BASEL INSTITUTE ON GOVERNANCE

Basel Institute on Governance
Strategy and approach

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1 Introduction

The Basel Institute on Governance is a hands-on centre of competence dedicated to promoting good governance and countering corruption for a more peaceful, just and sustainable world. Established in 2003 in Basel, Switzerland, the Institute works with partners worldwide to advance knowledge, practice and policy on anti-corruption, asset recovery and business integrity.

Corruption has reached unprecedented levels in the past decade, entrenching itself ever more deeply in political, economic and societal structures. Corruption is a global phenomenon and affects every society and country, regardless of political systems or traditions.

Corruption has also evolved significantly in the past two decades. In the late 20th century, it was used primarily as an instrument for personal enrichment or enrichment for gaining or preserving power. In this form, corruption aggressively undermines the quality of governance in the public and private sectors. By derailing investment decisions in the public and private sectors, it perpetuates poverty, distorts economic growth and fuels inequality. Corruption also facilitates a wide range of crimes that are a fundamental threat to society and our planet, including environmental crime and illegal trafficking in arms, drugs and people.

Today corruption is increasingly also being used aggressively by politicians as part of their domestic or geopolitical power plays, thereby contributing to political radicalisation, undermining citizens' rights and self-determination, weakening global governance and threatening domestic and international security.

Corruption is perhaps the greatest obstacle to prosperity and peace. As a consequence, for us, corruption is not just a matter of the law, of ethics, or of right and wrong. Combating corruption is not a goal in itself. Our mission to combat corruption is driven by the much bigger objective of contributing to a more peaceful, just and sustainable world.

This paper describes the cornerstones of the Basel Institute's methodology as developed over the past 20 years. It should be read in conjunction with multi-year thematic operational strategies as developed for selected engagements.

2 What is corruption?

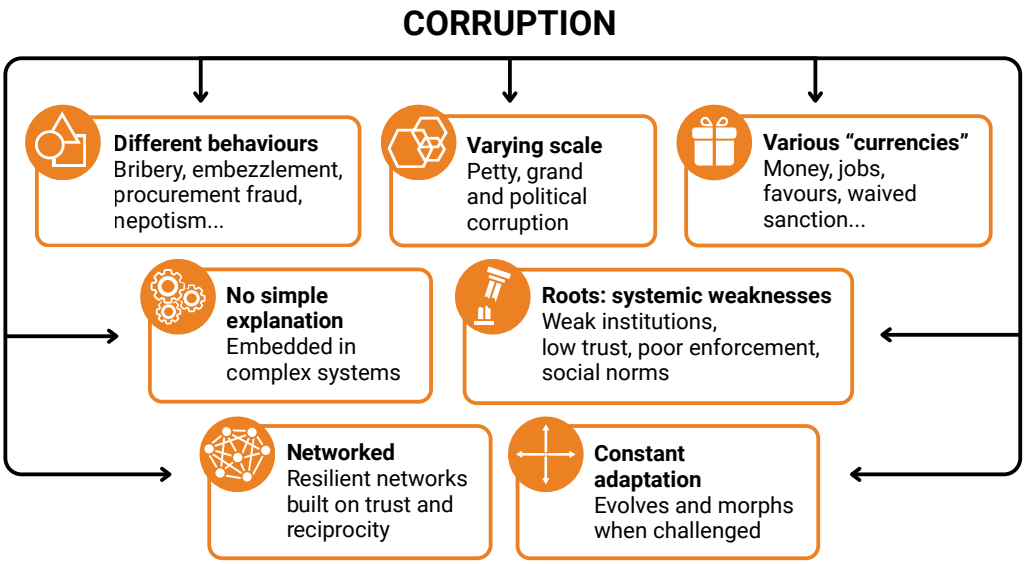
Corruption takes many forms, and no single definition captures them all. The most widely used comes from Transparency International, which describes corruption as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain".

This definition is useful because it captures the essence of the problem. At its core, corruption happens when something intended to serve a whole community – a public service, a resource, a contract or an opportunity – is diverted to benefit a narrower circle instead.

