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A joint response to corruption in Uganda:

Donors beginning to bite?

Given the stagnating trend on corruption in Uganda and the need to consolidate accountability reforms ahead of the inflow of oil revenues, international development partners developed a Joint Response to Corruption in early 2009. The British Department for International Development (DFID) led an approach that draws on ideas from the OECD DAC Anti-Corruption Task Team, but was tailored to the local context. A year and a half later, the approach was showing promising results in terms of establishing a common platform for dialogue, improving the design of safeguards against corruption in other donor programmes, and encouraging anti-corruption allies in Uganda. The record is more mixed on the impact of sanctions, and sustainability of the donor effort remains a challenge.

The Uganda experience suggests that an effective Joint Response to Corruption requires, among other things, investing in leadership for the initiative, building a strong base of evidence and analysis, and maintaining flexibility in order to seize opportunities to advance the anti-corruption agenda.

The case for a Joint Response to Corruption

Recent international surveys coupled with nationally produced data indicate that corruption in Uganda is endemic and deeply ingrained; it shows no sign of subsiding and may be getting worse. Evidence exists of extensive **grand corruption** and impunity enjoyed by high level officials. Local public opinion polls indicate that petty corruption is pervasive and worsening, feeding a culture of waste and inefficiency and considerable financial loss. The analysis identified future risks – particularly related to the prospect of future **substantial oil revenues** coming on stream.

The past record of development partner engagement on corruption in Uganda is mixed. Development partners have provided support for technical reforms with positive albeit slow impact. In parallel, they have consistently engaged at the political/diplomatic level, but this has tended to be rather narrowly focused either on a few high-profile cases in the media or on corruption concerns related to an individual agency's programme.

In 2006, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Ministers of Development expressed a desire to move towards more effective collective responses to governance issues, particularly regarding corruption. In **2007 the OECD Policy Paper on Anti-Corruption "Setting an Agenda for Collective Action"** proposed developing a voluntary code of conduct for co-ordinated donor responses to deteriorating corruption contexts. The DAC Network on Governance (GOVNET) was tasked to produce a framework for joint responses. A retrospective study of how donors have responded to corruption in practice showed **a degree of inertia** to modify their stance when evidence is found of lack of progress in tackling corruption, and stagnation or deterioration in governance indicators. However, the study also found that cumulative, sustained pressure by a critical mass of donors, combined with technical and financial support for key reform programmes, has the potential to improve accountability and transparency. A set of ideas was put forward as to how such joint approaches could be designed.

This Practice Insight provides an updated and publicly-available view of activities previously summarised in an internal working paper for the Anti-Corruption Task Team of the OECD Development Assistance Committee.

U4 collaborates with the OECD Task Team to publicise and learn from experience related to its initiative on Joint Donor Responses to Corruption.

For more information, see documents cited in this paper and www.oecd.org/dac/governance/corruption.

Description of the intervention

In June 2009 the Accountability Working Group presented an initial proposal to the leadership of all the bilateral and multilateral development agencies (Ambassadors and Heads of Cooperation) in Uganda for a Joint Response to Corruption. An analysis of the past failure of development partners to engage in fighting corruption in Uganda as well as the aforementioned OECD DAC policy paper served as the basis of the proposal.

Following a presentation of the initial proposal in July 2009, the Accountability Working Group led a six-month process of developing, refining and testing the various elements of the Joint Response to Corruption. This involved close collaboration with a range of development partners (20 participating in a technical workshop in September 2009), and with specific development partner sector working groups where particular corruption challenges had been identified. It also involved further collaboration with international centres of expertise, including the OECD DAC, the World Bank and UK Department for International Development (DFID) headquarters on specific issues. As a result of this work, the Accountability Working Group presented a final proposal for a joint response, which the leadership of development partners in Uganda adopted in February 2010. The joint response focuses on the five areas outlined below and illustrated by Figure 1.

