BASEL INSTITUTE ON
GOVERNANCE

Corruption, Social Norms and Behaviours
A comparative assessment of Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda

Claudia Baez Camargo | December 2017

Basel Institute on Governance
Steinenring 60 | 4051 Basel, Switzerland | +41 61 205 55 11
info@baselgovernance.org | www.baselgovernance.org

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Acronyms

DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
EABI	East African Bribery Index
EARF	East Africa Research Fund (DFID)
EARH	East Africa Research Hub (DFID)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HGS	Home Grown Solutions (Rwanda)
PCCB	Prevention and Combatting Corruption Bureau (Tanzania)

1 Introduction

Recognising the devastating impact that the misuse of public resources has on the welfare of society, and especially of the most vulnerable groups, the fight against corruption has been at the top of the international development's community agenda for over two decades. However, results to date have been far from satisfactory, in particular in many countries that experience widespread acts of corruption from the highest levels of government all the way down to the practices of average citizens. Delving into the causes for the seeming entrenched nature of corruption has generated heated debate among academics and practitioners alike, leading to an increased recognition of the need to deepen our understanding of context-specific drivers of corrupt behaviours.

Notwithstanding the above, research has only very recently begun to reveal how corrupt practices are perceived in the eyes of those directly engaging in them. Emerging evidence suggests that corruption is often seen as either a 'necessary evil' or simply 'the way things are done', suggesting a high degree of social acceptability of corruption in local contexts where corrupt collective practices have become normalised (Koni-Hoffmann and Navanit-Patel 2017). Considering that, when certain types of corrupt actions are socially embedded or culturally rooted, corruption itself becomes a feature during the enculturation of individuals, and therefore it becomes collectively reproduced, normalised and reinforced (cf. Hoff and Stiglitz, 2015). Under such circumstances, it is perhaps not surprising that anti-corruption prescriptions that rely on the assumption that corruption is a deviant behaviour will have limited effects.

These considerations suggest that there is a crucial need to rethink the formulation of anti-corruption approaches in order to account for locally prevailing conditions and context-specific drivers of corruption - including hidden agendas, social habits and deeply engrained attitudes towards corruption (Baez-Camargo and Passas 2017; Koni-Hoffmann and Navanit-Patel 2017). Devising innovative policy interventions that effectively impact the choices and ultimately the collective behaviours of citizens and service providers requires a thorough understanding of those social beliefs and expectations that have supported the persistence of corrupt practices to begin with. This calls for more nuanced complementary approaches that incorporate a contextualised understanding of *behavioural drivers* of corruption (Scartascini 2016).

Against this backdrop, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), through its East Africa Research Fund (EARF), commissioned the Basel Institute on Governance to conduct the research project "Corruption, Social Norms and Behaviours in East Africa" (hereafter "the Project") aiming at shedding light into those "[behavioural] factors that influence the propensity for poor people to engage in, resist and report 'corrupt transactions'" in three East African countries, namely, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.[1]

The Project activities took place between January 2016 and August 2017 and involved two major components:

The first component is a semi-systematic literature review (hereafter "the Literature Review") that compiled the evidence about the impact of behavioural factors on the incidence of petty corruption and

[1] Terms of Reference, Research on Corruption Social Norms and Behaviours in East Africa, published on 9 October 2015 by EARF (DFID).

assessed the relative effectiveness of anti-corruption interventions targeting petty corruption in developing countries. The Literature Review (Stahl, Kassa, and Baez-Camargo 2017) and an accompanying Policy Brief (Baez-Camargo 2017) have been published separately.[2]

The second component comprised field research activities, in the form of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and a survey, which explored the commonalities and differences in behavioural influences on attitudes towards petty corruption across the three case study countries. The research focused in particular on the interactions between ordinary citizens and low-to-mid level officials.[3] The field research findings have been integrated into three country reports with accompanying policy briefs as well as in the present synthesis comparative assessment distilling the implications of the research findings for anti-corruption practice and corruption research.[4] All outputs of the research project are available for electronic download on the institutional website.[5]

This report presents a comparative discussion about the evidence of behavioural elements associated with attitudes towards petty corruption across the three countries. The report is structured as follows: Section 2 presents a general background of the three countries in terms of their experiences in implementing anti-corruption policies and strategies and the relevance of this sample for the study of practices of petty corruption in East Africa. The main research findings are presented subsequently: Section 3 discusses the findings associated with the impact of factors of sociality on attitudes towards petty corruption. Section 4 is devoted to describing the findings related to how environmental heuristics and shared mental models shape the manner in which individuals make choices on whether to engage in or abstain from acts of petty corruption. Section 5 elaborates conclusions on the relevance of behavioural factors for understanding petty corruption outcomes in East Africa and discusses policy relevant implications of the Project findings.

2 Characterising the three cases

Fighting corruption has been high on the political agenda of the governments in Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda for many years. In the three countries, robust anti-corruption legislation and institutions have been put in place but with different substantial results to show for it.

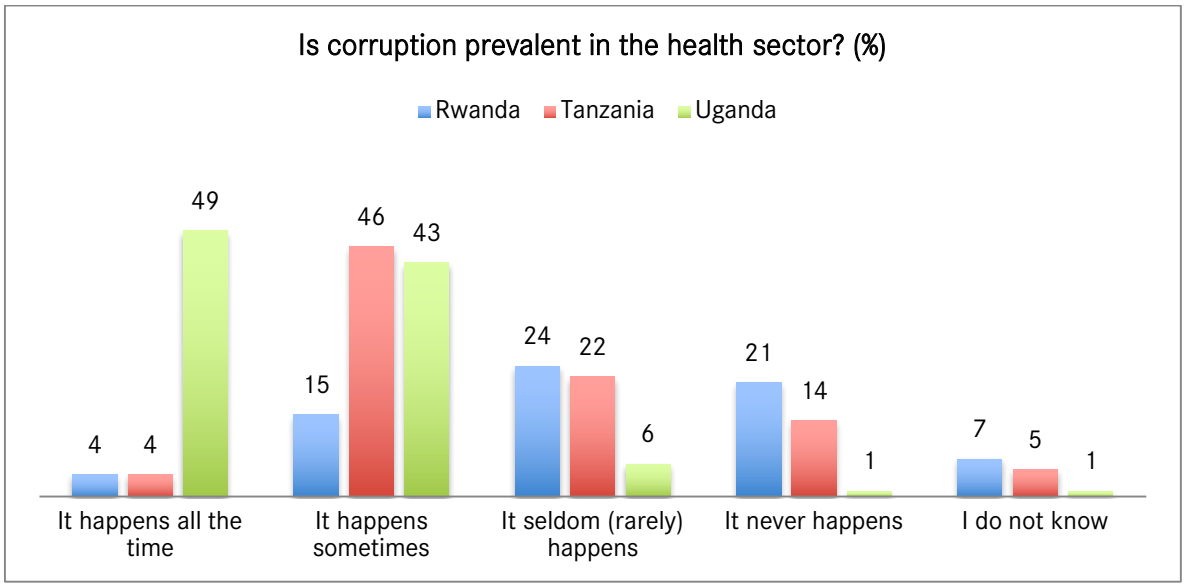
[2] Both documents are accessible on https://www.baselgovernance.org/publications/3623 and https://www.baselgovernance.org/publications/3621respectively.
[3] A complementary research project, entitled 'Informal Governance and Corruption – Transcending the Principal-Agent and Collective Action Paradigms', has been commissioned by DFID and the British Academy (BA) and implemented by the Basel Institute on Governance in collaboration with University College London (UCL) and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). Following an inductive approach – it looks at those norms and practices commonly employed by political and business elites. This top-down perspective seeks to uncover unwritten rules and behavioural patterns that articulate informal governance regimes associated with high prevalence of corruption. More information can be found on: www.britac.ac.uk/anti-corruption, www.britac.ac.uk/node/4660.
[4] It should be noted that the research focused on two sectors in each country: health and education in the case of Tanzania and Uganda and health and police in the case of Rwanda. In this comparative paper the focus is strongly on the major findings stemming from the three cases making particular reference to the health sector where the most directly comparability of findings ensues from the research design. For details on the findings regarding the education and police sector the reader is advised to review the country reports available electronically at https://www.baselgovernance.org/publications.
[5] All documents are accessible on: https://www.baselgovernance.org/publications.