That circle may be a single official, a family or a much larger group. Whatever its size, the effect is the same: people who were meant to benefit are unfairly deprived of a right or entitlement through the actions – or deliberate inaction – of those entrusted with authority.

The breadth of this definition is both a strength and a limitation. Corruption covers a wide range of behaviours: bribery, procurement fraud, embezzlement, clientelism and nepotism, among many others.

That very breadth makes it hard to translate into concrete, measurable terms, and easy to turn into vague or politicised accusations.



This definition is an extract from our full definition of corruption, updated in October 2026. Drawing on evidence from our work and research over recent years, the full definition explores the different forms corruption can take, why it goes beyond financial gain, how it becomes embedded in society and why it is a networked phenomenon.

To explore our full definition, read our Quick Guide on Corruption.

3 Our approach

Since our establishment in 2003, we have continuously tested, expanded and refined anti-corruption instruments and interventions with a view to developing (and sharing with others) a method of working that leads to tangible and sustainable change.

From a normative standpoint, the fight against corruption has significantly matured in the past three to four decades, more actors at all levels are involved in efforts to eradicate corruption, and public awareness is considerably higher. However, progress has been too slow.

In part, this is because those with a vested interest in preserving and increasing corruption's grip over many countries are well equipped to fight back against any attempt to curtail this deeply erosive phenomenon. They further have access to, or are indeed part of, the political elite in whose power it would be to drive change.

In our experience, however, a significant part of this failure to more effectively tackle corruption also lies in the methodology. Most organisations still tackle corruption almost exclusively through formal institutions and processes, thereby neglecting the significant role that informality, criminal networks, context, social norms, people and behaviour play in corrupt practices.

Also, while dialogue among stakeholders has improved in the past decades, solutions are ultimately still largely tackled in silos. In most countries, anti-corruption is the task of dedicated institutions rather than being understood as an all-of-government and all-of-society responsibility. Connections between prevention and enforcement are also heavily under-utilised.

Last but not least, investing in anti-corruption is considered by some donors as risky because much depends on political will, which is difficult to influence, and outcomes are hard to measure. As a consequence, resources are not readily available and scattered into short-term interventions with implementers, driven by unrealistic expectations and falsely inclined to focus on safe outputs rather than difficult long-term outcomes.

These are some of the shortcomings which we seek to address with our method. In short, we focus on evidence-based and people-centric interventions. We leverage our practical, hands-on experience from case-based mentoring and other context-specific work in order to inform legal and policy recommendations. We combine enforcement and prevention approaches as powerful means for behaviour change. And we seek to connect all concerned stakeholders.

In all this, adaptive learning is an integrated feature. As corruption continues to evolve, so should our efforts to curtail it.

3.1 Changing behaviour

We seek to change behaviours and shift social norms towards integrity and ethics. Our approach combines prevention and enforcement tools; both are powerful means for behavioural change.

The Basel Institute believes that, simply put, combating corruption is essentially about changing behaviour by incentivising and rewarding integrity and ethics, and by punishing and disincentivising corrupt and unethical actions.

This dual approach is typically described as prevention and enforcement, often pursued separately and by different entities, and even often pitted against each other. In practice, we believe this separation is artificial and wrong. Activities traditionally assigned to one or the other of these two categories must be understood and utilised for their dual impact. To illustrate:

When it comes to addressing corruption, prevention and enforcement interventions are two sides of the same coin.

Our work helping enforcement and judicial authorities to **investigate and prosecute corruption** and environmental crime and recover stolen assets is clearly an enforcement action which aims to change behaviour through punishment. However, because it signals that corruption does not pay and that impunity is no longer accepted, it works just as strongly as a prevention mechanism and incentivises integrity and non-corrupt behaviour.

We help companies build stronger **ethics and compliance programmes** and internal control systems with both prevention and enforcement elements. These positive changes can also influence value chains and sectors, which in turn contribute to levelling the playing field.

In the same vein, integrity guidelines, codes of ethics, anti-corruption strategies and other relevant **public-sector policies** guide and are intended to positively influence the behaviour of public officials, while also serving as mechanisms to hold them accountable.

