démocratie directe
- Transparency France
- Mairie de Paris
- Association CNAPE

governance and integrity. Transparency France used that data to elaborate the portal [www.integritywatch.fr](http://www.integritywatch.fr) which presents the information on conflict of interest of MP's in an easily accessible manner allowing citizens to monitor their representatives. The challenge of publishing this kind information and safeguarding privacy rights was also discussed. Citizen's expectations need to be managed not to infringe upon data protection provisions. Finally, the Moroccan delegation was able to exchange experiences on the question of regional offices to fight corruption at the local level. The Association pour une démocratie directe acts locally having representatives throughout France and working directly with municipalities. The French Anti-Corruption Agency however does not have regional offices, yet France is confronted with a different kind of corruption than Morocco faces.

### **Study Visit of the IMR to Belgium: 27-28 January 2016**

The representatives of the Ombudsman visited several other Ombudsman and Human Rights institutions to discuss their engagement with civil society. The Centre interfédéral signed conventions with NGOs to give them privileged access to submit alerts, allowing complainants to stay anonym. This cooperation provides them with access to valuable information about the situation of normal citizens. NGOs are also consulted for their strategic plan and involved in the evaluation of their work.

Cooperation rests on mutual support to one's work and not on financial contributions. The two Belgian Ombudsman Institutions also work with civil society but based



on informal relations. The Médiateur fédéral for example consults them when they conduct investigations.

Another point of discussion was the use of ICTs. The portal of the Centre interfédéral includes a video in sign language to present the work of the institution, thus reaching disadvantaged groups. The Belgian Ombudsman Institutions have elaborated a joint portal [www.ombudsman.be](http://www.ombudsman.be) to guide citizens in their choice of the right Ombudsman. The Ombudsman also presented their mandate to investigate complaints about integrity in the public sector, which allows public officials to remain anonym and be protected, a function which the Moroccan Ombudsman does not have. Finally, the work on a "*Guide de la bonne administration*" was discussed, which aims to establish a joint

understanding among the public administration on how to treat citizens, to promote a transparent and responsive public administration.

#### **Study Visit Belgium**

- Centre interfédéral pour l'égalité des chances
- Médiateur Fédéral
- Médiateur de la Wallonie et de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles