

Corruption in Humanitarian Assistance

Why focus on corruption in relief

- Large scale of relief spending
- Relief is delivered in difficult environments
- Funds for relief depend on public trust
- Literally – stealing from starving

Why is it ignored?

- Fears of alienating public support
- Good motives a sufficient guard
- Assumption that corruption is someone else's problem

Context of Aid

- Aid providers are in a powerful position in providing relief due to the particular vulnerability of disaster affected populations
- Emergencies also have a set of features which may facilitate corruption – lots of money, pressure to do things quickly.
- Opaque, chaotic, alien, western

What are the key risks?

- Follow the money –procurement, transport, food aid, high value commodities
- Follow where power is exercised – targeting, registration, recruitment

Risks

- Procurement, transport – bribes during tendering, re-sale
- Targeting – bribes to get on list
- Partners – bribes to get the contract
- Recruitment – cronyism, bribes, ghosts, re-circulation of corrupt staff

Minimising Corruption Risks

- **Breaking the silence**
- **Investment in capabilities to minimise risk – capacity for risk assessment, financial safeguards, policies and systems**
- **Tackling perceptions of aid agencies as outsiders and sometimes ‘rich and arrogant’**
- **Need for downwards accountability, transparency and participation**

A beneficiary who knows what they are meant to receive, from which organisation and can complain to an independent body if they don't get it

More information at:

<http://www.odi.org.uk/hpg/corruption.html>

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