We also argue for an integrated anti-corruption approach when it comes to **research and data analysis**. For example, the analysis of

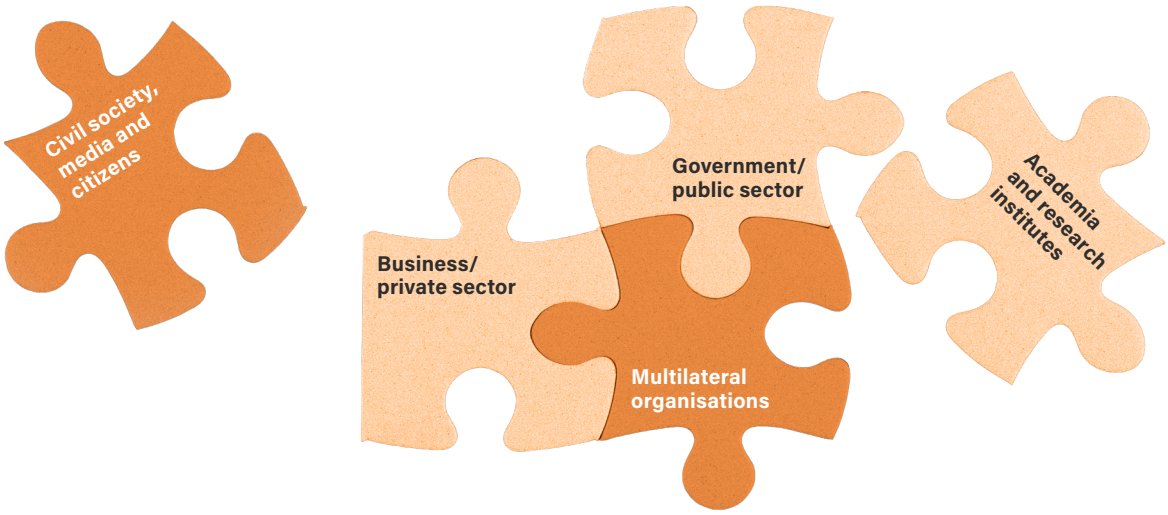
enforcement data can help to identify and address weaknesses in prevention systems and to guide public information and awareness campaigns. In turn, corruption risk assessments, which we regularly support in both public- and private-sector organisations, hold valuable information for law enforcement when determining proactive enforcement strategies.

3.2 Building coalitions

We work to break down institutional silos between stakeholders, build trust and persuade different parties to collaborate in a joint fight against corruption.

Corruption is a particularly complex phenomenon, and we firmly believe that tackling it requires efforts from all stakeholder groups.

Governments and the private sector need to act because corruption typically happens at the interface between these two sectors. As a consequence, they hold the keys to change. For the same reason, however, the intrinsic motivation of these actors to stop corruption is limited. Therefore, journalists, civil society organisations and citizens are critical stakeholders to exert pressure, demand accountability and offer constructive support. Academia must analyse, critically assess and help advance and make anti-corruption efforts more effective.



There is no doubt that today, these key players typically endorse anti-corruption as an important topic and are taking action accordingly. What is still often lacking is genuine interaction between these anti-corruption communities.

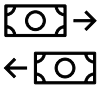
The concerted action of all stakeholders, which is necessary to help overcome a phenomenon of such complexity, is however still mostly theory; commitments to cooperation between – even within – stakeholder groups is often only a lip service; dialogue is often adversarial and accusatory rather than solution oriented; and mutual understanding is hampered by lack of perspective. This translates into siloed programming, competition within and between stakeholder groups, uncoordinated action and the inefficient use of resources.

Persistently working towards breaking down barriers within and among stakeholder groups is therefore at the core of our work. By way of example:

The **chain-linked approach** is central to the Basel Institute's efforts to help developing and transition countries build capacity to **recover stolen assets**. In practice, this means we aim to engage with all actors along the asset recovery "chain", from financial institutions and financial intelligence units all the way to judicial authorities. When possible we also engage with agencies that play a supporting role, such as land registries, tax authorities and audit institutions. We encourage our partner countries to institutionalise this cooperation through multi-agency taskforces, integrated asset recovery offices, or information- and intelligence-sharing agreements.