In Uganda, while anti-corruption efforts by President Yoweri Museveni's government have been emphasised in recent years, the results continue to be meagre at best. This results in a sizeable implementation gap, which is reflected in that corruption, both petty and grand, continues to be widespread and represents a major obstacle to the country's development. Petty corrupt practices such as bribery, favouritism, absenteeism and gift-giving are common, deeply embedded and endemic; and have had deteriorating impacts on the provision of basic public services to citizens. The situation is confirmed by the research findings in which Ugandan participants corroborate the perception of an on going situation where corruption is rampant and has become a normalised feature in the daily life of citizens, compounded with low levels of trust in the ability of state institutions to enforce the rule of law.

In the case of Tanzania, high levels of corruption have pervaded all aspects of public administration and have been a constant feature in the experience of citizens in their interactions with the state, especially when it comes to the delivery of public services. However, since the 2015 election, the government led by President John Magufuli has vowed to renew anti-corruption efforts, and has taken significantly bold actions to punish and prevent illicit behaviours. The reform agenda of the current regime has received significant support from Tanzanian citizens and expectations are high that this government will induce meaningful transformations that will result in better livelihoods for families and individuals. In fact, as will be discussed, the research findings suggest that change is already being felt at the level of service provision in terms of stronger enforcement of punishment for corrupt actions and decreased opportunities for rent seeking.

Rwanda provides a stark contrast to the pervasiveness of corruption in the public sector found in Uganda and, at least until recently, Tanzania. The government led by President Paul Kagame has successfully managed to tackle corruption (and particularly petty corruption) by ensuring that adequate anti-corruption legal frameworks and monitoring institutions are in place and through an overall strict enforcement of the rule of law. Strong political commitment is operationalised in a 'zero-tolerance' approach to corruption based on harsh punishments and strict enforcement. Sensitising the public about the value of anti-corruption and integrity has resulted in Rwanda being among the least corrupt countries in Africa. This assessment is confirmed by the perceptions of research participants who attest to a low incidence of corrupt behaviours and a perception that the state has a strong commitment to the detection and punishment of illicit actions.

Against this background, the comparative research design covering these three East African countries provides an excellent opportunity to compare the attitudes and experiences of citizens vis-à-vis petty corruption when accessing public services, reflecting how variations in the wider national context impact citizens' beliefs and behaviours. These different corruption dynamics are captured in the Project's survey results regarding the perceived prevalence of corruption in the health sector as illustrated in Figure 1.



Perceived prevalence of corruption in the health sector in Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

These survey results confirm the general picture in which Uganda comes out as experiencing the highest levels of corruption, whereas Rwandan respondents report a significantly lower incidence of corrupt practices, with Tanzania reporting intermediate results. It should be noted that the Project's survey findings align with those from the most recent East African Bribery Index (EABI), which found that 81% of respondents in Uganda describe the level of corruption in their country as high, whereas in Tanzania 44% of respondents (the largest proportion) describe levels of corruption in their country as medium and a majority of Rwandan respondents 61% describe corruption in their country as low. Furthermore, the EABI also gives some indication about trends across the three countries. In this respect, Ugandans share a grim assessment of past and future performance as 59% of respondents believe that corruption increased in comparison to the last year and will continue to increase during the following 12 months. In contrast, a positive outlook was shared among a majority of Tanzanian and Rwandan respondents (70% and 61% respectively) who believe that corruption has decreased in comparison to the previous year continue to will decrease in the subsequent 12 months (70% of respondents in both countries) (Transparency International 2017).

A similar pattern was captured in the survey where respondents across the three countries considered whether corruption is inescapable. As Figure 2 indicates, the more pessimistic in that regard were the Ugandans 60% of whom strongly agreed, compared to 45% in Tanzania and 23% in Rwanda.

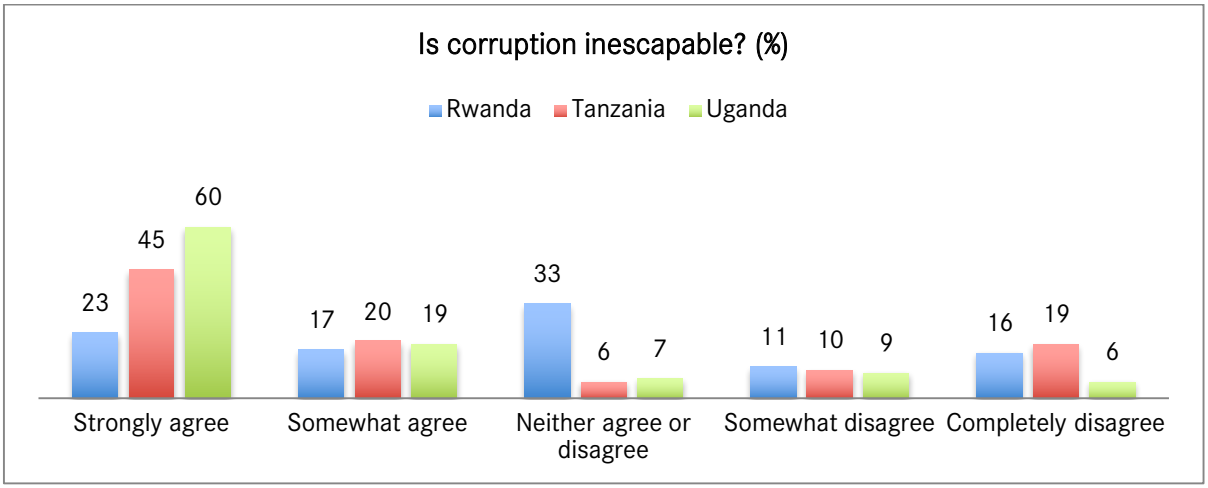


Figure 2. Is corruption inescapable in Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda?

