Working Paper

CORRUPTION, JUSTICE AND LEGITIMACY PROGRAM

APRIL 2024

Common Patterns: A Fast Forward Tool for Systemic Corruption Analysis

besa

Common Patterns: A Fast Forward Tool for Systemic Corruption Analysis

Working Paper

Peter Woodrow, Senior Advisor

Corruption, Justice and Legitimacy Program

a besa global program

corruptionjusticeandlegitimacy.org

connect@besaglobal.ca

Corruption in Fragile States Blog

Suggested Citation

Peter Woodrow. *Common Patterns: A Fast Forward Tool for Systemic Corruption Analysis.* Working Paper, Corruption, Justice and Legitimacy Program. Calgary: Besa Global, 2024. http://corruptionjusticeandlegitimacy.org/common-systems-wp.

The Corruption, Justice and Legitimacy Program @ Besa Global

The **Corruption, Justice and Legitimacy Program (CJL)** is a research-to-practice initiative committed to improving the impact of anti-corruption programming in contexts of endemic corruption. We have pioneered a systems-based corruption analysis methodology that identifies drivers and enablers of corrupt practices in order to inform strategic programming decisions. Integral to CJL's approach is the inclusion of social norms, a critical determinant of behavior. Our research shows how norms drive corrupt practices and inhibit anti-corruption efforts, especially in contexts of fragility and conflict. Key to improving effectiveness and our commitment to 'do no harm' is developing processes to adapt anti-corruption programs to the realities of fragile and conflict affected states. Advances in our work can be found on the **Corruption in Fragile States Blog**.

CJL is housed at **Besa Global**, an innovator and convener in the corruption and conflict space. As a thought leader, Besa Global works with social change partners to make strategic decisions to maximize their impact.

This **Working Paper** is part of the Corruption, Justice and Legitimacy (CJL) Program's "Corruption as a System Project," which offers technical assistance to implementers and donors as they integrate corruption analysis into their program development or evaluation processes. Working Papers are CJL's way of sharing initial findings that are substantial and worthy of review but still open to evolution and improvement through scrutiny from the community of practice.

Table of Contents

Introduction

This Working Paper supports the use of systems thinking as a primary tool for corruption analysis in situations of endemic corruption. Systems thinking looks at the world as a series of interacting factors that create and maintain positive or negative dynamics. Endemic corruption is a complex adaptive system that represents a persistent negative dynamic.[1] Therefore, it is best understood through a systems thinking lens. The CJL program has been using causal loop mapping, a key systems thinking tool, as one of our main ways to conduct corruption analysis.

The paper explores the potential for using generic systems maps that represent "common patterns" of corruption as a way to fast forward the process of systems analysis in order to move on to the design of anti-corruption interventions. This is not a step-by-step manual for systems mapping, although excellent manuals do exist.[2] However, it does place the use of Common Patterns in context and explores how to integrate the Common Patterns into corruption analysis.

I. Corruption Analysis: First Step in Anti-Corruption Programming

Corruption analysis is a necessary first step in developing effective anti-corruption programming. Logically, diagnosis must precede treatment. If we lack a thorough understanding of the problem, we might apply easy fixes that turn out to be ineffective at best and create unintended harm at worst.

Classic or conventional anti-corruption approaches—such as prevent, detect, investigate and sanction—were built on Western conceptions of a social contract, a functioning bureaucracy, and effective rule of law. When we apply those approaches to contexts of endemic corruption, they do not achieve results because, alone, they are ill fit for purpose. There are no recipes for what to do in these contexts because each situation reveals its own interplay of actors, power, influences and institutions. These dynamics must be explored to identify where the leverage points for change might lie.

> **The purpose of corruption analysis is to identify how corruption functions, and, most importantly, the drivers, enablers and actors that make up that system.**

Corruption analysis is a process that seeks to identify the drivers and enablers of corruption, the purpose of the system the corruption is embedded within, who is involved, and what power and interests they have. A **driver** is a factor that causes a person to engage in corrupt behavior, while an **enabler** is a factor in the situation that allows the corrupt action to occur. Corruption analysis is the first step in an adaptive management project cycle that starts with strategic program design and continues with

complexity-informed monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Unlike conventional risk assessments, corruption analysis focuses on understanding why corruption happens, rather than identifying areas where it might be likely to happen.

Systems Thinking Enables Useful Corruption Analysis

Our team at the Corruption, Justice and Legitimacy Program (CJL) has, for over ten years, been using **systems thinking tools**, in conjunction with stakeholder analysis, as our primary way of understanding corruption dynamics[3] and its role in undermining justice, peace and development. We turned to systems thinking to address the frequent lack of corruption analysis, which we saw as a significant contributor to the meager results of much anti-corruption programming. Many practitioners skip *any* form of corruption analysis and proceed directly to application of programming often based on 'best practices' from non-endemically corrupt contexts.

Those who do engage in analysis often generate lists of causes of corruption or "gaps" in enforcement and other arenas without showing how those different factors interact to perpetuate corrupt practices. For example, lack of a whistleblower protection law might be identified as a gap. Therefore, the obvious solution—in this mindset—is to pass a whistleblower protection provision. That solution fails to consider other factors that contribute to the reluctance of citizens to step forward to identify corruption, including social norms that might frown on reporting corruption, or known examples of extreme retribution against people who did blow the whistle. Is the problem really about the lack of a law or is it more about the capacity to provide protection for whistleblowers?

Systems thinking allows us to see corruption as a collection of interacting parts, rather than unconnected factors, and to understand the nature of the interconnections and processes of feedback. Systems "maps" can show how the elements—such as greed, inconsistently applied rule of law, financial stress, social pressure and multiple other elements—interact with each other to create a robust, resilient and adaptive system. In contexts of endemic corruption, where corruption is systemic, rather than isolated acts by bad actors, this is very important, because actions in one part of the system may cause unexpected reactions in another area. Or anti-corruption intervention may meet resistance that could be anticipated through a systemic analysis.

> **Understanding how and why corruption is institutionalized and resistant to change is key to identifying where the opportunities for action lie and designing effective anti-corruption programs.**

The systems thinking field has many different tools. CJL's analyses have used causal loop diagramming, also known as system mapping, as the primary way to understand endemic corruption systemically. **Mapping is a way to analyze and present what drives and enables corrupt practices within a sector in a manner that promotes action.**

Causal loop diagrams show the interactions among key factors that **drive** and **enable** corrupt practices, with a focus on illuminating feedback loops among them. The diagrams depict the causal relationships among factors in the system. This includes reinforcing dynamics, where an increase in one factor leads to an increase in another, or counteracting dynamics, where one factor's increase leads to a decrease in the other. From these, reinforcing loops (vicious or virtuous cycles) or balancing (stabilizing or status quo) dynamics are mapped. Visually depicting corruption as a systems map allows teams to generate a common understanding of the issue, identify possible points of intervention, and hypothesize potential positive and negative consequences of programming.

