



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

04

Foreword

06

Fighting corruption,
fostering governance

08

2023 at a glance

10

Features

10

Anti-corruption: About more
than corruption

14

Strengthening the toolbox for
asset recovery

18

Fostering regional coalitions
against corruption

21

Closing the global enterprise

22

Shifting the narrative on
anti-corruption

24

Catalysing asset recovery
cooperation

26

Tech-powered learning

30

Looking back: Our 20th
anniversary

32

This year's highlights
in pictures

34

Publications

36

Our team

38

Valuing diversity and
sustainability

40

Funding and partnerships

42

Financial statement



Gretta Fenner (1975-2024)
Managing Director



Peter Maurer
President

The final preparations of this annual report were overshadowed by the tragic news that Gretta Fenner, Managing Director of the Basel Institute on Governance for nearly two decades, had passed away in a car accident in Kenya on 6 April 2024.

While we continue to be deeply saddened by the loss, we also know that Gretta was immensely proud of the Basel Institute's achievements in 2023, as well as of the progress made over the Institute's 20 years of existence – the latter, a large part of her legacy.

And there are indeed many reasons to be proud and optimistic. While corruption scandals hit the headlines, the more important stories of anti-corruption progress tend to advance quietly over years. Many of the standout achievements in this annual report are not just from 2023.

Second, anti-corruption tools yield benefits that go far beyond the immediate goal of reducing corruption risks. For example, when we provide advice to companies on compliance and multi-stakeholder

Collective Action (page 18), the goal is not merely to reduce the risk of compliance-related violations but to foster resilient, ethical companies, fair competition and thriving industries.

A third reason for optimism is that corruption is finally appearing on the agenda where it really matters – notably in the environmental sector. Our Green Corruption team has been working hard to embed anti-corruption and asset recovery tools in the environmental sphere, and to build bridges between the anti-corruption and conservation communities (pages 14 and 17).

At the Basel Institute, connections like these feed into our evolving understanding of corruption and of the changing tactics of power brokers on the political and geopolitical stage. From a narrowly defined legal concept, corruption has become a phenomenon that connects the biggest issues of our time. What global challenge is not caused or worsened by misuses of power and influence, with the aim of benefitting the few over the many?

As Gretta said at the Munich Security Conference shortly before her passing, the old idea of corruption as “just” bribery causes us to overlook patterns of behaviour that have long-term, systemic impacts on both national and global stability.

So, while we are a centre of technical competence, and advise governments worldwide on their laws and policies on corruption and asset recovery, the solutions we bring are never isolated from their political and social context. And we use behavioural science to better understand what really causes corrupt behaviour, and what might work to shift social norms towards compliance with laws, codes of ethics and other elements of the formal anti-corruption and anti-money laundering architecture.

That is also why a big focus of our work is on engaging and connecting with others in the anti-corruption, asset recovery and business integrity fields, and beyond. Even if, or rather especially if, they have competing priorities. Only through negotiation and dialogue can one forge the type of common understanding and

consensus that form the basis of effective and concerted action against corruption.

As the stories in this annual report show, the trust and partnership of our donors and collaborators are vital in order for us to make progress in often turbulent and unpredictable political contexts. We are deeply grateful to those who support our ultimate goal of fighting corruption for a better world, who trust our way of working and who are willing to invest for long-term success.

By jointly designing interventions and building in flexibility, we can continue to leverage our individual and collective resources, achieve greater impact and relevance and keep alive Gretta’s legacy over the Institute’s next 20 years and beyond.

Fighting corruption, fostering governance

for a more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable world.

Independent, non-profit
organisation

Established in
2003

130+
staff

28
nationalities



Based in Basel,
working worldwide



UNI
BASEL

Associated Institute of the
University of Basel

Tackling global
challenges
together



Empowering people

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

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.

Building coalitions

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

Changing behaviour

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

2023 at a glance

Anti-corruption and prevention

We uncover the root causes of corruption, create innovative tools for prevention and assist partners in implementing successful anti-corruption strategies.

- In 2023, our **Prevention, Research and Innovation** team provided **expert advice and political economy analysis for anti-corruption programmes** in seven countries, helping to mitigate risks and maximise effectiveness for donor agencies.
- Our **Green Corruption** team rolled out **corruption risk assessment** training for environmental authorities in Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Indonesia and Malawi, followed by intense advisory work to help implement mitigation measures.
- In **Ukraine**, our corruption prevention specialists worked with the Ministry of Infrastructure, Agency for Restoration and Ukrainian Railways to conduct corruption risk assessments, develop codes and policies, and strengthen strategic anti-corruption plans and institutional arrangements.
- In **Bulgaria**, we assisted government partners to establish new anti-corruption laws and institutions aligned with international standards and to develop a strategy to change perceptions around corruption.
- In **Peru**, through training and technical assistance on **Public Finance Management** to subnational governments, our team helped the authorities to surpass targets in areas from tax collection to vaccination and the execution of public investment projects.

Tackling global challenges together

We empower, enable and connect practitioners to collectively address the corruption hindering progress on the environment, security and other global challenges.

- Use of our **Basel LEARN** knowledge platform and its seven free eLearning courses – now in multiple languages – grew by 60 percent to nearly 40,000 users.
- Together with partners, we organised prominent events like the **7th Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptocurrencies** and regional multi-stakeholder coalitions under the US-led **Summit for Democracy** initiative.
- We helped spotlight environmental corruption at the **10th Conference of the States Parties to the UNCAC**, put corruption on the agenda at the **Munich Security Conference** and contributed to the endorsement of Collective Action in policy recommendations of the **B20 India**.
- Over 500 anti-corruption and conservation practitioners have now joined the **Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum**. As co-leaders we organised regular peer learning workshops and developed a public website and knowledge-sharing platform.
- Our 12th annual **Basel AML Index** spotlighted critical gaps in global anti-money laundering policy and practice. Subscriptions to our Expert Edition risk assessment tool rose by 47 percent.
- The **B20 Collective Action Hub**, our global resource centre on multi-stakeholder approaches to business integrity, saw 48,000 visits and now lists over 300 initiatives around the world.
- We contributed to critical global policy debates with more than **20 research papers and studies** on topics from environmental corruption to sanctions and asset recovery.

Asset recovery and enforcement

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

- In 2023, our **International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR)** worked with over 30 partner agencies across four continents on dozens of complex, transnational cases. Drawing on this case work, we provided advice on closing gaps in laws, policies and practices that hinder efforts to fight corruption and recover assets.
- Our **ICAR training team** conducted 21 high-impact training programmes on financial investigations and asset recovery, backed up by 42 workshops led by our in-country teams.
- Our ICAR team in **Latin America** supported some of the region's largest and most complex corruption and asset recovery cases, providing financial analysis and hands-on assistance with international cooperation to partners in Peru, Ecuador and Colombia. At the subnational level, asset recovery experts in our **Public Finance Management** programme in Peru trained over 200 specialised prosecutors in the use of non-conviction based forfeiture legislation and saw significant recoveries in domestic cases.
- Under our **Green Corruption** programme, we mentored and trained law enforcement officials across three continents to conduct financial investigations in environmental crime cases and to confiscate illicit assets linked to environmental harm.

Business integrity and governance

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

- Our **Private Sector** team expanded its mentoring programme for civil society organisations working with the private sector on anti-corruption, adding five new organisations to this growing community.
- Our **regional Collective Action Forums** and Awards ceremonies in South Africa and the Philippines helped raise the profile of anti-corruption Collective Action and build relationships between participants from the private sector, public sector, civil society and academia.
- Collective Action initiatives facilitated and supported by the Institute continued to **raise standards of integrity and compliance** in sectors including metals technology and finance.
- Through tailored advice and training, our **Compliance** specialists helped private firms, state-owned enterprises and a multilateral organisation to improve their anti-corruption and governance policies and to implement them effectively.

Anti-corruption: About more than corruption

Global conflicts reveal how corruption jeopardises the independence and effectiveness of institutions, and even the stability and security of entire states. Anti-corruption tools not only defend against corruption. They are integral to building healthy, resilient institutions that carry out their missions effectively while protecting against a range of threats.

In our wide-ranging corruption prevention and compliance work, we seek to maximise the benefits of anti-corruption for governments and their agencies, multilateral organisations, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and private firms.

When corruption is an existential issue

As Ukraine fights to defend against an illegal war, corruption risks are under the spotlight. The twin goals of safeguarding Western support and deepening European integration have catalysed Ukraine's anti-corruption reform agenda, which has made significant progress since the 2014 Revolution and is closely supported by an engaged and capable civil society.

Working with [Ukraine's Ministry of Infrastructure](#), we helped to assess corruption risks in the issuing of 336 Restoration grants worth nearly

BUILDING BACK BETTER

Our joint [policy briefing with Transparency International Ukraine](#), which we presented at the [Ukraine Recovery Conference in London](#), recommended concrete improvements in Ukraine's anti-corruption framework to safeguard ongoing Restoration projects and "build back better".