Overall, the research findings suggest that the provision of public services in Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda is indeed impacted – albeit in different ways - by behavioural patterns emanating from social norms and values, narrow frames and collectively held mental models. However, before discussing these factors and their impact on attitudes towards petty corruption, two key background considerations need to be understood in order to properly interpret the findings regarding behavioural drivers of corruption.

First, across the three countries the research participants communicated the belief that attitudes towards public service provision and petty corruption are very much determined by the socioeconomic conditions affecting citizens. In this regard, participants from Uganda and Tanzania referred to precarious conditions (including poverty, high costs of living as well as notoriously low wages and heavy workloads) as a key obstacle to overcoming corruption. In particular, Ugandan FGD participants stressed that salaries are often not paid regularly, jobs are insecure and scarce, and living expenses are unaffordable for many Ugandans. In Tanzania, similar insights were shared about the impossibility to attend to personal and family needs relying only on meagre formal salaries. In contrast, in Rwanda, while needs are still substantial, public officials have on average higher wages. Such essential considerations play a strong role in setting the stage to the manner in which corruption is conceptualised and how citizens interact with public officials.

Second, across the three countries it is clear that state efficacy has a substantial influence in the manner in which individuals' choices are made, whether driven by behavioural or non-behavioural factors. State efficacy matters substantially in two ways: in terms of state outputs (the quality of services available; pervasiveness of instances of abuse of power; and negligence on the part of providers) and in terms of upholding the rule of law. This is strongly reflected in the experiences shared by research participants whereby in Tanzania and Uganda there was very much consensus that accessing public services and interacting with the public sector have for the most part very little to do with formal rights and entitlements, whereas in Rwanda, the perception was that all services are provided according to the formal legal stipulations.

3 Social articulations: values, norms and agency

3.1 The centrality of social networks

Social networks are extremely relevant in East Africa because strong personal connections constitute an effective mechanism to pool scarce resources and provide access to goods, services, resources and even career opportunities (Jauregui, 2014; Ruud, 2000; (Grodeland, Koshechkina, and Miller 1998; Ledeneva 1997 [for Russia and China]; Sneath 2002 [for Mongolia]; Chang, Chang, and Freese 2001). Indeed, research participants ascribed great importance to social networks because they constitute an informal social safety net that helps people attend to their needs. In this regard, it is important to note that the baseline is similar across the three countries.

Generally speaking, close relatives make up the closest and most trusted network. Additionally, social networks may be constructed on the basis of specific criteria of group affiliation such as gender, ethnicity, professional acquaintances, religion and so on. Some networks may consist of 'friends of friends' and encompass increasingly distant acquaintances. Significantly, the research suggests that inclusion criteria can be fluid and instrumental, whereby networks are constructed in a deliberate manner to link up individuals increasingly far removed from each other on the basis of pragmatic considerations.

In the comparative discussion about the centrality of social networks in East Africa it is important to make a conceptual clarification. Whereas it is clear that individuals belong to multiple, overlapping networks anywhere, the type of networks that are most relevant for this research are those to which the individual feels bound by obligations that are primordial because they are enforced and sanctioned by stringent social controls. Those networks are the social equivalent to what the political sciences refers to as the leader's 'winning coalition' (Mesquita et al. 2005), meaning those constituencies whose support is most essential for maintaining legitimacy in the case of the political leader, and status and social recognition within the community in the case of the individual. These are the core networks, which are also interchangeably referred to as the reference group (following Koni-Hoffmann and Navanit-Patel 2017) or clique, which is the subset of individuals in a wider network in which actors are more closely and intensely tied to one another.[6] What makes the cliques relevant is that they represent the networks in which strict social norms are enforced and the individuals feel obliged to satisfy the expectations of the group. On the basis of the research evidence, the core networks or cliques can be subdivided into two groups consisting of family, on the one hand, and friends and other acquaintances, on the other.

Within the core network of the family the social norm is the obligation to share with the next of kin. Indeed, the research findings confirm that, when it comes to the family, the duty to help and provide for one's relatives is an essential, unquestionable premise of social life in the three countries. The obligation to help is expected to be known, is understood as obvious and it does not need be articulated explicitly. One can be certain that not responding in accordance to this norm will surely have consequences which range from loss of respect and status, social isolation, to even physical threats as

[6] See http://faculty.ucr.edu/~hanneman/nettext/C11_Cliques.html [25 August 2017].

was mentioned in Uganda. The duty to the family is strongly upheld as a cultural value as attested by the remarks made by research participants across the three countries.

Within the core networks – or cliques - composed of friends and other acquaintances, the social norm is the obligation to reciprocate. In fact, networks are sustained on the basis of a transactional logic which was succinctly summarised by a Tanzanian research participant in the following manner: "There is a reciprocal relationship meaning today you have helped me, so tomorrow I must find a way to return the favour." Thus, at the core of the network dynamics is the exchange of a gift or a favour, which is used to establish a relationship. The transaction generates a condition of indebtedness on the part of the accepting party and a gift economy arises, which is characterised by the exchange of a gift and then a counter-gift sequentially. Arising out of such dynamics is an unwritten recognition that one of the two parties has to be indebted, the not yet realised favour pending until the situation when it can be reciprocated arises. The balance of indebtedness never gets settled; otherwise there would be no relationship. Networked relationships may entail different degrees of proximity and affection but what distinguishes the core network is the central role played by the moral duty to honour one's debts. Notably, in the three countries gift-giving was also recognised as being rooted in their cultural traditions.