The first four elements relate to the development partner policy/political engagement on corruption, and the fifth relates to the complementary funding and technical assistance provided by development partners for accountability reforms:

- 1. Better data and trend analysis** – To improve the quality and use of data for more robust tracking of corruption trends.
- 2. Better dialogue** – To achieve more strategic and focused political dialogue on corruption.
- 3. Stronger link to international agenda** – To develop a portfolio of activities related to international action on corruption.
- 4. Stronger responses** – To develop a joint graduated response to four "test cases."
- 5. Funding of key accountability reforms** – To improve detection, prevention and sanctioning of corruption supported through various development partner programmes.

Better data and trend analysis

In order to establish a more robust development partner engagement on corruption, better analysis

of corruption trends was seen as important – specifically better data quality and better tracking of data over time. Development partners agreed the need for developing an evidence base that was recognised by the Government of Uganda as a starting point for constructive dialogue. Previously the development partners had tended to rely almost entirely on international perception data, which the government frequently dismissed making it difficult to establish a common understanding in the dialogue.

Towards that end, a “home-grown” Data Tracking Mechanism (DTM) was established, building largely on national data sources to establish a baseline for trend analysis of corruption. This involved identifying a set of indicators, improving national data sources and developing detailed trend analysis. The DTM is managed by an independent research centre, the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), which has the required technical capacity, credibility with government officials, and, importantly, independence to publish negative data. The DTM will regularly produce publicly available reports monitoring corruption trends in Uganda. The trend analysis will also be made publicly available to stimulate debate, and for the development partners to use actively in their dialogue with the government of Uganda.

Early results have been positive. Produced in November 2010, the first annual report received positive feedback from a range of players with regards to the comprehensiveness of the data and the quality of the analysis. The data presented in the first report has generated debate amongst the permanent secretaries of ministries and key parliamentary committees. The second annual report was published in November 2011. It presented interesting trend data, which confirms the existing impression that the situation might be getting worse. The strong ownership of the report by the Inspectorate of Government (an anti-corruption institution) is another important result. However, challenges lie ahead: the type of data optimal for DTM tracking is not easily available; and it will be essential to ensure that key stakeholders make use of the data and that recommendations from the report are implemented.

Better dialogue

Research has highlighted the importance of strengthening development partner dialogue on corruption. Previously the development partners in Uganda had not been sufficiently strategic in their political engagement on corruption. Problems included a lack of coordination of messages conveyed to the government, and poor inter-linkage between the technical and political aspects of the dialogue. In addition, an imbalance in the dialogue between short-term corruption scandals and long-

term systemic challenges existed with the latter issue largely being neglected. Finally, development partners often missed opportunities for making use of a broader set of dialogue avenues (including international arenas).

Development partners therefore decided to develop a Rolling Core Script. The script includes the following key elements: (i) *common analysis* of overall corruption trends and of specific corruption cases; (ii) *joint messages and responses* to key corruption cases; and (iii) *an outline of desired outcomes* in terms of government follow-up. The script is not intended as a straightjacket, but rather as a common hymn sheet for development partners on corruption messages. The script is updated every two months, and discussed and agreed by the development partner leadership for use in individual and collective dialogue opportunities. The script would facilitate greater coordination between development partners at headquarters level by ensuring that in-country development partners feed the same analysis and messages to their headquarters.

As of mid 2011, the script had been in use for one and a half years, and the early feedback has been very positive. Heads of Development Cooperation and Ambassadors confirm that the introduction of the script led to a marked improvement in the quality and consistency of collective political dialogue on corruption. They also noted a similar positive impact on internal reporting and bilateral dialogue with the government of Uganda. Furthermore, the provision of concrete “hooks” to hang the dialogue on in terms of the detailed analysis of “test cases,” was mentioned as significant. Through the engagement on concrete cases the development partners observed that they were able to put in place a more credible and substantive discussion with the government. It allowed them to get to grips with the core questions around the lack of sanctioning – thus enabling them to hold government counterparts to account more effectively.