Systems Maps of Corruption: We have numerous examples of systems analysis of corruption ranging from its role in natural resource management in the Philippines to corruption in criminal justice in Central African Republic. Full reports are available on the CJL website.

Most maps of corrupt systems involve multiple interconnected reinforcing and balancing loops. The example in Figure 1 is just one set of many loops in a larger map that shows how corruption functions in the criminal justice system (CJS) in the Central African Republic (CAR).[4]

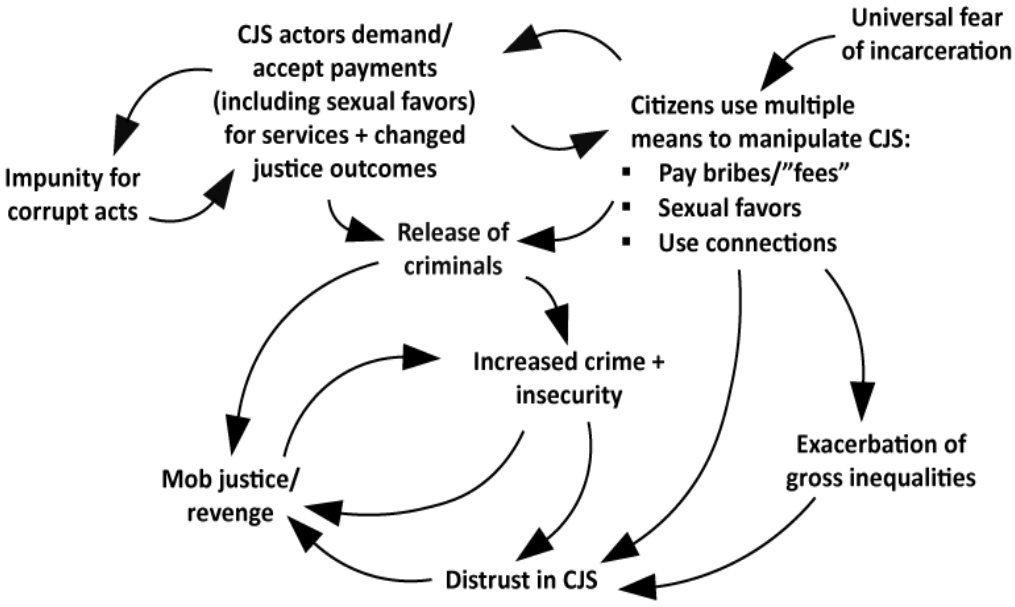


Figure 1: Corruption in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) of the Central African Republic

This partial systems map shows the interaction between citizens and the officials involved in the criminal justice system (CJS) of the CAR. When someone is arrested, regardless of their guilt or innocence, their family and friends become desperate to secure their release, due to the dire conditions of the jails. Therefore, they use whatever means they can to get them out, including bribes, sexual favors, or other means of influence, or they acquiesce to extortion demands of CJS officials. Once some form of

payment is made, officials respond by releasing those detained, sometimes including actual criminals, which then amplifies criminality and insecurity. Over time, this erodes public trust in the CJS and leads to citizens taking justice into their own hands, further diminishing security. Meanwhile, only those families/friends with resources are able to pay or exert influence, while the poorer members of society will suffer the consequences of incarceration, amplifying inequalities in the society, also eroding trust in the CJS.

Factors Need Actors: Incorporating Stakeholder Analysis and Theory of Change Thinking

Systems mapping is not the only analytical tool that we use in a complete corruption analysis. We combine it with **stakeholder analysis** to determine how the factors in the systems map interact with the key actors. Understanding the motivations, incentives, relationships and sources of power and influence of the key actors provides insights into where change might be feasible. This is particularly important as we delve into how powerful social norms influence behaviors.[5]

For more on how we conduct a stakeholders analysis, check out Understanding Actors: Stakeholder Analysis for Fighting Corruption in Contexts of Endemic Corruption and Conflict.

Based on a stakeholder analysis, the key actors can also be inserted into the systems map to indicate which groups would need to be engaged in any process of change. The map below in Figure 2 illustrates this by adding actors to Figure 1 on CAR.

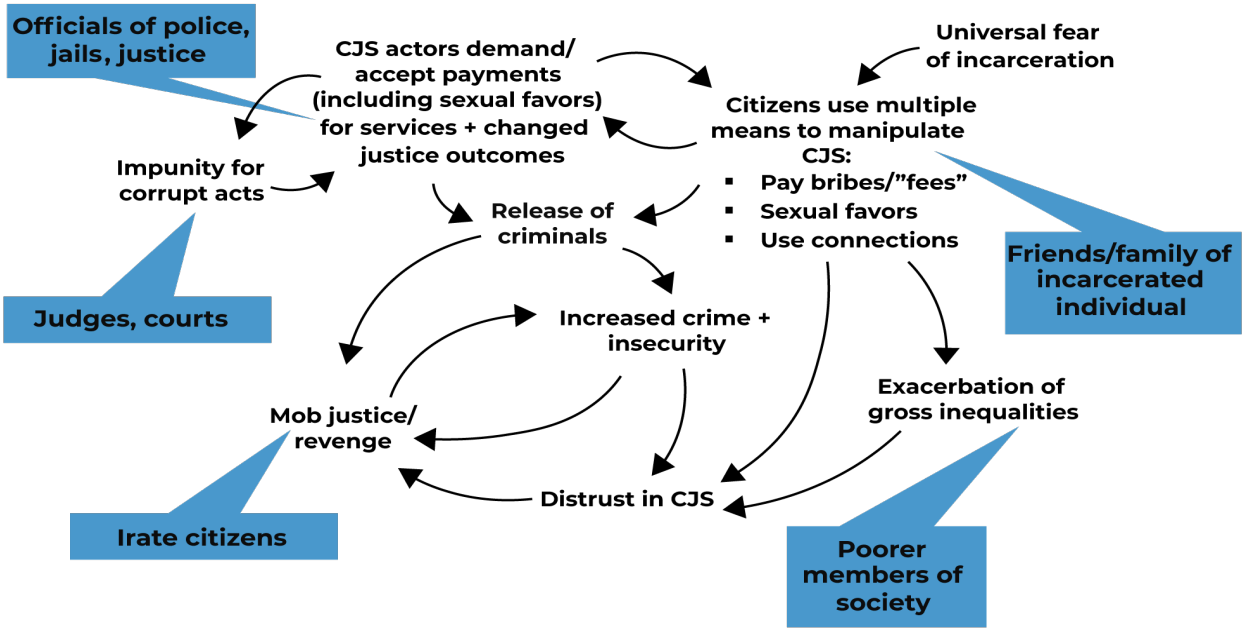


Figure 2: Corruption in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) of the Central African Republic with actors.

