

RESTORE THE HEALTH OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE
TO CURING AND PREVENTING CORRUPTION
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND COMMUNITIES**



VOLUME 2

process facilitation tools

by Ana Vasilache and Nicole Rata

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UN-HABITAT FOREWORD



Corruption has a profoundly corrosive effect on local governance and the quality of life in cities. When decisions are taken to serve private rather than public interests, they undermine the ability of local government to promote social and economic development and to protect the environment. As a result citizens of all walks of life, but especially the poor, suffer the consequences in terms of loss of quality of life and the ability to pursue sustainable livelihoods.

UN-HABITAT, as the focal agency for local authorities within the UN system, promotes a governance approach to combating corruption. Good urban governance is based on effective participation, transparency and accountability, and responsiveness to the needs and priorities of the majority of citizens. Lack of participation often means that the poor do not have a voice in determining their development priorities. Complex and non-accountable municipal administrative practices tend to increase citizen apathy leading to lower revenues and less spending on social programmes and basic services. Non-responsive allocation of resources can lead to disproportionate spending on the priorities of the better-off rather than on those of the poor. Non-transparent land allocation practices push the poor to the urban periphery and hazardous areas, depriving them of secure access to a major productive asset.

Concern for improved standards of governance, transparency, and accountability is now spreading across the globe. At the local level in many countries, citizens groups are holding their governments to account. But change can also start from within the local government. Using a medical metaphor, this "Practical Guide to Curing and Preventing Corruption in Local Governments and Communities" provides a wealth of suggestions on how to initiate such a process. It offers a hands-on capacity-building approach to restore the health of local governments, increase revenues and improve service delivery, reduce poverty and social exclusion, and uphold ethical standards and practices.

This Guide is the result of an initiative by Partners Foundation for Local Development (FPDL) supported by the Local Government Initiative Program (LGI) of the Open Society Institute and by UN-HABITAT. The Guide is a follow-up of the publication on "Tools to Promote Transparency in Local Governance", which was developed jointly by UN-HABITAT and Transparency International, under the umbrella of the Global Campaign on Urban Governance. The new Guide also complements the range of local governance training materials developed by our Training and Capacity Building Branch.

I hope this Guide will contribute to promoting good urban governance and to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. We welcome your views on how to improve this Guide including lessons and experiences from the field.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna K. Tibaijuka'.

Anna K. Tibaijuka
Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Director

FPDL FOREWORD

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,
Committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

Margaret Mead
American anthropologist



The inspired words of Margaret Mead symbolize our hope that we can change the world for better, through our work as a Romanian NGO, together with our allies from LGI/OSI, UN-HABITAT, and our network of CEE/SEE trainers and training organizations.

How to make the change? FPDL, LGI/OSI and UN-HABITAT answer is the Regional Program "Working Together", an international program through which we identify the change agents, trainers and training organizations, and build their capacity to promote good governance and democratic leadership in their countries. The capacity building activities include Training of Trainers, Training Manuals and Methodologies Dissemination, Networking and Experience Exchange, and Support for National Programs Development.

"Restore the Health of Your Organization - a Practical Guide to curing and Preventing Corruption in Local Governments and Communities" continues the fruitful collaboration between FPDL, LGI/OSI and UN-HABITAT in developing and disseminating new training manuals. The book "Corrupt Cities - a practical guide to cure and prevent corruption", by Robert Klitgaard, Ronald Maclean-Abaroa, and H. Lindsey Parris, has been the guiding inspiration behind it.

Why the focus on local governments? While decentralization and the adoption of democratic self-governance processes at the local level have brought the promise of better governance, they have also spawned opportunities for decentralized corruption. When local governments ignore the need for transparency and accountability systems, they provide new temptations for the misuse of public offices for personal gain. In the transition period toward democracy, the implementation of new policies through sick institutions, and the weak enforcement of the new rules, increases the level of corruption. There is a huge need to fix the systems that breed corruption at local level and public leaders are expected to take the initiative to restore the health of their organizations.

Is this expectation a realistic one? Yes! And yet, we realize that this will not be easy. We know that corruption has always existed, since the beginning of humanity and human organizations. We also know that corruption exists in all countries; however, it tends to be more damaging in poor countries thus adding an additional challenge to local governments in these countries. Corruption undermines institutions, thwarts the rule of law, is a disincentive to investors, and results in inequitable distribution of wealth and power. We know that many anti-corruption campaigns around the world have failed because they either took an exclusively legalistic approach, relied mainly on appeals to morality, were pursued without commitment, or became corrupt by focusing mainly on imprisoning political opposition.

But our initiative is based on a significant dose of optimism because we know there are successful anti-corruption initiatives, at the level of organizations, cities, projects, ministries, or even entire countries, from which we can learn. If La Paz, New York, Hong Kong, or State College, have succeeded in transforming difficult corrupt situations into catalysts for administrative reforms, why should other cities and other public institutions not succeed also?

We also believe there are local public leaders and managers, who have the courage to name the illness of their organizations, recognize its symptoms, diagnose it, and make the necessary changes to treat it. The manual "Restore the Health of Your Organization" was developed for these courageous leaders as a source of inspiration and a practical guide to action.

This Practical Guide describes a strategic approach to curing and preventing corruption and provides a set of tools for local leaders to use in the planning and implementation of their plan of action. In addition to their commitment and courage to restore the health of their organization and community, they will know how to:

- Identify and treat, with priority, the most damaging and dangerous forms of corruption
- Change corrupt systems not (only) corrupt individuals
- Elaborate short, medium and long term objectives for their anti-corruption strategy
- Work with employees, as well as with the community members, in a participatory process, to collect and analyze data on corrupting practices, and identify curative actions
- Work with an external consultant, or facilitator, who would provide assistance in conducting the corruption-curing intervention.

We hope that those who have the power to make the necessary changes to restore the health of their local governments and communities will use this Practical Guide. And it should be no surprise that healthier local governments would be also more effective, efficient, and just organizations.

This Practical Guide is the result of a lot of hard work and commitment on the part of a small group of thoughtful committed citizens and I want to acknowledge and thank them all:

- Ronald MacLean Abaroa, one of the Corrupt Cities book author, former mayor of La Paz, Bolivia, founding member of Transparency International and its first president for Latin America, for inspiring and supporting our work
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Executive Director - Partners Foundation for Local Development - FPDL

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