Stronger link to the international agenda

Corruption thrives due to the opportunities and incentives provided through international links (i.e. international money laundering and organised crime). Consequently, international action and mechanisms are required as well as in-country responses. Previously, development partners made insufficient effort in Uganda to link the domestic and international agendas for combating corruption. From a potentially long list of options to improve the linkage to the international agenda it was decided that a smaller **portfolio of activities** be taken forward. The portfolio centred on three areas: 1) *anti-money laundering*: support for the

development of legislation and institutional capacity to counter money laundering; 2) *engagement with international frameworks on transparency and accountability in oil management* (EITI, Resource Charter, etc.); and 3) *international investigative collaboration*: ensuring collaboration between international “centres of excellence” and Ugandan agencies on corruption investigations.

Progress over the last one and a half years has been greatest in the third aforementioned area. Collaboration with international investigative centres had already been explored successfully by the government of Uganda in the past, by supporting the investigation into the [Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria](#) (GFATM) (see Box 1). This experience revealed significant capacity constraints within the Ugandan investigative and law enforcement agencies in terms of their effectiveness to deal with large-scale corruption cases as well as long-term endemic corruption.

that it focuses on ensuring “quick wins” in terms of building successful prosecution cases to ensure timely convictions on high profile cases.

By the middle of 2011 important early results were achieved in terms of robust investigations and prosecution cases being assembled on high profile corruption cases. The continuous provision of “hands-on” assistance, and wider capacity building on corruption investigations, is seen as one contributing factor to the 75 per cent conviction rate in the new Anti-Corruption Court (established at the end of 2009).

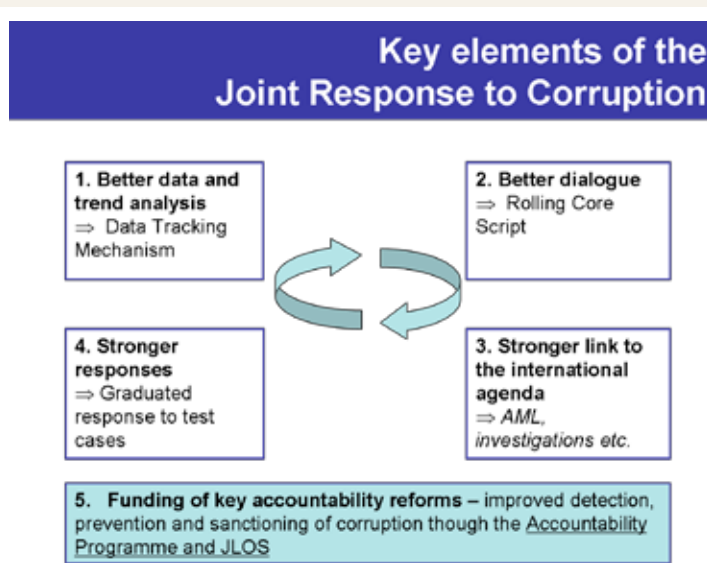
Stronger response

Perhaps the most interesting element of the Joint Response to Corruption is the effort to ensure a stronger response by the development partners to specific corruption cases. In the past, in Uganda as in many other contexts, limited evidence existed that the development partners “bite” when they “bark.” Evidence cited by the OECD DAC underscores the importance of the development partners’ willingness to follow up with coordinated response when corrupt behaviour is met with impunity. This is critical to the credibility and legitimacy of the development partners vis-à-vis the Ugandan government, home constituencies and the Ugandan public.

Development partners decided early on that an abstract agreement on potential responses would not deliver much. Instead, they agreed that a joint graduated response be implemented in four “test cases.” The graduated response involves the development of a strong evidence base / analysis of the corruption case, combined with clearly articulated expectations in terms of government of Uganda due diligence (follow-up), and an agreement on common responses by the development partners and preparedness to activate these should the government’s performance be inadequate (see Figure 2).