The reciprocity rules of the networks are strongly enforced by means of social controls associated with status, respectability and shaming. In fact, the evidence strongly suggests that fear of losing status is a strong driver of behaviours. Thus, the research findings confirm the pattern identified in the Literature Review whereby the role of networks in fuelling corrupt practices is closely associated with locally recognised norms of sociality. These social norms are enforced via normative constraints based on respect, shame, guilt, peer pressure and reputation (Baez-Camargo and Sambaiga 2016; Dong, Dulleck, and Torgler 2009; Fjeldstad, Kolstad, and Lange 2003; Fjeldstad 2005; Gatti, Paternostro, and Rigolini 2003; Heilman and Ndumbaro 2002; Kindra and Stapenhurst 1998).[7]

This strong enforceability of social norms of solidarity and reciprocity in contexts of unmet needs and uncertainty lends particular value to the networks, which may be considered a form of currency. Extensive networks, especially if they include influential or strategically placed individuals, are a form of capital. It is meaningful that research participants in Uganda considered that the most vulnerable social groups are the poor, not only because they lack financial resources, but because they often also lack the networks connecting them to those who could most likely help them. Furthermore, people often invest in social networks with the expectation of accruing certain benefits at a later stage. For instance, in reference to a son's education, one female participant stated: "we usually expect that by educating our kids, after they graduate and get good jobs they [will] return back the favour by taking care of their families and the community in general."

One of the most meaningful findings is that there appears to be a positive correlation between the size of the core networks and state performance. This is because social ties reduce uncertainty when formal criteria and formal rights cannot be relied upon. Concretely, the more uncertain the enforcement of formal laws is - including the realisation of formal rights and entitlements and the punishment of illegal actions - the more useful and valuable it is to have large, extensive networks. This is clearly illustrated in the findings from Uganda and Tanzania where (at least until recently in the case of the latter) research

[7] This was also confirmed for the case of Nigeria in the study on social norms by (Hoffman and Patel 2017, p. 11), who found out that "the risk of a loss of status, position, access or trust within a person's reference network is a powerful incentive for most to comply with the expectations of the majority within their network."

participants related how people instrumentally build their networks, thereby increasing access to this form of social capital with the rationale that larger networks provide more security by spreading the availability of resources as widely as possible. This is justified from the perspective of service users since in both countries there was a general appreciation that it is very difficult to obtain adequate services without a personal connection to the provider. From the perspective of the service provider, being open to receiving gifts and granting personalised favours leads to success by being recommended across networks and therefore commanding a sizable client base that can provide a significant income supplement.

Thus, pragmatically, the networks represent an effective means to obtain a 'simplified' service delivery. In fact, in the case of health services, discussants agreed that the only way to speed up treatment is precisely through social networks, for instance by appealing to a relative or friend that is either a service provider or has the influence to intercede on the patient's behalf. Health workers in Kampala further explained how patients will come and give them money and understand that by doing so they have built a relationship, that they will be remembered and treated in a preferential manner going forward, which stresses the functional value ascribed to network building.

Overall, the research data from Uganda and Tanzania indicates that social networks have a significant impact on the provision of public services. As mentioned earlier, knowing that access is challenging, people prepare before going to the health facility by either gathering money or mobilising their networks. This means that people lacking connections with the relevant providers or the necessary financial means to build a network are excluded from the benefits of such informal safety nets and are particularly vulnerable to extortive bribing, low accessibility of public services and overall deficient state performance. The picture that emerges from the FGDs shows a pointedly regressive health system that, in spite of legal entitlements, actually works on the basis of personal contacts and the ability to pay, discriminating against the most vulnerable groups.

In contrast, the research findings suggest that in Rwanda the core networks are considerably smaller, circumscribed to the family and close friends. In fact, the evidence shows that effective social programmes of the state can have a meaningful impact by reducing the dependency on the social networks as coping mechanisms. In particular, the Rwandan *Ubudehe* social programme, which involves the categorisation of citizens by income level and provides targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable groups, has reduced the reliance of citizens on informal social networks by ensuring access to public services and social benefits.

Similarly, strong enforcement of punishments for corrupt behaviours curtails the ability of cultivating large network clienteles that demand prioritised service. Furthermore, the research findings suggest that in the context of Rwanda, social networks may also exacerbate risks when a member is caught engaging in corrupt transactions, with potential negative implications for the entire network. Particularly notable in this regard are the policies implemented by the Rwandan authorities that employ a naming and shaming approach whereby not only the identities of individuals accused of crimes of corruption

are published, but also the names of their parents and communities of origin, thus explicitly making the public shaming extensive to the social networks.[8]

3.2 Social networks and corruption

The research data suggests that the boundaries are extremely blurred, if not inexistent, in the conceptualisation and the practice of the separation of private and public realms. This allows the influence of the social networks to override the obligations associated with the public duty and confers a prebendal logic to the exercise of public office. Thus, in Tanzania and Uganda practices of petty corruption become normalised because the transactional logic of the social networks seamlessly penetrates the public sector to the extent that it could be said that they informally regulate the provision of public services. The generalised recognition about the efficacy of petty corruption to 'get things done' imposes informal rules that dictate the criteria on the basis of which services are provided.

As the FGDs highlight, gift-giving is widely used to establish a relation with the service provider (co-opting him or her into one's network) because the expectation of a counter-gift – in the form of a service or a favour – is inherent. Thus, the research data confirms other findings from the Literature Review, suggesting that social network members are more likely to pay a bribe (Peiffer and Rose 2014). The findings also illuminate the meaning ascribed to the bribe in these countries, which should not be necessarily understood as a one-off transaction. Bribes should rather be seen as a means to establish a relationship, leading to an on-going exchange following the logic of the social networks and the rules that bind them together. From this perspective, it is hardly surprising that bribing becomes endemic, fuelled by factors of sociality from the bottom up.

Interestingly, in Uganda and Tanzania bribing is widespread and is even informally regulated by the degree of closeness in the networks, which for instance dictates how large a bribe should be. In contrast, in Rwanda bribing is an option available only to those members that are in close contact with the civil servant. In fact, while in Tanzania and Uganda extensive networks are strongly favoured and actively built, in Rwanda the tougher law enforcement reinforces the presence of smaller cliques because there are more limited opportunities to accommodate large clienteles and because bonds of trust are even more relevant given the high costs of being caught.

[8] Several of the strategies resorted to in Tanzania and Uganda relating to the instrumental use of social connections can also be found in Rwanda, which confirms that at the baseline level the social dynamics are similar. For example, In Rwanda social networks are sometimes instrumentally constructed, especially to extend one's connections to include powerful individuals, thus, district authorities or ranking officers of law enforcement agencies sometimes obtain preferential treatment at public health facilities. These similarities in patterns of sociality allow us to make inferences about the explanatory power of the differences in formal rule enforcement and state effectiveness to account for the differences observed.