Enforcement authorities are often reluctant to engage with non-enforcement organisations, in particular civil society and journalists. We believe this is a missed opportunity, as all parties involved could benefit from each other's information and knowledge. We help overcome this barrier by supporting **transparent public communication strategies** for enforcement and other public authorities, and by **educating civil society and journalists** about the inner workings of these authorities. In doing so, we seek to achieve better mutual understanding and a smoother flow of information, so that shared objectives can be achieved through each stakeholder's respective means.

We work tirelessly through our B20 Collective Action Hub and involvement in global policy forums toward the recognition of the concept of **Collective Action** as a norm in anti-corruption. As a result, the concept is now increasingly included in national anti-corruption strategies and policies, enforcement guidelines and international commitments. Facilitating individual Collective Action initiatives and supporting Collective Action communities of practice, including through our mentoring programme, knowledge products and the helpdesk function, is at the heart of our efforts to bring together the private sector, governments and civil society to help raise standards and develop innovative tools to combat corruption and bribery in business transactions.



As large-scale corruption and money laundering cases are more often than not international in nature, with stolen monies flowing easily from one jurisdiction to the next, **international cooperation between concerned countries** is critical. Unfortunately this remains fraught with obstacles, from language issues to lack of capacity to challenges when it comes to the compatibility of laws. In our asset recovery and green corruption programmes, we help partner countries overcome these barriers by providing our network of contacts, by helping understand how to plug one legal system into another, and through international advocacy for reforms in the mutual legal assistance framework.

While the anti-corruption community often still works in silos, and anti-corruption laws and institutions are focused on individuals and individual cases, criminal networks do the opposite. They operate across borders, political divides and stakeholder groups, and with that they have a particularly strong hold over the environment in which they operate. Through **social network analysis and network ethnography, we help crack these criminal networks open and identify opportunities to interrupt their criminal activities**. In a way, this seeks to reverse the current scenario by taking an integrated approach to push criminals into silos. And in turn, we encourage the use of the same methods to **support the creation of networks of anti-corruption champions**.

3.3 Empowering people

People are our primary focus. From victims of corruption to those on the front lines of fighting it, we seek to enable and empower our partners through mentoring, guidance and peer learning.

Fighting corruption is not only about having the right laws, controls and institutions. It is just as much about how to make these formal structures work and achieve their aims. And that necessary change, we believe, ultimately lies in the people who are the decision makers or implementers of laws and institutions, and the people who are the users or beneficiaries of these formal structures.

In practice, this means:

We advise development cooperation agencies, public authorities and companies in using **behavioural science-based interventions** to understand what type of anti-corruption interventions can work in which context.

We work with people and seek to empower rather than replace them. Our principle method for capacity building, for example, **is mentoring and facilitating peer learning**, as opposed to lecturing and teaching.

When we advise companies, or when we support legislative or institutional reform processes, **we don't provide off-the-shelf products**. Instead we engage, we listen, we participate, and we share our experience, so as not to dictate but to guide decision makers in finding the right solutions.

3.4 Catalysing learning

We connect practice with policy, feeding our hands-on experience into research, technical assistance and training to help shape future strategies and interventions for fighting corruption.

The Basel Institute's work is conceptualised as a virtuous learning circle connecting practice and implementation; analysis and evaluation; and experience sharing and learning.

Our independence and distinct positioning, bridging the academic and policy dialogue spheres and being active in the realm of applied anti-corruption interventions, are attributes that few (if any) other actors in the anti-corruption environment can bring together. We are in a privileged position to have first-hand insight into the practical realities of enforcement agencies, companies and our civil society partners. This is reinforced by a staff that consists of practitioners with many decades of first-hand experience working in public and private institutions, and our embedded expert model.

This allows us to stay away from text book or template solutions. Instead we work in a context-sensitive and evolutionary manner, constantly analysing our own work and the environment in which we work, distilling lessons to improve our own interventions and solutions developed with our partners, and sharing these widely to contribute to enhancing practice globally. It also means that we are open, in the right circumstances, to a (controlled) trial-and-improvement approach that is commonly used in science.