The development of a graduated response to concrete corruption cases required a culture shift – with a **pro-active search for opportunities** for holding the government of Uganda to account. Individual agencies needed to be ready to consider what response measures they were willing to take in a given case, and how these responses could be brought together to form a joint coordinated response. The experience of the first one and a half years of this strategy shows that putting in place a joint graduated response is not dependent on getting agreement from all development partners to respond in an identical manner. In some of the “test cases” it was only feasible to involve those development partners with a direct financial stake in the case, and even with a smaller number of development partners the individual responses

Figure 1: The Joint Response to Corruption



The experience of the GFATM provided important background for developing the international aspects of the Joint Response to Corruption. As part of the Joint Response to Corruption, focus was given to providing continued “hands-on” assistance from international experts on corruption investigations and prosecutions. At the end of 2010, a two-year collaboration agreement was signed between Ugandan agencies (courts, prosecutors, police, etc.) and the International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR), based at the Basel Institute on Governance. The focus of the agreement is to provide case-specific assistance on “live” corruption investigations and wider capacity building. This agreement is innovative in

would vary. The important point was how these individual actions were brought together and communicated as part of one collective response. This was done very successfully in some of the cases.

It is also important to note that the graduate response approach involves looking at traditional as well as “new” methods, including:

- “*traditional*” action such as the withholding funds (either in the sector, Joint Budget Support Framework, or both)
- “*new*” responses, including action to track, freeze and recover illegally acquired assets in “home countries”; travel bans, etc.
- “*reputational*” responses such as raising the issue of lack of follow-up in multilateral and bilateral dialogue forums at national and international levels, etc.

It was decided to select “test cases” of both petty and grand corruption, as well as **short-term corruption cases and systemic corruption challenges** in key service delivery sectors. The selection criteria included the scale of the problem (e.g., volume of loss, number of cases), the public profile of the case, the impact on citizens and the opportunity for collaboration across a range of development partners. The pace at which the development partners will be ready to put in place a joint graduated response will, however, vary greatly, depending on the nature of the case. Below is a brief outline of the four test cases selected:

- *Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)*: misuse/non-accounting for more than US\$44 million detected in the preparation of this conference in 2007.
- *Uganda Aids Commission*: fraud detected internally in the commission – at a small scale but symbolically important given the series of earlier fraud scandals in the health sector.
- *National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADS)*: significant levels of petty corruption detected in this national agricultural outreach programme funded by a group of donors.
- *Drug management*: widespread petty corruption detected at various levels of the drug supply chain, involving significant aggregate amounts.

In order to illustrate the approach taken to establish a joint graduated response an explanation of the response to the first case (CHOGM) is included below in Box 2.

Box 1: Development partner response to corruption in the Global Fund for Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM)

Large-scale corruption was detected in the management of the GFATM in 2005, followed by a Commission of Inquiry and a government White Paper recommending robust action within a six-month period. After six months minimal follow-up action had been taken, and the case was well on its way to be shelved along with other unresolved corruption cases.

The technical development partner group working on corruption, together with development partner colleagues from the health sector, mobilised its leadership in country and the GFATM board. This resulted in two years of collaboration between the Inspector General of the GFATM and development partners in country, with a follow-up action plan negotiated with the government of Uganda. In line with the action plan, the anti-fraud units of the EU and the UK (European Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF, and the UK’s Serious Fraud Office, SFO) provided hands-on technical support to the law enforcement agencies of Uganda with a view to taking investigations forward.

As a result of wider pressure and technical support important results have been achieved, including the conviction of five people and the recovery of 63% of the funds. There are still outstanding issues related to long-term institutional strengthening, but the accomplishments in terms of sanctioning and funds recovery have had important signalling effects.