CHF 1.5 billion. The Ministry endorsed our recommendations to strengthen regulations and procedures for assessing costs in high-risk road construction projects and allocating funds for Restoration projects.

The Ministry elevated the Roads Agency, which we had recently been assisting, to become Ukraine's wartime



The Basel Institute and Ministry of Infrastructure formalised their cooperation on anti-corruption in the context of the Restoration process with a Memorandum of Understanding signed in April 2023. Photo: Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine.

Agency for Restoration, bringing new responsibilities over procurement and supervision of infrastructure projects. Our Ukrainian and international corruption prevention team worked with the Agency leadership to reshape the previously created Anti-Corruption Action Plan and develop the supporting Code of Ethics, Whistleblowing and Reporting Policy, and Regulation on Internal Investigation.

Our work in Ukraine was funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, USAID and the EU Anti-Corruption Initiative.

Our technical assistance in Ukraine builds on an ongoing engagement with Ukrainian Railways or Ukrzaliznytsia (UZ), the country's main wartime transport provider and largest landowner, with 230,000 staff. As part of a far-reaching corporatisation and decentralisation strategy, we provided extensive mentoring and advice during the institutional restructuring of its anti-corruption functions and worked with compliance staff to build capacity to manage procurement-related risks.

“The Code of Ethics is grounded in Ukraine’s anti-corruption laws and the profound belief that ethical behaviour is the foundation of meaningful public service. It ... reminds us that our actions, no matter their scale, influence the success of the country’s Restoration.”

 **@RestoreUA**, Ukraine’s Agency for Restoration, referring to a Code of Ethics whose development we supported in 2023.



A risk assessment workshop with Ukrainian Railways staff. Photo: USAID.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with our partners in the Ukrainian government and civil society as they advance their anti-corruption efforts and effectiveness. This includes in the forestry sector, through our engagement with the state-owned enterprise Forests of Ukraine.

In parallel, we envisage an expansion in our support to the country’s key anti-corruption enforcement agencies. Their efforts to investigate high-level corruption and recover stolen funds serve as an important deterrent against engaging in corrupt behaviour.

Beyond tick-box compliance

Across our work in Ukraine, as well as compliance mandates in the Middle East, Southeast Europe and Southeast Asia involving SOEs in high-risk sectors, we emphasise how preventing corruption is not only about complying with laws, avoiding penalties and checking the boxes of investor requirements.

The process of strengthening anti-corruption policies and internal controls, and of engaging staff in their implementation through tailored training and communication, are all

part of building effective, values-led organisations that are resistant to both external and internal threats.

Corruption prevention measures benefit enforcement efforts, too. For example, our Compliance specialists have supported organisations large and small in:

- building capacity for internal investigations, a strong deterrent as well as essential for the enforcement of corruption prevention measures;
- revising governance instruments, including developing clear and relevant conflict of interest guidelines that help to prevent unwitting conflicts as well as to sanction those who abuse their positions deliberately for private gain.



Internal investigations training as part of the USAID Integritas project in Indonesia.

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Mitigating corruption risks for better environmental outcomes

Our Green Corruption programme has consistently found that public entities in charge of managing natural resources typically have insufficient internal controls to mitigate corruption.

The team rolled out prevention tools that they had developed and piloted in 2022 across three continents, typically starting with participatory corruption risk assessment workshops followed by intense advisory work on risk mitigation.

The map, right, shows some highlights of our Green Corruption prevention work in 2023.

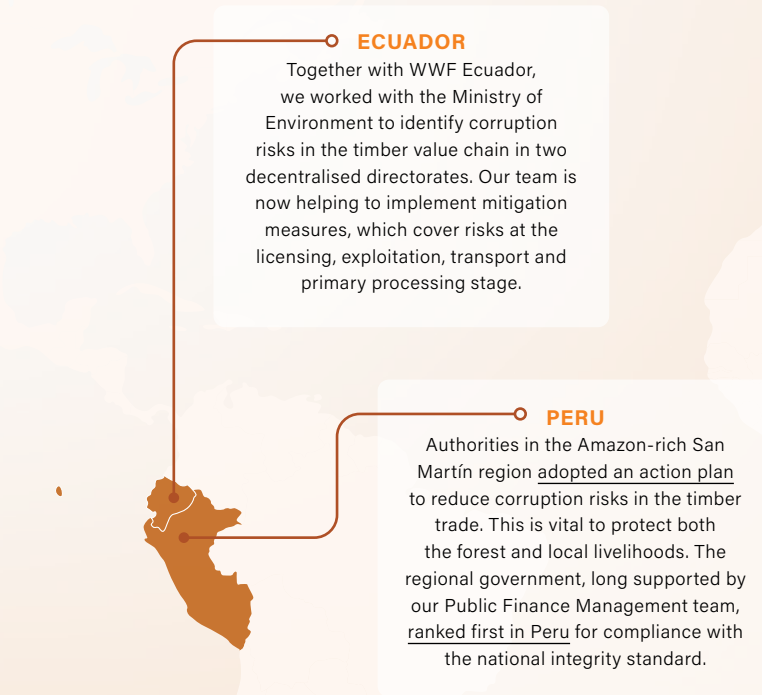
Effective diagnoses and strategies

To be effective, corruption prevention approaches must be based on a deep and nuanced understanding of how and why corruption arises in that context. It is important to ask how aspects of the wider political context may be fuelling the problem – but also how it might be leveraged to help embed reforms.

Our Prevention, Research and Innovation team conducts targeted corruption diagnoses and political economy analyses for our own teams and partner agencies in order to help these identify challenges and opportunities for anti-corruption interventions.

Their analyses in 2023 included:

- Government efforts to tackle illegal wildlife trade in two Latin American countries where corruption is a strong facilitator of organised crime.
- Strategies to improve governance of the mining sector in an African country, taking into account how informal governance structures and relationships often supersede formal institutions and laws.
- The design of sustainable anti-corruption strategies in an African country that are resilient to political volatility and stand a greater chance of long-term success.



→ Approaches to strengthen democratic governance in a West Asian country, highlighting potential reforms that are the most politically relevant and feasible.

Drawing on these and previous experiences, our team has also provided guidance to practitioners seeking to better assess and incorporate political economic factors into anti-corruption programming. These range from a [step-by-step guidance document](#) for conservation practitioners to the development of an internal assessment framework for our asset recovery and enforcement country programmes – which typically have to respond to complex and fast-changing political economic contexts.

How enhancing Public Finance Management reduces corruption risks and enhances outcomes for citizens

Across our work, we see how anti-corruption tools not only help to prevent corruption but foster stronger, more effective institutions and states. Our [Public Finance Management](#)

programme in Peru, funded by the Swiss SECO Cooperation since 2015, shows vividly how the same holds true in the other direction: building capacity for the efficient, transparent management of public finances helps to foster a culture of integrity and reduce corruption risks in the 11 subnational governments with which we work.

A few highlights from 2023 show some promising progress in areas where we provide training, mentoring and other technical assistance, including public investments, procurement, logistics and tax collection:

- Record revenues from property tax collection, exceeding national targets in the subnational governments of Abancay, Cusco, Piura and Tarapoto.
- 94% distribution rates of vaccines for children under five.
- 92% execution rates for high-priority regional investment projects.

UKRAINE

A “deep dive” report into corruption in the forestry sector revealed concerns over a war-related increase in risks of illegal logging. Following online events and a workshop with WWF’s regional chapters, we have commenced work with Ukraine’s new forestry SOE on anti-corruption and internal controls.

MALAWI

We helped our partners at the Department of Forestry to establish an Institutional Integrity Committee, a key feature of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy. The Committee seeks to promote integrity, transparency and accountability and to improve public service delivery in relation to forestry.

INDONESIA

Following an in-depth risk assessment of the timber sales platform of Perum Perhutani, an SOE that manages forests on the island of Java, our recommendations to strengthen safeguards were adopted.

CAN A WHATSAPP CHATBOT IMPROVE TAX COLLECTION RATES?

Yes, so it appears from a novel pilot by our partners in the SAT-Tarapoto tax office in San Martín. The WhatsApp chatbot, “Tributito”, provides users with real-time guidance on tax compliance, including due dates and benefits of early payment. According to our partners in SAT-Tarapoto, the chatbot has eased communication between civil servants and tax payers, saving time and increasing transparency.

Coordinating on public integrity

Promising approaches like that of the tax collection chatbot (see box, right), and other behavioural science-based interventions piloted in 2023, call out to be shared with other government entities at the subnational and national levels.

That’s why, at an inaugural joint public integrity workshop, we brought together leaders from six regional governments with representatives from Peru’s Public Integrity Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme. The workshop was an opportunity to strengthen channels of communication and cooperation between subnational and national entities and this key international donor.