4 Automatic thinking and mental models

4.1 Narrow frames of corruption

The Literature Review (Stahl, Kassa, and Baez-Camargo 2017) informs that one of the modalities in which automatic thinking takes over the rational mind is through the power of frames, whereby our choices and behaviours are affected by the perceptions of the generalised patterns of action adopted by others around us. Furthermore, the literature on perceptions about the prevalence of corruption suggests that in highly corrupt environments, where everybody else is perceived as corrupt and where corruption is perceived to be the norm, individuals have a heightened propensity to engage in corruption. In such contexts, individuals tend to justify illicit actions by automatically presupposing that corruption 'is simply the way things are done', that 'everybody else is doing it', and that 'dishonest behaviour is necessary to get ahead' (cf. Kahan 2003; Mauro 2004; Dong, Dulleck, and Torgler 2009; Barr and Serra 2009; Kotzian 2011; Carson 2013; Pfeiffer and Rose 2014; Zaloznaya 2014; Hoffman and Patel 2017). Naturally, this may lead to large-scale collective reproduction of corruption and associated practices.

In Uganda, participants from both rural and urban areas almost unanimously agreed on the fact that corruption is virtually everywhere in their country, whereas in Tanzania, the research findings suggest that corruption and bribery are perceived as being the norm most frequently among urban research participants as compared to those from the rural area. In both countries, however, the Project found evidence of corruption being normalised in the sense that research participants were typically of the view that a person who solicits or accepts a bribe is behaving normally. Also, suggestive of the perceived institutionalisation of corruption, was the notion shared by research participants that public services cannot be accessed without recourse to either bribery or having a personal connection. In contrast, in Rwanda the research findings strongly suggest that the shared perception among citizens is that corruption in the country is not only no longer a typical occurrence but also that engaging in corrupt actions is a high-risk endeavour given the possibility of being caught and the severe punishments associated with crimes of corruption.

These differences in the beliefs about the prevalence of corruption in the three countries were captured in the survey as illustrated in Figure 2 (in section 2).

Evidence from experimental studies suggests that perceptions about modal behavioural patterns are key to understanding individual choice. Such beliefs represent key potential entry points for change because while systematic replication of behaviours normalise them, there is evidence that people update their choices when confronted with changed environments, increasingly conforming to the new norms (Fisman and Miguel 2006). The challenge, then, is to implement measures that succeed at constructing a 'new normal' as suggested by Hoffman and Patel (2017).

The Literature Review (Stahl, Kassa, and Baez-Camargo 2017) suggests that highlighting examples of good behaviours, on the one hand, and of enforcement of sanctions against the corrupt, on the other hand, can help to encourage a change in the narrow frames affecting individuals' decision-making. For instance, as Carson (2013) argued, information about the method and frequency of sanction enforcement may increase the perceived costs of engaging in corrupt behaviours. Also, there is

evidence that translating legal prescriptions into clear rules that specify duties and responsibilities can be an effective mechanism to deter corruption (ibid.).

With regard to these general considerations, the research findings illustrate how in the case of Rwanda these kinds of prescriptions can be put into practice. Particularly notable are the policies implemented by the Rwandan authorities mentioned before, which employ a highly visible 'naming and shaming' approach to anti-corruption law enforcement. This approach serves the purpose - not only of disseminating the message about effective detection and sanctioning of corrupt acts - but also incorporates additional social costs by heightening the stakes of being publicly shamed for the family and communities. Indeed, the evidence collected from the Rwandan FGDs indicates that participants were not only well aware of the consequences of engaging in acts of corruption, but also were of the opinion that Rwandan institutions are very efficient in identifying and fighting corrupt practices.

Rwanda also provides illustrative examples about the use of environmental cues to disseminate clear messages that reinforce anti-corruption policies. This approach is palpable across the country in the form of publicly displayed codes of conduct and messages reinforcing desirable and undesirable behaviours in pursuit of the public good. As the Literature Review suggested, environmental cues, understood as unspoken signals that trigger certain behaviours, can play a crucial role in either eliciting or inhibiting corrupt behaviours (Peiffer and Rose 2014; Bateson, Nettle, and Roberts 2006). In the Rwandan context, examples of such environmental cues can be found prominently displayed around the country, for instance, at the main gates of public and private institutions or at the roadside on the main road leading to the communities, as shown in the pictures below.

Source: authors' photographs

Left: The photograph of the District officer (a deputy mayor in charge of economic affairs) is attached to his door, including his name and mobile and office telephone number. The major tasks and duties of the officer are depicted opposite of this. Below, a poster of Transparency International says: 'don't shy away from pointing a finger wherever you see corruption: the law protects you'. Telephone numbers to call and report corrupt behaviour follow this.
Right: The stone photographed alongside the main Road Kigali-Butare/Huye displays the values of the Cell Kigembe in the District of Kamonyi, Gacurabwenge Sector. The values to be promoted are displayed on the left side and the values to be eradicated are displayed on the right side. The ten values promoted are: 'Rwandaness'; patriotism; integrity; work ethics and morale; fighting for dignity and self-reliance; cleanliness; courage; and work by objectives (known in the governance domain as the performance contracts)9.

[9] Many different tools of communication are used cross the country by public institutions, Districts, Sectors, Cells, schools, hospitals and clinics and other public and private institutions to display moral values promoting the fight against corruption.

4.2 Mental models about national identity, leadership and institutional trust

The research findings indicate that narrow frames regarding the perceived prevalence of corruption are reinforced by other broadly held preconceptions, or mental models. One of the relevant mental models associated with corruption encountered during the research concerns national identity and the images it conjures in the collective imagination. This insight was initially brought forward by respondents in Kampala, who provided examples of some of the expressions that are used to solicit a bribe which included the command to "act like a Ugandan." In fact, FGD participants discussed at length the meaning and connotation of being Ugandan and most of them associated 'Ugandaness' with corruption, bribery, money-drivenness, astuteness and sharp-mindedness.[10]

It should be noted that in Tanzania the evidence regarding mental models of national identity supporting narrow frames of corruption was less pronounced than in the Ugandan case. While being Tanzanian was to some extent viewed as concomitant with corruption, it was also associated with moral behaviour, entailing criteria such as "doing things that are familiar" within the communitarian setting, to be generous and to be "a good person."

However, in regard to this specific topic, evidence from Rwanda informs on the impact of policy that is reinforced by behavioural considerations. The Rwandan government has implemented programmes and policies aimed at strengthening shared mental models that promote positive control of corruption outcomes. To be sure, most of the programmes associated with the so-called home grown solutions[11] promoted by the Rwandan government communicate a strong message about social justice, accountability and integrity as key guiding values that characterise - not just the conduct of public affairs - but also the nature of the relationship between citizens and government and, ultimately, Rwandan national identity. FGD evidence suggests that emphasising integrity as a central value that guides behaviours and choices of Rwandans has had positive impacts on the manner in which citizens understand Rwandan national identity. Overall, FGD participants expressed that they feel great pride in being called Rwandans and elaborated that while "behaving like a Rwandan" in the past was associated with negative connotations, nowadays 'Rwandaness' is attached to a sense of dignity. This is the result of the local as well as international recognition about the achievements that the country has recorded since the genocide, which in turn give Rwandan people the reputation for being honest and abiding by high standards of integrity in their behaviours.

