

Capacity Enhancement

BRIEFS

SHARING BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

USING NETWORKS FOR CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT Lessons from Anticorruption Parliamentary Networks

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National, regional, or global networks of parliamentarians are proving important vehicles for enhancing their capacity and the effectiveness of parliaments in developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly in fighting corruption and mitigating its negative impacts on economic and human development. This Capacity Enhancement (CE) Brief reviews the activities of several such networks worldwide at the individual, regional, and global levels that are making a difference in the ability of parliamentarians to address corruption in their countries.

One critical lesson learned from the World Bank Institute's (WBI's) work with parliamentarians is the importance of networks in developing capacity and improving effectiveness of parliaments and parliamentarians in developing countries.

This lesson emerged as a by-product of activities under the "Laurentian Seminar" program for parliamentarians.² A joint effort of WBI and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), this program helped facilitate a number of encounters among parliamentarians that have led to creation of national, regional, and global networks that are active in building awareness, support, and understanding of the role that parliamentarians can play in development. Regional networks for Africa, South Asia, and South East Asia have emerged and a global network, the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC) was founded in October 2002. Membership in a regional network confers membership in GOPAC.

As builders and facilitators of capacity, these networks have used different methods to achieve their objectives and have targeted an array of capacity and institutional problems facing parliamentarians:

- African participants decided to pursue regional and national issues of anticorruption, forming the African Parliamentarians Network against Corruption (APNAC). APNAC focuses on coordinating, involving, and strengthening the capacity

of African parliamentarians to fight corruption and promote good governance.

- Participants from South East Asia first opted to create the South East Asian Parliamentarians against Corruption (SEAPAC) network, which failed due to a lack of resources. The group, however, later formed a chapter of GOPAC, which has installed new leadership and is actively supporting individual parliamentarians in challenging corruption in their countries.
- Southern Asian members of parliament (MPs) were initially reluctant to establish a formal network, although they did hold a regional seminar, but are now in the process of establishing a South Asia chapter of GOPAC.

Additional regional networks have been launched or are under development in the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union, North America, North East Asia and Russia. Although these regional networks are at different stages of development, they are increasingly effective in enhancing the capacity of their members to achieve change at various levels: individual, national, regional, and global.

CE at the Individual Parliamentarian Level

At the individual parliamentarian level, GOPAC was able to propose a model code of conduct for MPs in



any country (see box 1). MPs from South East Asia also benefited from translated versions of the *Handbook for Parliamentarians on Curbing Corruption* in local languages. Follow-up workshops held in Thailand, Cambodia, and Indonesia conducted by WBI and the Parliamentary Centre further enhanced parliamentarians' capacity by providing valuable information, skills, and contacts needed to combat corruption. MPs were able to strengthen and build relationships between reform-minded MPs and civil society organizations (CSOs), such as the King Prajadhipok Institute, Centre for Social Development (Cambodia), and Corruption Watch-Indonesia.

MPs from Africa also benefited from the handbook, which was translated into French and Arabic. Follow-up workshops under the auspices of APNAC were held at national (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) and regional (Kenya, Nigeria, and Chad) levels to develop (a) parliamentarians' capacity to use international instruments in the fight against corrup-

ported members facing a strong executive; for example, a parliamentarian from Mozambique received support in the form of friendship and information sharing from colleagues in Mexico.

In addition, GOPAC has undertaken several successful workshops and activities for members on issues of common concern. In November 2003 an Anti-Money Laundering Workshop for East African parliamentarians was organized in Nairobi, Kenya, in partnership with the Africa Program at the Parliamentary Centre and the International Monetary Fund. More than 20 East African parliamentarian attendees said they had gained greater understanding of the nature and significance of the Anti-Money Laundering Initiative. Most notably, Kenyan participants committed to drafting an Anti-Money Laundering Bill that was later submitted to the Kenyan Minister of Finance.

CE at the National Level

Parliamentarian network success in fighting corruption has been most evident at the national level. In Africa, APNAC has established national chapters in Chad, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe and is developing chapters in Rwanda, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, and South

Box 1

Draft Code of Conduct for MPs (excerpts)

A member should not try to secure business from the government for a firm, company, or organization with which s/he is directly or indirectly concerned.

