



**GLOBAL INTEGRITY**  
Independent Information on Governance & Corruption



# *A Users' Guide to Measuring Corruption*

## **Best Practices for an Imperfect Art**

31 October 2008

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<http://www.globalintegrity.org/books>





# Outline



1. **About Global Integrity**
2. *Why A Users' Guide?*
3. How We Did It
4. Key Findings
5. Good Practices Going Forward

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# Who We Are



Global Integrity is an international nonprofit organization that works with in-country teams of experts to track governance and corruption trends around the world.

<http://www.globalintegrity.org/books>





# Our Mission



“As an **independent information provider**, we collect and disseminate credible, comprehensive and timely information on good governance and corruption.

We produce original reporting and quantitative analysis to promote accountable and democratic global governance that is in the public interest.”

<http://www.globalintegrity.org/books>





# What We Do



- Flagship national assessments: annual *Global Integrity Report*.
- Sub-national assessments as part of our *Local Integrity Initiative*.
- In-country stakeholder workshops: *Global Integrity Dialogues*.

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# Strengths & Weaknesses of the Most Widely Used Data



- **Aggregate perceptions-based (CPI, WBI):** Easy to gather many voices and smooth out outliers, but not appropriate for tracking change over time or change across countries. Rarely yields “actionable” data. Global coverage a plus.
- **Expert assessments (GI, OBI, FH, PEFA):** Much more challenging and resource-intensive process, but far more “actionable” and accessible to policymakers and practitioners. Tracking change over time and across countries possible.

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# Key Findings: The Need for Better Tools



- Practitioners want actionable data, and existing metrics are not getting the job done.
- Most find that current metrics are only loosely related to the daily work of promoting reforms.

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# From September's News in Dhaka

bdnews24.com  
Bangladesh's First Online Newspaper



...TI Bangladesh's board of trustees chairman Muzaffer Ahmed said: "This is not a significant change in terms of statistics. With an increase in the amount of the data or sources surveyed, the score also increases."

"Previously, the position of Bangladesh was identified on the basis of three data sources. This time data has been compiled from seven different sources. This does not help to understand whether the situation is changing or not," he said.

"There are questions about index every year, as this year. In the past, Nigeria was almost in the same position with Bangladesh. There was sufficient graft in Nigeria last year, but this year it went down 121st position. We don't have any explanation of it."

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# Key Findings: The Need for Disaggregated Indicators



- Metrics that go beyond single numbers are likely to be more actionable.
- Even when metrics are solid, practitioners value narrative and context to go along with the numbers.
- Perceptions-based data viewed as the least useful data.

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# Key Findings: Nationally-owned metrics may be best



- Whether “nationally-owned” or simply generated by local experts and stakeholders, bottom-up data viewed as most useful.
- Difficult for international NGOs or aid agencies to generate government buy-in to external, closed assessments.

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# Key Findings: Qualitative Assessments Equally Useful



- Numbers matter, but empty numbers are often meaningless.
- Qualitative political-economy analysis can be very powerful when executed well.
- Research community complicit in “demand for meaningless numbers” – researchers complain about data quality but then happily run their regressions.

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# Good Practices



- Know what you want to measure, and then use (or design) the appropriate measurement tools.
- Build indicators from the bottom-up; avoid fuzzy, high-level concepts (e.g. “rule of law,” “control of corruption”).
- Look for actionable data whenever possible.

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# Good Practices (cont.)



- Consider using existing data sources to construct indicators that capture experiences of the poor, women, and minorities.
- Whenever possible, combine qualitative narrative with quantitative data.
- Gravitate towards locally-generated metrics.

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# Good Practices (cont.)



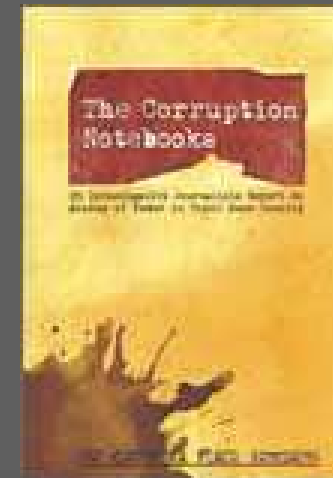
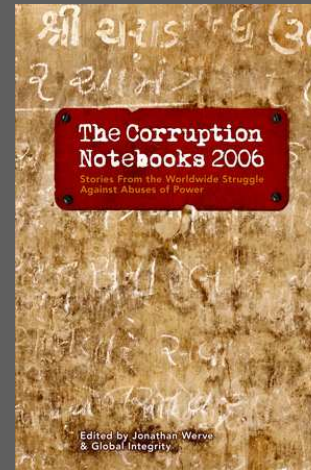
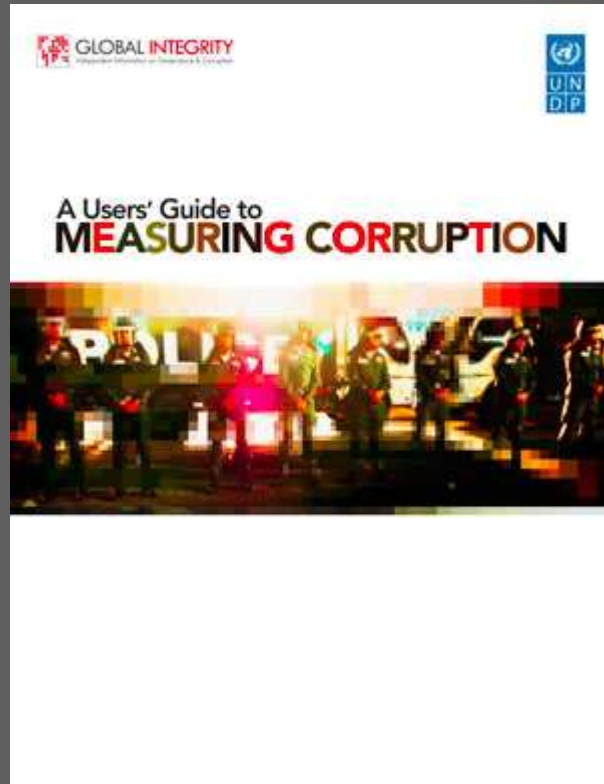
- Embrace the need for multiple assessments and complementarity. There are no silver bullets!
- Be responsible with data: read the fine print and know their limitations.
- Transparency of methodology is crucial.

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