Examples of this *do – analyse – learn* approach are:

- We embed our work in an analysis and understanding of political context, using **political economy analysis** and other instruments. This is important in order to ensure our independence, the adequacy of our operations and adaptive programming.
- We analyse the persistent inadequacies in the global response to corruption and test new strategies through **pilot interventions accompanied by academically refined evaluation methods**.
- We seek to continuously improve the quality of our practical work with insights from long-term research, **studies into underlying conditions** for successful anti-corruption interventions and evidence stemming from related pilot projects.

We analyse formal and informal structures, norms and behavioural patterns that drive corrupt behaviour. We use this knowledge to identify suitable entry points for anti-corruption interventions in both the public and private sectors that are context sensitive and therefore likely to achieve results.

We provide **analytical tools and strategic diagnostic frameworks** emerging from our research and analysis of practice to support development partners to be innovative and to identify relevant, feasible and sustainable entry points for their anti-corruption programming.

Fundamentally, we always aim to operate in a highly **adaptive** and **flexible manner**, **responding quickly** to demand and need, while ensuring that we stay on track with achieving our mission.

4 Increasing impact

Because we have proof of concept for this approach to combating corruption, we intend to focus on multiplying impact through a targeted and strategic growth strategy. At its core, this consists of bolstering partnerships and enabling others to work alongside us, of upholding the highest level of quality and of methodological consistency, and of ensuring that change can be demonstrated, thereby generating more buy-in for decisive action against corruption.

After almost 20 years of testing, enhancing and continuously developing our work methods, we have a strong track record that demonstrates that our anti-corruption interventions have impact. With the piloting and ultimately full implementation of our Green Corruption programme since 2019, we have further been able to demonstrate that anti-corruption instruments have a much wider applicability than currently practised. This opens additional opportunities to scale up the positive impact that anti-corruption can have on our ultimate goal of reversing corruption's negative impact on equality, prosperity and peace.

However, as a comparatively small organisation, the impact that we can have is still limited and far from enough to achieve this ultimate mission. In view of this, and the fast-growing scale of corruption and corruption-induced global challenges, our overarching goal is to seek opportunities to increase our impact through a dual strategy:

- On the one hand, we seek to **grow the portfolio of work** directly implemented by the Basel Institute and to further build up our ability to use our first-hand learnings and experience in order to **influence global policy making**.
- On the other hand, we seek to strengthen our operations that aim to **enable others**, by working through communities of practice, by anchoring anti-corruption in new communities and through other multiplier opportunities.

4.1 Areas of work

Overall, we seek to grow our portfolio of work across three intersecting and complementary areas that are vital to tackling corruption and promoting good governance:

The following sections give a deeper insight and examples to illuminate how we work in each main area and our prospects to increase our impact.

4.1.1 Asset recovery and enforcement

Building the enforcement capacity and systems needed for countries to effectively investigate corruption and recover illicit funds.

The investigation and prosecution of large-scale corruption and the recovery of stolen assets continue to be critical aspects of global efforts to curtail corruption. The recovery of stolen assets serves a two-fold purpose. First, returning valuable and often critically needed resources to corruption-plagued countries. Second, serving as an important deterrent, and indeed most powerful punishment, for corruption.

The task at hand is exceptionally complex. Unlike other forms of crime, the parties involved in corruption are typically complicit, and those benefitting from it are usually in positions of significant political power. Evidence from witnesses and victims is therefore rarely available.

Furthermore, evidentiary burdens for financial crime are high. This challenge is multiplied in large-scale corruption cases, which are typically committed and concealed through complex international financial transactions involving a multitude of jurisdictions and enablers. This complicates the investigative

process, especially in the absence of access to critical information on corporate ownership. It often requires multiple layers of international judicial cooperation, a process that is notoriously slow and difficult to navigate.

