Integrity beyond the capital

Embedding Peru's national anti-corruption standards in subnational governments

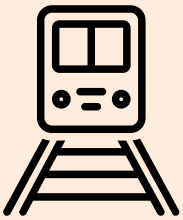
Peru's Integrity Model – its framework for preventing corruption in government operations – is a powerful tool to strengthen integrity and protect public resources. But it only works if governments at all levels implement it properly.

The Swiss-funded Subnational Public Finance Management (PFM) programme, implemented by the Basel Institute on Governance, has supported six Peruvian regional and local governments in embedding these standards into everyday operations.

Within one year, the regions of Loreto and Apurímac moved from among the lowest-ranked positions to the top of the national Preventive Capacity Index, which measures the effective implementation of the Integrity Model. This shows that targeted support can lead to rapid, measurable improvements in institutional capacity – and to more transparent, ethical management of public resources.



Regional Meeting of Integrity Officers in Apurímac, 2025. Source: Subnational PFM programme.



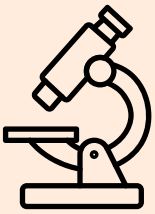
Getting on the right track

The programme focused on six subnational governments with significant gaps in corruption prevention and in the early stages of implementing Peru's national Integrity Model.



Targeting priorities

Official Preventive Capacity Index results helped identify institutional gaps and priorities to guide targeted activities and capacity building with local authorities.



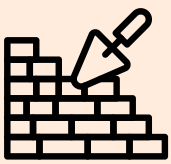
Focus on practical processes

The programme translates complex regulatory and technical requirements into practical tools that public officials now use in their everyday decision-making.



Leading national rankings

In just one year, the Loreto and Apurímac regional governments moved from 17th to 4th and 18th to 1st places respectively in the national Preventive Capacity Index.



Built to last

Methodologies, plans, tools and materials are designed to remain in place after the programme ends, and to be replicated in other contexts.

The challenge: the cost of weak integrity

Peru faces significant public integrity challenges. In 2024, the Comptroller General estimated that corruption and misconduct resulted in losses of approximately PEN 24.3 billion (around USD 7 billion) in 2023, equivalent to 2.8 percent of GDP. Subnational governments accounted for around 44 percent of these losses.

The main risks include manipulated procurement, overvaluation of works and services, improper payments and unsupported consultancy contracts. Another was weaknesses in internal controls and transparency, particularly in public procurement and budget execution processes.

In response, the Peruvian state established the Integrity Model, a five-stage tool designed to guide state entities in implementing anti-corruption frameworks based on international standards and best practices. The goal is to strengthen a culture of integrity and improve the capacity to prevent and respond to unethical or corrupt practices. The Preventive Capacity Index assesses the effectiveness of its implementation.

Yet formal rules and requirements, such as those of the Integrity Model, do not automatically translate into effective corruption prevention. Many subnational governments face difficulties turning these rules into concrete actions that become part of their work, often because of unclear roles and responsibilities and weak follow-up.

These gaps are particularly significant in territories with limited institutional capacity and complex development challenges.

The response: turning integrity rules into everyday practice

The programme developed an approach to make integrity part of everyday public financial management and decision-making. It focused on entities in the early stages of adopting and implementing the Integrity Model that also scored low on preventive capacity.

The programme combined several forms of support:

- **Evidence-based diagnostics**: identifying the main institutional gaps and priority actions, based on the results of the Preventive Capacity Index evaluation.
- **Bringing actors together**: working together with authorities and technical teams to develop integrity programmes aligned with national requirements and define implementation roadmaps.
- **Developing concrete plans and tools**: helping institutions define clear responsibilities, deadlines, indicators and follow-up

mechanisms, and translating regulatory and technical requirements into processes and tools that public officials could use in their daily work.

- **Ongoing technical assistance**: helping officials address implementation challenges as they arose.

This approach aimed both to strengthen institutional ownership and to build lasting capacities that would endure beyond the programme's conclusion.

Results: record improvements in preventive capacity

The programme contributed to significant improvements in the supported regional governments' capacities to plan, implement and monitor measures to prevent corruption risks, according to their scores in the official evaluations of the Integrity Model.

Even in complex institutional contexts, where serious issues existed at the outset, corruption prevention capacity saw a positive change thanks to the combination of technical assistance, institutional commitment and a practical approach to implementation.

Beyond improving their Preventive Capacity Index scores, the programme left these institutions with methodologies, skills and practical tools that can be applied further, across other subnational governments and public entities. These resources aim to support sustainable change towards an institutional culture focused on transparency, risk prevention and continuous improvement in public financial management.