The research findings also emphasise the role of leadership in shaping mental models about what are appropriate and acceptable behaviours. As the literature indicates, shared images and ideas about social roles –including what constitutes being a 'good' politician, service provider and public official - determine how people come to expect themselves and others to behave in different situations (Kotzian 2011). In this regard, the evidence highlights that leadership has an inspirational effect on others; a "learning from above" that supports certain narratives about corruption (or anti-corruption) in relation to the perceived behaviours of the leaders. In fact, as suggested by the FGD findings, leaders constitute role models in relation to whom individuals justify and rationalise their own behaviours.

[10] Strikingly, this negative connotation is not limited to Uganda, but has become a stereotype even in neighbouring countries as recounted by one participant about an experience when travelling to buy supplies in the Democratic Republic of Congo where "they refused to sell us things [...] the moment they realised we were Ugandans, who they call Ugandis, [...] saying that we are thieves and very corrupt and shouldn't bring our corruption there."

[11] The Home Grown Solutions refer to state policies and programmes that formalise social practices rooted in Rwandan cultural traditions that promote social welfare and community development by appealing to a collective sense of responsibility, solidarity and fraternity (Gatwa forthcoming 2018).

In Uganda, research participants discussed why corrupt practices are entrenched and referred to the conspicuousness of the high-level corruption scandals that emerge on a regular basis and the involvement of prominent political figures. This was pointedly described by a Kampala service user who asked "what would you then expect from ordinary people?." Other individuals complemented this assertion by explaining that as a result of high levels of political corruption, people have the feeling that the current regime encourages individuals to try to get rich at any cost.

In Rwanda, the common narrow frame about the credibility of the regime's anti-corruption stance is often discussed by alluding to the personal integrity of President Kagame, who is regarded as an example of both austere behaviours and intransigence towards abuse of office, even from his close collaborators. The contrasting perceptions on leadership cast important lessons applicable to the current situation in Tanzania, where President Magufuli is regarded as a credible anti-corruption crusader. This is further confirmed by the responses given to a national level survey on bribery where 44% of Tanzanian respondents - who felt that corruption would decrease in the forthcoming year - opined that this is due to the President's commitment to fight corruption (EABI 2017, 30).

According to anecdotal evidence, nowadays Tanzanian public officials who cannot grant a favour or provide in the amounts expected by their networks resort to simply stating "Magufuli" to communicate the idea that under the current presidency things have changed, which is an interesting example of how people make reference to the leadership to justify their own choices and behaviours. From a behavioural perspective, the current positive outlook in Tanzania could therefore be harnessed as an opportunity to further support changes in mental models by emphasising actions undertaken by the top political leadership.[12]

Narrow frames and mental models that normalise corruption have important consequences - not only because they perpetuate practices linked to petty corruption - but also because of their impact on people's views of the state and the relevance of the formal legal framework. Some of the evidence compiled through the research shows a correlation between the perceptions about the prevalence of corruption and trust in public institutions.

Table 1: Mode comparison of selected institutions – trust in public institutions

	Rwanda	**Tanzania**	**Uganda**
Office of the President and statehouse	5 Total trust	4 High trust	1 No trust
Parliament	5 Total trust	4 High trust	2 Low trust
PCCB, Inspectorate of Government, Office of the Ombudsman	4 High trust	4 High trust	1 No trust
Healthcare providers	4 High trust	4 High trust	2 Low trust
Police	4 High trust	2 Low trust	1 No trust

[12] For example, a recent case where President Magufuli sacked one of his close associates over questionable performance could be used to model a campaign against favouritism.

As Table 1 indicates for selected public sector institutions, Ugandan respondents had the lowest levels of institutional trust, which correlates with perceptions of high levels of corruption. Rwandan respondents expressed high trust in institutions in a context associated with perceptions of low corruption and Tanzania represents an intermediate case with relatively high levels of institutional trust during a moment where perceptions about corruption levels appear to be undergoing change. These findings are aligned with those from the East Africa Bribery Index 2017 where a majority of respondents in Tanzania (74%) and Rwanda (88%) felt their governments were doing enough to fight corruption while 61% from Uganda held a contrary opinion.

5 Implications and opportunities for anti-corruption

5.1 The challenge of multiple normative frameworks

One broad topic that emerges from the research evidence refers to the coexistence of two overarching normative frameworks that generates severe challenges for anti-corruption. One the one hand, a formal, legal framework prescribes behaviours governed by adherence to principles of universalistic provision of public services and distribution of public goods on the basis of formal qualifications and entitlements. On the other hand, an informal normative system based on solidarity and reciprocity prescribes distributive decision-making on the basis of personalistic and particularised criteria.

It should be recognised that the coexistence of multiple normative frameworks is not an unusual occurrence; everyone experiences this in one way or the other. What is significant is the relative value ascribed to the informal framework when contrasted with the formal legal order and the degree to which the formal and informal rules complement or contradict each other. Thus, significant challenges arise when the normative framework prescribes different, sometimes contradictory behaviours, which means that public officials constantly find themselves in an unavoidable legal pluralism that results in continuous decision-making with double standards.

In practice, the research shows that, especially in the case of Uganda and Tanzania, the gap between these two normative standards is significant. In this sense, the evidence suggests that the loyalty towards the social network is considered to be more important than abidance to the state's rules in both countries. Furthermore, the research informs that individuals often find the legal framework to be inherently unfair, whereas the networked logic of trust-based reciprocity and moral obligation is viewed as promoting social fairness and effectively representing the foundation for the construction of social status.

These findings have several important implications. First, acknowledging the relevance of the informal normative framework helps to better understand decision-making from the perspective of the individuals involved. This means that one needs to recognise that any given action may have completely different meanings and valuations ascribed to it depending in reference to which normative framework it is being assessed. Thus, a corrupt transaction seen from the perspective of one of the frameworks may be also be regarded as upholding high levels of integrity when viewed through the lens of a different one. An illustrative example came from Tanzania where research participants described a situation in which a provider does not favour family and friends and does not accept bribes and gifts. According to the collected views, this provider would be denying his or her networks of the advantages that public sector employment offers, and would therefore be considered to be misusing their position for individual gain, which is strikingly akin to the legal definition of corruption.

