



## Regional Workshop

# Harnessing the Power of Data to Promote the Anti-Corruption and Development Nexus

26-28 May 2025

Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

## Programme

## Background

Decades of research, advocacy and actions in the field have established a global consensus that **anti-corruption is essential to enhancing development** effectiveness, increasing institutional efficiency, improving lives and livelihoods and boosting the immunity of economies and societies against serious criminal activities and other various threats to human security including violent conflict and the impact of climate-related disasters.

This is confirmed in the preamble of the **UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)** and in Global Agenda 2030 across all its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in particular **SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**. Indeed, corruption does not only siphon away much needed public funds from vital development projects in key sectors such as health, education, water, energy and transport; but it also erodes economic opportunity, social justice, trust in institutions and the prospects of a better future for people and planet altogether.

With less resources available to tackle development challenges that face the world today, the imperative for enhanced efforts against corruption is stronger than ever. Despite progress made over the last two decades, **global efforts are still falling short** of expressed needs and public expectations, while effective links to national development efforts are still, by and large, feeble and in some cases even non-existent. Indeed, corruption continues to be cited as one of the major challenges facing sustainable development across the globe, affecting poor and rich nations, developing and developed economies, and countries with different forms of government – corruption is indeed a global challenge par excellence. It is estimated to cost the world's economies more than 3.65 trillion USD every year – and this is not counting indirect costs and opportunity costs, which manifest themselves in the form of poverty, hunger, unemployment, and poor public services, with the most vulnerable groups being the most affected.

The **overall situation in the Arab States region is no different**. While progress has been made in some countries on strengthening anti-corruption institutions, enhancing related legislations, scaling up investigations and prosecutions, and integrating various compliance programs in the public and the private sector, many other countries are still lagging. Notwithstanding the different levels of progress achieved in preventing and combating corruption, the nexus with national development efforts is yet to be systematically explored and tackled across the region. Specialized capacities to identify, understand and address corruption risks related to the achievement of specific development goals are scarce, especially in multi-sectoral areas of work, such as climate action or post-crisis recovery efforts. Synergies between national anti-corruption strategies and other national strategies are also virtually absent, such as in the case of youth strategies or private sector development strategies, thus undermining the ability to promote more competitive economies and more just and sustainable societies.

**Addressing the anti-corruption and development nexus** by promoting cooperation between the anti-corruption community (e.g. specialized agencies, supreme audit institutions, and governance-focused civil society actors) and the development community (e.g. ministries of planning and finance, key line ministries, and development-focused non-governmental organizations) is expected to add important value to their respective efforts, while also amplifying contributions to the achievement of the SDGs and national development visions and plans across the region. These important potentials, nonetheless, remain mostly untapped, as corruption prevention and investigation capacities continue to be largely siloed, while joint initiatives bringing the two communities together are rare and not sufficiently institutionalized.

This is slowly changing, however, with various efforts underway to begin bridging the gap between the anti-corruption community and the development community across the region – and indeed worldwide. One critical obstacle in this regard is **the lack of data on corruption and anti-corruption and related developmental implications**. Since the 1990s, substantial strides have been made by various international organization on measuring corruption and anti-corruption, including most notably Transparency International, the World Bank, Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the Basel Institute on Governance, the Risk Watch Initiative and most recently the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which published [the OECD's Public Integrity Indicators](#), setting a new benchmark for strengthening public integrity and for government resilience to corruption risks. These indicators and methodologies have been devised to gauge perception, experience, and the extent of corruption – all of which are fundamental for countries to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-corruption initiatives, the impact of anti-corruption reforms and most importantly, learning from what works, what does not and why. Nonetheless, additional efforts are still needed to develop standardized tools, methodologies and data with the aim of providing evidence that informs and guides specific anti-corruption policies and programs, while also promoting the nexus with development. Further efforts in this regard will be informed by the 2023 [“Vienna Principles Towards a Global Framework for the Measurement of Corruption”](#)<sup>1</sup>, which is a document that guides the way forward on related measurement frameworks and linkages with the development agenda.