A complete corruption analysis that includes both factors and actors then serves as the basis for determining where to intervene to create change in the system of corruption. We call these "points of leverage" for intervention. As we assess the intervention point options, we also engage in rigorous theory of change thinking to examine the assumptions behind any proposed anti-corruption approach. Why do we think that X action will result in Y change in corrupt behavior? How does that show up in our systems map? How will various actors support or resist change efforts? As programming is implemented and we learn more about how the system reacts to our interventions, we also adjust the map. Then we adapt the program based on this more nuanced understanding of the system we are trying to change. In order to increase the likelihood, scale, relevance and sustainability of results, systems approaches require continuous adaptation.

Theory of change thinking challenges us to ask why we think any form of intervention will result in a desired change. Will our activities be sufficient to create change—or will other actions be needed? How will different actors resist or support change? Will our underlying assumptions prove correct?

II. The Origins and Purpose of the "Common Patterns"

In most situations, we generate systems maps by working with people who live and work in the context. Information comes from a review of the literature as well as observers of or (willing and unwilling) participants in corrupt practices. Such information is usually gathered in a workshop setting or through individual or group interviews. From that information, a draft systems map is developed for further refinement and validation by those who experience the situation.

At other times, our effort is focused on transferring the capacity to develop maps, rather than producing a final product ourselves. However, generating a systems map from scratch requires some technical skill honed through practice and application. These experiences with systems mapping over many years have highlighted two key challenges. First, many do not have the time to master the process and, secondly, not everyone finds causal loop mapping an intuitive process. Systems thinking, the underlying approach behind mapping, represents a different way of thinking. It pushes people out of simple, linear cause-and-effect modes of thinking into a way of understanding the world that more accurately reflects the complex reality in contexts of endemic corruption. Like any new way of thinking, systems mapping takes mental energy, time, and commitment to mastering a new approach.

Despite these challenges, we find that the combination of a systems map and a stakeholder analysis is well worth the time and energy, as the two tools together generate a robust corruption analysis from which strategic action can be taken. So, the question is, how do we respond to the challenges to gain the known benefits?

The point of analysis is to inform strategic anti-corruption programming, not to linger in the analytical stage. Therefore, CJL has been experimenting with ways to help practitioners create a functional map more easily and quickly using generic loops as starting points. The generic loops—or common patterns—enable practitioners to "fast forward" the systems mapping process.

We derived these common patterns by reviewing and simplifying the systems maps generated by CJL and its students and clients over the past ten years. The Common Patterns were found in contexts of endemic corruption around the world, including in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. For instance, how does bribery typically show up across multiple settings? What do patronage systems usually look like? (And so forth…) The common patterns provide a kind of scaffolding that people can build on—like the frame used to create a *papier mâché* figure. The rest of this paper presents those common patterns, including the causal loop diagrams and narrative explanations.

III. Presentation of the Common Patterns

Four patterns have been identified to date, each representing different types of corruption occurring at different levels. As maps are visual representations of how things happen, each pattern is accompanied by a narrative explanation, tracing the causal loop pathway and describing how corruption functions. So far, the Common Patterns include:

Pattern 1: Systems of Pervasive Patronage
Pattern 2: Diverted Public Assets Drive Inequality & Block Development
Pattern 3: Manipulation or Loyalty-based Procurement/Contracting
Pattern 4: Common Patterns of Bribery

There are four important points to stress before explaining each pattern.

- **These are not the only patterns possible.** There are many other types of corruption. These are just the ones for which we have sufficient experience to put forth tentative drafts.
- **These common patterns are just DRAFTS!** That is, the "generic" systems dynamics described in each pattern do not exist in any specific place. Each common pattern is an amalgamation derived from a variety of places and therefore inherently incorrect to any specific place. They are to be used as drafts that must be adapted to specific circumstances.
- **These patterns are just parts of bigger systems.** Systems maps that show how corruption is embedded in the economic, political, social or psychological elements of a particular issue or sector almost always have multiple loops.
- **The systems maps/causal loop diagrams should tell a story.** The accompanying narrative explanations should make logical sense as an explanation of how corruption works.

After presenting the common patterns and their narrative explanations below, we will explore how to work with the common patterns, how to refine and validate a draft map, when to use common patterns (and when NOT to use them), and applications of the resulting systems maps.

Key: Symbols Used in Causal Loop Diagrams

Factors are shown as *text*—usually expressed as things that can increase or decrease

Example: Degree of compliance with laws

Arrows indicate the direction of influence from one factor to another **A → B**

Small boxes labeled R1, R2, etc. are "reinforcing loops," which are then explained in the narratives