The GFATM case illustrated the importance of close collaboration between corruption/accountability technical staff and colleagues from the health sector. It also showed the importance of maximising different points of leverage, including international collaboration, through the involvement of the Inspector General of the GFATM. The collaboration between Ugandan and international investigative units is seen as a critical to the success achieved. Finally, the willingness by the GFATM to signal what adverse implications the lack of follow-up might have for continued funding, with the associated reputational risks for the government of Uganda, was an important factor.

Support for accountability reforms

The final element of the Joint Response to Corruption includes continued financial and technical support to the government’s accountability reforms. Efforts to strengthen Uganda’s budgeting and financial management systems have yielded improvements but these have not yet translated into clear progress on accountable, value-for-money service delivery. Uganda’s rules and legislation for addressing corruption and non-compliance are strong but the government’s credibility is being eroded by failure to take action against corruption or to enforce sanctions on poor performance and malpractice. A five-year multi-donor programme is in place to provide continued support for public financial management reform programmes, such as improved quality of audits and parliamentary scrutiny of these audits, as well as strengthened local government budgeting and reporting. Several donors have also agreed to provide increased funding for civil society initiatives for monitoring service delivery and demanding accountability.

Impact

After one and a half years of implementation of the Joint Response to Corruption, the following

points are worth mentioning in terms of **what has worked**:

- *Common platform for dialogue*: Feedback from the development partner group confirms a common view that the development of the Rolling Core Script was an essential element in developing a common platform for dialogue. Specifically, it was noted that the detailed analysis provided, and the provision of concrete “hooks” on which to hang the dialogue in terms of the “test cases” was important. Through the engagement on concrete cases the development partners were able to put in place a much more credible and substantive discussion with the government of Uganda. It allowed the development partners to get to grips with the core questions around the lack of sanctioning – thus enabling them to hold government counterparts to account more effectively.
- *Sanctioning – “glass half full”*: Considerable discussion took place on the extent to which the joint response to corruption has contributed to improving the sanctioning of corruption. In support of a “glass half full” argument the following results can be highlighted: In each of the “test cases,” development partners reached an agreement with the government of Uganda for Action Plans to be drawn up responding to audit recommendations. This may seem like a small step, but it provided an essential basis on which the government could be held to account at a later stage. The pressure applied in relation to the “test cases” also ensured that additional resources were made available to investigative and prosecutorial agencies, both in terms of finances and technical assistance. This had a direct impact on improving the quality and speed of investigations. Finally, some important progress has been made in terms of administrative sanctioning, recoveries, investigations and prosecution of corruption cases. Feedback from the government

indicates that progress in some cases was strongly influenced by the development partner pressure applied.

- *Safeguarding future investments*: Concrete results from the Joint Response to Corruption include more detailed attention given to the design of safeguards in future programmes. There is evidence of a much stronger link between analysis of corruption challenges in past programme interventions and design of oversight, accountability and transparency measures for future interventions. In general terms, evidence exists of significant “mainstreaming” of anti-corruption approaches in the target sectors for the joint approach.
- *Supporting the development partner “allies” - long-term change*: The challenge of turning the trend on corruption around in Uganda is one that will not be achieved in the near future. The stronger position taken by development partners is seen as important in terms of providing explicit support to the development partner “allies” in the fight against corruption. These include pro-reform members of parliament, government of Uganda staff, and non-state actors working on accountability issues. Concrete feedback has been received from these “allies” of the fact that they have found the strengthened development partner line on corruption extremely important in terms of encouraging a continued fight against corruption.

In spite of the positive aspects noted above, limitations exist to what can be achieved through the implementation of a Joint Response to Corruption. In terms of **what has not worked** the following can be noted:

- *Sustainability of the response over time*: Sustainability of a high profile Joint Response to Corruption over time remains limited. Persuading individual agencies to allocate staff time to this “public good” initiative – which

Figure 2. Key elements of a graduated response to corruption cases

| Evidence | Government of Uganda due diligence | Graduated response |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Build a strong evidence base and shared understanding of the corruption case</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on government of Uganda data sources • Clarity on detail and scale | <p>Clarity on what is expected from government of Uganda in terms of due diligence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanctioning • Follow-up on audits etc. • Future safeguards | <p>Activate graduated joint response if performance stagnates or deteriorates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree in advance • Willingness to activate response |

is above and beyond the regular portfolio of work of most officers – is difficult. Also, the appetite of development partners for keeping corruption on the top of the agenda over an extended period of time remains constrained. There needs to be a recognition that interest levels will fluctuate, not least depending on what other issues are on the agenda.