Although global in nature, the lack of data on corruption and anti-corruption and related developmental implications is **even more accentuated in the case of the Arab States region**. First highlighted by the [2002 Arab human Development Report \(AHDR\)](#), the data gap in the region is most pronounced in relation to the acquisition and diffusion of knowledge, the state of freedoms and good governance, and the empowerment of women. According to that seminal report, the

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<sup>1</sup> The Vienna Principles Towards a Global Framework for the Measurement of Corruption were the outcome of the first ‘Global Conference on Harnessing Data to Improve Corruption Measurement’, organized in Vienna, Austria, from 31 August to 1 September 2023, by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA).

lack in comprehensive and timely data undermined the ability to measure progress and inform policy in these three key areas. While significant investments have been made, since then, to address the data gap in most of these areas, reliable, comparable, and disaggregated statistics on corruption and anti-corruption remain extremely scarce. This is reflected both in the limited representation of Arab countries in related international datasets, and the lack of nationally produced and publicly available data that could be relevant to advancing anti-corruption efforts and promoting the nexus with sustainable development efforts.

To further explore and tackle the anti-corruption and development nexus in the Arab States region and harness the power of data for this purpose, UNDP is collaborating with a selected number of global and regional partners to organize a dedicated regional workshop. The **overall aim is to advance regional cooperation, while informing broader global discussions** in the run up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Conference on Corruption Measurement that will be held in New York from 2 to 4 December 2025 to achieve greater accuracy, reliability and usefulness of corruption measurement methodologies building on the Vienna Principles.

The regional workshop on “Harnessing the Power of Data to Promote the Anti-Corruption and Development Nexus” will be **organized in Amman, Jordan, on 26-28 May 2025**, with the support of the UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab States in the framework of its longstanding cooperation with the [Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network \(ACINET\)](#). It builds on the work of [UNDP’s regional project on Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Arab Countries \(ACIAC\)](#), implemented in partnership with the [Korea International Cooperation Agency \(KOICA\)](#), and on the valuable efforts to enhance global corruption measurements currently underway in cooperation between the [Oversight and Anti-Corruption Commission in Saudi Arabia \(Nazaha\)](#) and UNDP in the framework of a [joint global initiative](#) launched in 2023.

The regional workshop is expected to convene **more than 100 participants** including senior representatives from national anti-corruption, integrity and oversight authorities in the Arab countries as well as independent experts and practitioners from government, business, civil society, academia and international organizations who will bring in additional perspectives from a developmental point of view.

Together, they will work over a period of three days to achieve a **dual objective**:

- **First**, they will reflect and elaborate on the nexus between anti-corruption and four specific cross-sectoral development priorities drawing on a set of discussion papers that have been prepared with the support of UNDP including (a) private sector development, (b) youth empowerment and engagement, (c) climate action, and (d) conflict prevention and recovery, with gender considerations addressed across these four priorities based on research papers and relevant guidance

materials developed in the framework of ACINET by the regional alliance of Women leaders for Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Arab countries (WAIA).

- **Second**, they will review a set of proposed indicators that are designed to measure the experiences of business with bribery, the integrity in public procurement, as well as the performance of Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs) drawing on (a) related draft global reports and data dashboards prepared by UNDP, (b) a policy paper on the performance of the anti-corruption agencies, and (c) the 'Handbook on Measuring Corruption' inclusive of key indicators that are useful to measuring corruption and anti-corruption.

The regional workshop will be conducted in person (with the possibility for online participation in certain sessions) in the Arabic and English languages with simultaneous interpretation available to participants. The outcome documents, including a series of papers on the anti-corruption and development nexus in the Arab region and a report on regional perspectives on corruption measurements, will be made available at [www.undp-aciac.org](http://www.undp-aciac.org) within one month of the completion of the workshop. For further information, please contact us at [aciad@undp.org](mailto:aciad@undp.org).

## Agenda

### Day One: Monday, 26 May 2025

**09:00 – 09:30**    **Arrival of Participants and Registration**

**09:30 – 11:00**    **Opening and High-Level Segment**

**Objective:** Welcome participants, enable the organizers to share perspectives and expectations related to the workshop topics, and provide an overview of the substantive background of the agenda and key related trends at the global and regional levels.