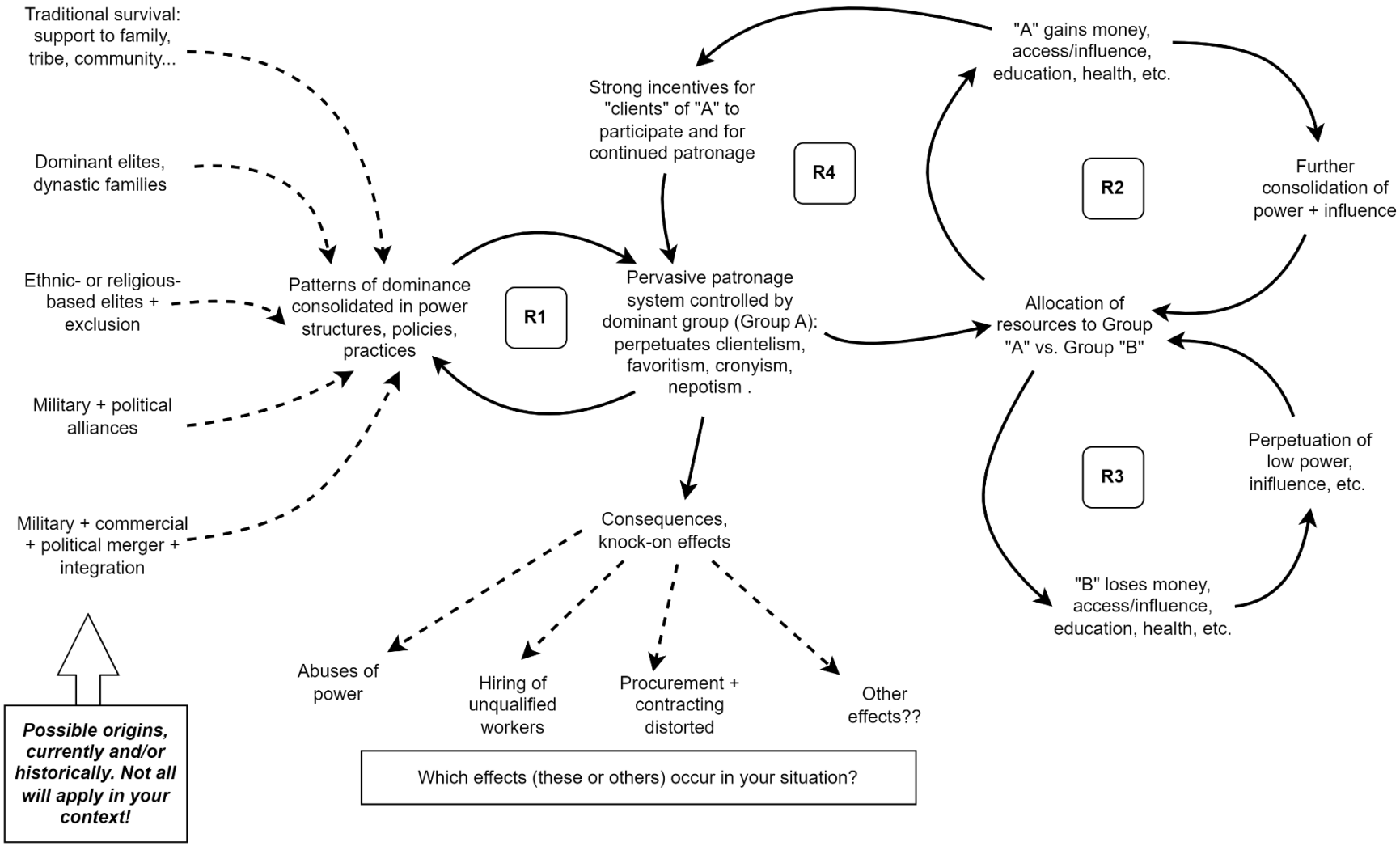
A **thought bubble** shows a Mental Model (how people feel, attitudes) that need to be tied to the specific context (some shown in Bribery)

Two conventions not shown in the Common Patterns—but are often used

B1, B2, etc. would be "**balancing loops**" that depict stabilizing forces or factors that counteract reinforcing loops (but there are none shown in the Common Patterns below).

Double line on an arrow **(//)** indicates a time delay.

Pattern #1: Systems of Pervasive Patronage



Narrative Explanation: Pervasive Patronage

Typical patronage dynamics show up throughout society—across sectors (health, education, government services, etcetera) and at all levels, from the quite local to municipal, provincial, regional and national levels. The dotted arrows to the left and below indicate that the background causes and follow-on effects will vary in different situations.

- Underlying causes (left side of map). In many places around the world, dynastic families, the colonial system, post-colonial politics, political-military alliances, and many other dynamics created elites that then evolved into powerful dominant groups. Some of these dynamics describe the historical origin or the continuing basis for dominance. Not all apply in all situations. *Pick the ones that apply in your situation, add additional ones if necessary and delete the rest.*

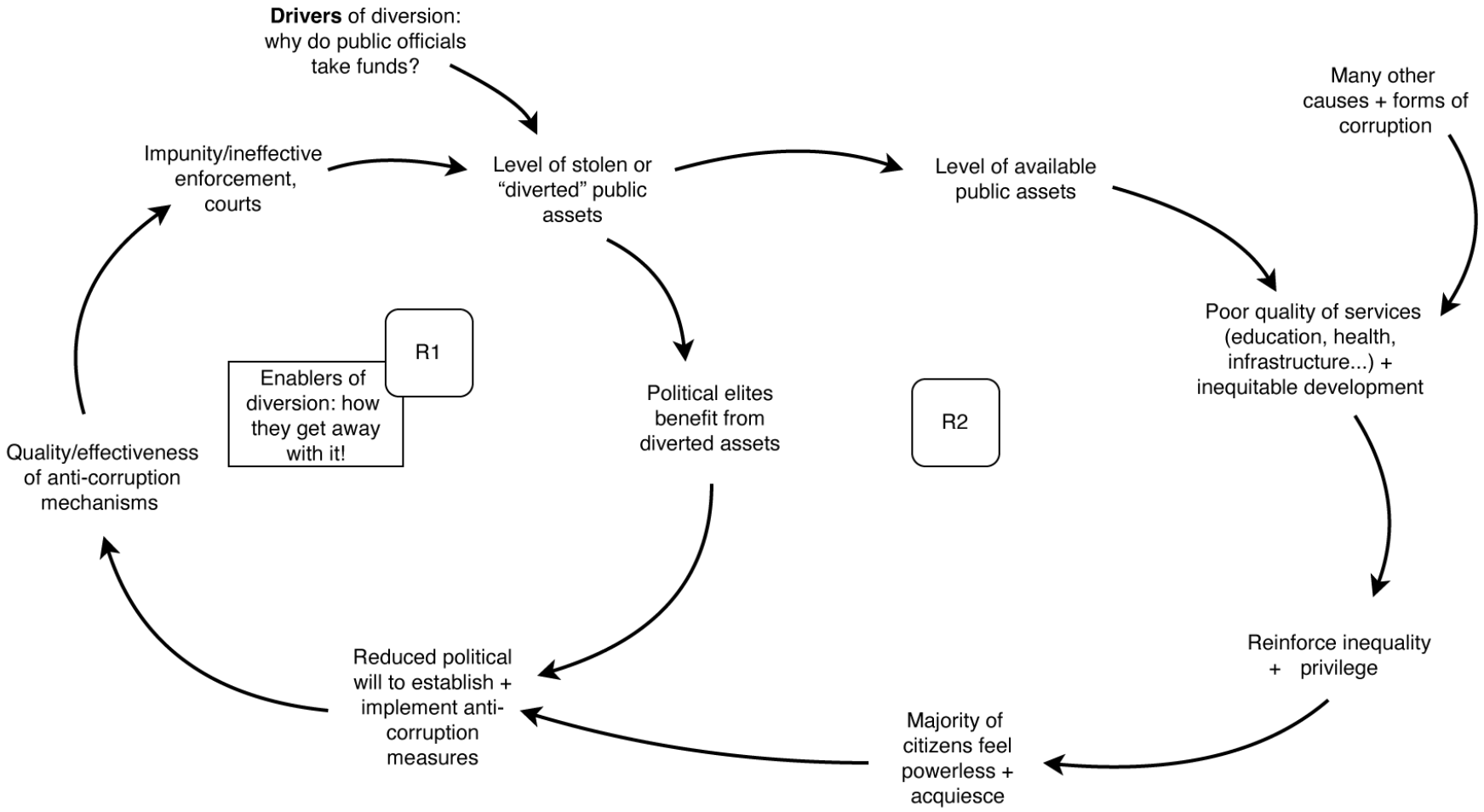
- **R1**: Derived from the various causes, the dominant group (Group A—political, social and economic elite) sets up structures, institutions and processes that ensure their continued dominance, their hold on power and control over resources. This creates a self-reinforcing feedback loop through a pervasive patronage system involving nepotism, cronyism, favoritism, and clientelism that reinforce their dominance.