Furthermore, in contexts where citizens regard the formal legal order as unfair, conventional anti-corruption interventions that place the emphasis on awareness raising on formal rights and entitlements are likely to have negligible impact. As Hoffman and Patel (2017, 23) argued "[l]aws might work effectively in shifting social norms if the legal system is perceived as fair and the enforcers of laws are seen as honest. But when laws or the legal system are not seen as fair, laws can be ineffective."

Against the backdrop of mistrust in the formal laws to obtain a just treatment, many of the informal practices documented in the research involve an underlying calculation about the fairness of any given exchange, which determines whether the conduct in question is socially acceptable or deplored. Therefore, not all practices associated with petty corruption are equally viewed and the judgement involves a determination of what is socially just. Thus, in Uganda, research participants explained that determining the amount of a bribe often involves assessing the situation of the other, for example, based on their physical appearances (what car one drives, whether the seeker is well dressed or not and so on). Also, while many opinions were collected indicating that generally speaking a corrupt transaction is socially accepted if it is meant to help the reference network or to reciprocate a favour received, there were equally numerous voices indicating that practices of corruption that are deemed to be abusive – such as extortive bribing - are socially condemned without question.

These findings open the door to thinking differently about devising anti-corruption interventions that the intended beneficiaries can better relate to. Also, as the Literature Review indicates, challenging conventional wisdom may involve putting the spotlight onto the hidden social costs of bribery and favouritism, which contradict the appearance of justice from the informal redistributive exchanges. This can be complemented by highlighting cases of tangible improvements to the welfare of the individual and core networks stemming from an effective enforcement of the law.

The discussion about the challenges posed by the existence of a significant gap between the legally prescribed and the socially accepted behaviours naturally raises the question of whether closing the gap is feasible and by which means. In this regard, the Rwandan case provides valuable insights about developing context-sensitive policy strategies that effectively work in the direction of narrowing the gap between formal and informal rules.

Especially noteworthy are the Rwandan Home Grown Solutions (HGS), which close the gap by formalising social practices rooted in Rwandan cultural traditions. This policy approach is particularly powerful in that it appeals to traditional social norms, harnessing them to prime individuals on the importance of adopting behaviours conducive to good governance outcomes and avoiding other behaviours that are detrimental to society. To be sure, some of the most visible HGSs, such as *Ubudehe, Imihigo* and *Itorero*[13] communicate a strong message about social justice, accountability and integrity as key guiding values that characterise - not just the conduct of public affairs - but also the nature of the relationship between citizens and government and, ultimately, Rwandan national identity. Therefore, official policies explicitly articulate and reinforce the development of a culture – or shared mental model – that dictates roles, behaviours and expectations that align with the promotion of good governance outcomes. As a result of these policy approaches, research evidence from Rwanda suggests that although networks still might be willing to uphold status and reputation for the individual who shares regardless of the origins of the resources, there is also recognised shame in being identified publicly as implicated in acts of corruption. This means that notwithstanding the short-term expectations of the networks, there is also increasing status and reputation associated with upholding the values of integrity associated with being a 'good' Rwandan.

This latter point is important because even the evidence from Uganda and Tanzania underscores that social status is not something inherent, it can be won or lost and, in the economy of favours, one must

[13] As mentioned before, Ubudehe is a programme of targeted social benefits and subsidies for low-income groups, while Imihigo is a performance monitoring mechanism based on traditional contracts stipulating personal commitment to achieving certain policy targets. Itorero is a permanent school for promoting the Ndumunyarwanda philosophy, which strongly emphasises the fight against corruption and the reconstruction of a moral society based on the observance of values of integrity.

continuously take action in order to improve or at the minimum maintain one's 'good' status. But while status and reputation are powerful drivers of decision-making, they are also socially constructed as individual behaviours are measured against certain standards. It is precisely these standards that can also be influenced and, as the case of Rwanda suggests, even reshaped by means of targeted behavioural interventions.

5.2 Ambivalence, the tensions of informality and the providers' dilemma

The coexistence of two distinct social and legal normative frameworks endows the actions and practices that take place at the junction where citizens interact with the state with an inherent ambivalence. This ambivalence is in part the reason why practices of petty corruption are difficult to eradicate, as appearances are not always what they seem. Thus, a bribe is easily morphed into a gift prescribed by tradition; a gift is a reward but it is simultaneously a hook; and while the network helps and supports, it also locks in.

Unravelling the complexities of navigating a context characterised by ambivalent actions is key to identifying the entry points for developing anti-corruption interventions. These interventions would not add another layer of oppressive formal constraints that will be overridden by social norms but would actually provide a different set of practical solutions that make decision making in line with control of corruption outcomes functional. The departure point is the recognition that while informal practices of petty corruption become entrenched because they are functional, the ambivalence and the double standards inherent to them also generate tensions. It is precisely those tensions that represent potential entry points to promoting positive behavioural changes and advancing anti-corruption.

An example of this is related to the significant tensions experienced by the providers of public services, as is logical given their dual roles as state actors and social agents. One of the main themes that resonated during service providers' FGDs referred to how these individuals feel burdened by the overlapping and often conflicting expectations to which they are held liable under the social norms and their legal duties and responsibilities. On the basis of the research data, it is possible to propose that the tensions are directly related to the relative stringency with which the respective sets of rules are enforced.

Thus, the Rwandan providers, while undoubtedly experiencing social pressures,[14] nevertheless have a very limited ability to deliver particularistic favours given the harsh legal punishments they would receive for such corrupt offences. The result is that the cliques they are able to sustain are much smaller and the providers often have to go to great lengths and incur substantial personal effort to tend to their social obligations. For instance, Rwandan health workers often treat family and close friends outside of their regular working hours in order to avoid disturbing their official duties. Also, the descriptions of how bribing occurs that were recounted by Rwandan research participants involved substantial efforts to ensure a high degree of secrecy and concealment, often only possible where high levels of interpersonal trust can be ensured (which also explains the reduced size of the cliques).

In Tanzania, service providers discussed the increased constraints they feel subjected to under a changing work environment characterised by a greater likelihood of detection and punishment of corrupt behaviours. A common grievance expressed by this group was the lack of awareness on the

[14] A comment made during the FGDs by one Rwandan service provider is indicative of the tensions between work and family responsibilities when he asked, "[what] else can you do if you don't serve [your] family members?"

part of the social networks about the constraints they face, whereby they often feel unfairly judged and even fearful as recounted by a rural service provider, who said that nowadays it cannot be discounted that a person offering a bribe might be an official from the PCCB.