#### Opening Statements

- H.E Dr. Mohamad Ali Allami, Chair of Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network, President of the Federal Commission of Integrity, Republic of Iraq
- H.E Dr. Muhannad Hijazi, Chair of the Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission

- Mr. Khalid Bubshait, Director of the G20 Department, Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Ms. Kim Soyoung, Country Director, Korea International Cooperation Agency in Jordan
- Ms. Susanne Dam Hansen, Deputy Director, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab States

#### **Anti-Corruption and Integrity: A Global Perspective**

- Dr. Anga Timilsina, Global Advisor on Anti-Corruption, Global Policy Centre for Governance, UNDP

#### **The Nexus with Development Priorities in the Arab States Region**

- Mr. Arkan El Seblani, Regional Chief Anti-Corruption and Integrity Advisor and Project Manager, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab States

**11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break**

#### **11:30 – 13:00 Session 1: Anti-Corruption and Private Sector Development**

**Objective:** Examine the existing evidence on the nexus of anti-corruption with private sector development and its relevance to the broader reform efforts in the Arab region and the achievement of Agenda 2030. The discussion will highlight policies and mechanisms that promote corporate governance with a focus on integrity in business operations and the interface with the public sector, encouraging innovation, healthy competition, and trust in investments. The outcomes are expected to offer insights for the formulation of evidence-based policies and country-specific reform plans, while also identifying priorities for further research.

#### **Moderator**

- Mr. Aslan Ben Rjeb, President, Confédération des Entreprises Citoyennes de Tunisie

#### **Panel**

- Mr. Yasser Akkaoui, Expert Advisor on Private Sector Development and Corporate Governance
- Ms. Elodie Beth Seo, Senior Manager, Anti-Corruption Division, Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs, OECD

- Ms. Nicola Ehlermann, Expert Advisor on Integrity, Governance and Gender

#### Discussion

**13:00 – 14:00 Lunch**

#### **14:00 – 15:30 Session 2: Measuring the Experiences of Businesses with Bribery**

**Objective:** Present preliminary findings of the draft global report on the experiences of businesses with bribery and walk through the data dashboard. The session will also discuss the way forward in terms of collecting more data and improving methodologies and indicators.

#### **Presentation of the indicators and dashboard**

- Ms. Fatma Usheva, Governance Data Specialist, Policy Centre for Governance, UNDP

#### **Commentators**

- Mr. Drago Kos, Expert Advisor in Anti-Corruption, and Former Chair of the OECD Working Group on Bribery in International Business
- Dr. Majdi Hassen, Executive Director, l'Institut Arabe des Chefs d'Entreprise
- Mr. Badri El Meouchi, Director of the Institute for Finance and Governance ESA Business School, Republic of Lebanon

#### Discussion

### **Day Two: Tuesday, 27 May 2025**

#### **09:30 – 11:00 Session 3: Anti-Corruption and Youth Empowerment and Engagement**

**Objective:** To provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between anti-corruption and youth engagement in the Arab States region. We will examine current challenges and opportunities related to youth engagement in anti-corruption efforts, compile best practices and lessons learned to support the development of evidence-based, country-specific strategies, and identify knowledge gaps that require further research. Outputs of the session are expected to support the successful integration of youth as key partners in anti-corruption and integrity reform across the region.

### **Moderator**

- Ms. Linda Haddad, Regional Manager, Youth Empowerment and Engagement Project, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab States

### **Panel**

- Dr. Kathleen Fincham, Expert Advisor on Youth Engagement
- Ms. Lina Abou Habib, Director of the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, American University of Beirut (AUB)
- Ms. Roqiah Basendwah, Assistant Legal Specialist, Regional Conventions Department, Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Mr. Karim Chalhoub, Project Manager, Youth4Governance Initiative, Republic of Lebanon
- Ms. Fadwa Traboulsi, Member of the Integrity Guardians Youth Group

### **Discussion**

**11:00 – 11:30 Break**

### **11:30 – 13:00 Session 4: Anti-Corruption and Climate Action**

**Objective:** Examine evidence on the nexus of anti-corruption and climate action, including data showing correlation between corruption and vulnerability to climate change and case studies that demonstrate the causal link between these phenomena in the Arab states region. Practical interventions are identified that assist in managing corruption risks, such as enhancing transparency in policymaking around climate financing. The discussion will explore links between anti-corruption, climate action, and conflict, particularly in Arab states. Outcomes will offer insights for the formulation of evidence-based policies and country-specific reform plans and identify priorities for further research.