- **R2:** Dominant elite Group A sets the rules and determines who has access to resources. Therefore, who gets resources such as education, health care, jobs, financial resources (etcetera) increases or decreases, based on elite decisions. Generally, the patron group (Group A in the diagram) has access—while Group B (everyone else) does not. This is the classic Success to the Successful Archetype from systems thinking.[6] Elite Group A consolidates power and dominates social, political and economic life—throughout society at every level from local to national.

- **R3:** Those at the bottom (Group B) struggle to survive and enjoy few of the benefits, creating a downward spiral for the underdog group.

- **R4:** Those who participate--both clients and patrons--gain tangible and intangible benefits (money, power, control, influence) that, then, reinforce the patronage systems dynamics of elite dominance.

Pattern #2: Diverted Public Assets Drive Inequality and Block Development



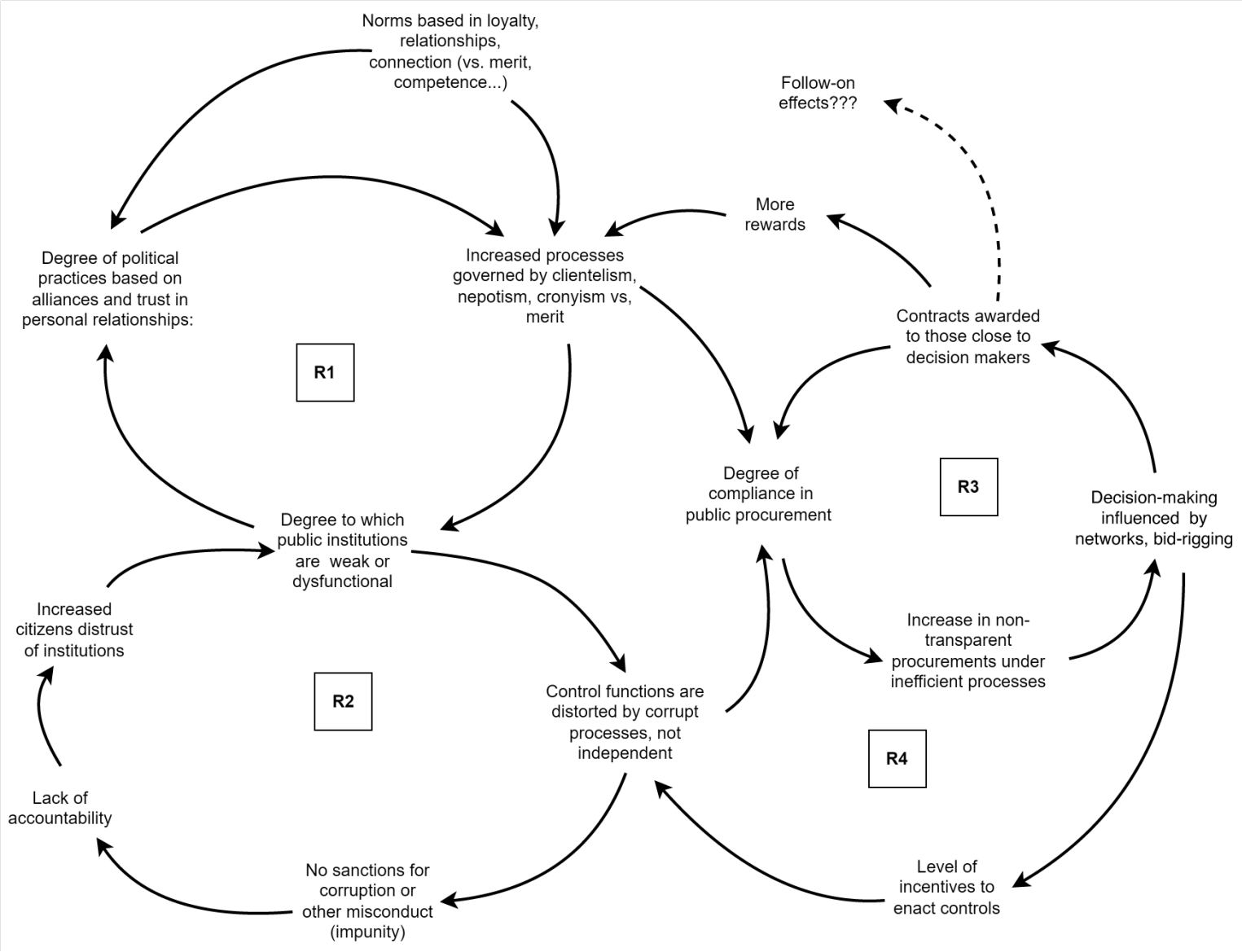
Narrative Explanation: Diverted Public Assets Drive Inequality and Block Development

This common pattern shows how corruption dynamics have serious implications for larger issues of economic development.

At the top left of the diagram, it is noted that various factors drive public officials to steal or divert public funds. Those must be identified in each context.