Interestingly, Ugandan service providers' accounts suggest they perceive the enforcement of legal punishment as less of a constraint than is the case in the other two countries. Nevertheless, there were still significant tensions to be underscored as a result of the relatively more intensive recourse to the transactional practices of the social networks. Ugandan service providers expressed feeling overwhelmed by the social expectations they are subject to and which increase in direct relation to their success in building expansive networks. Thus, a "successful" provider (who get things done at reasonable rates) gets recommended across social networks, which means the growing income supplement that is obtained is nonetheless associated with an increased number of clients, all of whom demand and expect privileged treatment.

These tensions indicate that, across the three countries, from the providers' perspective, the social norms can differ from the individual preferences depending on different factual situations, with the result that individuals sometimes decide to deviate from the social norms. Therefore, an important implication of the research findings is that informal practices of the networks become entrenched because they are functional but changes in the context that decrease the effectiveness of the informal practices or render them too onerous will likely give rise to changes in behaviours. This appears to be the case for example when legal constraints are more strictly enforced but it is conceivable that other kinds of bottom-up changes (such as advocated by proponents of social accountability interventions) could also become contributory factors to stimulate a shift in the accepted social norms.

5.3 Considerations for practitioners and policy makers

The evidence from the research indicates that social norms, narrow frames and mental models play a substantial role in fuelling and perpetuating practices linked to petty corruption. Recognising the role played by behavioural factors in shaping decision-making illuminates key contextual conditions that impede the effectiveness of conventional, non-contextualised anti-corruption interventions. Thus, for example, awareness raising campaigns that spread the message that those engaging in corruption (whether offering or soliciting a bribe) are guilty and liable to criminal prosecution, leave aside the fact that for many people corruption is seen as a necessary evil or as the only feasible solution to a problem. Similarly, interventions focused on informing citizens of their legal rights and entitlements are bound to fail when entitlements rarely materialise and when the law is regarded as unfair. While these types of interventions are not inadequate per se, the research findings point to topics that could be targeted by means of behavioural interventions to align more closely with the prevailing conditions in each context and with the experiences and beliefs of the intended beneficiaries.

At a general level, the research findings indicate that the relative functionality of social norms may change in response to exogenous changes. This was shown by the experiences shared by Tanzanian service providers who recounted how the perceived environment where laws and anti-corruption prescriptions are more strongly enforced has meant that they have to go back and explain to their respective networks that things do not function in the same manner as in the past. While it is still too early to make any conclusive judgement, this could indicate that at the grassroots Tanzania is transiting from a situation where extensive social networks sustain a high incidence of particularistic transactions in public service delivery (as is the case in Uganda) to one where core networks are more bounded and the prevalence of petty corruption decreases.

The discussion on the coexistence of formal and informal normative frameworks suggests the pertinence of targeting efforts to address the situation of service providers through the development of behavioural anti-corruption interventions that account for the influence of sociality factors. Taking into account the evidence uncovered by the research about the tensions they encounter due to the conflict between their official and social duties, the goal would be to devise anti-corruption approaches that actually provide positive, functional, alternatives to engaging in practices of bribing and favouritism while addressing the social context. One of several possible entry points for developing such approaches would be to align financial and other incentives. This could involve finding creative ways to reward honest behaviour and punish corrupt actions in a manner such that the benefits and costs clearly spill over to the social networks. In other words, the challenge is to ensure that the benefits of better service provision and of abstaining from soliciting bribes and yielding to favouritism are clearly accrued by the service providers and their social networks, thereby making anti-corruption functional to the interests of the group.

A holistic approach would also contemplate harnessing the transformative potential of social networks to maximise the impact of development interventions. Such considerations have already been tested and been proven successful in the field of public health. Kim et al. (2015) have provided strong evidence about how health interventions have most impact when delivered through the social networks. According to these authors, advances in understanding the structure and function of social networks have opened new frontiers for interventions to improve the health of individuals and populations. In particular, "[b]ecause knowledge and behaviour can spread across interpersonal ties, and because the networks formed by such ties tend to amplify this spread, changes in one person's behaviour can cascade out across a social network, producing behavioural changes in other people in the population at- large." (ibid., p. 145).

Furthermore, as the Literature Review of the relative effectiveness of anti-corruption interventions suggests, policies and strategies that question commonly held beliefs work well to address narrow frames and shifting mental models (Stahl et al., 2017). In this regard, an effective way to challenge conventional wisdom is by disseminating stories and illustrative examples of how corruption hurts individuals and families and by sharing contradicting notions that the corrupt are successful in life. For instance, there is increasing evidence about the effectiveness of so-called "edutainment" campaigns in disseminating and convincingly communicating positive messages via soap operas and other variations of storytelling where positive role models are reinforced (see for example Hoffman and Patel 2017, 30). This could include shedding light on the plight of positive deviants that pay a high price for not getting involved in corruption. These individuals should be recognised to encourage and demonstrate that their uprightness is appreciated and not in vain.

Another key consideration is that, in order to promote more effective and sustainable anti-corruption approaches, practitioners need to address the functionality of the practices of petty corruption. The findings from Tanzania and Uganda indicate that, although people rationally understand the negative consequences of corruption, they nonetheless resort to bribing and gift-giving to expand their networks instrumentally due to the failure of the state to provide a reliable and effective social safety net. The Rwandan case gives important insights into this. The improvement of service delivery and state support for vulnerable groups is essential to substitute for the pooling and support functions played by the social networks. More precisely, the evidence from Rwanda strongly indicates how, when access to health treatment is adequate and reliable, there is a significantly reduced drive to resort to an informal connection or a bribe by service seekers.

This last point links to another central inference of the study underscoring the limitations of bottom-up anti-corruption approaches. It is meaningful that, socially and culturally speaking, the three case study countries share similar baselines. Against this background, the research evidence supports the broader findings from the literature, which have found that while there seems to be an association between corruption and certain cultures, corruption norms may not be intrinsic in a culture but rather incentive-driven (Banuri and Eckel 2015). Concretely, the literature points to the effect of short-term punishment in influencing behavioural patterns and overriding cultural traits (Yap 2013).

Indeed, the FGDs findings stress the fact that social behaviour cannot be merely derived form social norms and moral rules but rather call for individual valuation and appraisal of existing conditions prevailing in each particular context. This means that formal rules and law enforcement matter a lot. Again, the case of Rwanda sends this message strongly as the evidence illustrates that the behavioural aspects incorporated into formal social and law enforcement policies are effective to the extent that they complement and reinforce a decisive top-down commitment to impose sanctions to punish corrupt behaviours.

Therefore, behavioural interventions without substantive reforms and improvements in law enforcement are likely to have very limited impact. The evidence for this can be appreciated in the cases of Rwanda and (increasingly) Tanzania, whereas the lack of it in Uganda is an essential element that enables the network dynamics to prevail over considerations for greater adherence to formal rules.

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