Spotlight on Knowledge

ELLA Area: Governance

ELLA Theme: Transparency and Access to Information

ELLA
Evidence and lessons
from Latin America

SPOTLIGHT ON PUBLICATIONS:
PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND DISCLOSURE OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS' PERSONAL ASSETS

Latin American countries - from Argentina, Brazil and Chile, to Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama and Peru - have aimed to tackle corruption by improving transparency and access to information in areas typically prone to corruption, such as public procurement. They have also increased transparency of government officials' personal assets as a strategy for detecting and preventing illicit enrichment. The following selection of publications showcases how public officials and civil society organisations in Latin America have dealt with the challenges of opening public procurement procedures and public officials' personal assets to citizen scrutiny. These publications could be useful for those in other regions who are looking to tackle corruption by improving transparency and access to information in these two key areas.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

▶ Accountability in Public Expenditures in Latin America and the Caribbean: Revitalizing Reforms in Financial Management and Procurement

This publication studies the different institutional arrangements and policy choices related to financial management and public procurement in Latin American countries, including Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Honduras, Panama and Peru. The book's first section describes the diverse contexts for public financial management in the region and explains recent developments in accounting practices. The second section analyses the status of public procurement in Latin America, the legal and regulatory frameworks, and the independent oversight systems for monitoring compliance. In the final section, the authors describe the drivers and results of financial management reforms, and the challenges and opportunities of developing transparent and efficient procurement systems. Overall, this publication provides an insider's view of public procurement in Latin America, and will therefore be useful to public officials in charge of designing and implementing public procurement systems in other contexts.

Full Citation: Ladipo, O. *et al.* 2009. *Accountability in Public Expenditures in Latin America and the Caribbean: Revitalizing Reforms in Financial Management and Procurement*. World Bank, Washington, DC.

Bribery in Public Procurement

This OECD publication is the result of a collaboration between experts from 12 countries, including Mexico and Argentina. It analyses corruption patterns and actors, as well as the measures that are available to procurement administrators, law enforcement agents and civil society to prevent, detect and sanction bribery. The publication considers using transparency in public sector procedures and personal asset declarations as a preventive tool, and that these types of transparency initiatives represent some of the best practices in procurement. The publication provides a potentially useful tool for Sub-Saharan African and South Asian government and civil society actors, illustrating its arguments with ten studies of bribery in public procurement which could apply to a variety of other contexts.

Full Citation: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2007. *Bribery in Public Procurement: Methods, Actors and Counter-Measures*. OECD Publishing, Paris.

Handbook on Transparency and Social Oversight in Public Procurement

This handbook focuses on the role of civil society in conducting oversight of public procurement in Latin America. In particular, it describes the social oversight processes of Poder Ciudadano, the Argentinean chapter of Transparency International. It begins by explaining the principles that govern public procurement, then describes the steps that must be taken by authorities during procurement processes and the institutions that must be involved. Particularly relevant is the handbook's presentation of other social oversight experiences from Colombia, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico, all of which will likely be useful for civil society organisations in other regions.

Full Citation: Arenoso, F. 2006. *Manual de Transparencia y Control Social en las Contrataciones Públicas (Handbook on Transparency and Social Oversight in Public Procurement)*. Fundación Poder Ciudadano, Buenos Aires.

Integrity in Public Procurement: Good Practice from A to Z

This OECD publication documents good practices that have been successful in improving integrity in public procurement. They include experiences such as e-auctioning and risk mapping in Brazil, and social witnesses in Mexico, a programme where citizens monitor the public procurement process. It focuses on OECD countries, including experiences from Latin American countries like Chile and Mexico, as well as Brazil. The publication also explores the main challenges of improving integrity in procurement and describes some emerging trends in procurement practices. It will likely be of use to public officials at the national and local level interested in using transparency in procurement practices to reduce corruption.

Full Citation: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2007. *Integrity in Public Procurement: Good Practice from A to Z*. OECD, Paris.

Multilateral Development Bank: International Survey of E-procurement Systems

This report presents the results of an international survey of the e-procurement systems of fourteen countries, including four from Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico. The procurement systems covered varied in terms of the size of government spending that goes through the procurement system, degree of integration of the systems and extent of centralized management of procurement. This report offers an interesting tool for actors in other regions, since it was designed to provide information on how the studied countries have approached e-government issues, and how they have dealt with implementing the three existing kinds of procurement systems: e-tendering, e-reverse auctioning and e-purchasing.