- **R1: Powerful Incentives Block Anti-Corruption.** R1 on the left-hand side explains how those who perpetrate this form of corruption get away with it. It shows the factors that enable diversion of funds, based on the degree of political will to take action against corruption and the lack of effective enforcement mechanisms. Political elites (who have access to public resources) benefit from the diversion of funds, either directly by lining their own pockets, by awarding contracts to their friends, or by exercising control and influence in other ways. Due to those ongoing benefits, politicians have little or no incentive to improve anti-corruption measures. Poor enforcement influences the level of assets that are stolen or diverted for other purposes.
- **R2: Effects on Equitable Development.** The level of diverted/stolen assets described in R1 influences the amount of public financial assets available in government coffers for a range of purposes. This, along with many other causes and forms of corruption, affects the quality and quantity of basic services available, in terms of education, health care, infrastructure development (etcetera). This then exacerbates economic and social inequalities. Poor services and unequal development reinforce the realities of inequality and privilege, which generate, among the general population, a sense of powerlessness and inability to resist. These dynamics reinforce the lack of political will to combat corruption.

Pattern #3. Manipulation or Loyalty-based Procurement/Contracting



Narrative Explanation: Manipulation or Loyalty-based Procurement/Contracting

In many places around the world, contracts for government services and supplies are awarded based on loyalty, not merit. This tendency is supported by weak controls and institutions.

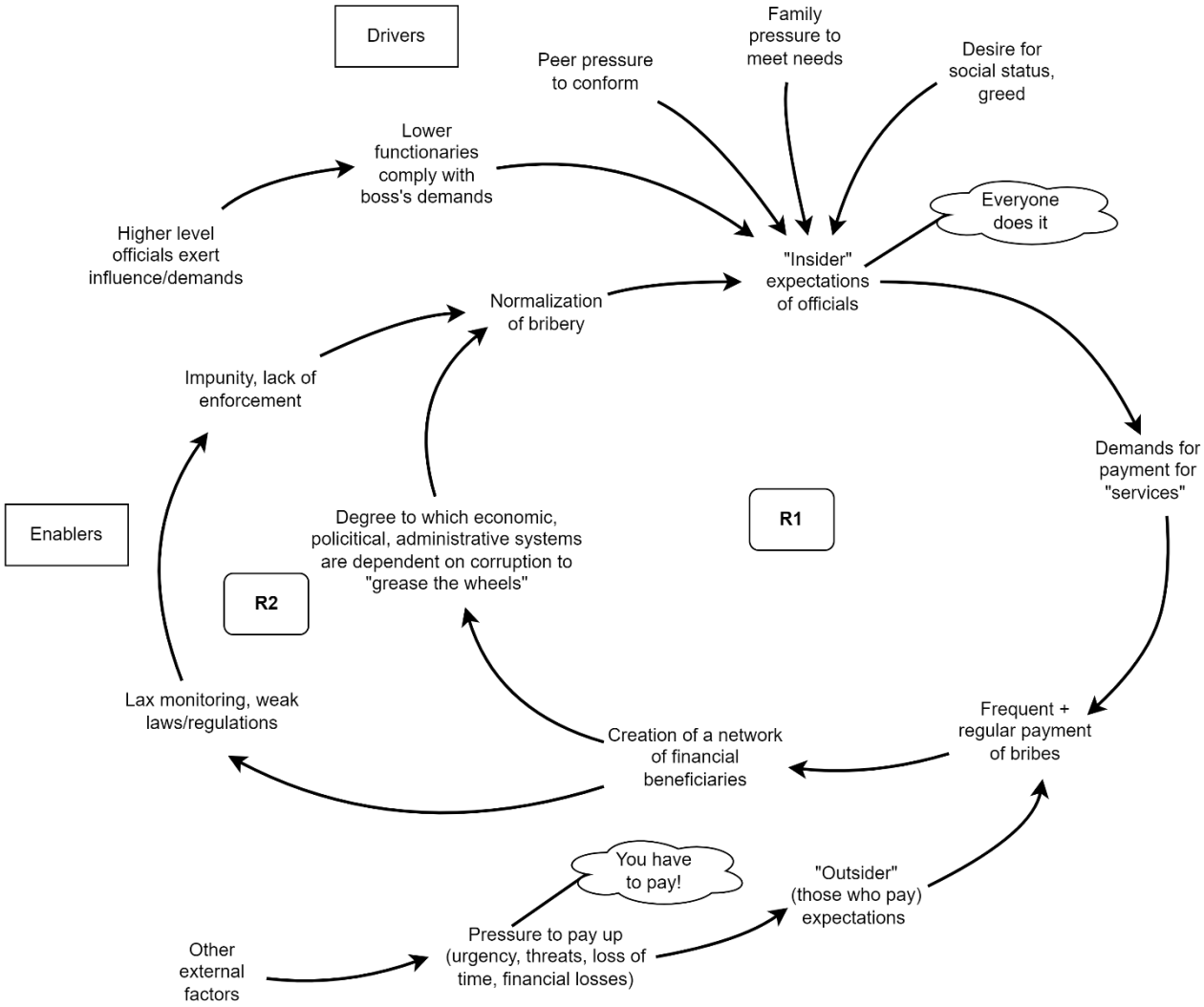
- **R1: Corrupt Governmental Institutions.** Organizational practices within public institutions are based on alliances and personal relationships, which grow out of widespread norms of loyalty, valuing relationships, and connections over merit. These norms result in processes that are governed by clientelism, nepotism and cronyism, which reinforce the overall weakness of public institutions. Weak institutions pose no counterweight to the dominant ways of operating based on relationships rather than merit or competence.

- **R2: Weak Controls and Sanctions.** Within weak public institutions, control functions are lacking. Thus, governmental controls remain weak and inefficient, unable to impose any sanctions for corrupt activities. Lack of accountability leads citizens to distrust public institutions, which reinforces their fundamental weakness.

- **R3: Corruption in Procurement and Contracting.** The dominance of nepotism/cronyism/clientelism and the lack of effective control mechanisms affect the degree of compliance with regulations of public procurement, leading to non-transparent and inefficient processes. Procurement decisions are based on personal networks and bid-rigging, rather than merit/competence/efficiency (or other more objective measures). Those close to decision makers are the beneficiaries—and their rewards weaken compliance with regulations and reinforce corrupt practices of the System [R1].

