14TH INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION CONFERENCE 2010

LONG WORKSHOP REPORT FORM

Special Session: A new generation of corruption assessment tools – strengthening local ownership and impact

Coordinator: Raymond June

Date and time of workshop: Friday, 3-5pm

Moderator (Name and Institution): John Samuel, UNDP

Rapporteur (Name and Institution): Finn Heinrich, TI

Panellists (Name, institution, title)

Valts Kalnins, CPP, Latvia
Paul van Hoof, IDASA
Raymond June, Global Integrity
Joel Turkewitz, World Bank
Elizabeth Ungar Bleier, Transparencia por Colombia

Main Issues Covered

Elizabeth Ungar:

- Describes index of transparency of public entities aimed to assess corruption risks in these institutions. Main risks could be: monopoly of information, high levels of discretion, underdeveloped institutional processes etc.
- The findings are supposed to lead to institutional adjustments.
- Index elements are: visibility, institutionality, control & sanction. Data sources are websites, online questionnaire and citizen input.
- Index is measured every 2 years. Results are used by public officials. National government, for example, is using this index to measure the effectiveness of public institutions

Paul van Hoof:

- describes the rather weak democratic governance context in Southern Africa
- Example: local protests in South Africa due to corruption and bad governance
- Corruption is seen as a manifestation of poor governance. Therefore, we need assessment tools which look at actual governance processes, empower citizens to hold powerful accountable, enable stakeholders to compare governance over time and space. Therefore, we need to easy-to-use, actionable, multi-perspective and address the systemic issues of governance. Paul noted the tensions between these aspects, particularly between easy-to-use and its in-depth analytical focus.
- Local Governance Barometer has been developed in 2005 and applied broadly in 10 African countries
- Combines universal and context-specific indicators. Universal criteria are translated into context-specific indicators and scoring statements by local experts and stakeholders
- Scoring via 1-day workshop with different local stakeholders to score and discuss issues. Differences in scoring across stakeholders are made transparent and used to

stimulate debate within the local community.
- Results: citizen participate on tender boards; board committees become activated and transparent; service charters; local ngos take up watchdog function
- Success factors: quantify governance and make it discussable, talk about what good governance should look like, stakeholders are treated equally; not reliant on data availability

Valts Kalnins:
- overview of methods and tools in C&EE
- large number of assessments in the region; many are implemented by local specialized NGOs with foreign funding
- difficult to identify specific policy effects based on available data
- cross-national comparability is not the main aim since there are other data sources to achieve that
- best national level assessments have higher validity and reliability than international assessments
- common types: national/local surveys; assessment of parties/candidates; monitoring of public institutions; risk assessments
- surveys: measurement of corruption perception & experience (also including media monitoring surveys)
- monitoring parties/candidates: collect information about illegal/unethical behaviour of candidates with sometimes major impact
- Monitoring of activities of public institutions, e.g. citizen-driven online evaluation of hospital doctors in Hungary
- Risk assessments focusing on corruption risks in specific institutions, which has most impact if institution under study is rather cooperative
- Tentative recommendations: local assessments are sensitive to context and therefore a good basis for targeted advocacy activities; policy impact is strongest when linked directly with advocacy; not much value-added of “research for research’s sake”

Emerging issues (John Samuel):
1) Agency based on local ownership
2) Legitimacy based on inclusiveness
3) Practical action – does the tool transform politics & policies?
4) Tension between contextual validity and cross-national comparability/replicability

Joel Turkewitz:
- Are we trying to do too much with the indicators we have? How do we add value with our tools?
- 1st generation: internat comparative indicators, such as CPI. Still strong role
- 2nd generation: sector-specific indicators – still strong role
- 3rd generation: embed indicators in specific political situation doesn’t say that 1st and 2nd generation are superfluous
- Assessment exercises have to be sustainable over time
- WB: diagnose, monitor and act upon corruption – ideally all via a single tool; however, often you need different tools for each of these purposes
- Monitoring often doesn’t lead to action but just breeds cynicism (e.g. national surveys on corruption)
- National monitoring via internat comparative indicators: WB is not comfortable with existing indicators due to shaky evident base. Good examples are business and household surveys which provide actual evidence and can be integrated into national statistical processes and efforts. Make these assessments nationally-owned and sustainable.
- Sectoral indicators which diagnose specific problems and lead to clear

recommendations. (1) actionable governance indicators, focusing on robust performance of specific sectors (e.g. financial management, public administration). Refers to WB website with datasets on these indicators and (2) descriptive governance assessments at sectoral level, e.g. Many faces of corruption publication.

- Action-oriented assessments: is expanding, not focused on comparison; looks at what limits action and designs assessment process to focus on groups which can deliver change, e.g. (1) ACAs doing integrity assessments of specific institutions/agencies (SK and other Asian countries), govt-led with some civil society input, output: action plan of specific agency together with ACA, annualized; (2) social auditing in India in work programme monitoring the "100 days of work" pledge by the government to citizens; (3) community monitoring of money on poverty programmes in Indonesia and formal auditing, which was read out to the community. It is often the link between civil society-led accountability and formal institutional processes which turn assessments into action.
- WB question: where to prioritize resources in terms of value-for-money?

