

Introducing WIN – The Water Integrity Network

The Water Integrity Network (WIN), formed in 2006, stimulates anti-corruption activities in the water sector worldwide. WIN welcomes organisations and individuals that view anti-corruption measures as central to equitable and sustainable development, economic efficiency and social equity. WIN is committed to accountability, transparency, integrity, honesty, mutual support and knowledge exchange among its members. These characteristics, to which any member should adhere, unite the network. WIN founders are the International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC), Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Swedish Water House (SWH), Transparency International (TI), and Water and Sanitation Program-Africa (WSP-Africa).



Photo: Mats Lannerstad

WIN in action

WIN is open, inclusive and promotes solutions-oriented action and coalition-building between civil society, the private and public sectors, media and governments. WIN advocates a wide range of anti-corruption activities locally, nationally and globally. Specifically, WIN members **foster** awareness and deeper understanding of corruption; **diagnose** the extent and map the breadth; **identify** concerns and issues; **research** and **disseminate** information, methodologies and best practices; **promote** practical tools and interventions; **develop** monitoring mechanisms; **encourage** individuals to coordinate and collaborate; and **build** capacity. WIN draws on other sectoral anti-corruption, good governance and reform experiences and makes them water-specific.



Photo: Mats Lannerstad

Transparency International – the leading anti-corruption organisation – will host the WIN secretariat. Members contribute with knowledge, expertise and their own anti-corruption activities. A multi-stakeholder steering committee advises the network and its secretariat and supports fundraising. The current WIN chair is Dr. Håkan Tropp of SIWI.

Join the WINning Team!

Corruption is draining the water sector. It reduces economic growth, discourages investment, violates human dignity, increases health risks and robs poor people of their livelihoods and their access to water. It doesn't have to be this way. By joining the Water Integrity Network (WIN), individuals, organisations, businesses and governments can help the poor fight corruption in water.

Join ➡ Learn ➡ Inform ➡ Act

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Integrity
Network
Fighting corruption in water worldwide

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Why we must **WIN** the fight against corruption in the water sector

Corruption is draining the water sector. It reduces economic growth, discourages investment, violates human dignity, increases health risks and robs the poor of livelihoods and access to water services.

An unaddressed issue

While causing so much harm, this lack of good governance, transparency, honesty and integrity is largely unaddressed in water and development. It is a stumbling block for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on poverty, water supply and sanitation, and environmental sustainability. A sector-wide effort to fight corruption is needed in water worldwide, within the



Photo: David Dahmén

Corruption in water supply and sanitation has many facets and varies substantially in size and incidence. Informal measurements indicate that a large percentage of water sector finance is drained by corruption.

- In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, some US \$6.7 billion is required annually to reach the MDGs. A 30 percent leakage would thus drain over US \$20 billion from the sector over the next decade.¹
- A recent case study from India's water sector indicates that side payments occurred in 50 percent of all transactions.²

¹Plummer, J and Cross, P. (2006) *Tackling Corruption in the Water and Sanitation Sector in Africa*. Nairobi: Water and Sanitation Program-Africa.

²Davis, J. (2004) *Corruption in Public Service Delivery: Experience from South Asia's Water and Sanitation Sector*. World Development Report, Vol. 32, No. 1 pp. 53-71.

framework of broader efforts at governance reform and greater transparency.

Transparency International defines corruption as the misuse of entrusted power for private gain. In the water sector, unethical behaviour occurs within government, between the government and private sectors, and between public officials and consumers.

Hurting through subtraction

Corruption hurts the water sector and thus poor people by limiting the expansion and effective delivery of water supply and sanitation services and the overall management of water resources. It hurts the poor by diverting investments that would benefit them.

Although the exact cost in human terms of this grievous leakage of revenue

and misallocation of financial resources is still unknown, its negative effects are undeniable. The poor suffer from increased water expenses, weakened or denied access to services, lost dignity, poor health and eroded democracy and social equity. Invisibly, corruption helps deprive 1.25 billion people of access to drinking water, according to the UN's World Water Development Report 2006.

Beyond direct human suffering, corruption intensifies the world's regional water scarcities. It promotes the excessive withdrawal from surface and underground water sources, pollutes freshwater resources, encourages inefficient freshwater use and undermines environmental sustainability. A lack of transparency hinders well-qualified contracting and ethical operating in the water sector, and it undermines the financial stability of water utilities and thus their ability to offer reliable service to all their clients and extend services to all citizens.

What is corruption like in reality?

Corruption:

- Forces the poor to pay bribes to connect to water pipes or to water tankers
- Helps inflate the cost of small-scale infrastructure like boreholes
- Diverts irrigated water away from poor villages
- Leads to biased decisions on the allocation and location of water service points, pipe systems and wastewater treatment facilities
- Falsifies meter readings
- Fosters ill-advised procurement of expensive but poorly constructed facilities
- Buys jobs and promotions



Discovering solutions

Promoting good governance and transparency to root out this unethical behaviour in the water sector won't be easy. Long ignored, and wilfully overlooked by some, corruption is only now being seriously confronted. Fortunately, anti-corruption measures exist. Learning from other broader sectoral reform efforts, the water sector can test their applicability and tailor them where appropriate.

Some examples: communities can learn to monitor services and construction; transparency and access to information in communities and utilities can be developed; and the water sector itself can reform its public institutions and regulatory and financial arrangements to promote more ethical behaviour.

The scope and scale of corruption in water is not well known. Increasingly, however, the water sector recognises that corruption is a major hurdle to the improvement of everyday lives. Appropriate solutions must be found for the problems identified, since corruption varies by socio-political setting. One size solutions do not fit all.



Photo: Shagun Mehrotra

Anti-corruption measures do exist in the water and sanitation sector. For example:

- The Public Affairs Foundation of Bangalore, India, introduced Citizen Report Cards (CRCs) in 1994 due to the poor quality of service delivery and low levels of public accountability. The CRCs empowered citizens and agencies with information and contributed to a significant increase in citizen satisfaction with the services and a visible decline in corruption.¹
- In Karachi, Pakistan, a clean and open bidding process, monitored by Transparency International, saved more than US \$3.1 million for the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board. This resulted from the application of a no-bribes “Integrity Pact” to the award of contracts for consultancy services and for all the physical works and supplies associated with the project.²

¹Thampi, GK (2005) *Community Voice as an Aid to Accountability. Experiences with Citizen Report Cards in Bangalore*. Bangalore: Public Affairs Foundation.

²Transparency International (2005) *Greater Karachi Water Supply Scheme: The Application of the Integrity Pact to the 100 MGD, K-III Project*. Berlin: Transparency International