- **R4: Reinforcement of Weak Government Control Capacity.** Decisions based on networks/bid-rigging in R3 reduces incentives to enact controls, further weakening government capacity to introduce compliance or efficiency in R2. A larger loop can be traced all the way through the rest of R2 and then through R3, helping to perpetuate corrupt practices.

Pattern #4. Common Pattern of Bribery



Narrative Explanation: Common Pattern of Bribery

Drivers of corruption: Those who demand bribes are influenced by a range of factors that drive them to participate in a bribery transaction. Several common drivers of bribery are captured above the primary loop. *These will vary, depending on the context: not all apply in all cases!*

An example of a driver of bribery is found when higher-ups in a hierarchy expect those who report to them to "contribute" a monthly amount or take a cut from a particularly large transaction and if they do not, they face personal and/or professional retribution. In many cases, the practice of bribery is widespread in the government agency (police, courts, government ministries, educational or medical institutions), leading to strong peer pressure to comply—or face penalties. Other pressures may come from family members who expect to benefit from revenues gained whether legally or through corrupt practices. Finally, the functionary her/himself might be motivated by the desire for enhanced social status (greed). *As noted, only some of these drivers may be present in any specific situation.*

All these factors can be considered "drivers" of bribery —and many of them are based on social norms and include clear negative sanctions for failure to comply or play along, while offering positive rewards for compliance. The prevailing mental model (attitude or associated feeling) of "everyone does it" reinforces the sense that bribery is normal. This is shown as a "thought bubble" in the diagram.

- **R1: Vicious Circle of Bribery.** These drivers of bribery (or a selection of them) lead to demands made on those who are in a position to pay for certain "services": often citizens. Services might be as simple as moving a paper through the bureaucracy or as dire as getting a friend or relative out of detention following arrest.

  The prospective payer or "outsider" to the government agency/department also experiences pressures to pay up, depending on the circumstances. If a relative is in dangerous detention, the urgency to pay may be extreme. In other cases, it is often easier to pay a small "fee" just to be able to proceed with activities. Many of those who pay are reacting to the mental model of "you have to pay." In other words, "that's just the way things work."

  The frequent and regular payment of bribes creates a network of those who benefit financially (and perhaps in other ways) from the practice. Over time, governmental operations become dependent on the bribery function to keep processes running, leading to normalization of bribery as a pervasive part of everyday life. This, in turn, becomes a factor contributing to pressure on functionaries to comply.

- **R2: Enablers of Bribery.** Meanwhile, those who benefit from the system of bribery undermine monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, leading to impunity and weak counters to the bribery system—an enabler of corruption.

IV. Working with the Common Patterns

There is no single approach to engaging with the common patterns as a shortcut to producing systems maps of endemic corruption. However, we present the following six-step approach as a provisional pathway that can be adapted to the setting and individuals involved.

1. **Set Boundaries:** When we engage clients, partners or students in a corruption analysis using systems mapping, we don't start with making causal loops. First, we explore the ***boundaries of the issue or problem.*** What are people in the situation most interested in addressing? How are those concerns related to corruption dynamics, since the connection may be indirect? Often, the concern with corruption is due to its negative impacts on basic services (such as health, education, security) or a development outcome (such as women's empowerment). This preliminary step should result in the creation of a ***framing question*** that guides the corruption analysis: What is hindering fire safety in Johannesburg? or What is blocking the implementation of the code of conduct in this unit of the police? These questions will be answered by identifying factors that are both directly related to corruption and factors in the broader context that are indirectly related to corruption.

2. **Identify Corruption Types:** Once we have formulated the framing question, the next step is to ask participants to identify the ***most important type(s) of corruption relevant to the problem*** or outcome (e.g., fire safety or police behavior). It is important here to move beyond the general category of "corruption" to identify the specific types of corrupt behaviors relevant to the problem. Here we are not looking for the one-off corrupt acts like a major scandal, but rather the ongoing or regularized corrupt practices that occur. Some groups will already have this information, while others may need to engage in some inquiry. Looking up official statistics, corruption risk assessments or academic analyses are common places to start.

3. **Brainstorm Factors:** The next step is to ***brainstorm the factors enabling and driving[7] those corrupt practices,*** as well as any factors that might push back or resist corrupt behaviors. For instance, in relation to corruption in procurement, participants might identify a series of enabling factors, including lax enforcement of regulations, secret deals behind closed doors, tip-offs to associates of officials, non-transparency in bidding processes, and so forth. Among drivers of corrupt behavior in procurement, factors might include social norms of loyalty and mutual support, greed/paybacks, pressure from higher level officials to favor their cronies, etc. Such brainstorming should not be an individual exercise; rather, views from multiple people with

> **Drivers:** factors that motivate or cause corrupt acts (e.g., greed, basic needs, social norms etc.)
>
> **Enablers:** factors in the environment that facilitate a corrupt act (e.g., insufficient laws, poor implementation of processes etc.)

different roles and perspectives should be obtained. This can be done either in a group workshop setting or through interviews or surveys with individuals. To develop a complete picture, explore factors across a variety of domains: economic, political, institutional, social, psychological, attitudinal, and so forth.

4. **Explore the Fit with Common Patterns:** Based on both the types of corruption you identified in #2 above and the various factors brainstormed in #3, which (if any) of the Common Patterns best fit the situation? This may be obvious. If, for instance, you are concerned about bribery in police operations, then the Common Pattern of Bribery may be a close fit. In other situations, the relevance of a Common Pattern may be less obvious, requiring comparison of the types of factors brainstormed with the factors appearing in one or more of the Common Patterns. In some cases, there will be no obvious fit, requiring construction of a new set of causal loops from the beginning.

5. **Adapt, Add, or Change a Common Pattern or Build a New Map Specific to the Situation and Provide a Narrative Explanation:** If one of the Common Patterns appears to fit the situation, it must still be adapted, incorporating the various factors identified in the brainstorm (#3 above). This might involve changing the wording, adding or deleting factors, creating new loops, or combining several loops together (sometimes two of the Common Patterns, or one of those plus a new loop). Relying on a Common Pattern as is would be a mistake—it must be contextualized. In most cases, a combination of loops or additional loops will be needed to create a complete analysis containing multiple interacting loops of corruption in a specific setting.

   The systems maps/causal loop diagrams should tell a story. Every map should be accompanied by a narrative explanation that logically explains how corruption works. For examples, see the explanations provided with the Common Patterns in the previous section. This narrative can also serve as a test of the systems map. If you cannot explain each loop, there may be a flaw in the logic, or the loops don't really "loop."

