

## Ten Things That May Control Corruption

None of the initiatives below work all the time. An important research agenda concerns identifying the conditions under which any single item is more or less effective. Most but not all of these items have been studied experimentally. Even those that have been studied experimentally usually do not yet have the accumulation of studies required to have much confidence in the evidence. No research has been conducted that allows assessment of the relative importance of any of these items, or how they might interact. Little work has been done to assess whether displacement occurs; that is, whether political authorities shift their activities to another sphere when corruption in one sphere is disrupted.

- 1) Audit: Audits of finances and spending of branches and units of government by independent authorities have been shown to be effective, especially if they occur unannounced and on a random basis.
- 2) Monitor and observe: Monitoring of civil servants, especially by electronic methods (punch cards, television cameras) may be effective in some settings.
- 3) Protect from political interference: Protecting civil servants from political interference is important. These protections include preventing discretionary political decisions about hiring, promotions, transfers, pay, and so forth.
- 4) Pay for performance: Some work shows that paying civil servants for outcomes rather than for simply showing up may be effective in reducing slacking and bribery.
- 5) Automate: Implementing technological counts to replace human counts may reduce deliberate misappropriation and misallocation of resources. On the other hand, automated solutions are subject to sabotage.
- 6) Disclose: Requiring the disclosure of information by political authorities may be useful. Disclosures that could be relevant include the assets and criminal status of candidates for public office as well as scorecards of performance in office.
- 7) Fund: No research has been done to assess whether providing campaign funds or other relevant resources (e.g. media time) to political parties and candidates reduces the pressure on them to vote buy and to engage in bribery and extortion. This is a hypothesis worth exploring.
- 8) Inform: Informing citizens that politicians are corrupt is often ineffective in inducing them to respond electorally. Informing citizens of their entitlements and rights has shown more promise in experimental research for preventing political authorities from siphoning off benefits. Current research concerns whether the scope of information transmission (private versus public) is effective in creating common knowledge and thereby shifting norms.

- 9) Nudge: Nudging citizens to exercise their civic duties --- such as voting or voting responsibly rather than clientelistically --- has in some work been shown to be useful.
- 10) Enforce. No research has been done to assess whether providing additional resources to the courts to allow them to enforce legal standards more efficiently and reliably reduces corruption.

## SUMMARY OF EXISTING FINDINGS

Challenge: Reducing corruption and improving transparency					
Study	Country/Year	Question	Who/What	Intervention	Outcome
Adida et al (2015)	Benin, 2015	Does information to voters improve vote choice; are public delivery methods of information more effective than private?	255 villages	Provides civic information using different channels of communication	Implemented around the 2015 legislative elections; results still unknown
Banerjee et al (2014)	Uttar Pradesh, India, 2010	Do voters prefer candidates of their own caste even if criminal or corrupt?	5,000 voters	Vignette experiment varying candidate characteristics	Voters prefer honest to criminal and corrupt candidates, even when the criminal is aligned with the voter's caste
Bobonis, et al (2012)	Puerto Rico, 1987-2005	Does the disclosure of information about corrupt activities induce a sustained reduction in corruption?	All municipalities, 1987-2005	Assembled and analyzed data on randomized audits of municipal expenditures	Corruption is lower in municipalities audited before an election. However, these municipalities do not exhibit decreased levels of corruption in subsequent audits. Audits do not have sustained anti-corruption effects.

Callen and Long (2015)	Afghanistan (2010)	Does the use of monitoring technology deter electoral fraud?	471 Polling Centers	A letter informing electoral officials that results forms would be photographed to document discrepancies in vote aggregation.	Announcement reduces electoral discrepancies and vote shares for politically powerful candidates as well as candidates connected to the administrators who oversee vote counting.
Chong et al (2015)	Mexico (2009)	Does information about incumbent corruption lead to higher political participation and increased support for challengers?	2, 360 voting precincts in 12 municipalities in Jalisco, Morelos, and Tabasco states.	Precinct-level randomization of distribution of flyers providing audit data on Mayors' use of infrastructure funds.	Precincts in which corruption information is shared with voters experience decreases in voter turnout, decreases in identification with incumbent party, and vote losses for both incumbents and challengers.
Ferraz and Finan (2008)	Brazil (2003-2004)	Do audits that reveal corruption lead voters to hold elected politicians accountable?	Municipalities with mayors eligible for re-election in 2004.	Natural experiment, where treatment is the random selection of Brazilian municipalities for audits of federally transferred funds	Mayors with at least two corruption violations (as revealed in the audit) are significantly less likely to get re-elected (17 percentage points); effect stronger in areas with better local media.
Golden et al (2015)	Ghana, 2012	Do election observers reduce or displace election fraud?	2,000 polling stations	Random placement of domestic election observers	Unexpected finding that polling stations without election observers experienced

					twice the rate of malfunctions of biometric verification machines as those with observers. Malfunction of machines appears associated with greater election fraud.
Hyde (2007)	Armenia (2003)	Do international observers reduce electoral fraud?	1,763 polling places across two rounds of presidential voting	Natural experiment in which international election observers were arbitrarily assigned to the complete list of polling stations.	International observers led to a reduction in vote share for incumbent presidential candidate.
Humphreys and Weinstein (2012)	Uganda, 2006-11	Does providing information to voters about politician performance improve it?	All 319 MPs, with random dissemination of scorecards to a subset of constituencies	Randomized dissemination of parliamentary scorecards	Very small impact; most voters unaware of information campaign, and politicians did little to try to get good grades on the scorecards
Ichino and Schündeln (2014)	Ghana, 2008	Do election observers reduce or displace voter registration fraud?	898 Electoral areas	Randomized initial 1-2 hour visit and follow up day of observation of registration process	Observation deters irregularities but also results in some spillovers to nearby electoral areas without observers
Muralidharan et al (2014)	Andhra Pradesh, India, 2010-12	Do biometrically-authenticated payment systems of government benefits reduce corruption?	158 sub-districts covering 19 million people	Randomization of rollout of Smartcards over two years	Significant reduction in "leakage" of funds and considerable public enthusiasm for new system
Olken (2007)	Indonesia	Do	600	Two over-	Audits lead to

	(2003-2004)	government audits reduce corruption?	Indonesian village road projects	lapping treatments: (1) audits by central government audit agency (2) increasing grassroots monitoring	decreased missing expenditures but to more family members of project officials being hired (substitution of corruption for nepotism).
Reinikka and Svensson (2011)	Uganda (1996-2002)	Can a newspaper campaign that provides parents with information to monitor local officials' handling of a large education grant program reduce corruption?	Schools entitled to receive capitation grants from the central government	Compares before/after outcomes for treated schools that had access to news reports; compares treated to control schools.	Prior to the experiment, schools received only 24% of yearly capitation grants. This increased to 80% attributable to the campaign.

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