



## USAID receives over 1,300 complaints of corruption

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ISLAMABAD: The quarterly report of the Inspector General of USAID submitted to the United States Congress reveals that 1,303 complaints were received during March-June 2011 only against the NGOs and other organizations specially working for the rehabilitation of 2010 flood effectees.

The report, titled 'Quarterly Progress and Oversight Report on the Civilian Assistance Programme in Pakistan as of June 30, 2011: Anti-Fraud Hotline and Investigative Work', highlights that during March to June 2011, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) closed 11 investigations and opened 19 new cases. "The vast majority involved in flood relief efforts in the provinces of Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Balochistan. While nearly 50 percent of the complaint calls did not indicate a specific province, 34 percent pertained to the Sindh Province, 9 percent to the Punjab Province, and 3 percent to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province," it mentions.

The report states that when the hotline receives complaints about programmes not under the direct responsibility of USAID, staff members refer the complaints to the appropriate organizations for resolution or disposition as those organizations deem necessary and appropriate. The USAID OIG and the hotline staff continue to develop methods to refer complainants quickly to the proper organization. During this reporting period, staff referred 342 complaints, as detailed below: 160 complaints to the WFP, which manages these USAID-funded projects. All of these complaints were about the same NGO; 81 complaints to USAID implementing partners; 38 complaints to the FAO for non-USAID-funded programmes and 63 complaints to international organizations other than FAO and NGOs for non-USAID-funded programmes.

"Also during the reporting period, the USAID OIG continued to receive complaints through the Pakistan Anti-Fraud Hotline. Hotline calls led to challenges of violations of Pakistan's public procurement rules and to investigations that resulted in terminations and a referral.

The USAID OIG closed 11 investigations during the reporting period and has 19 open cases. As the only one of its kind in Pakistan, the Anti-Fraud Hotline gives the people of Pakistan a tool to provide feedback to USAID, its implementing partners, and the Government of Pakistan. Since its introduction in February 2011, the hotline has been widely advertised in media, including television, radio, newspapers, and billboards and has been very successful.

As a result, the hotline has received a large volume of complaints related to service delivery as well as numerous requests for humanitarian assistance. This quarter, the hotline received 1,303 complaints through various channels. These complaints relate to projects funded by USAID, the Pakistani Government, bilateral donors, and international organizations. The vast majority involved in flood relief efforts in the provinces of Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Balochistan. While nearly 50 percent of the complaint calls did not indicate a specific province, 34 percent pertained to Sindh Province, 9 percent to Punjab Province, and 3 percent to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.”

The report says that in accordance with the cooperative agreement between USAID/Pakistan and Transparency International-Pakistan, the hotline processes complaints alleging violations of the Pakistan Public Procurement Rules under USAID-funded projects. “These rules apply to all procurements made by the Government of Pakistan agencies. When complaints come in to the hotline, Transparency International, Pakistan, prepares a letter lodging a complaint which is sent to the head of the agency in question, the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority, the Auditor General of Pakistan, the National Accountability Bureau, the Supreme Court of Pakistan, and USAID OIG. The procedures set forth in the Public Procurement Rules are then followed to resolve the issue. To date, three public procurements have been challenged under this process. Procurement was cancelled and re-tendered; however, a second complaint has now been lodged on the re-tendered procurement and is pending. Responses to the two remaining complaints are not received from the appropriate agency under the Pakistan Public Procurement Rules.