

# Targeting Natural Resource Corruption

Harnessing knowledge, generating evidence, and supporting innovative policy and practice for more effective anti-corruption programming



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# What shapes anti-corruption success and failure in renewable resource sectors?

U4 Webinar – Targeting Natural Resource Corruption Project

21<sup>st</sup> February 2023, 1430-1600 CET

# Agenda and Timings

- Introduction by U4 Director and TNRC Chief of Party (6 mins)
  - U4's approach to the research, focus, methods, data, cases (10 mins presentation, incl. Q&A)
  - Recommendation 1: Improving analysis (10 mins presentation, 8 mins discussion)
  - Recommendation 2: Further support for civil society and journalism (10 mins presentation, 8 mins discussion)
  - Recommendation 3: Further safeguarding measures (10 mins presentation, 8 mins discussion)
  - Broad discussion of policy and practice implications (15 mins discussion)
  - Close
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- ❖ Moderation by Peter Evans (U4) and Kyle Rearick (USAID Sr. Social Scientist, Biodiversity Division, Center for Environment, Energy and Infrastructure, Washington DC)



# U4's approach to the research, focus, methods, data, cases

**Overall research question:** What factors condition anti-corruption success and failure in renewable resource sectors?

**Methods:** Mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach with varied investigator research design (three country teams), rooted in political ecology.

**Data:** Primary data were 300+ in-field interviews, plus participant observation and surveys. Secondary data were a systematic literature review (900+ publications), reviews of official documentation, environmental change data on deforestation (Global Forest Watch and other).

**Three cases for in-depth study:** (i) a multi-sector case of community-led natural resource management in northern Madagascar; (ii) the case of community forestry reforms to tackle illegal logging and associated corruption in the Peruvian Amazon; and (iii) a case considering the use of e-payments in Vietnam's forest sector.

**Photo Caption:** *Vietnam fieldwork, Covid checkpoint*





## FIELD SITES



## FIELD SITE



## FIELD SITE



# Recommendation 1: Improving analysis

- Addressing corruption is typically a secondary objective for resource governance projects, resulting in limited bandwidth for analyzing and addressing it (all cases studied)
- Project implementors tend to be acutely concerned by, and aware of, how corruption potentially affects intervention outcomes, but there are examples of unsound project assumptions
- Corruption linked to political struggles over who benefits from natural resources in specific places must be properly understood if it is to be tackled
- Example: In Peru, the approach taken did not seem to account for the capture of provincial institutions by special interest groups (illegal logging barons)
- Conservation actors must continue to train, consider latest evidence and debates, as well as use the best available risk analysis and management [methods](#) for targeting corruption
- Practical tip: Implement more systematic literature reviews to build on existing evidence

## Recommendation 2: Further support for civil society and journalism

- Resolving political conflicts at the heart of environmental corruption is vital, yet interventions adopt a primarily technical lens rather than a political one.
- The challenges confronting state policies and aid projects in grappling with the real politics of resource governance and environmental corruption helped fuel, at least in part, despondency and/or alternate approaches on the part of concerned populations and groups.
- Although a range of civil society and media tend to be supported in highlighting the political dimensions of challenging resource governance, there is still a dearth of viable *actions* that resolve these highly politicized problems through legislative, policy and enforcement means.
- Further cross-fertilization of knowledge and approaches among civil society and media organizations is likely to be beneficial.



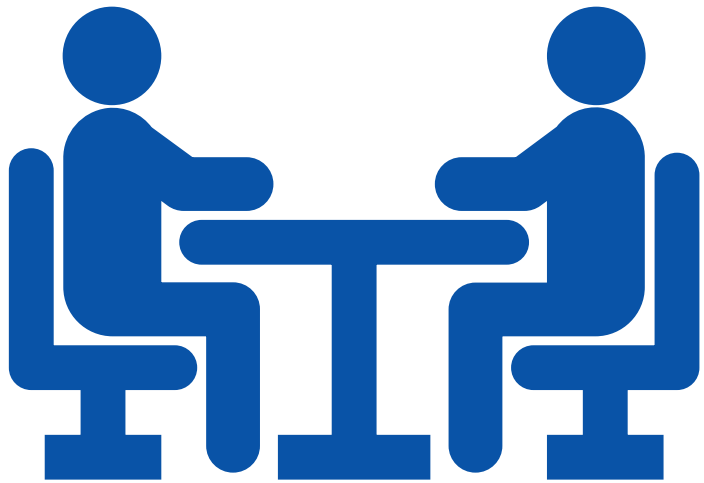


## Recommendation 3: Further safeguarding measures

- The main burden of tackling corruption should not fall on vulnerable members of society, yet our findings point to younger generations (e.g., students) and Indigenous environmental defenders continuing to place themselves at significant risk by calling out environmental corruption.
- Example: Indigenous Peoples facing loss of access to ancestral lands following years of collusion and corruption between individuals in the state and criminals have sometimes taken to direct protests, placing themselves and their communities at risk of violent retaliation.
- Recent efforts by [Mary Lawlor](#), the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, and by [Amnesty International](#), to highlight the risks to human rights defenders focused on both the environment and corruption should be further supported, with concrete legal and practical safeguards put in place for both students and Indigenous Peoples on these issues.

*Photo: Peru fieldwork, Camila Gianella*





Policy and practice  
discussion

# References

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