

CORRUPTION AT LOCAL LEVEL AND HOW TO COMBATE

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Dubrovnik, 22.03.2011.

WHAT IS CORRUPTION?

- no universal or comprehensive definition
- the most prominent definitions share a common emphasis upon the abuse of public power or position for personal advantage
- World Bank Institute: „the misuse of public services for private gain”

TYPES OF THE CORRUPTION IN MUNICIPALITIES

- bribery
- embezzlement
- nepotism
- patronage system

CONSEQUENCES

- distortion of the allocation of local resources
- distortion of the performance of local government
- poor public services
- increased social polarization
- inefficiency in public services
- low investment in the municipality
- decreased economic growth
- reduces the effectiveness of public administration

CAUSES

- 1. lack of public information and transparency**
- 2. lack of accountability (responsibility)**
- 3. socioeconomic and demographic factors**
 - religion
 - size of municipality
 - economic development
 - education
 - political culture

POLITICAL WILL – key factor in combating corruption

- precondition for initiating process of combating corruption
- fighting corruption cannot be one man show; we need systematic and structured strategies and reforms
- once when political will exists, civil society plays a key role in designing sustainable institutional reforms

TOOLS FOR FIGHTING CORRUPTION

- there are no unique measures that can be applied in every municipality
- the rationale should be the negative impact that corruption has
- according Maria Gonzales de Asis, World Bank Institute, those tools are:

1) Simplification of administrative procedure

- complexity and unpredictability of administrative procedures - one of the main factors contributing to corruption
- initial step - developing and implementing standardized administrative procedures
- citizens must be well informed about such procedures and how to benefit from them

2) Citizen participation

- in order to facilitate accountability and transparency and the participation of civil society in government - all municipal documents should be available to the public
- citizens should have access in programs and activities, council members and the mayor, annual budget program etc.
- tools for realising citizen participation:

A) Public hearings

- participatory mechanism allowing for the elaboration of the municipal budget in a citizen forum
- different public budgeting program methodologies
- Porto Alegre – one of the best example

B) Computerized data system

- another mechanism for improving accountability and transparency
- citizens may monitor municipal transactions by computer, including public bidding, acquisitions and execution of public works
- „e-corruption“ – technological service that allows citizens to track municipal transactions via the Internet

C) Auditing commissions

- an additional approach used to achieve accountability and transparency
- includes:
 - a) citizen representatives
 - b) chamber representative
 - c) local municipal officials
- it has two objectives:
 - a) to facilitate community participation
 - b) to oversee and audit public works and social programs

CONCLUSION

- corruption affects all aspects of society – local community as well
- political will – key factor
- synergy between local government and local civil society
- we need to find tools that can be used to kill this monster rather than in describing how big the monster is!
- rational should not be perception of corruption; rather should be the negative impact that corruption has

Thank you for your attention!