- *Sanctioning – “glass half empty”*: It is important to recognise the limitations to the impact of a joint response in terms of persuading the government to sanction corruption. Underlying political economy dynamics, which development partners are unable to influence, determine the way corruption is dealt with, – at least in the short term. Sanctioning corruption cases in the areas of focus for the joint response to corruption still falls short of what is desired.

Analysis and lessons learned

Important results during the first year have been illustrated above. However, these results have not come easily, and it is important to reflect on some of the lessons learned along the way. These fall in three categories:

On internal development partner process management:

- The development of a Joint Response to Corruption involves a heavy work burden for a few people. It requires an agency willing to take on the lead role, while bringing on board other development partners to relieve the onus of work with a view to “locking them into” a joint process.
- Collaboration on sector-related corruption cases is not straightforward. It often involves conflicting agendas, where sector colleagues may be wary of anything that might jeopardise immediate programme implementation/ approval.
- There is a need for coordination at the country and headquarters level in order to get agencies to buy into a joint approach. The difference of agendas and incentives within development partners can make it hard to negotiate a common way forward. It is critical, therefore, that space be made for development partners to play different roles while respecting the constraints each development partner faces without permitting the lowest common denominator to dictate the level of action.

On relations between development partners and key stakeholders:

- In taking the Joint Response to Corruption forward there is a fine balance to be struck between a challenging and a collaborative dialogue with the government. The basic principle of working as partners with the government of Uganda remains. However, the joint response involves taking a tougher stance on specific corruption cases. A short-term trade-off may be required in terms of the broader political/diplomatic relations when tougher action is warranted.
- Development partners need to be aware of the potential risk posed by the Joint Response to Corruption in inducing stronger accountability to the development partners as opposed to the government of Uganda’s accountability to its citizens. Steps should be taken to mitigate against this.

On how to build a joint response:

- The development of a strong evidence base and analysis is a critical element of the Joint Response to Corruption. In the past, the development partners have tended not to do sufficient homework in terms of particular corruption scandals. Not understanding the details of the cases weakens the development partner dialogue position. Addressing grand corruption also requires a good understanding of the political economy.
- As the political environment changes, the development partners must maintain flexibility to seize opportunities that could maximise impact. Rather than waiting for corruption scandals to “happen to us,” prompting a reactive response, a culture shift is needed towards a more pro-active search for opportunities to take a more consistent stance on corruption.
- The implementation of a Joint Response to Corruption is not necessarily a protracted process. The work required to put all the building blocks in place no doubt takes time. However, opportunities may arise more quickly than expected in terms of a particular corruption case as “breaking news,” or a particular decision-making point being reached (regarding the release of funding, etc.). The development partners need to be ready to act when these opportunities arise. In many cases getting a “critical mass” on board will suffice. Whenever individual development partners take different courses of action these can still be presented jointly through careful messaging.
- Be pragmatic, opportunistic and avoid formality in the development of the Joint Response to Corruption. Early on, there was

Box 2: A joint graduated response to CHOGM

Evidence base

The misuse or failure to account for US\$44 million in the preparation of the 2007 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Kampala presented itself as an obvious test case for the joint graduated response. The selection was based on an assessment of the magnitude of lost public resources, the high public profile and the strong evidence of continued impunity for corruption offences. The audit reports were released in late 2008 and by the time of the Joint Budget Support assessment in June 2009 no follow-up on the audit recommendations had occurred.