A member should not unduly influence government officers of the ministries in a case in which s/he is interested, either financially or indirectly.

A member should not receive remuneration of any kind for any work that s/he desires or proposes to do from a person or organization on whose behalf the work is to be done.

A member should not proceed to take action on behalf of his/her constituents on some baseless facts.

A member should not write recommendation letters or speak to government officials about employment or business contracts for any of his/her relations.

Note: Based on this draft code, Rick Stapenhurst and Riccardo Pelizzo wrote a WBI Working Paper on "Parliamentary Codes of Conduct and Legislative Ethics," which has recently been endorsed and adopted by the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption.

tion, (b) the role of watchdog institutions, and (c) parliamentarians' role in fighting corruption.

GOPAC members, either through regional networks/national chapters or the international Secretariat, implemented a *peer support* program to share information and lessons learned and support their colleagues around the world. Members are prepared to travel abroad to assist nascent chapters; for example, Latin America Chapter members traveled to Africa, and the APNAC chair traveled to other African nations to encourage colleagues in developing their own anticorruption networks. GOPAC has also sup-

Box 2

African Parliamentarians Network against Corruption (APNAC): Successes

Since its establishment, several APNAC activities have empowered parliamentarians to take concrete actions to stop corruption and build links with one another and local and international organizations.

Legislation. APNAC has been most successful on the national level. Senegal's national chapter has been instrumental in pushing its National Assembly to pass several bills, such as the Anti-Money Laundering Bill, National Commission on Anti-Corruption Bill, and a bill requiring representation of the National Assembly on the board of the Public Works Commission. APNAC Kenya has also introduced an anti-money laundering bill. The Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Bill (2001) was based on APNAC recommendations.

Awareness raising. In Uganda APNAC has gotten anticorruption issues firmly on the national agenda by lobbying for legislative change, fueling nationwide debate and raising public awareness through TV and radio and consultative workshops with MPs and civil society. MPs and the executive branch of government also collaborated through the annual Anticorruption Week and following up on AG reports.

Information sharing/peer support. The APNAC Executive has represented APNAC and GOPAC at several international anticorruption events to share lessons learned and best practices. Representatives have participated in annual International Anticorruption Conference meetings, regional forums in Asia, meetings with foreign anticorruption experts, and founding meetings of other GOPAC regional and national chapters.



Africa. APNAC and its national chapters have strengthened relations between parliamentarians and civil society and increased the capacity of parliaments to exercise accountability particularly in financial matters (see box 2). Elsewhere, there are national chapters in Argentina, Brazil Canada and Korea.

Challenges remain for APNAC, including mobilization of resources to maintain momentum developed in the past few years and the poor endangerment of women in APNAC activities, which APNAC has consequently recognized. In addition, it is necessary to disseminate knowledge of APNAC and its work beyond its membership.

Before the 2003 election, GOPAC members in Kenya were mostly opposition members. The 2003 general election results for APNAC members were, in some respect, linked with the legitimacy and respect the citizenry held for the organization. Of the 21 original members of the APNAC-Kenya chapter of GOPAC, eight were appointed to the new government's cabinet; this included the current chair, Hon. Musikari Kombo, who is the Minister of Local Government and Deputy Environment Minister, and Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai.

GOPAC and its chapters have also established solid relationships with other like-minded organizations. In Australasia, Middle East/North Africa, and South Asia as well as in Kenya, GOPAC chapters have founded their secretariats within Transparency International's local offices. For the Latin American chapter, a cooperation agreement was signed with the Organization of American States to work together on anticorruption activities in the region.

CE at the Regional Level

Parliamentarian networks have also taken significant steps regionally to strengthen institutional frameworks to mitigate corruption. APNAC's Pan-African conference "New Challenges in the Fight against Corruption" (November 2003) focused on issues in establishing greater fairness in electoral systems and achieving greater freedom of information and dissent in societies. A later West African regional conference (March 2004) focused on developing shared understanding on establishing and building capacity of national anticorruption chapters and discussing how to create linkages and strengthen networking among regional chapters and with external players, such as regional parliaments and CSOs.