Case studies: Loreto and Apurímac rising in the ranking

LORETO
2023–2024

17th → 4th

of 22 regional governments

▲ 13 places climbed

APURÍMAC
2024–2025

18th → 1st

of 19 regional governments

▲ 17 places climbed

Loreto is an Amazonian region with around 1 million inhabitants and the second-highest incidence of monetary poverty in the country (40.1 percent). Apurímac is a highland region with around 436,000 inhabitants and a poverty rate of 20.9 percent (INEI, 2026). These were two regions in Peru facing significant challenges in translating national integrity standards into effective day-to-day public management.



Dissemination of materials on the implementation of the Integrity Model by the Regional Government of Loreto. Source: Subnational PFM programme.

Both regional governments started from critically low positions in the evaluation of the implementation of Peru's Integrity Model. The programme provided technical assistance to help them implement the model's standards across their daily operations.

This included strengthening institutional planning and regulatory frameworks, training on ethics, conflicts of interest and corruption risk management, improving transparency and complaints mechanisms, and introducing or enhancing digital tools for access to public information and accountability.

As a result, Loreto moved from 17th to 4th place out of 22 regional governments in Stage 1 of the Integrity Model between 2023 and 2024. In Apurímac, the same type of support contributed to an even stronger result, with the region rising from 18th to 1st place between 2024 and 2025, reaching the maximum score for Stage 1.



Renzo Freddy Angeles Ortega, Municipal Manager and Integrity Officer, and Johana Oscco Ramos, Integrity Coordinator, signing the Municipality of Abancay's 2026 Integrity Programme. Source: Subnational PFM programme.

Across both cases, the key driver of change was the operationalisation of existing integrity requirements into clear processes, responsibilities and tools that public officials could apply in their daily work.

Advancing towards international standards

These advances also align with international standards on public integrity, including the UN Convention against Corruption and the OECD's Recommendation on Public Integrity.

As part of Peru's OECD accession process, the country is adapting its policies to these standards. Strengthening preventive capacity at the subnational level responds directly to the OECD's call for coherent, comprehensive integrity systems. This means embedding risk management and internal controls into everyday practice while promoting an ethical culture for public decision-making.

Lessons learned to improve prevention capacity

Several key lessons emerge from the programme's experience supporting subnational governments to implement Peru's Integrity Model:

1. **Secure institutional commitment**. Direct, results-oriented communication with authorities and management helped internal coordination to push the implementation of the Integrity Model forward.

2. **Communicate strategically**. Active listening, empathy, flexibility and the ability to translate technical concepts into clear, accessible messages helped build a better understanding of the Integrity Model and reduce initial barriers to implementation.

3. **Build trust through evidence**. Sharing successful previous experiences strengthened credibility and demonstrated that implementation of the Integrity Model was feasible even in complex institutional contexts.

4. **Provide continuous technical support**. Ongoing assistance enabled timely responses to operational challenges, questions, institutional constraints and high workloads, helping institutions sustain implementation throughout the process.

5. **Develop standardised and replicable tools**. Common formats, templates and methodologies helped optimise resources and support institutions in meeting the evaluation criteria.

6. **Combine technical expertise with regulatory knowledge**. In-depth knowledge of the regulatory framework and the criteria of the Preventive Capacity Index enabled the team to provide appropriate guidance to participating entities and strengthen the quality of implementation.

7. **Maintain a strong presence on the ground**. In-person engagement helped with follow-up and institutional involvement, while also supporting the consolidation of capacities that continued to develop within institutions using their own resources.



Dissemination of materials for the “No to Bribery” and “A State Free from Sexual Harassment” campaigns. Source: Subnational PFM programme.

Why this matters for development partners

The experience demonstrates that subnational governments can strengthen their preventive capacity through targeted support, while generating methodologies and tools that can be adapted elsewhere in Peru and internationally.

For Switzerland and other development partners, this experience offers value on three levels.

1. **Impact**: strengthening public institutions responsible for managing public resources and delivering essential services to people in regions facing significant development challenges.
2. **Knowledge**: generating tested methodologies and practical tools for strengthening integrity in subnational governments with different levels of capacity and institutional maturity.
3. **Global public goods**: contributing to corruption prevention, stronger democratic governance and more transparent and efficient public financial management.

For governments and development partners seeking to strengthen corruption prevention at subnational level, the model offers a practical starting point: work with existing national frameworks, identify implementation gaps, build local capacity and provide sustained technical support until integrity becomes part of everyday public management.

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About this publication

This publication presents insights and lessons learned from over a decade of working with regional and municipal governments in Peru to strengthen public financial management systems and practices under our Programa GFP Subnacional. The programme is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) through its cooperation programme in Peru.

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The Basel Institute on Governance is an independent centre of expertise dedicated to advancing good governance and countering corruption. Our aim is to contribute to a more peaceful, just and sustainable world. We work hand in hand with governments, civil society and the private sector to prevent corruption, recover illicit assets and foster business integrity.

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