Government of Uganda due diligence

The findings in the audit reports provided a very clear basis for what the government of Uganda was required to do in terms of due diligence follow-up. In particular the development partners focused on the following:

- All outstanding accounting for expenditures identified by the Office of the Auditor General to be completed and presented by relevant agencies.
- Administrative/disciplinary action to be taken against all individuals responsible for the mismanagement of public funds under CHOGM.
- 100% of misused funds to be recovered and contract management to be concluded to ensure value for money / receipt of services in all the cases highlighted by the Office of the Auditor General.
- Relevant investigative and prosecutorial agencies (Criminal Investigation Department / development partner) to be resourced to conclude the criminal investigations and prosecutions of all relevant cases.

In order to ensure close alignment with national stakeholders

the development partners used the recommendations of national oversight bodies such as the Office of the Auditor General’s reports and the parliamentary hearings as the starting point for dialogue with the government on follow-up.

Building a joint response

The joint graduated response to CHOGM was initiated in 2007 and included an escalation of responses from private to public dialogue, and eventually joint action (illustrated by the figure below):

- Private dialogue with the government: Development partners sent letters to the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister and the President over a period of a couple of years (2007 - 2008).
- Public dialogue: Follow up on CHOGM was included in the budget support assessment in June 2009 and in January 2010, with concrete messages on the need for follow-up communicated to the government of Uganda.
- Signal responses: Budget support development partners “drew a line in the sand” in 2009 – signalling that a lack of follow-up over the subsequent year could result in “serious implications.” This was formalised through the introduction of a specific indicator on follow up on CHOGM in the budget support results framework (in 2009).
- Activate responses: As part of the budget support assessment in 2010 it was concluded that follow-up on CHOGM had been inadequate and a collective 10% cut in budget support (including World Bank) was announced.
- Further cuts? The 2011 budget support annual assessment is coming up – time will show whether pressure will be maintained.

| Evidence | Government of Uganda due diligence | Graduated response |
|--|---|--|
| <p>CHOGM audits identified over US\$ 88 billion (US\$44 million) of inappropriate expenditure.</p> <p>Parliamentary hearings confirmed minimal follow-up action taken by government of Uganda during the FY 2008/09.</p> | <p>4 key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All outstanding accountability presented 2. Administrative/disciplinary action taken 3. Recovery of misused funds 4. Criminal investigations and prosecutions of key cases | <p>2007 and 2008</p> <p>Private dialogue with government of Uganda: letters from development partners to Minister of Finance, Prime Minister and the President over a period of three years (from early 2007)</p> |
| | | <p>2009</p> <p>Public dialogue: through the budget support assessment in June 2009 and January 2010</p> <p>Signal responses: Budget support development partners “drew a line in the sand” – signalling that a lack of follow-up could result in “serious implications”</p> |
| | | <p>2010</p> <p>Activate responses: development partners passed a significant test – collective 10% cut in budget support (including the World Bank)</p> |
| | | <p>2011</p> <p>Further cuts? 2011 assessment coming up – pressure maintained in spite of some progress</p> |

Results achieved

By the middle of 2011 the joint graduated response to CHOGM has contributed to achieving the following results:

1. Government of Uganda Action Plan (explicit commitment for follow-up): Following sustained pressure from development partners an Action Plan was agreed with the government of Uganda in 2009 (led by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development), providing an important basis for holding the government to account.
2. Development partner position contributed to strengthened national debate: The pressure applied by development partners regarding follow-up on this case was seen by civil society actors as important for strengthening the national debate on this case and corruption more widely. Feedback from reformers within the government and parliamentarians confirm that the

development partner response contributed directly to "keeping it on the agenda."

3. Criminal Sanctioning: Some important results have been achieved including: one conviction of a senior civil servant; five on going prosecutions including of the former Vice President, the current Foreign Affairs, Government Chief Whip and Minister of Labour (who have all stepped down awaiting the outcome of the trial); and a further 30 cases being investigated. Additional financial resources were allocated to these investigations as a result of development partner pressure.