An important regional contribution of parliamentarian networks is sharing information in ways that might be misconstrued at the individual or country level. The GOPAC Secretariat has gone to great

lengths to keep communication channels open by sharing information through the GOPAC web site (http://www.parlcent.ca/gopac/index_e.php), the parliamentarian's handbook, GOPAC CD-ROM (developed with WBI), GOPAC News, as well as event reports, papers, and other documentation. All these information tools are shared with the GOPAC membership and chapters and distributed to parliaments and CSOs.

Establishing relationships with respected and credible regional/global organizations has also proved crucial in strengthening parliamentarian capacity. GOPAC, for example, has been able to forge strong links with UNDP, the International Compliance Association, Latin American Financial Intelligence Council, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the European Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), Stability Pact, Westminster Foundation, and International Association of Business and Parliament. These links have enabled GOPAC to conduct a number of CE events with parliamentarians, develop an anti-money laundering training program for parliamentarians, and further the available research on parliamentarians and corruption.

CE at the Global Level

The second Laurentian seminar (July 1999) brought into focus corruption issues of global concern, including the need for greater transparency in international banking and enhanced accountability of international financial institutions and donor agencies to parliaments. Noteworthy outputs included MPs' call for greater information on World Bank and International Monetary Fund operations and proposals to establish an international network of parliamentary public accounts committees and globalized mechanism for disclosure of bank accounts to enable better investigation of globalized corruption.

Participants in the seminar believed that parliaments need to apply good governance principles, such as accountability and transparency, to international financial institutions operating within their countries and vice versa. They proposed developing effective dialogue mechanisms for parliaments and that international financial institutions (IFIs) communicate more effectively. Participants stressed that parliamentary committees should share their reports and studies with IFIs and parliaments should ensure their own procedures allow them to scrutinize and approve international aid and loan proposals. (Many parliaments have the constitutional power to scrutinize and approve foreign loans contracted by government, but have not established rules, procedures, and tools to allow them to do this effectively.) Participants also

recommended that IFIs help build parliamentary capacity to oversee government financial operations, that parliamentary committees and IFIs meet regularly, and that IFIs establish special parliamentary relations units.

In all these areas, significant progress has been achieved: a small but increasing number of Bank grants, loans, and credits support strengthening of parliamentary oversight,³ while WBI's own program of parliamentary capacity building has also grown. Many World Bank Country Directors and staff now routinely meet with Senior Parliamentarians within the context of CAS and PRSP discussions on macro-economic and budget issues. At the corporate level, establishment of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank allows ongoing dialogue between MPs and senior management of the World Bank on a wide range of global issues.

Conclusion

The Laurentian Seminars initially served to engage parliamentarians worldwide in fighting corruption and its negative impacts on economic and human development. In addition to accumulating and disseminating parliamentarians' experience in combating corruption, the seminars have led to the much more important result of active networks of parliamentarians that are succeeding in increasing MP capacity to fulfill an oversight role and combat corruption, particularly by providing peer support and political cover for those standing up against corruption, placing pressure on those supporting and tolerating it, and sharing lessons learned and best practices.

In 2003 GOPAC declared its support of the U.N. Convention against Corruption at the signing ceremony in Merida, Mexico, and offered GOPAC membership support in effective implementation of the convention's provisions. GOPAC is committed to engaging its members in developing information, tools, and support for reducing corruption and its negative impacts; moreover, GOPAC has devoted itself to monitoring and documenting results achieved in reducing corruption and publicly reporting them. Although only two years in existence, GOPAC has delivered preliminary results in the form of legitimacy to reformers, establishing relationships with like-minded organizations, and shared learning.

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Endnotes

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2 The Laurentian seminar program, the "flagship" of WBI-CIDA collaboration, is a joint program developed by the Parliamentary Centre and WBI to help parliamentarians address critical contemporary issues within a good governance framework that stresses principles of accountability, participation, and openness.

3 Such loans and credits are being developed and implemented for Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania, among others.

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