



Curbing Corruption

Global Forum II challenges conventional wisdom through empirics

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June 7, 2001—Which types of corruption are the most widespread and costly?

- Civil service corruption?
- Diversion of budgetary resources and/or procurement fraud?

Which factors most help to ensure a transparent, honest, and efficient judiciary?

- Independence from political and executive pressures?
- Higher salaries and/or better training?

Should anticorruption agencies take the lead in programs to control corruption? Or another agency in the executive? Or NGOs?

Should donor institutions withhold financial support from countries where corruption is rife? Or should donor countries focus on cleaning up their own programs and projects?

These were some of the questions answered by some 1000 respondents in an Internet [survey](#) sponsored by the World Bank Institute, as part of the second *Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity* held in end May—and attended by some 120 ministers and 1600 experts from around the world.

Perhaps surprisingly, the answers to these



Left to right: Eveline Herkens, Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation, Daniel Kaufmann (WBI), and Miria Matembe, Uganda's Minister for Ethics and Integrity



questions was "No." Instead, among others, respondents from throughout the world focused on the following:

- Corruption at the highest executive levels was regarded as the most prevalent, and misgovernance within rule of law institutions was cited often as well.
- State Capture, when corrupt elite interests are instrumental in shaping laws, policies, and regulations, was regarded as the most costly type of corruption, and was also seen as key impediment to a transparent judiciary.
- Formulating anticorruption programs in a participatory fashion by a broad coalition of stakeholders is crucially important.
- Donors should dispense funds only where serious commitment to better governance is in place.

The results also provide insights as to important regional differences in the challenges of good governance. And the questions and feedback provided by this survey provided important backdrop to many contributions and sessions to which the World Bank contributed during the Global Forum.

Held in The Hague, May 28-31, the *Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity II*, was organized by the Netherland's Ministries of Justice, Interior, Economic Affairs, Finance and Foreign Affairs, with contributions from the World Bank, including the World Bank Institute (WBI), and members of the Public Sector Board of PREM, ECA, OPC and INT.

The Forum's goal was to mobilize support against corruption both internationally and in individual countries. The Forum issued a Final Declaration specifying a number of government commitments, including the development of a UN-instrument against corruption. It pointed to the need to monitor the effectiveness of national anticorruption strategies and to identify best practices.

Bank at the Global forum: Hendrikus G. Ter Maat (Brussels Office), Helen Sutch (PREM), Rick Staphenurst (WBI), Sahr Kpundeh (WBI), Tripti Thomas (PREM), Daniel Kaufmann (WBI)

Promoting its participatory approach to combating corruption systemically, and drawing on new empirical results from diagnostic surveys, the Bank's contributions to the Global Forum included a number of applied workshops on state capture, on voice, public participation and governance diagnostics, on public sector management, as well as on the role of donors in fighting corruption and on the media.

In one of the opening keynote addresses of the Forum, Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation, Eveline Herfkens, stressed the crucial role of a free and open media in curbing corruption and on the importance of the PRSP process in combating corruption as well as international collaboration to control money laundering. She also referred to empirical governance diagnostic tools, pointing out to "... the ground-breaking research of the World Bank Institute on quantifying and qualifying the various types of corruption and the price of corruption in a globalizing world," and emphasized the need to address the challenge of state capture.

Several ministers from emerging economies participated in the session on *Donors, IFIs and Fighting Corruption*, where the keynote presentation on the results of the empirical diagnostic surveys in general, and of the governance internet survey in particular provoked a lively debate about the need to adapt programs to differing country realities, and on the wisdom of conditionality in funding—versus other means of working with countries to address corruption.

In the special ministerial session at the conclusion, former World Bank President Robert McNamara highlighted the importance of country-specific programs and actions to curb corruption, the need to address high level corruption in the form of state capture, and the critical role that baseline diagnostic surveys can play, both in measuring corruption and as a

means of catalyzing broad-based coalitions of government, the private sector, and civil society—an essential prerequisite for successful anticorruption efforts.

In the concluding plenary session, Minister of Ethics and Integrity Matembe from Uganda lauded the technical support the Bank has provided to a number of African countries over the past year in their own participatory formulation of action programs.

Useful links: [Click here](#) for more on the survey.

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