Concerns remain, however, over whether the government of Uganda will commit itself to undertake the full range of follow-up actions in terms of sanctioning officials (both by means of administrative disciplining and concluding criminal prosecution) and ensuring the full recovery of funds.

discussion in Uganda whether all development partners should sign a common Memorandum of Understanding or a set of formal guiding principles. Development partners decided that this would be a waste of time; rather, they would agree on a set of broad principles and put to test real-life "cases."

The first one and a half years of the implementation of the Joint Response to Corruption have delivered some interesting results. Whether or not the

development partners achieve the intended long-term impact in terms of leveraging change in the government of Uganda attitude towards and response to corruption, and, in turn, lead to reduced corruption, only time will tell. It is clear, however, that the success of the Joint Response to Corruption will ultimately depend on the commitment of individual agencies to put ideas forward and make resources available to realise the ideas in the areas identified.

Additional reading

Justine Davila, Karen Hussmann, K. Sarwar Lateef, Jose Jaime Macuane and Marcus Cox, Working towards more effective collective donor responses to corruption, Synthesis and Recommendations, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Anti-Corruption Task Team (2009), www.oecd.org/dataoecd/26/52/45019669.pdf.

Notes

1. The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index shows that Uganda suffers from severe corruption (consistently appearing in the bottom third of the ranking), well below the good performers in the region. Uganda scored 2.8 (ranked 111) in 2007 and 2.5 (ranked 127) in 2010 compared to Rwanda who had equal scores in 2007 and improved to 4 (ranked 66) in 2010. A comparison of the World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) for Uganda between 1996-2008 confirms that corruption remains a serious problem and shows no significant signs of abating. Transparency International, "Corruption Perception Index," Transparency International, 2002-2009, http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi; World Bank, "Worldwide Governance Indicators," World Bank Institute, 1996-2008, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>.

2. Findings of the National Integrity Survey (NIS III) 2008 and the National Service Delivery Survey (2004, 2008) confirm high levels of petty corruption and low level of confidence in government efforts to combat corruption. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), Country Review Report

No. 7, Republic of Uganda, January 2009 takes a strong view of the incidence of corruption, stating that "both petty and grand corruption are prevalent and affect every institution in the country, from the private sector, through the courts to healthcare" (p LXii). The APRM report concludes that "there is increasing evidence of...rapidly escalating corruption (p 26) and that all informants including political leaders and appointed officials agreed that corruption is now institutionalised" (p 75). Inspectorate of Government, Final Report of the 3rd National Integrity Survey, October 2008, www.igg.go.ug; Government of Uganda, "National Service Delivery Survey," Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), 2004, 2008, www.ubos.go.ug; Government of Uganda, "APRM Country Review Report," no. 7, Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Secretariat, 2009, http://www.afrimap.org/english/images/documents/APRM_Uganda_report_EN.pdf.

3. See analysis in the papers by: Inge Amundsen and Harald Mathiesen, Corruption, Lack of Political will and the Role of Donors (in Uganda), CMI Commissioned Report, 44 p. (Bergen, Norway: Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2005); Joel Barkan, Saillie Kayuga, Njuguna Ng'ethe, and Jack Titsworth, The Political Economy of Uganda, World Bank commissioned paper (2004); David Booth, and Frederick Golooba-Mutebi, Aiding Economic Growth in Africa: The Political Economy of Roads Reform in Uganda, 2009, Overseas Development Institute, Working Paper 307, www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/3829.pdf; Andrew Mwenda and Roger Tangri, "Military Corruption and Ugandan Politics since the late 1990s," Review of African Political Economy, No. 98 (2003): 539-552.

4. Outlined in the paper "Corruption in Uganda – Comfort or Crisis," Development Partner Accountability Working Group Uganda, June 2009.

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