In direct response to these challenges, our International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR) pursues the mission of supporting its partner countries to investigate and prosecute corruption and related financial crime cases with the explicit intention of recovering stolen assets. Assistance provided by the ICAR team consists in particular of:

- specialised financial investigations and asset recovery training by a dedicated team for law enforcement and judicial practitioners;
- hands-on mentoring to advance complex financial crime cases and build capacity;
- guidance on strengthening laws, policies and institutions vital to fighting corruption and recovering assets;
- liaising with relevant foreign jurisdictions for the purpose of international judicial cooperation; and
- facilitating dedicated communities of practice for law enforcement, international cooperation and prosecution practitioners.

In addition, ICAR is actively engaged in all relevant global policy forums to advance progressive and innovative practices and laws in the field of asset recovery through its research and expert forums, and by fostering proactive policy responses to anti-money laundering and counter financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) risks through the Basel AML Index.

More details about ICAR's activities and Theory of Change are available in the ICAR Operational Strategy 2021–2024. The forthcoming Operational Strategy 2025–2028 will provide more information about ICAR's strategic priorities going forward.

Through our multidisciplinary Green Corruption programme, we apply anti-corruption, asset recovery and governance tools to protect the environment. A major aim is to take the profit out of environmental crime and related corruption.

We help partner agencies to apply "follow the money" approaches to environmental crime and corruption cases, in effect providing similar support to ICAR specifically in the environmental sphere. This includes training and technical assistance with financial investigations, prosecutions and asset recovery proceedings.

More in section 4.1.4 below.

4.1.2 Business integrity and governance

Supporting the development of resilient, ethical companies and business environments characterised by integrity, transparency and fair competition.

Companies are faced with significant challenges, especially in high-risk markets. They are also seeing rapidly evolving norms and regulatory standards, as well as pressure to demonstrate the effectiveness of compliance programme. Further, the growing call for integration of corruption risks with other aspects of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors are giving companies new challenges.

State-owned enterprises in fragile environments are typically far behind private companies when it comes to anti-corruption compliance structures, which leads to a real risk of public funds being misdirected or lost to fraud and corruption.

The Private Sector team takes a dual approach to engaging and strengthening the private-sector response to corruption risks in business transactions. First, through expert assistance on compliance and corporate governance to companies, state-owned enterprises and multilateral organisations. Second, as a leading facilitator and promoter of anti-corruption Collective Action initiatives.

The Collective Action approach engages the private sector through multi-stakeholder initiatives to collaboratively tackle corruption challenges, raise regulatory and self-regulatory standards of integrity and fair competition in business, solve systemic issues related to corruption, and enhance conditions for fair competition by levelling the playing field between competitors.

We have a track record of over 20 years in promoting and initiating Collective Action. We have facilitated some of the world's first and most innovative Collective Action initiatives, including the World Economic Forum Partnering Against Corruption Initiative, the Wolfsberg Group, and similar groups in the defence and metals technology industries.

This was recognised in 2014 when the B20 group of business leaders awarded the Basel Institute the responsibility of developing and maintaining the B20 Collective Action Hub, a central, global platform for learning about and engaging in anti-corruption Collective Action. Our team provides advice and resources on Collective Action to companies, business associations, non-profit organisations and multi-stakeholder groups around the world. This is operationalised through a strategy focused on enabling others, in the form of dedicated mentoring programme, a helpdesk function, and expert and practitioner communities.

The Basel Institute further advises a wide range of SMEs and multinational corporations as well as state-owned enterprises on building or strengthening anti-bribery compliance systems, conducting internal investigations, measuring effectiveness of compliance and integrating responses to regulatory developments in the field of ESG. While this work in the corporate sector is critical to ensure that Collective Action initiatives that we support and

mentor are closely connected to current compliance challenges and that our global advocacy on compliance reflects corporate practices, advice to state-owned enterprises typically arises in connection with loans and guarantees provided by multilateral development banks.

4.1.3 Anti-corruption and prevention

Uncovering the root causes of corruption, creating innovative tools for prevention and assisting partners in implementing successful anti-corruption strategies.

Corruption and governance are complex phenomena which vary in shape, intensity and root causes. One thing is clear: off-the-shelf interventions have not worked and will not work. Therefore, building a bridge between research and practice is essential to find sustainable, feasible and pragmatic ways to reduce corruption and improve governance in different contexts.

