



# UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

## The benefits and drawbacks of corruption surveys

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## Data on crime and criminal justice

### 1. Administrative data

- Police-recorded crime
- Prosecution/court data
- Prison data, etc.

### 2. Sample Survey data

- Victimization surveys
- Self-reporting surveys
- Corruption surveys





## Why experience-based corruption surveys?

Challenge: How to provide an objective measurement of bribery and corruption?

Administrative data on corruption/bribery cover only “**Detected/reported Cases**” = offences detected by/reported to official authorities.

Perception surveys cover only indirect “knowledge” on corruption, influenced by media, political events, hearsay,... useful for awareness raising but provide no actionable insights

Experience-based surveys on corruption can cover the real experience of the population with bribery and other forms of corruption and produce important insights on the extent and nature of bribery and the response to it for evidence-based policy

*Limitation: Household surveys on bribery cover mainly administrative corruption (not “grand corruption” or “political corruption”)*

# SDG indicators on bribery within SDG 16

## 1 violence/crime prevention

\_violence against women

\_violence against children

int. homicide  
physical, sexual violence  
fear of violence  
harassment  
violence against women (x2)  
trafficking in persons



## 2 trafficking and organised crime

illicit financial flows  
trafficking of firearms  
trafficking of wildlife



## 3 justice, rule of law, corruption

crime reporting rate  
unsentenced detainees  
bribery prevalence  
population  
bribery prevalence  
business



## 4. drug treatment

treatment coverage





## Target 16.5

Target	Indicators
16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms	16.5.1 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months
	16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months



## Corruption Surveys: a range of information

- Experience of bribery and other forms of corruption
- Extent and modalities of bribery
- Forms and purpose of bribery
- Public officials involved, sectors/administrative procedures at risk, type and amount of payments, timing, modalities,..
- Public/Private sector corruption
- Reporting mechanisms
- Response to bribery
- Awareness and perceptions of anti-corruption agencies
- Etc ....



## The benefits and drawbacks of corruption surveys

### Benefits

- a. Allow direct measurement of bribery from population or business
- b. Overcoming under-reporting problems of administrative data (“dark figure”)
- c. Based on objective evidence and methodology
- d. Availability of many details on corrupt behaviours allows comprehensive understanding of drivers and vulnerabilities
- e. Provide actionable and policy-relevant information – e.g. sectors, trends, reporting..
- f. Comparability of data

### Drawbacks

Impact of non-disclosure based on unwillingness to admit socially undesirable and illegal behaviour (not suitable for corruption involving large amounts)

Potential reporting bias (e.g. telescoping, non-recall, question interpretation..)

Potentially high cost of surveys

Currently focus is on bribery, methodology on other forms of corruption is under development (e.g. nepotism, vote-buying)

# UNODC experience in measuring corruption

- Direct support to implement corruption surveys in ten countries since 2009
- Technical advice for countries implementing corruption surveys/modules (Mexico, Italy, Indonesia, etc.)
- Methodological work to improve existing approaches

## Examples:

- Afghanistan (with UNDP): 2009 and 2012
- Iraq (with UNDP): 2012
- Western Balkans (7 countries):  
2010: population survey  
2012: business sector survey
- Nigeria 2017 and 2019







## UNODC approach to corruption measurement

### Process

- Build ownership at country level: involvement of major stakeholders
- Methodology adapted at national level
- Surveys conducted by/with national statistical authorities

### Contents

- Scientifically sound methodology: focus on experience of corruption (large-scale sample surveys)
- Direct relevance for policy making:
  - information on modalities of and vulnerabilities to bribery
  - broaden the scope: integrity and state response



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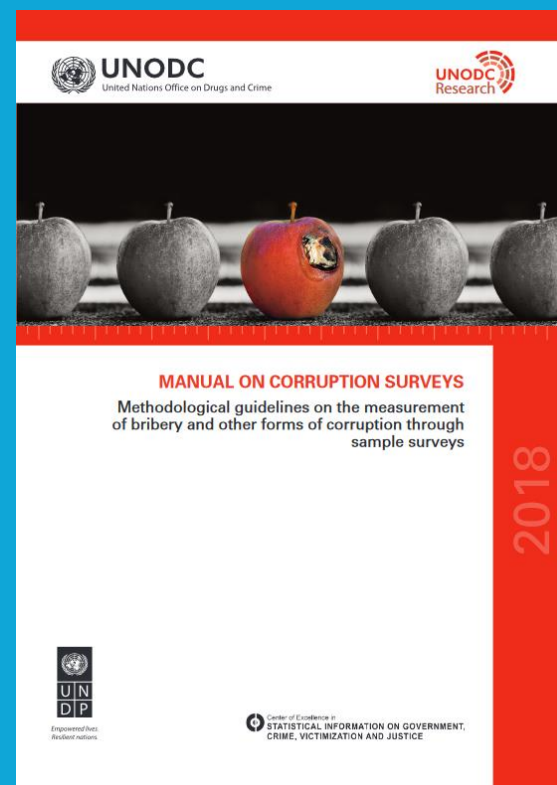
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## Manual on corruption surveys

**Objective:** provide countries with practical guidance to develop, plan and implement sample surveys on households and businesses to measure the prevalence of bribery at national level, modalities and scope of bribery, public attitudes towards corruption and anti-corruption

### Main contents

- How to plan a corruption survey
- How to develop the methodology of the survey
- How to field a corruption survey
- How to analyse survey results and produce data for SDG indicator 16.5.1 and 16.5.2





## Ongoing work

- UNODC will continue to support countries wishing to undertake surveys/modules on corruption (to support reporting on SDG Target 16.5)
- Technical assistance/training workshops on corruption surveys
- Continue methodological work (beyond bribery surveys) to improve existing approaches and to measure other forms of corruption and vulnerability to it
- In parallel, improvement of administrative data on corruption/bribery to improve understanding of criminal justice response to corruption
- Collection of data on bribery prevalence (SDG 16.5.1 and 16.5.2) through the annual UN Crime Trends Survey questionnaire and reporting on the SDGs



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Thank you  
for your attention

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/corruption.html>

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