Turning experience into guidance

Based on their hands-on experience working with subnational governments, our local team also collaborated with the Public Integrity Secretariat to develop guidance on managing integrity risks in public entities. The resulting joint guide forms the basis of the work of integrity offices in all government entities, covering ministries, other central bodies, regional governments and municipalities.

In a press release following the guide’s formal adoption by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister stressed that this action reflects the government’s firm commitment to advancing the fight against corruption using a preventive approach.

The inaugural Public Integrity Workshop in July 2023, part of our Swiss SECO-funded assistance programme for 11 subnational governments in Peru.



Strengthening the toolbox for asset recovery



Investing in systems to recover assets linked to corruption, money laundering and other crimes is not only valuable for its ability to deprive criminals of funds and free up resources for citizens. It's also because each step we take towards a more effective asset recovery system is a step towards stronger institutions, rule of law and public trust. Our International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR) specialists worked closely with authorities across our 17 partner countries to develop stronger asset recovery laws and to apply them more effectively.

Mozambique: Birth and development of a new civil confiscation law

Working closely with the Attorney General's Office and other government partners in Mozambique, our local ICAR team assisted with the development of a new law that would enable the confiscation of proceeds of crime using a civil standard of proof. When the law is adopted, Mozambique will be the first Portuguese-speaking jurisdiction to have a civil confiscation regime.

The timeline on the right shows how our team worked with relevant partners to conceptualise and draft a law that could be used effectively in the Mozambican context.

2022

Information and decision

Scoping missions and a multi-jurisdictional conference in Lisbon, Portugal, highlight how a civil confiscation law would enable Mozambique to target assets independently of criminal proceedings.

2023

Developing the law

ICAR works with stakeholders across the criminal justice chain to develop and adapt a civil confiscation law to Mozambican legislation.

Political seminar

A high-level international seminar consolidates understanding and political backing. Minister of Justice Helena Kida applauds the effort, emphasising that "the State must ensure that it is not possible to accumulate wealth by committing illicit acts". Deputy Attorney General Alberto Paulo says that "depriving the perpetrator of the proceeds of criminal activity is one of the most powerful mechanisms in the fight against crime."

Technical retreat

The draft law is refined by a working group comprising relevant Mozambican stakeholders and international asset recovery experts.

2024

Parliamentary approval sought

The Attorney General sends the law to the Ministry of Justice. It is referenced in the country's counter-terrorism strategy while awaiting final approval, anticipated in early 2024.



Delegates at the high-level seminar in July 2023. The seminar was part of our programme of assistance to the Attorney General's Office of Mozambique, with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.



“Events such as this Convention foster knowledge and the exchange of ideas among judges. The outcomes will be positive in terms of exchanging ideas and harmonising criteria for the application of *Extinción de dominio*, and above all in terms of shaping the future of this subsystem.”

Javier Arévalo Vela, President of the Supreme Court of Peru, speaking at a National Convention of Judges (photo left) that we organised in 2023 to foster continuous improvement and peer exchange in the national judicial subsystem for *Extinción de dominio*.

Peru: Building on success

Mozambique’s civil forfeiture law draws on elements of *Extinción de dominio*, a non-conviction based forfeiture law in Peru that we helped to introduce in 2018. The law is leading to rapid progress in asset recovery capabilities at both the international and domestic levels.

At the international level, our Latin America-based ICAR team is supporting some of Peru’s – and the region’s – most complex, multi-year cases involving individuals at the highest levels of state. The team’s financial analyses and assistance with legal strategies and mutual legal assistance have broken new ground in many of these cases.

At the domestic level, through our Swiss SECO-financed Public Finance Management programme, we continue to provide technical assistance and training to subnational Public Prosecutor’s Offices specialised in *Extinción de*

dominio. The legal strategies that we jointly developed in 16 high-profile cases at the subnational level led to the recovery of over USD 176,300 in 2023, with more in the pipeline.

As we see across our asset recovery work in dozens of countries, even small successes at the subnational level can mean a lot to local people and help reinforce the message that corruption doesn’t pay. They are also critical in building the capacity and confidence of practitioners to apply the tools in their country’s toolbox.

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“When it comes to asset recovery legislation, a good motto is: Use what you’ve got and consider getting what you haven’t.”

Working Paper 42 by Andrew Dornbierer sets out how states can maximise their ability to recover assets linked to crimes or sanctions by maximising the utility of existing laws; introducing alternative legal mechanisms such as non-conviction based forfeiture or illicit enrichment laws; and enhancing coordination.

We thank the Fellows of the International Academy of Financial Crime Litigators and other experts who contributed research and reviews of the paper.

Bulgaria: Forging a unified framework

Developing a toolkit for confiscating illicit assets relies on other parts of the anti-corruption framework being robust and aligned with international standards.

Through our close partnership with the Government of Bulgaria, we supported the drafting, adoption and initial implementation of key anti-corruption legislation in 2023, including the Whistleblower Protection Act and the Law on Combating Corruption Among Senior Public Officials.

The latter establishes a new Anti-Corruption Commission with vested investigative powers, with the aim of streamlining and catalysing investigations into high-level corruption cases.

These are significant achievements for the Ministry of Justice and other government partners, considering 2023 was marked by election turmoil, two caretaker governments and the tremors of Russia’s war on Ukraine.

The passing of the legislation helped to unlock a tranche of funds from the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility, directly benefiting Bulgarian citizens who have vocally protested against the impacts of corruption on the country’s economy and security.

“Anti-corruption reforms are always an exercise in managing competing interests. So it was heartening to see a united spirit developing in the technical discussions and in the various multi-stakeholder working groups we helped to facilitate.”



Renne Traicova
Team Leader Bulgaria
Basel Institute on Governance



A roundtable co-organised with the Commission for Personal Data Protection and the Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives served to clarify the new Whistleblower Protection Act among key representatives of the public sector, business, media and civil society. The event was held under our holistic programme of work in Bulgaria, funded by USAID and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Confiscation for conservation

Applying asset recovery laws effectively means applying them across broad areas of profit-motivated crime. A standout example of where this has not traditionally happened is the environmental sphere.

Our Green Corruption team’s research and pilot projects with environmental enforcement agencies has revealed how financial investigations and asset recovery tools are rarely applied to environmental crimes or related corruption.

Through technical assistance and mentoring in eight countries, we are

seeking to embed the concept and practice of “following the money” into the work of environmental enforcement agencies. The cases we support reflect the priorities of each country. Gold-related cases are growing in Latin America, for example, while wildlife trafficking cases are advancing in our African partner countries. In Indonesia, our support focuses on forestry and fisheries-related cases.

To increase the relevance of our training for environmental enforcement partners, our Green Corruption and ICAR training teams have adapted ICAR’s flagship training programme on financial investigations and asset recovery to the environmental sphere.

The simulated case at the heart of the workshop involves an alleged illegal logging kingpin, who lives a luxurious lifestyle and owns vehicles, properties and other assets. Multidisciplinary “task teams” investigate suspected corruption and money laundering offences, prove the case in the classroom “court” and initiate asset recovery actions.

The adapted training programme was piloted in Uganda before being rolled out in Peru and Bolivia. It will be delivered in 2024 in Indonesia and Madagascar, the latter a new partner country for our Green Corruption programme.



SEEDLINGS OF HOPE?

“Crimes that have an impact on the environment are among the most lucrative criminal activities in the world ... and have disastrous consequences that extend far beyond the illicit profits generated by these activities.”

Our Working Paper 50, *Seedlings of Hope* by Sophie Lemaître, explored promising initiatives by states and non-state actors to address the hugely overlooked issue of environmental corruption. In addition to asset recovery tools, the paper highlighted promising enforcement interventions including methodologies to assess harm caused by environmental corruption and alternative legal avenues such as tax offences, corporate due diligence legislation and civil litigation.

The paper was one of several highly valuable research efforts funded by the Principality of Liechtenstein, a core donor to the Basel Institute and our Green Corruption programme.



CoSP10: Green Corruption rises up the anti-corruption agenda

For the first time in its 20-year history, the Conference of the States Parties to the UNCAC (CoSP10) hosted a series of special events on corruption that impacts the environment. We joined a coalition of 25 states, international organisations and non-profit organisations in co-organising the five panel discussions.

Speaking to packed audiences, panellists highlighted the importance of cutting off environmental criminals from financial markets and targeting their ill-gotten assets. Others testified to how anti-corruption tools such as corruption risk assessments can help protect valuable natural resources.



Packed rooms indicate a welcome swell in interest in combating corruption to protect the environment. Photo: UNIS Vienna.