Raymond June:

- challenge of 1st generation: not suitable for cross country / over time comparisons; often unclear what is being measured
- Global Integrity Index (2nd generation): local expert assessments, 320 indicators, double-blind peer review, focus on "law" vs. "practice"
- Challenges of 2nd generation: difficult to assess impact;
- 3rd generation: local ownership and local specificity: very few templates; examples of local governance toolkit and health governance in Macedonia
- Challenges: lack of comparability, too localized, hard to see forests from trees, increased capacity demands (e.g. training of local governments and CSOs); local categories can be "globalized" (e.g. informal institutions/relations)

John Samuel:

- mention that learning about assessment is ideally done in an applied way
- Aren't we often too indicator-focused? What is the art of creating ownership and agency? Who's agency?

Questions from the floor:

1) Donors are increasingly under pressure to show impact. Therefore, issues of replicability and sustainability are important. Local-driven indicators seem to be key. Can you say more about their sustainability?

- often difficult for NGOs, since they are depended on external funding
- Paul - one idea: institutionalize them as local government performance indicator. However, this would fundamentally change the purpose of the tool and lead local govts to aim for high but not necessarily realistic scores. Other alternative might be to separate this and rather define local governance standards for an entire country.
- Valts: replicabilty requires continued demand/interest

2) Is it possible to come up with a model which can be adopted in different contexts?

- Elizabeth: No, since corruption is so contextualized
- Raymond: 3rd generation tools are expensive and difficult to get off the ground (e.g. co-constructing indicators). GI is using satellite indicators, e.g. country-specific indicators
- Paul: forms follows function, i.e. comparability was not the aim.

3) Question on data. Objective indicators are not sustainable since they are expensive. Couldn't open-data movement assist here? Why isn't this happening?

- Joel: right to information laws can indeed play a strong role in getting more data out
- A glossary of local governance indicators/questions would be useful

4) Reforms take long. Don't annual assessments create frustration as an unintended consequence?

Elizabeth: assessments are not end in themselves; have to be adapted to changing realities since corruption is extremely adaptable; instruments and results need to be discussed with stakeholders to have buy-in and impact; instruments can also show good practices of public institutions, businesses and politicians; instruments have to be combined with citizen empowerment and other initiatives. Doesn't agree with Valts' statements that corruption is sufficiently researched.

Questions:

1) Monitoring of climate change initiatives is becoming important. How does this link with these assessments?

2) How do you as TI Colombia create a strong argument about the relevance of these indices?

- Eliz: depends on independent non-partisan credible and high quality information

3) Don't we need to lower our expectations on what indicators can achieve? How do you add value if you integrate indicator into national statistical offices? Shouldn't we rather focus on the demand side of corruption?

- Joel: yes, one indicator cannot do it all for us. We need to be clear about the purpose of the indicators
- Joel: WB has different access points to change than NGOs, i.e. supply vs. demand-side pressures
- Raymond; indicators are necessarily reductive; caution against actionability – is change necessarily a good thing?

4) Does "local" exclude the private sector? What about new methodologies of 3rd generation tools? Shouldn't we spend more time linking assessments and learning from them?

- Eliz: project on corruption risks in mining risks

5) Would different definitions of corruption have an effect on the assessments? Is there a categorization of how an assessment leads to action/impact?

John S: what matters is whether indicators are relevant, transformative and make a difference? Ownership of indicators (local vs. international) is important in order to turn them into change-tools, that means citizen's ownership.

Main Outcomes

- **Each generation of assessment tools has its rightful place, as they serve different purposes**
- **Local ownership of assessments is important, but also involves significant investment of time and resources**
- **If the primary aim is advocacy/policy, comparability should take a back-seat, as there are trade-offs between these goals**

Main Outputs

- There has been a proliferation of different tools, particularly locally owned action-oriented ones. A “meta level” review of them is an important task for the future
- one has to be careful not to put too much emphasis on actionability of indicators. Not every action leads to positive change.
- Different actors in assessment landscape have different roles; both, strengthening supply-side and demand-side tools are important
- Policy impact of tools is strongest when the assessments are integrated into a larger advocacy project
- Tools have to be adapted over time, since forms and conditions of corruption are very adaptable and changing over time

Recommendations, Follow-up Actions

- Always involve stakeholders in discussing design and findings of tool to ensure maximum impact
- Be realistic about what each assessment can achieve
- Specific the purpose of the tool, since this drives its design (Forms follows function)
- Always consider issues of sustainability and replicability of tools
- Push for access to information laws to make more data available

Workshop Highlights (including interesting quotes)

Signed and date submitted
F. Heinrich, 12.11.10