

11th International Anti-Corruption Conference: Workshop 2.4

Presentation Abstract

1. Panelist Name: Laura Alonso	2. Workshop Title: Judicial Integrity
2. Title of case-study or paper: The Role of Civil Society in Monitoring the Judicial System: Poder Ciudadano's Experience at the Argentine <i>Consejo de la Magistratura</i>	

I) Program goals

Brief Description: The Civic Monitoring of the Consejo de la Magistratura (CMCM) aims to create links between the citizenry and the judiciary. It promotes responsible participation by informed citizens in order to advocate public policies and reach excellence in the administration of justice.

Main Goal: To achieve transparency in the selection, sanction and accusation of justices and in the budgetary management of the judiciary through citizen control.

When and where the tool was implemented: It was designed and implemented by Poder Ciudadano in 1998 immediately after the '*Consejo de la Magistratura*' law was passed.

Problems that the tool addresses: Influencing of the judiciary by external interests and by the interests of the executive and legislative branches of government.

Funding: The tool was conceived and implemented without funding. The monitoring is done due and thanks to the active, committed and voluntary participation of a group of citizens organized in teams.

II) Specific mechanisms used to support the monitoring or auditing process

1. Legislation search and analysis
2. Information requests
3. Databank of judges and members of the '*Consejo*'
4. Citizen initiatives to the General Regulatory Framework of the '*Consejo*'
5. Collective action activities
6. Public hearings
7. Public calls
8. Advocacy in the design of the General Regulatory Framework of the '*Consejo*'
9. How to control justices' selection and appointment processes
10. How to control the processes of sanction, accusation and removal
11. Weaknesses and strengths reports

III) Impact

- Sanction of two General Regulatory Framework of the '*Consejo*' introducing Information Public Hearings and the Removal mechanism for members of the Consejo.
- The Consejo organized two information public hearings following a request from Poder Ciudadano.
- Publication of a background article in an important newspaper to promote the public debate of tools that are usually of reserved usage.
- Permanent control of the access to public information through the information requests that must be available to citizens.
- Creation of public databanks of judicial public officials.
- Creation of a space for collective action with other NGOs like the Social Forum for Justice.
- Public reports of weaknesses and strengths.
- Since 2002 the Instituto de Estudios Comparados en Ciencias Penales y Sociales (INECIP) together with Poder Ciudadano are replicating the experience in Peru and Bolivia.