Fostering regional coalitions against corruption

Countries in different regions tend to face similar corruption and governance challenges, and national policymakers can learn a lot from speaking to counterparts across their borders. For practitioners, regional coalitions can also act as powerful networks of information exchange, peer learning and support. As we grow and shift towards a more regional operational model, we foster communities of practice that can jointly accelerate and localise our partners' efforts to fight corruption, advance asset recovery and improve governance in their context.

Asia Pacific and Southern Africa: Power in numbers

Business integrity is vital for sustainable economic growth. Fostering trust and transparency through multi-stakeholder Collective Action is key to advancing business integrity, levelling the playing field and solving challenges that hold back investment and fair business.

To catalyse peer learning and networking among Collective Action practitioners in Asia Pacific and Southern Africa, our Private Sector team hosted two regional Forums in Manila and Johannesburg. Over 120 representatives of business, government and civil society came together to exchange experiences and identify opportunities to collaborate.

Together, we celebrated the presentation of regional Collective Action Awards to CoST Uganda – the Ugandan chapter of the global Infrastructure Transparency Initiative – and the Thai Collective Action Against Corruption.

These regional networks will help sow the seeds of future successful multi-stakeholder initiatives, now that the concept of Collective Action is endorsed by numerous governments in their anti-corruption strategies and

The Asia Pacific Forum was organised together with the OECD and the Asian Development Bank. The collaboration builds on our support to the two organisations' Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific, whose advisory group we joined in 2023.

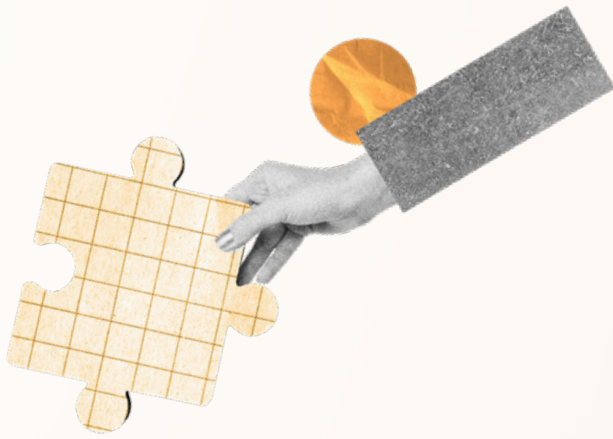


by major companies through their compliance programmes. In 2023, the OECD's updated Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct recommended Collective Action, joining a growing list of influential international policy documents to which we have contributed.

The Forums, and our many other efforts to advance Collective Action, are supported by the Siemens Integrity Initiative. Learn more on the B20 Collective Action Hub, our global platform for resources and engagement on anti-corruption Collective Action.



Celebrating the Collective Action Award winner at the Southern Africa Forum. The Forum was organised together with The Ethics Institute and the Southern African Anti-Corruption Network.



Europe: Summit for Democracy

Collective Action was the theme of one of several events we co-organised under the Summit for Democracy (S4D) initiative of US President Biden, as joint leaders of two of the three S4D anti-corruption cohorts.

The high-level event was a chance to shape private-sector engagement in anti-corruption and good governance efforts in Bulgaria. As a cross-sector collaboration with the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance, the American Chamber of Commerce, the Bulgarian-Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Transparency International Bulgaria, the event also displayed Collective Action in action.

An opening speech prepared by Deputy Prime Minister Mariya Gabriel emphasised the value of establishing a robust platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue through Collective Action.

“In finding solutions to a common problem like corruption, it is essential to share experiences, good ideas and practices – national and international, from the perspective of institutions, companies, NGOs and civil society. Different sectors have different perspectives and each one is useful and welcome in this process.”

Mariya Gabriel

Deputy Prime Minister of Bulgaria in 2023



Bulgaria's Minister of Finance addresses high-level representatives from political, business, civil society and diplomatic sectors at our joint event in Sofia. Photo: Ministry of Finance of Bulgaria.

Bulgaria's active leadership of the S4D anti-corruption coalition is helping to galvanise support for the fight against corruption in the country and beyond, as well as providing a valuable platform for regional leaders to share experiences and strengthen collaboration.

This will be essential to tackle shared challenges of corruption and security faced by countries in Eastern Europe – another topic addressed in an S4D regional conference on anti-corruption and national security in March 2023 that we co-organised with Bulgaria's Ministry of Justice, the Center for the Study of Democracy and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

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In opening remarks at a Summit for Democracy event on anti-corruption and national security, our President Peter Maurer commended how the initiative is finally putting corruption at the centre of the debate about global peace and stability. He called on leaders across sectors to work together to turn their commitments into action.

Latin America: Asset Recovery Knowledge Community

In addition to high-level policy events at the regional level, we regularly seek to convene practitioners who might benefit from learning from peers across their borders.

A community of practice that we launched in late 2021 to advance non-conviction based asset recovery in Latin America is taking on a life of its own. The Comunidad de Conocimiento en Recuperación de Activos now counts over 70 members from the public sector and academia, including judges, prosecutors and investigators from 11 Latin American countries plus Spain.

Members proactively suggest topics or volunteer to present at the monthly virtual meetings, which our local ICAR team in Peru facilitates.

Background papers and meeting summaries are shared among members via an online platform, in addition to informal discussions via a WhatsApp group.

Members say they appreciate the chance to exchange experiences on introducing and applying non-conviction based asset recovery laws in their country contexts, where political challenges often stand in the way. The informal nature of the community makes it a valuable place to seek advice on specific legal topics from members with specialised knowledge, including academics.

The relationships are also useful when it comes to fostering international judicial cooperation in the region, as a source of informal information on countries' mutual legal assistance processes and requirements.

“The Asset Recovery Knowledge Community provides an invaluable space for experts from various countries to discuss legal frameworks for asset recovery and their implementation in practice. Its diverse composition fosters rich dialogues spanning state and academic perspectives. These help to advance asset recovery in the region both generally and in terms of judicial decisions.”

Gilmar Giovanni Santander Abril
Former Colombian prosecutor, consultant lawyer and university lecturer on money laundering and asset forfeiture

Closing down the global enterprise

Preventing corruption is not only about instituting laws, norms and codes of ethics – it is about applying them effectively in practice. Our Basel AML Index, a leading ranking and risk assessment tool for money laundering and terrorist financing risks, took a deep dive this year into what “effectiveness” means when it comes to preventing illicit financial flows.

The [report](#) accompanying the 12th Public Edition of our Basel AML Index revealed a concerning trend: average global money laundering risks are on the rise, but many countries are becoming less effective at addressing them.

That’s a problem, not least because the same systems, mechanisms and individuals that enable money laundering can be used to finance terrorism, transfer funds linked to organised crime and evade financial sanctions.

So how does one turn this equation around and “close down the global enterprise” of money laundering, terrorist financing and sanctions evasion?

The big picture

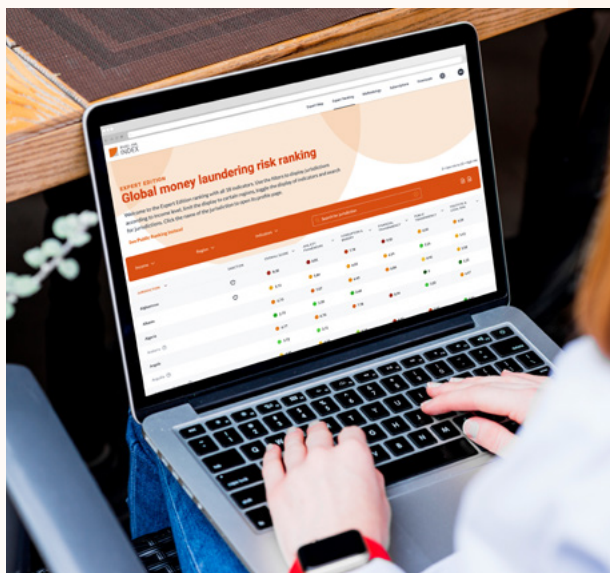
One key, says our Basel AML Index report, is a more nuanced and targeted risk-based approach to implementing anti-money laundering and counter financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) standards.

Heavy-handed application of AML/CFT laws can have severe unintended

consequences, including impacts on human rights and humanitarian assistance. It can also elevate the importance of professional service providers willing to help criminals [evade sanctions](#).

A second key is to keep up with emerging risks and trends, like those around [virtual assets](#) and artificial intelligence.

Third, our report emphasised that effectiveness is about building holistic resilience to financial crime across political and business spheres – as the same elements that make up a strong AML/CFT system are conducive to a secure, stable society based on trust, transparency and the rule of law.



BASEL AML INDEX IN 2023

152

jurisdictions in
Public Edition

9,000

downloads of report

157,000

visitors to website

47%

increase in Expert
Edition subscriptions

ENHANCING ACCESS TO AML DATA

Our subscription-based [Expert Editions](#) allow users to explore the data for 203 jurisdictions on a customisable interface that also highlights jurisdiction-level sanctions and other relevant lists.

