The Centre for Democratic Institutions

Corruption and Anti-Corruption Course
National Centre for Development Studies, ANU

The National Centre for Development Studies (NCDS) sixth annual Corruption and Anti-Corruption course was held from 25 August to 12 September, 2003. This course was conducted in association with the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) with support from CDI. Dr Peter Lamour of the Asia Pacific School of Economics and Governance at the ANU directed the course. The aim was to develop an understanding of the relationship between corruption, liberalisation and good governance. Different types of corruption were examined and practical strategies for investigation and prevention were developed. The course was conducted in three parts: the first week was held at the ANU, the second week at the ICAC in Sydney and the third week at the ANU.

The course was enhanced by the participation of several groups including Masters students from the ANU, Professional Short Course Students sponsored by CDI, the Commonwealth Secretariat and participants from the New South Wales Public Sector, sponsored by the ICAC.

List of Participants

CDI sponsored the attendance of six officers from ombudsmen offices in the Pacific region. Participants were:

1. Mr. John Smith Pitabelama, Ombudsman, Office of the Ombudsman, Solomon Islands
2. Ms. Ethel Frances Puia, Training Officer of the Higher Education EU-Stabex PIU, School of Finance and Administration, Ministry of Education, Solomon Islands
3. Mr. Emmanuel Kouhota, Chairman of the Leadership Code, Office of the Prime Minister, Solomon Islands
4. Mr. John Nero, Deputy Director Operations, Ombudsman Commission of Papua New Guinea
5. Ms. Marama Disiola Tubuna, Legal Officer, Office of the Ombudsman, Fiji
6. Mr. Alain Molgos, Investigator, Office of the Ombudsman, Vanuatu

Course Overview

The core reading material for the course was Corruption and Anti Corruption edited by Peter Larmour and Nick Wolanin (2001). One of the chapters in this book is Zoe
Pearson’s, ‘An international human rights approach to corruption’ originally commissioned as a CDI research paper. This paper can be found on CDI’s website: http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au/research_publications/research_HumanRightsandCorruption.htm

The course was opened with an inspiring presentation by Marie Noelle Ferrieux Patterson, formerly Ombudsman Commissioner in Vanuatu, and now chair of the Vanuatu chapter of Transparency International. The first week included one day workshops by Professor Barry Hindess, on what counted as ‘corruption’, and Dr John Uhr on the relationship between anti corruption and the promotion of public sector ethics. On the final day, Roland Rich commented on the various project proposals designed by participants.

The class then moved to Sydney and ICAC officers gave presentations on techniques of investigation and prevention. The first day introduced the ICAC and its powers, functions and history. The final day in Sydney was a panel discussion featuring officials from NSW agencies that had experienced ICAC investigations. The agencies reflected on what they had learned from the investigations and what had happened since.

In the third week the course participants divided into groups to design and present anti corruption plans relevant to their country or agency. The Masters and short course students were also given a briefing by officials of the federal parliament on the way the executive is made accountable through parliamentary questions and the work of the Public Accounts Committee. The New South Wales participants present their proposals to the ICAC in Sydney on 25 September.

Participants agreed that they had been energised by the course to redouble their efforts to tackle corruption in their home countries. They found the course balance between theory and practice to be particularly helpful.

Countries and Agencies Project Proposals

International participants also made presentations at the end of the course on anti-corruption projects that could be implemented by their own institutions. The project proposals were diverse and ranged from specific issues to the more general institutional strengthening projects. Among the specific issues were ideas on how to make the Suva water supply more efficient and discourage collusion that led to contractors receiving considerable benefits to cart water by truck. There was a discussion of the management of the court system in Fiji in particular the way court clerks manipulate the system to benefit certain parties. In both cases key steps were in systematically ensuring greater transparency and improving enforcement. Another idea was the establishment of public complaints processes.

The Solomon Islands delegation concentrated on ways to strengthen services delivery by the Ombudsman office. One key means was to work more closely with the Leadership Code Commissioner where this was appropriate. Other ideas were also developed based on the examples provided throughout the course.
Other specific project proposals concerned ways and means of improving the system of demobilisation in Cambodia. As part of the political compromise to conclude the country’s civil war was an agreement to include fighters from all the factions in the new national armed forces. This was now a considerable burden to the nation as the size of the armed forces was out of proportion to Cambodia’s needs. Open and transparent systems vetted by parliament and civil society were the key requirement. The aid donors also had an important role to play in the vetting process.