To contribute to this goal, our Prevention, Research and Innovation team focuses on generating evidence on drivers of corruption and what can make anti-corruption interventions effective.

Often working with other Basel Institute staff and partners, the team analyses existing and emerging approaches to address corruption, tests them through pilot interventions, and uses this knowledge to assist government entities and international development actors to find smarter, context-sensitive and evidence-based interventions to prevent corruption and strengthen resilience. This also informs our own corruption prevention-oriented technical assistance and training services for partner countries and donors.

Specific building blocks of our research employed for this purpose are:

- **Social norms:** Exploring the power of social norms to impact attitudes and behaviours around corruption and piloting interventions that target these norms.
- **Behavioural insights:** Field research on what drives corrupt behaviours and analysis to help make behavioural anti-corruption interventions more effective.
- **Social network analysis:** Using specific techniques to analyse the networks behind grand corruption and money laundering schemes, to develop novel network-based anti-corruption interventions.
- **Informality:** Understanding the role of informal governance structures and informal networks in perpetuating corruption, and piloting corruption prevention interventions that take into account informality.

We also share our findings from the field at global policy forums on governance and anti-corruption, in university teaching halls, and globally through our fully open-access research publications.

4.1.4 Tackling global challenges together – Green Corruption

Our Green Corruption programme is a standout example of how we empower, enable and connect practitioners to collectively address corruption as an obstacle to progress on the environment and other global challenges.

Green Corruption is the term the Basel Institute uses to define corruption, money laundering and governance failures which lead to environmental degradation. Green Corruption allows criminals to fund their illegal operations and to hide, clean and subsequently enjoy the profits of their crimes. As most environmental crimes are profit driven and often run by organised crime groups, corruption and money laundering play a key role as enablers of environmental degradation. Corruption can also directly harm the environment, for example by enabling undue influence on climate change policies or funding streams.

Environmental destruction has grown to industrial proportions. While climate change and issues related to industrialisation and population growth play an important and well-documented role, environmental crime as a driver of environmental degradation is not in the spotlight. Most governments are unable or unwilling to effectively prevent or punish corruption relating to the environment. They thus lack a key lever for protecting it.

Through our Green Corruption programme, we have dedicated a substantial share of its institutional attention towards reversing this culture of impunity and contributing to halting and reversing environmental degradation.

During the programme's first phase, leading up to 2020 and benefitting from the Institute's expertise in follow-the-money investigations, rigorous research to test viability of approaches, and dynamic engagement of the private sector, we have adapted some of our anti-corruption tools to the environmental sector, with an initial focus on the illegal wildlife trade. We piloted these in East Africa, resulting in the uncovering of massive untapped prevention and enforcement potential.

During the second phase (2021–24), we have scaled these engagements up to target a broader range of environmental crime fields (adding forestry, fisheries, and mining) and are applying an expanded multi-pronged approach consisting of:

- introducing the follow-the-money and asset recovery focus in environmental crime law enforcement through the ICAR-tested model of embedded expert-led mentoring and capacity building;
- building deeper understanding of environmental crime typologies in high-risk sectors through comparative research and pilot interventions and through mixed conservation / anti-corruption communities of practice; and

- implementing dedicated control tools in the public and private sectors, including through Collective Action, to prevent corruption in environmental conservation institutions and policies and in affected companies.

4.2 Enabling others

The overarching objective of this external strategy is to seek to widely share our work, our work methods and tools, and our learning path with other organisations and practitioners to contribute to enhanced impact and quality of anti-corruption interventions. Concrete avenues to pursue this goal over the next three years include:

4.2.1 Offering new training opportunities for anti-corruption professionals

The Basel Institute currently offers training either as part of our ICAR training team through in-person trainings or self-paced eLearning modules, or on an ad hoc basis as part of donor-funded projects, for example on the investigation of environmental corruption, internal controls and risk assessments, as well as in public financial management topics. In addition, Basel Institute team members regularly teach at the University of Basel and other universities, mostly in Switzerland.

Our current training offer has the particular strength of being uniquely practitioner led and practitioner oriented. The Basel Institute training methodology is widely recognised for its very high quality, its context sensitivity and its relevance. We can further build on our existing, state-of-the-art learning platform, Basel LEARN, that is easily accessible and caters for countries with weak access to the internet.