A new Expert Edition Plus feature in 2023 enables users to predict the risk of jurisdictions being placed under “increased monitoring” by the Financial Action Task Force. Subscription remains free for all entities except private firms.

index.baselgovernance.org

Shifting the narrative on anti-corruption

Perceptions of corruption can themselves hamper the fight against it. When citizens believe corruption is widespread, anti-corruption interventions may hit a wall of cynicism, anger or complacency. And when corrupt actors can influence the media and social media, fighting back using legal and ethical tools can be doubly hard. Facing these challenges amid political turbulence, the Government of Bulgaria requested our assistance in developing a strategy to galvanise public support for anti-corruption reform.

A challenging picture

To gather evidence about perceptions of corruption and anti-corruption in Bulgaria, we conducted a nationwide survey with local market research firm Global Metrics and colleagues at the University of Basel.

The results were no surprise: corruption is considered a pressing problem among all social groups. And despite a strong desire to combat corruption, most of the 1,209 individuals surveyed were sceptical of government efforts to fight it.

Our subsequent analysis of corruption and anti-corruption narratives in Bulgarian media, together with monitoring and analytics firm Sensika, revealed a polarised and opaque media landscape. Social media is trusted more than traditional press, while fake news and smear campaigns against government reformers spread quickly through “mushroom sites” and influence networks. One deflected attention from anti-corruption reforms by spreading false stories about the Minister of Justice having strangled a pet cat!

Communicating about public integrity

In planning its National Public Integrity Campaign in this challenging context, our government partners sought a strategic and holistic approach.

First, by emphasising the positive benefits of integrity over the evils of corruption. Our research indicates that “negative” messaging can contribute to corruption fatigue and even backfire, by confirming people’s pessimism.

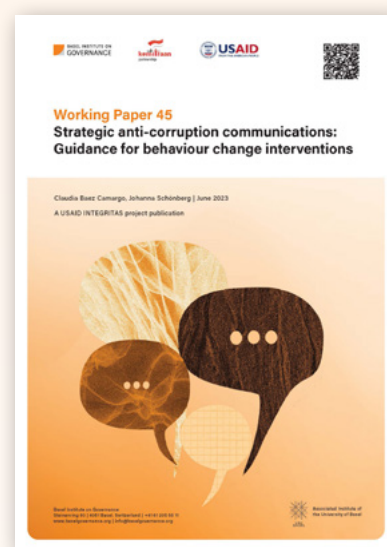
Second, by backing up communications on anti-corruption with real action and results. We held eight focus group discussions to test different messages across various social groups. These consistently revealed a strong desire for the government to make good on its anti-corruption commitments. Failing this, messages sound “untrue” and “like a joke” or are just “marketing techniques”.

Third, by thinking beyond traditional communications channels. At a

CHANGING BEHAVIOURS

A review of behaviour change interventions focused on anti-corruption messaging found that:

- Saying corruption is widespread often backfires.
- Negative messages are mostly ineffective.
- Specific messages are more effective.
- People are more likely to change their behaviours and beliefs if they see how corruption concretely affects their welfare.



Working Paper 45: *Strategic anti-corruption communications*, by Claudia Baez Camargo and Jude Schönberg.

Our Prevention, Research and Innovation team will use the findings as part of a new engagement in Indonesia in 2024 aimed at understanding and changing behaviours around sextortion (sexual corruption) and reducing its social acceptability.

two-day strategic communications retreat that we facilitated with the Prime Minister, high-level public officials and international communications advisers, it was widely agreed that galvanising public support for anti-corruption reforms needed more than a few press releases and billboards.

Initiatives that focus on transparency and civic trust can make citizens more receptive, as well as shield against disinformation and smear campaigns. Open access to data on how money is spent from procurement to service delivery, for example, can help to counter fake news attacks that sow suspicion.

In the meeting, which the Prime Minister described as having “reset our approach to communication”, participants drew up action points to bolster the planned integrity campaign. We look forward to supporting its rollout in 2024, under ongoing programmes funded by USAID and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.



A two-day strategic communications retreat for high-level government officials focused heavily on communications about anti-corruption. Simulated interviews put ministers in the “hot seat”.

“For the government to be stable and successful, it is important to communicate effectively with our citizens ... Making progress on communication is making progress on anti-corruption.”

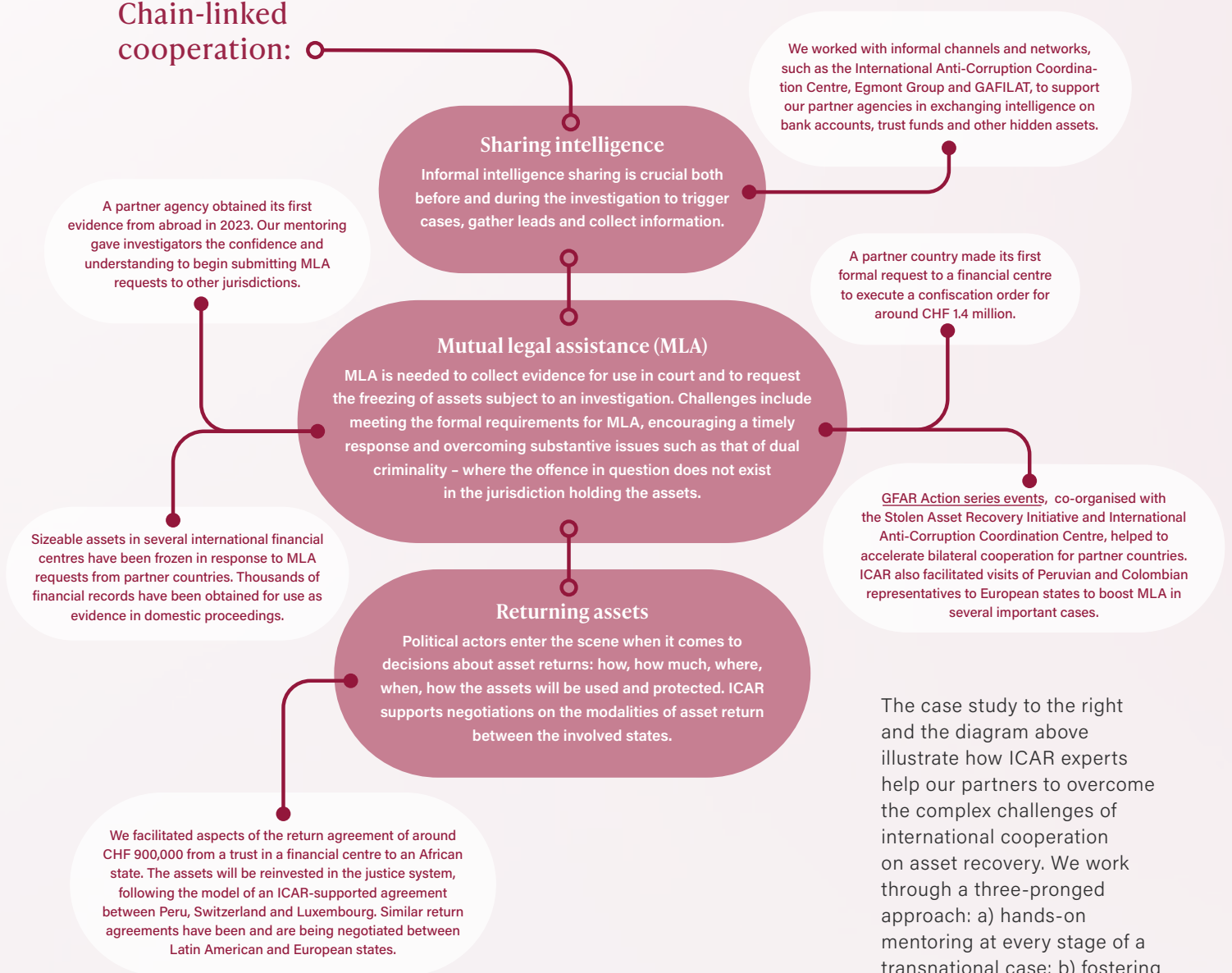
Nikolai Denkov
Prime Minister of Bulgaria in 2023



Catalysing asset recovery cooperation

Corrupt assets rarely stay where they are stolen; they typically pass through multiple jurisdictions before being spent or stashed abroad. And it is at country borders that many investigations hit a wall. Investigators and prosecutors may struggle to get intelligence or evidence from foreign jurisdictions – or in the case of many ICAR partner countries, may not even have tried. Requests to restrain or confiscate assets may be ignored, rejected or take years.

Chain-linked cooperation:



The case study to the right and the diagram above illustrate how ICAR experts help our partners to overcome the complex challenges of international cooperation on asset recovery. We work through a three-pronged approach: a) hands-on mentoring at every stage of a transnational case; b) fostering bilateral relationships and coalitions; and c) advancing global dialogue.

