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Government Procurement Integrity Platform

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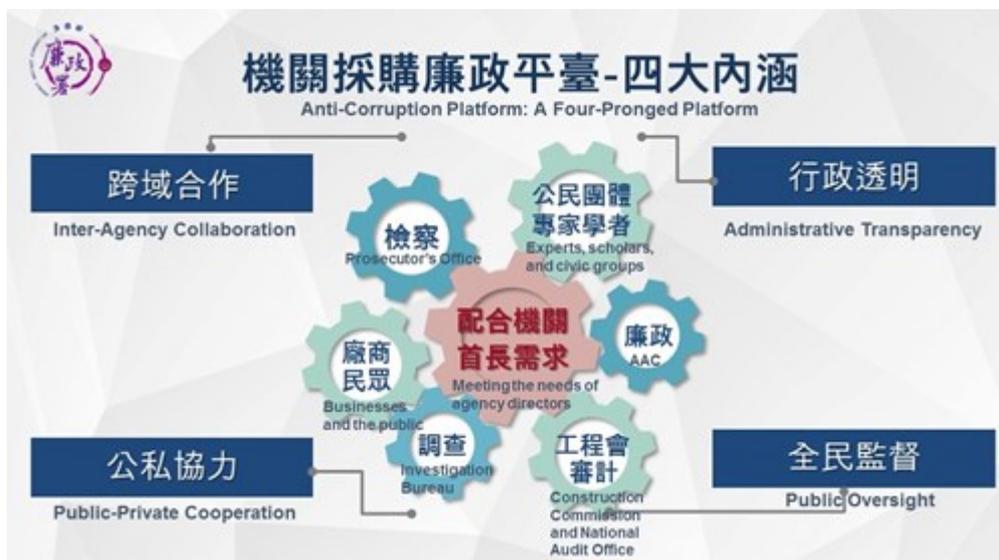
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I. Background and Objectives

To safeguard the quality of major public construction projects in Taiwan, provide the people with a high-quality living environment, and raise national competitiveness, in 2016, the Executive Yuan instructed the Ministry of Justice to issue an order to implement a plan for an integrity platform to support government agencies in their procurement efforts. In spite of its limited manpower, the Agency Against Corruption (AAC) nonetheless established the Integrity Platform for Government Procurement to meet the needs of government agency directors in managing major national construction projects and important procurement cases.

The Integrity Platform established an inter-agency communications network that allowed the Prosecutor's Office, AAC, and Investigation Bureau to participate in the handling of major construction cases. It also introduced the participation of professional agencies such as the Construction Commission, external experts, scholars, and civic groups. Through transparency and openness, improper interference from external forces can be eliminated and civil servants can feel secure in the performance of their duties, thus ensuring that major national construction projects are completed cleanly and on schedule, that quality requirements are met, and that the people are provided with high-quality government services.

II. A Four-Pronged Platform: Inter-Agency Collaboration, Public-Private Cooperation, Administrative Transparency, Public Oversight



III. Specific Actions

- 1. Inter-agency collaboration:** An inter-agency communications network was developed to streamline communication between procuring agencies, other agencies involved in government procurement (e.g., the Prosecutor's Office, AAC, Investigation Bureau, Construction Commission, and National Audit Office), civic groups (e.g., Transparency International Chinese Taipei (TICT) and concerned environmental groups), experts, scholars, manufacturers, and the public. The public has been made aware of the participation of anti-corruption inspection teams through public press conferences and briefings. Through regular meetings, consultative forums, and public education and public relations efforts, difficulties encountered during case processing can be discussed, solutions can be jointly researched, feedback can be collected, and the dissemination of laws and regulations and promotion of public awareness can be strengthened.
- 2. Information disclosure:** Each agency is required to set up a special section on its website for the Integrity Platform to disclose information regarding the background, planning, progress, and resolution of cases as well as related meeting materials and records. The public dissemination of this information on the Integrity Platform makes it easy for businesses and other stakeholders to find the information and express their views, and allays fears of anti-competitive practices. It also increases public understanding, oversight, and trust.
- 3. Internal controls:** In addition to the strengthening of individual agencies' internal control mechanisms and the improved coordination between agencies with the authority to carry out inspections (e.g., construction inspection and procurement audit teams, supervisory units, and government employee ethics units), the frequency of internal audits was increased. Special inspections and on-site visits can be performed through the platform to allow for a timely response to prevent risk escalation when concerns of corruption are raised. Furthermore, malpractice cases are handled—in accordance with law immediately upon identification.

IV. Benefits

- 1. For government agencies and state:** The Platform improves government efficiency and national competitiveness by ensuring that all major national construction projects are completed lawfully, on schedule, and with good quality.
- 2. For civil servants:** The Platform creates a quality public service environment with an emphasis on accountability and proactivity.

3. **For businesses:** The Platform offers protection for the rights and interests of businesses so that they can focus on contract fulfillment.
4. **For the public:** The public can participate in the oversight of the government's anti-corruption efforts and reap the benefits of prudent government administration and quality infrastructure.

V. Future Outlook

In keeping with the global trend towards open government and the Open Government Partnership's principles of transparency, participation, and accountability, the AAC will continue to improve the Platform's functionality and usefulness by promoting important national policies in conjunction with government officials, encouraging both the public and private sectors to participate in the Platform, strengthening access to and the utilization of case data, publicizing model cases executed under the Platform to reach a wider audience, and ultimately, creating more benefits for the general public.