Potential weaknesses of our training offer at present are that it does not comprehensively cover the field of anti-corruption and our methods, and our training has no formal recognition beyond Basel Institute's reputation and our Basel Institute-issued certificates of participation. These are weaknesses that are common to anti-corruption training offers, with the exception of two other institutions at the time of writing (University of Sussex, International Anti-Corruption Academy).

Both the strength and the weaknesses bear significant potential for growth in order to increase impact, which we seek to leverage as follows:

- Offering certified training for specialised professions (e.g. financial investigation, cryptocurrency investigation, corruption risk assessment, etc.).

- Offering post-graduate training for young professionals and senior anti-corruption leaders and practitioners in conjunction with Bologna-accredited universities (including the University of Basel).

- Developing Basel LEARN into a globally recognised learning platform for anti-corruption practitioners across all fields.

4.2.2 Facilitating professional communities of practice

The creation and facilitation of dedicated professional communities of practice in areas of particular relevance to our operations are an important aspect of our goal to create more impact by working through and with others and enabling others to operate more effectively.

This low-cost engagement is geared toward more formally nurturing our existing communities of practice – regional anti-corruption prosecutor groups; Collective Action practitioners; environmental crime and conservation professionals – and building opportunities and platforms to engage with additional communities.

We seek to further invest in this model of working by:

- continuously expanding and professionalising these communities; and
- piloting different models of engagement, including digital technology for fostering engagement and exchange and community building through training (connected to the point above).

Past experience shows that the success of such communities depends heavily on the quality and intensity of the moderator or facilitator's efforts. Therefore, significant additional resources in IT infrastructure and human capacity are required to maintain existing and establish new communities.

4.2.3 Supporting dedicated non-state actors to promote and implement private-sector anti-corruption initiatives in high-risk countries

We have promoted Collective Action as a critical and constructive tool to prevent and combat corruption and level the business playing field since our foundation in 2003. While back then, Collective Action was still viewed with significant suspicion, the last decade has been critical in gaining traction for Collective Action.

The Siemens Integrity Initiative, a funding mechanism that arose from a corruption scandal in the early 2000s, has provided critical impetus for this evolution. In the past 10+ years, it has successfully nurtured a wide range of Collective Action initiatives and helped reach a point where Collective Action has true and demonstrable impact on business practice .

The greatest merit of this funding model was that it allowed a very heterogenous group of organisations and institutions to receive funding, thereby allowing the Collective Action community to test different models and to operate in a context sensitive and adaptive manner.

The Siemens funding mechanism, however, concludes in June 2024, leaving a significant gap in global efforts to promote fair, competitive and clean business. Numerous local organisations are dependent on this form

of funding in order to preserve its independent broker and facilitator role for innovative private-sector anti-corruption practice. The role played by the Basel Institute in this community of practice, by providing advice and mentoring, and by offering learning and networking opportunities to the initiatives and organisations, would also lose impact.

Fundraising for the Basel Institute alone would to a considerable extent defeat the purpose, because without funding for the other organisations in the Collective Action community, we are not able to implement our programme of work and the legacy of the Siemens Integrity Initiative will be largely lost. Also, the Basel Institute, which is widely recognised as the go-to centre of excellence in anti-corruption Collective Action and has strong convening power in this field, can assist other, less well connected or internationally recognised organisations to find funding.

In order to ensure that this valuable and innovative community of practice can persevere beyond the lifetime of the Siemens funding mechanism, we are proposing to establish a similarly designed successor funding mechanism, thereby ensuring sustainability and continued positive impact of Collective Action on the global business climate. Funding for this engagement is initially sought from the private sector.

5 Learn more and see latest updates

The Basel Institute and its constituent teams are fast-moving and quickly adapt to new opportunities, challenges and strategic directions. For the latest updates on our work and operations, please visit baselgovernance.org or follow us on our social media channels: LinkedIn, X, Facebook and WhatsApp.

For specific details of our teams' operational strategies, please contact the respective head of team as listed on our website.