Zambia, where an ICAR expert was deployed in January 2023, has seen a particularly significant improvement in international cooperation along all stages of the asset recovery chain.

“The support of ICAR has been extremely impactful in exposing investigators and prosecutors to the options and tactics in undertaking both informal and formal cooperation. This has allowed for meaningful and constructive dialogue with international counterparts leading to an array of parallel investigations, a significant uptake in international cooperation and the restriction of significant funds in overseas jurisdictions.

The added facet of embedding experts in the key institutions has been of great benefit and will ensure our staff are well mentored so they can mentor others in years to come.”

Gilbert Phiri, Director of Public Prosecutions, Zambia



LEARN to cooperate on asset recovery cases

Try our free eLearning course on International Cooperation and Mutual Legal Assistance at: learn.baselgovernance.org

During an intensive ICAR training programme, Zambian law enforcement and other public officials work in cross-agency “task teams” to request evidence from abroad and recover assets hidden in complex offshore structures.

A precedent-setting case

A decision by the Swiss Federal Supreme Court in 2023 has cleared the way for the return of around USD 8.5 million in corruptly obtained assets to Peru. The case, closely supported by in-country asset recovery experts under ICAR and our SECO-funded Public Finance Management programme, is linked to corrupt military procurement deals.

In 2021, Peru issued a confiscation order for the assets based on its non-conviction based *Extinción de dominio* law and sent an MLA request to Switzerland to execute it. Although Switzerland does not have a comparable law, the Swiss authorities showed willingness to evaluate the request according to Swiss legal principles. The case is an example of best practice in MLA and sets a precedent for the use of non-conviction based forfeiture laws to recover illicit assets from abroad.

Tech-powered learning

Amid a rise in excitement about how new technologies can boost productivity, we are seeing how technology can also catalyse and expand learning among anti-corruption and asset recovery practitioners. By closely connecting our IT, eLearning and in-person training functions, we create a virtuous circle that takes advantage of technology while keeping learners' experience at the centre.

At the heart of that circle are the impactful training approach of our ICAR training team and our online knowledge and learning hub, [Basel LEARN](#).

From classroom to online clicks

Basel LEARN was launched in early 2020 to host our self-paced eLearning courses on financial investigations, asset recovery and related topics. Propelled by the Covid pandemic, it also became our primary platform for instructor-led online training.

[ICAR's training programmes](#) – of which we delivered 21 with 505 practitioners in 11 countries during 2023 – are based on a context-specific case exercise in which participants work together as investigative teams. Step by step, they investigate financial flows, discover evidence and build a case against a corrupt official.



Judges, prosecutors and investigators in Bulgaria investigate a simulated case and recover proceeds of corruption using their country's relevant laws and enforcement procedures.



To bring ICAR's active and participatory training experience to the digital world, we use password-protected activities which can only be unlocked if the group collects sufficient evidence and asks the right questions. Simulated databases such as land registries, financial intelligence reports and internet searches allow the teams to discover evidence on their own.

Even in on-site workshops, our training team continues to use Basel LEARN's interactive features. Trainees tell us they are a great enhancement to the learning experience and closer to the real-life tasks of investigators.

Blended learning – where participants complete our eLearning courses before an in-person workshop – enable trainees to learn new skills and explore best practices at their own pace before applying these “live” in their country context during the on-site training.

Making completion of a relevant eLearning course a requirement prior to on-site training ensures that all participants start with the same baseline. We found this to be very useful in our advanced operational analysis training in Malawi, for example, and in our financial investigations workshop for an emerging asset recovery community of practice for Lusophone countries.

One participant said: “This is the first online training I have experienced ... It was very practical and dynamic, which allowed us to intervene more. The format of the presentations, followed by the assignment of documents for group analysis, also allowed for greater discussion and learning.”

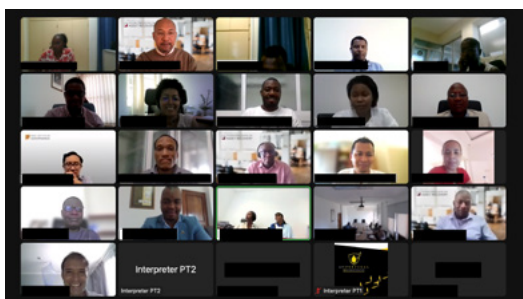


Participants from eight of Zambia's key investigative and prosecutorial agencies worked together to “follow the money” in a complex case involving a fictional Director of Public Works – and in doing so, built better inter-agency relationships and understanding.



In Ecuador, 58 criminal justice practitioners took part in intensive training described as “very useful for our job performance” as “we gained knowledge not only in theory, but through practice.” The workshops doubled as a “train the trainer” programme for five Latin America-based members of ICAR and our Green Corruption programme, who will form a regional hub for training in the future.

Continued on next page →



Training for the Lusophone Knowledge Community, our fledgling community of justice practitioners across Angola, Cabo Verde, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe, made full use of Basel LEARN's functionalities.

Empowering others: self-paced eLearning

Self-paced eLearning on Basel LEARN is also thriving. By the end of 2023, we had more than 40,000 registered users. Our newest of the seven free courses, on open-source intelligence, became the most popular in 2023 with 6,500 completions.

In 2023, the IT and eLearning team supported two partner agencies – the Academy of Justice in Kosovo and the Akademi Antikorupsi Indonesia – in integrating eLearning courses into their own virtual learning websites and professional development curricula.

New translations into Bulgarian and Ukrainian add to those already available in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Latvian and/or Bahasa Indonesia. The translations maximise the global reach of our courses and the ability of practitioners everywhere to gain and enhance the skills to fight financial crime.

As technology continues to evolve, we constantly explore new technologies that prove themselves to be effective and that support interactive, hands-on and practical training.

New eLearning courses in 2024 will include an advanced two-part course on data harvesting and analysis, and an introduction to investigating crypto assets. Our team is also experimenting with an artificial intelligence-enhanced version of our ICAR training programme on interviewing skills for financial investigators – watch this space!



The fourth in a series of five train-the-trainer workshops with the Academy of Justice in Kosovo. Photo courtesy of UNDP Kosovo, which supports our training and technical assistance under a programme of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Peru: Using lessons learned to help boost learning

In Peru, our specialised Public Finance Management team has the challenge of training thousands of public officials in 11 regions and municipalities across the country, in circumstances where officials' time, IT equipment and WiFi access are often limited.

As the Swiss SECO-funded programme moves into its ninth year, our team uses a variety of capacity-building strategies that have proven highly effective at embedding skills, knowledge and long-term practices among the programme's beneficiaries. These include:

- Smart use of social media, for example delivering some video-based courses via Facebook. The strategy takes advantage of free mobile data packages offered by the social media company. The platform's social features also serve to boost engagement and to spread awareness among broader networks of public officials in the country.
- Peer learning and trainee support are central pillars, achieved partly through the use of messaging apps and virtual "coffee breaks" that help to connect practitioners in different areas and to encourage conversations.
- An aspirational element has been added thanks to the delivery of some sessions by members of the Public Finance Management Experts Network. The network is a ground-up, informal initiative of graduates of a diploma course that we offered in 2019 in partnership with ESAN University. It now counts several hundred experienced practitioners among its members.

As a result of these strategies – and of our team's dedicated training and Public Finance Management specialists embedded in beneficiary government offices – workshops and courses on public finance management, internal controls and related topics reached over 17,000 public officials in 2023.



December 2023 saw the launch of a novel course in partnership with the University of Piura. The hands-on course, delivered virtually to meet the needs of working officials across the country, enables participants to learn about academic tools that can be applied to real-world challenges of Public Finance Management in their contexts.

Looking back

In 2023, we took the opportunity to reflect on our 20 years of fighting corruption and how we became the organisation we are today.



2003: The Basel Institute is established by Professor Mark Pieth.

2004: The Basel Institute is a founding member of **two early Collective Action initiatives**, the Wolfsberg Group and the World Economic Forum's Partnering Against Corruption Initiative.



2014: Asset recovery assistance moves to its current mentoring model, with the first full-time ICAR advisor deployed as an embedded expert in Kenya.

2013: The B20 mandates the Basel Institute to develop the **B20 Collective Action Hub**, a global resource centre on anti-corruption Collective Action.



2015: First field office opens in Peru to run a multi-year Swiss-funded programme aimed at strengthening Public Finance Management at the subnational level.



2016: A prestigious UK grant kickstarts research on **social norms, behavioural drivers of corruption and informal networks**.



2016: eLearning course published in cooperation with the Egmont Group of FIUs, focused on operational analysis of suspicious transaction reports.

Fight corruption: Play the game!