### **Moderator**

- Mr. Benjamin Basmaci, Regional Climate Specialist, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab States

### **Panel**



- Mr. Micheal Nest, Expert Advisor on Anti-Corruption and Climate Action Policies
- Dr. Alexandra Manea, Senior Counsel on Anti-Corruption, World Bank Group
- Mr. Robert Forster, Expert Advisor on Anti-Corruption, U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre
- Ms. Mira Abou Moghli, Expert Advisor on Gender

#### **Discussion**

**13:00 – 14:00 Lunch**

#### **14:00 – 15:30 Session 5: Anti-Corruption and Conflict Prevention and Recovery**

**Objective:** Examine the existing evidence on the nexus between anti-corruption, conflict prevention and recovery in the Arab region. The session will highlight corruption as both a catalyst for conflict and a barrier to effective recovery, critically engaging with the prevailing notion that anti-corruption is a secondary concern, to be addressed only post-stabilization. It will underscore the importance of integrating anti-corruption strategies throughout the conflict cycle, from prevention through to recovery, to ensure sustainable peace and development. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights towards evidence-based reforms and policies; integrating anti-corruption throughout the conflict cycle, from prevention through to recovery.

#### **Moderator**

- Dr. Karam Karam, Regional Advisor for Peacebuilding, Governance, and Institutional development, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA)

#### **Panel**

- Dr. Rachel George, Expert Advisor in International Security and Development, Lecturer at Stanford University, United States of America
- Dr. Youssef Chaitani, Chief of Section on Conflict and Development, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA)
- H.E Dr. Nasser Yassine, Expert Advisor in Public Policy, Former Minister of Environment and Government Crisis Response Coordinator
- Mr. Robert Forster, Expert Advisor on Anti-Corruption, U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre

- Ms. Cheyanne Church, Expert Advisor on Corruption and Conflict

#### **Discussion**

**15:30 – 16:00 Break**

#### **16:00 – 17:30 Working Groups: Integrating Gender Perspectives**

**Objective:** Enable participants to take a deep dive into the gender dimensions of the nexus between anti-corruption and the four key development priorities tackled in earlier sessions, including private sector development, youth empowerment and engagement, climate action, and conflict prevention and recovery. The discussions will center on the integration of gender perspectives in addressing these interconnected challenges, with a particular focus on advancing women's empowerment and promoting gender equality.

#### **Moderator**

- Ms. Lina Abou Habib, Director of the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, American University of Beirut (AUB)

#### **Presentation**

- Ms. Nicola Ehlermann, Expert Advisor on Integrity, Governance and Gender

#### **Small Working Groups**

### **Day Three: Wednesday, 28 May 2025**

#### **09:00 – 11:00 Session 6: Measuring the Performance of Anti-Corruption Agencies**

**Objective:** Present and discuss major findings from the global policy paper on Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs) and discuss various measures and experiences to examine the performance of ACAs including effectiveness and capacities.

#### **Moderator**

- Mr. Arkan El Seblani, Regional Chief Anti-Corruption and Integrity Advisor and Project Manager, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab States

#### **Panel**

- Mr. Samuel De Jaegere, Head of the Global Programme on Measuring Corruption, International Anti-Corruption Academy
- Dr. Kleib Kleib, Member of the National Anti-Corruption Commission, Republic of Lebanon
- Dr. Khaled Kdah, Head of the Integrity and Prevention Directorate, Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission
- Ms. Nayfa Al Issa, International Relations Specialist, Department of International Cooperation, Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Mr. Amine Al Basri, Director of the Observatory, L'Instance nationale de la probité, de la prévention et de la lutte contre la corruption

#### **Discussion**

**11:00 – 11:30 Break**

#### **11:30 – 13:00 Measuring Integrity in Public Procurement**

**Objective:** Present the preliminary findings of the draft global report on integrity in public procurement and walk through the data dashboard. The session will also discuss the way forward in terms of collecting more data and improving methodologies and indicators.

#### **Presentation of indicators and dashboard**

- Dr. Anga Timilsina, Global Advisor on Anti-Corruption, Global Policy Centre for Governance

#### **Panel**

- H.E Moayad Odeh, President, High Council for Public Procurement Policies, State of Palestine
- Mr. Mostafa Khawaja, Head of Statistical Policies and Coordination Unit, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

#### **Discussion**

**13:00 – 14:00 Closing session**

#### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **Comments by Participants**

## Concluding Remarks

14:00 – 15:00 Lunch

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