Another specific presentation dealt with the management of the Education Department in the Philippines. The Department consumed a massive proportion of the state budget and there were thus considerable public benefits in improving its performance. The key problem was that a culture of corruption had grown in this sector whereby many personnel decisions were taken not on the basis of meritocracy or efficiency but because a bribe had been paid. Questions of employment, transfer and promotion were now routinely subject to bribery. The result was low quality education. Whistleblower protection was seen as a key idea to help reverse this trend.

Some of the more general project proposals concerned issues of public education on how to strengthen public resistance to corruption and how to strengthen investigative machinery, codes of conduct and audit processes.

Course Program

Week One – ANU
University House

MONDAY 25 AUGUST
9.00-10.15  Introductions
10.15 coffee, formal opening
11.00-1.00  Theory and Practice in Preventing Corruption
by Peter Larmour
2.00-3.30  Keynote Speaker: Marie-Noelle Ferrieux Patteson
Former Ombudsman Commissioner, Vanuatu

TUESDAY 26 AUGUST
9.00-1.00  Sharing National Experiences
2.00-5.00  Sharing National Experiences

WEDNESDAY 27 AUGUST
9.00 –10.00 Identification of topics for prevention proposals
10.00 –12.00 Academic Skills Workshop on reaction papers
2.00-4.30  What is Corruption?
by Barry Hindess
4.30 – 5.00  Round Up

THURSDAY 28 AUGUST
9.00-1.00  What is Corruption?
by Barry Hindess
2.00-4.30  Corruption and Public Service Ethics
by John Uhr
4.30 – 5.00  Round Up

FRIDAY 29 AUGUST
9.00-1.00  Corruption and Public Sector Ethics
by John Uhr
2.00-4.0  Orientation to next week

Week Two – ICAC
Wesley Centre in Sydney

MONDAY 1 SEPT
7.30-11.00  Travel to Sydney
2.00-4.0  Introduction to ICAC
  Presentations by: Deputy Commissioner, Executive Directors
4.30-5.00  Roundup

TUESDAY 2 SEPT
9.00-12.00  Investigation
  by Mike Outram and Ian Bowyer
1.30-4.30  Investigation
  by Mike Outram and Ian Bowyer
4.30-5.00  Roundup

WEDNESDAY 3 SEPT
9.00-12.00  Corruption Prevention – Theory and Practice
  by Vicki Klum and Jane Coulter
1.30-4.30  Corruption Prevention – Identifying Key Issues, Case Study
  by Vicki Klum and Jane Coulter
4.30-5.00  Roundup

THURSDAY 4 SEPT
9:00-12:00  Additional Investigation Module
  by Mike Outram and Ian Bowyer
1.30-4.30  Additional Corruption Prevention Module
  – DIY Corruption Resistance
  by Vicki Klum and Jane Coulter
4.30-5.00  Roundup

FRIDAY 5 SEPT
9.00-12.30  Panel Session “Corruption Prevention in Action” Guest Speakers and Panel Discussion chaired by Grant Poulton.

Return to Canberra
Week Three – ANU  
Crawford Building and University House, ANU

| MONDAY 8 SEPT | 9.00-12.00 | What have we learned from the Sydney visit?  
|              | 2.00-5.00  | Transfer, Implementation and Evaluation of issues  
|              |            | Groups Prepare the Prevention Proposals  
|              |            | 1:1 Academic skills consultations on reaction papers  
| TUESDAY 9 SEPT | 9.00-1.0 | Accountability Seminar at the Commonwealth Parliament  
|              | 2.00-5.00  | Groups Prepare Prevention Proposals  
|              | 5.00       | Deadline for reaction papers  
| WEDNESDAY 10 SEPT | 9.00 –12.00 | Complete written proposal, submit by  
|                | 12.00-1.00 | Group academic skills advice available  
|                | 1.00-3.00  | Workshop on written proposals  
|                |            | 1: group Feedback on written Proposals from Peter  
|                | 3.30 – 5.00 | Presentation Skills Seminar  
| THURSDAY 11 SEPT | 9.00-12.00  | Preparation of presentations (Power Point or other methods)  
|                | 2.00-5.00  | Presentation of Proposals to group  
|                |            | Peer Review by audience  
|                |            | Comments from Roland Rich  
|                | 7.00-10.00 | Farewell Dinner at University House Scarfe Room  
| FRIDAY 12 SEPT |            | Proposals revised and submitted in light of peer review for assessment by Peter  