Published as part of our 20th anniversary celebrations, our card game offers a host of trivia questions on corruption, asset recovery and more.

baselgovernance.org/card-game





2005: Gretta Fenner joins the Basel Institute as Managing Director.



2006: The International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR) is established to assist countries seeking to recover funds stolen through corruption, with funding from Liechtenstein, Switzerland and the UK.



2007: High-impact financial investigations training starts with ICAR's first flagship training programmes in Indonesia and Tanzania.



2012: The Basel AML Index is first published as a country ranking and risk assessment tool for money laundering and terrorist financing.



2010: Private-sector engagement gets a boost with a multi-year grant from the Siemens Integrity Initiative for work on anti-corruption Collective Action.



2009: Anti-corruption research kicks off with a grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation for research on health governance.



2018: Jersey and Norway join Liechtenstein, Switzerland and the UK as **core donors to ICAR**.



2019: A pilot project on illegal wildlife trade, with seed funding from the Elephant Crisis Fund, paves the way for our **Green Corruption programme**.



2020: Basel LEARN is developed as a **virtual knowledge platform** for free self-paced eLearning courses and for the delivery of ICAR's trainer-led programmes.



2022: Peter Maurer becomes **President**, succeeding Mark Pieth.



2021: The Green Corruption programme expands as Liechtenstein becomes a core donor.



2021: Research into behaviour change interventions deepens with an innovative pilot intervention in Tanzania to address social norms of bribery in healthcare.



From top left: Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Zanzibar's Judiciary; Training on money laundering and asset recovery in Mozambique; The Basel Institute delegation at the 10th Conference of the States Parties to the UNCAC; At a high-level meeting hosted by the Government of Liechtenstein; Beneficiaries of our Public Finance Management programme in Peru; Meeting with Nikolai Denkov, Prime Minister of Bulgaria in 2023 (photo: Government of Bulgaria).



From top left: Basel Institute retreat in Mürren, Switzerland; Members of our ICAR team in Latin America with Colombian Supreme Court magistrate Cristina Lombana; Financial investigations training for environmental prosecutors in Bolivia; Members of our Prevention, Research and Innovation team take a break from teaching students at the University of Basel; Our booth at the Anti-Corruption Symposium of Malawi's Anti-Corruption Bureau.

Publications

Working Papers

The latest research and thinking on key topics relating to anti-corruption and our core areas of work.

Dornbierer, Andrew. 'From sanctions to confiscation while upholding the rule of law.' Working Paper 42.

Hrynyk, Yehor, Andrii Biletskyi, and Amanda Cabrejo le Roux. 'How corruption threatens the forests of Ukraine: Typology and case studies on corruption and illegal logging.' Working Paper 43 / Environmental Corruption Deep Dive Series.

Thürk, Maria, and Stefanie Bailer. 'Perceptions of corruption and anti-corruption efforts in Bulgaria.' Working Paper 44.

Baez Camargo, Claudia, and Jude Schönberg. 'Strategic anti-corruption communications: a resource for practitioners.' Working Paper 45.

Arribas Reyes, Esteban. 'Incrementando el impacto de los Pactos de Integridad en la contratación pública: Un análisis desde la experiencia en España.' Working Paper 46.

Costa, Jacopo. 'Conflict of interest legislation in Brazil, South Korea and the European Union.' Working Paper 47.

Binder, Lucie, Vanessa Hans, and Anna Stransky. 'A collaborative approach to improve business integrity in ASEAN: Case studies of anti-corruption Collective Action in the region.' Working Paper 48.

Isarin, Nancy, Claudia Baez Camargo, and Amanda Cabrejo le Roux. 'Dirty deals: Case studies on corruption in waste management and trade.' Working Paper 49 / Environmental Corruption Deep Dive Series.

Lemaître, Sophie. 'Seedlings of hope: Addressing corruption linked to crimes that impact the environment in line with UNCAC Resolution 8/12.' Working Paper 50.

Policy Briefs & Key Reports

Insights from anti-corruption research, distilled into practical guidance for policymakers and practitioners.

Basel AML Index 12th edition report.

Boguslavskaya, Kateryna. 'De-risking of Russian clients: Best intentions, unintended consequences.' Policy Brief 12.

Wannenwetsch, Scarlet, and Liza Young. 'Engaging the private sector in Collective Action against corruption: A practical guide for anti-corruption agencies in Africa.' Also available in French.

Sensika. 'Corruption and anti-corruption narratives in Bulgarian media: Media monitoring and analysis report.'

Programa GFP Subnacional. 'Desafíos para la ejecución de grandes proyectos de inversión desde los gobiernos subnacionales del Perú.'

Programa GFP Subnacional. 'Gestión de riesgos en la administración y recaudación del impuesto predial para fortalecer la gestión municipal.'

Programa GFP Subnacional. 'Guía de gestión de riesgos para los gobiernos regionales en el marco de la implementación del sistema de control interno.'



All publications are freely available: baselgovernance.org/publications



Quick Guides, Case Studies & Research Case Studies

Short snapshots of key anti-corruption topics and research, plus a series of case studies.

Dornbierer, Andrew. 'Money laundering and sanctions evasions using the art market.' Quick Guide 29.

International Centre for Asset Recovery. 'Using full legal means to confiscate illicit assets in a time of war.' Case Study 10.

Baez Camargo, Claudia. 'Targeting corrupt behaviours in a Tanzanian hospital: A social norms approach.' Research Case Study 1.

Baez Camargo, Claudia, Jacopo Costa, and Saba Kassa. 'Leveraging informal networks for anti-corruption.' Research Case Study 2.

Costa, Jacopo. 'Exposing the networks behind transnational corruption and money laundering schemes.' Research Case Study 3.

Costa, Jacopo. 'Deconstructing a criminal network involved in illegal wildlife trade between East Africa and Southeast Asia.' Research Case Study 4.

Baez Camargo, Claudia, and Saba Kassa. 'Harnessing behavioural approaches against corruption.' Research Case Study 5.

Schönberg, Jude. 'Sextortion: An unaddressed form of corruption and sexual abuse.' Research Case Study 6.

ANTI-CORRUPTION AND CONSERVATION

In collaboration with the Targeting Natural Resource Corruption (TNRC) project, our teams produced a series of practical guides on:

- Translating political economy insights into conservation practice.
- Strengthening internal controls to prevent corruption in illegal wildlife trade enforcement.
- Conducting corruption risk assessments in a wildlife law enforcement context.
- Internal controls and illegal wildlife trade: A systemic approach to corruption prevention and law enforcement integrity.

Find these and other resources on environmental corruption at: tnrcproject.org.

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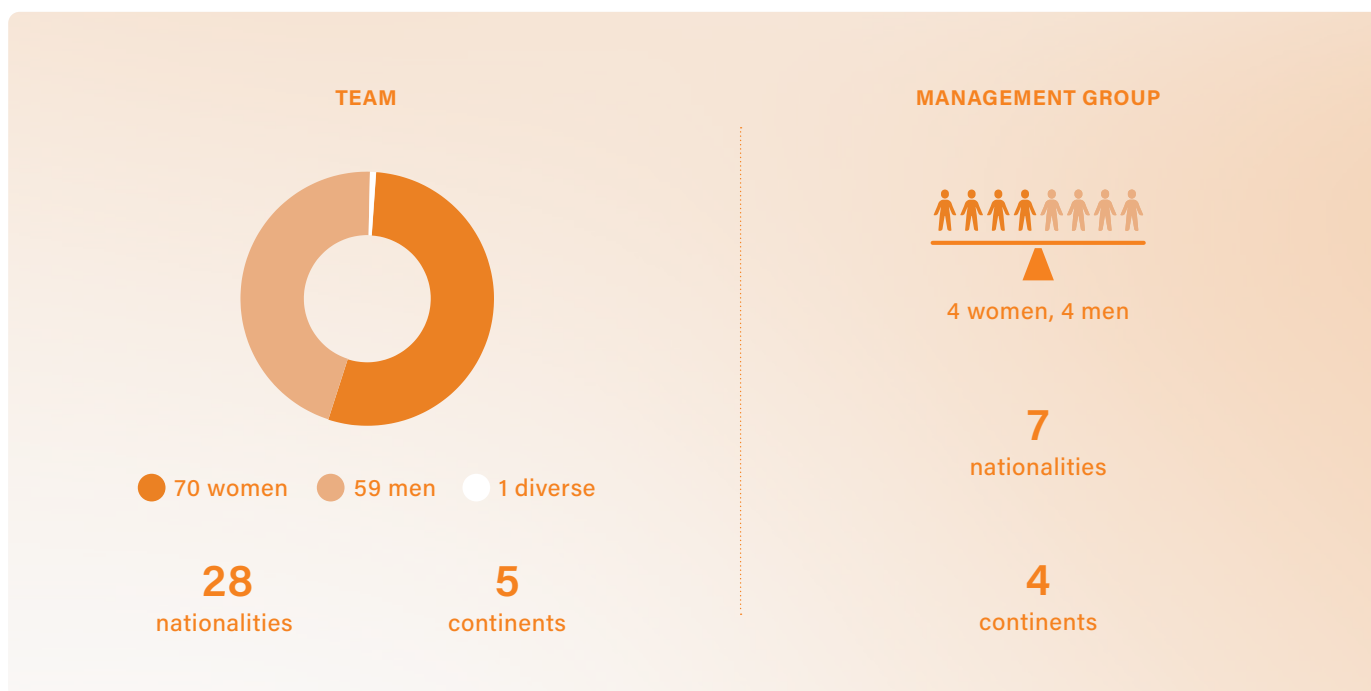
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Valuing diversity

Gender equality, inclusion and diversity have been core values of the Basel Institute on Governance since its foundation in 2003. This is reflected in our rich and diverse pool of professionals from around the world, each bringing different contributions and perspectives to our mission to counter corruption and foster good governance.