Full Citation: Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank, Curtin University of Technology and Business School. 2007. *Multilateral Development Bank: International Survey of E-procurement Systems*. New South Wales.

[Public Procurement Reform in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

This World Bank publication argues that since governments are now complex service organisations and major economic players, they need to implement procurement systems that respond to this new role. In particular, this publication shows how Latin American countries are grappling with these new complexities, studies alternatives that are available, and considers whether the recommendations of international agencies about procurement are being adapted to the current needs of governments. Public officials and legislators or members of international agencies in charge of implementing and adopting procurement reform might find the Latin American experiences described in this publication useful.

Full Citation: Schapper, P., Veiga, M. 2011. *Public Procurement Reform in Latin America and the Caribbean.* World Bank, Washington, DC.

DISCLOSING PUBLIC OFFICIALS' PERSONAL ASSETS

[Financial Statements and Declarations of Conflict of Interest in the Congresses of Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency](#)

This report from the [Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency](#) (*Red Latinoamericana por la Transparencia Legislativa*) analyses how legislators' personal assets are disclosed in five countries: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. It summarizes, in a very effective way, the common features and differences between the different disclosure systems of these countries' legislative branches. Highlighting good practices in assets disclosure legislation, this report offers an interesting tool for people working on issues related to public officials' disclosure of personal assets.

Full Citation: Red Latinoamericana por la Transparencia Legislativa (The Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency). 2001. *Financial Statements and Declarations of Conflict of Interest in the Congresses of Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency.* Red Latinoamericana por la Transparencia Legislativa.

[Income and Assets Declarations: Issues to consider in developing a disclosure regime](#)

This Issue paper by [U4](#), an anti-corruption resource centre, describes questions policymakers should consider when designing a financial disclosure law. It weighs the advantages and disadvantages of personal asset disclosure and whether disclosure should be public. The paper also describes good practice in implementing and managing a disclosure law. It contains, as well, a typology of personal asset disclosure in different World Bank member countries, including several Latin American states. This publication is a useful resource for those from other regions engaged in approving, modifying or evaluating laws on disclosure of public officials' personal assets.

Full Citation: Messick, R. 2009. *Income and Assets Declarations: Issues to Consider in Developing a Disclosure Regime.* U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, U4 Issue 6, Norway.

Income and Asset Declarations: Tools and Trade-offs

This World Bank and Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative publication explains how to design and implement an effective and efficient income and assets disclosure system. First, it outlines considerations that policy makers and practitioners should take into account when designing asset disclosure systems. Then, it studies 74 countries' legal frameworks related to asset disclosure, highlighting good practice. Finally, this paper takes an in-depth look at the asset disclosure systems of 8 countries', including some from Latin America, highlighting their design features and implementation approaches. This publication could be useful for agencies responsible for implementing assets disclosure systems, as well as legislators, policymakers and civil society organisations aiming to increase accountability of public officials.

Full Citation: Burdescu, R. *et al*. 2009. *Income and Asset Declarations: Tools and Trade-offs*. World Bank, Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), Washington, DC.

Regional Index of Parliamentary Transparency

This report describes the creation and application of a parliamentary transparency index in Argentina, Chile and Guatemala. The variables studied in the index include electronic disclosure of legislators' and Congressional administrative officials' personal assets and salaries and disclosure of Congress' public procurements. The report shows how the index project led to establishing a standard of transparency, access to information and accountability in the Congresses of the different countries studied, and how there are now efforts to improve and develop the index for use in other parts of the world. The report starts with a background study of the three countries covered, then describes the objectives of the index, its methodology and variables used, and its application and results. This publication might be of use to civil society organisations or academics in other regions interested in measuring transparency and accountability in the legislative branch.

Full Citation: National Endowment for Democracy, Participa Corporación, Poder Ciudadano, Acción Ciudadana. 2008. *Regional Index of Parliamentary Transparency*. Santiago de Chile.

CONTACT FUNDAR

To learn more about these publications or about using transparency to reduce corruption in Latin America, contact Janet Oropeza Eng, ELLA Project Coordinator, at janet@fundar.org.mx.

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To learn more about transparency and corruption in the region, read the ELLA Brief: Fighting Corruption by Improving Transparency and Access to Information. To learn more about other Transparency and Access to Information issues in Latin America, read the ELLA Guide, which has a full list of knowledge materials on this theme. To learn more about other ELLA Development issues, browse other ELLA Themes.