We see diversity in broad and inclusive terms, encompassing equity in pay and parental leave, and the creation of a culture where all staff feel welcome.

In 2023, the Foundation Board approved our first formal Gender, Equality, Inclusion and Diversity (GEID) improvement plan, covering gender considerations in leadership, recruitment and career progression; awareness raising and learning; measures against gender-based violence and sexual harassment; work-life balance and organisational culture; and the integration of gender considerations into our research and operational work.

Among our prioritised commitments for 2023, we highlight these achievements:

- Improved gender balance in our Foundation Board, now comprising three women and five men.
- The introduction of an accessible reporting mechanism, including for GEID issues.
- Initial research on a framework to integrate gender considerations into our asset recovery workstream.

As members of the International Gender Champions Network, Gretta Fenner and Peter Maurer acted as ambassadors and role models on gender equality. In the same way, the Basel Institute seeks to be an ambassador for diversity, equity and inclusion in our sphere of influence.



Sustainability

Environmental sustainability is both a major goal of our mission to fight corruption and a guiding principle of our operations.

We have long practised an embedded mentoring model in our asset recovery work, where our specialists are based in-country and work directly within partner agencies rather than flying in and flying out for short periods.

Building on this approach, 2023 saw advances in our development of regional hubs of competence that aim to reduce long-distance travel and bring our assistance closer to home. Certified trainers in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, for example, are now equipped to deliver financial investigations training across their regions.

Technology helps: ICAR training programmes are now paper free thanks to Basel LEARN (see page 26), while video conferencing greatly reduces travel emissions for many meetings and events.

These step changes join continuous efforts to improve sustainability in our everyday operations – through carbon credits for flights, the repair or recycling of electronic products, and encouraging default sustainable behaviours in regard to travel, printing, ecological products and electricity usage.

Plus: if you are holding a paper version of this Annual Report, it was printed using Cradle2Cradle (c2c) Gold Certified processes, which include carbon offsets for inks, paper from sustainable sources and a no-waste guarantee.

“In the context of one of our country programmes, we organised a study to explore intersections between asset recovery and gender equality. The aim was to identify how we might strengthen our programmes from a gender equality perspective.

To our knowledge, this is the first study of its kind, which in itself made it a challenging exercise. There are no simple answers! Following rich debate within the team, we have generated some concrete suggestions that we hope to take forward.”



Amanda Procter,
Senior Programme Manager,
Basel Institute on Governance

Funding and partnerships

In 2023, the annual budget (*total operating income*) of the Basel Institute on Governance was CHF 15 million. Approximately 25 percent of this is core financing (contributions), with the remaining 75 percent made up of project- and country programme-specific funding (*project income, reimbursed expenses, overhead recovery*).

We are grateful to the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and the UK Home Office for providing continued core contributions to ICAR, and in many cases also additional country-specific programme funding.

In addition, the Principality of Liechtenstein has continued to provide vital core funding to our Green Corruption programme.

Through the Siemens Integrity Initiative, we have benefited from long-term funding that has been essential to build and expand our Collective Action practice.

Other development and corporate partners fund some 40+ specific projects, including technical assistance and applied research.

As a non-profit organisation, any surplus funds from advisory services and projects are used to support our research and technical assistance initiatives in partner countries.

While finance is of course essential to the success of our programmes, so too is the steady commitment and encouragement of all our partners from around the world, to whom we wish to express our sincere appreciation.

Without their dedication to our joint efforts we would not be able to pursue our mission: to eradicate corruption and promote good governance globally.



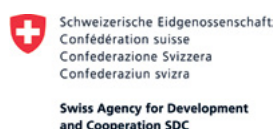
“Our donors mean so much more to us than just money! They are collective partners and drivers in our fight against corruption and in our mission to improve governance.

Together, we roll up our sleeves, identify what needs to be done, invest and make it happen, always using the available financial resources wisely and transparently. Without our donors our mission would be incomplete. We thank them!”



Andrea Poelling
Head, Operations

A special thanks to those who have supported our work with substantial financial contributions over the last years:



Our gratitude to the country offices and embassies of the above institutions and all others who have funded research and technical assistance projects in 2023, including:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
European Union Anti-Corruption Initiative in Ukraine (EUACI)
Global Integrity Anti-Corruption Evidence Programme (GI-ACE)
Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE)
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research, and Innovation (SERI)
UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF)
UK Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
US Agency for International Development (USAID)
US Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL Bureau)

And our thanks to those for whom we act as Secretariat for the continued trust and fruitful partnership:

Ethics and Compliance Switzerland
International Academy of Financial Crime Litigators
The Wolfsberg Group



Associated Institute of
the University of Basel

Financial statement



Balance sheet

| Assets (in CHF) | 31 Dec 2023 | 31 Dec 2022 |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| Liquid assets | 4,752,388.02 | 2,659,140.14 |
| Trade-receivables | 1,048,588.92 | 1,435,570.31 |
| Other receivables | 241,036.81 | 95,515.57 |
| Accrued income and prepaid expenses | 1,344,223.01 | 1,099,252.27 |
| Total current assets | 7,386,236.76 | 5,289,478.29 |
| Office furniture and IT equipment | — | 3,674.83 |
| Financial assets | 44,824.71 | 44,686.95 |
| Total fixed assets | 44,824.71 | 48,361.78 |
| Total assets | 7,431,061.47 | 5,337,840.07 |
| Liabilities (in CHF) | 31 Dec 2023 | 31 Dec 2022 |
| Trade-payables | 158,992.10 | 191,981.06 |
| Advance payments | 3,599,215.56 | 2,026,896.79 |
| Other payables | 140,095.90 | 126,251.06 |
| Accrued liabilities and deferred expenses | 351,943.76 | 528,269.74 |
| Total current liabilities | 4,250,247.32 | 2,873,398.65 |
| Restricted funds (ICAR) | 1,782,461.09 | 1,309,007.28 |
| Total restricted funds | 1,782,461.09 | 1,309,007.28 |
| Total liabilities | 6,032,708.41 | 4,182,405.93 |
| Paid-in capital | 20,000.00 | 20,000.00 |
| Unrestricted capital (GOV) | 1,085,434.14 | 889,692.82 |
| Annual result | 292,918.92 | 245,741.32 |
| Total capital of the organisation | 1,398,353.06 | 1,155,434.14 |
| Total liabilities and capital of the organisation | 7,431,061.47 | 5,337,840.07 |

Statement of operations

| Income and expenditure (in CHF) | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Contributions | 3,880,764.44 | 3,476,081.29 |
| Overhead recovery | 616,937.68 | 596,259.02 |
| Project income (fees) | 3,426,161.78 | 2,808,396.26 |
| Reimbursed expenses | 2,809,627.78 | 2,320,058.91 |
| Project income (fees field staff & long-term consultants) | 4,409,064.10 | 3,988,282.85 |
| Total operating income | 15,142,555.78 | 13,189,078.33 |
| Project expenditure | -12,584,969.48 | -12,026,518.59 |
| Administrative expenditure | -1,678,926.16 | -1,566,561.84 |
| Total operating expenditure | -14,263,895.64 | -13,593,080.43 |
| Operating surplus (- deficit) | 878,660.14 | -404,002.10 |
| Net financial income | -162,287.41 | -79,225.47 |
| Change of restricted funds | -473,453.81 | 678,968.89 |
| Change of unrestricted funds | -50,000.00 | -50,000.00 |
| Annual result | 292,918.92 | 245,741.32 |

Note: The aforementioned balance sheet and statement of operations form part of the Basel Institute's Financial Statement 2023, which was audited by BDO AG, in accordance with Swiss GAAP ARR, Swiss law and the Charter of the Foundation and its regulations. The Foundation Board of the Basel Institute approved the Financial Statement 2023 on 19 April 2024.

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