   We have provided an ***example of a contextualized map in Appendix A.*** This example is the product of an adaptation of the Common Pattern of Bribery with elements taken from the Common Pattern on Procurement added in.

6. **Validate, Refine and Renew Regularly:** Systems maps represent political, economic, social and institutional factors and need to draw on a diversity of perspectives. Therefore, **every draft systems analysis** must be reviewed, refined and validated by people in the situation. No single person, no matter how well informed, can produce an accurate and comprehensive systems map. The process of review and validation also helps gain ownership of the analysis by local people. At the same time, we also learn more as we start to implement programs aimed at changing corrupt practices. Those learning can inform regular updates to a systems map and revised strategies for change.

When to Use and Not Use Common Patterns

If the group you are working with has time and willingness, it is generally better to build a systems map from scratch, rather than use the Common Patterns. This ensures clear connection to the context and promotes greater group ownership of the analysis. Of course, if none of the Common Patterns fit the situation, it will be necessary to construct the systems map from the beginning anyway.

If, on the other hand, time is short or the group is reluctant to engage in all the steps of analysis, the Common Patterns can help. The preliminary steps and processes of refinement and validation are still required and can also gain some of the needed ownership.

V. Uses of the Resulting Systems Map

The goal of a systems map is not to achieve a perfect picture or the absolute truth. Rather, it is to understand the basic dynamics and produce a diagnosis of what is happening, why and among whom, before applying any programmatic intervention aimed at changing corrupt behaviors. A systems map should be good enough to support strategic choices about where and how to intervene in the system. In addition to exploring options for change and intervention, the map can be used or elaborated in the following ways:

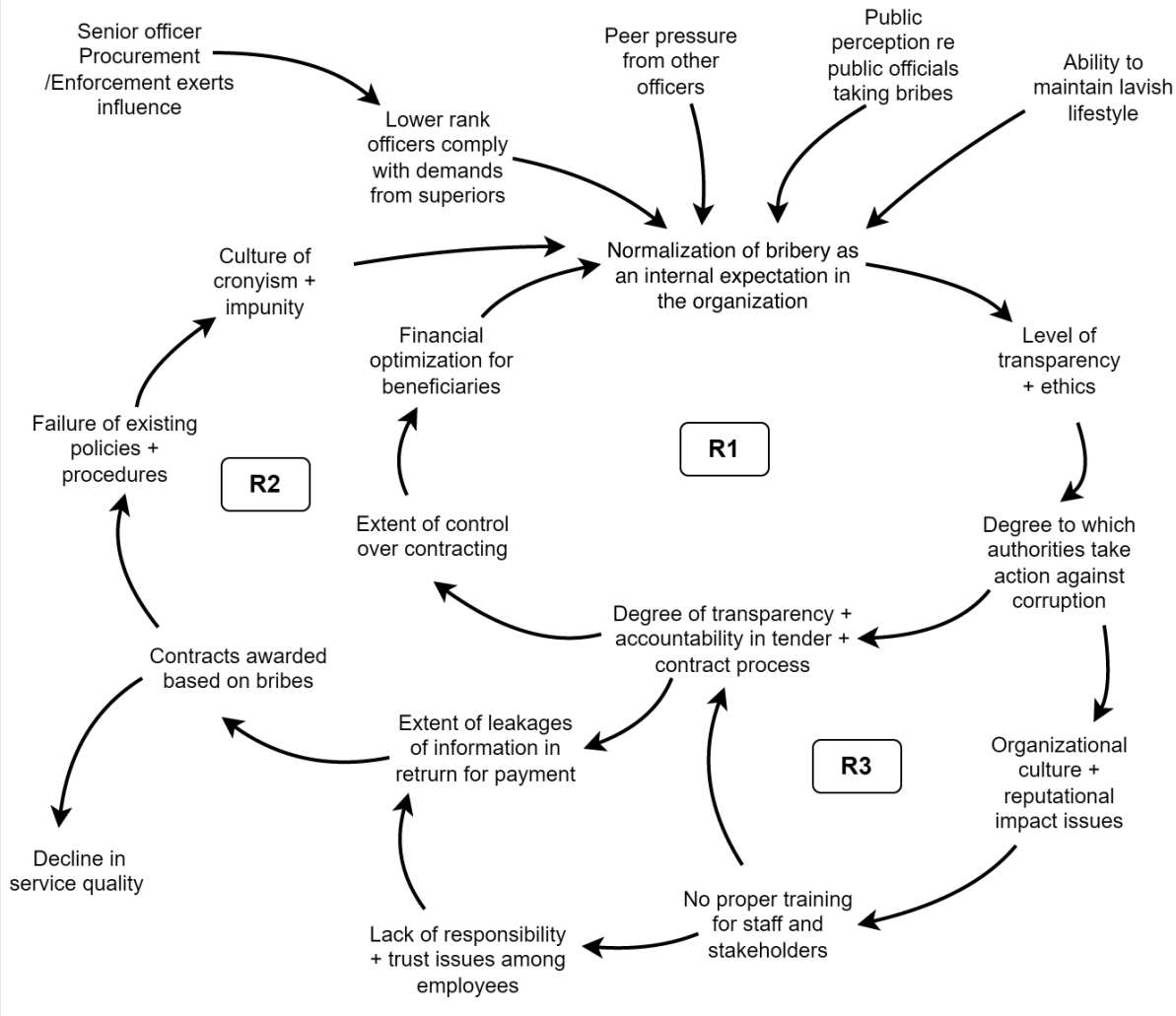
- If it has not been done already, when considering potential allies and opponents to change, key actors can be added to the map (integrating systems mapping with stakeholder analysis), which promotes thinking about how system dynamics and actors work together, and which people or groups will need to be engaged in processes of change.
- Also reinforcing a point made earlier, it is important to identify the mental models (how people think or feel within the system) and **explore how social norms function** within the causal loops of the system.
- Discuss who is doing what where in the system? Which groups are already working to change specific aspects of the system—and how? What has been tried already with what results?
- Consider how the system might push back or resist efforts at change.
- Identify and mitigate any potential and unintended harms that might result from anti-corruption efforts (a do-no-harm analysis).[8]

VI. Conclusion

Systems maps, combined with other analytical tools, provide the basis for developing effective strategies for anti-corruption programming. The Common Patterns presented here serve as one way to speed up the analysis process, produce a cogent systems map sooner, and move on to identifying an approach to change.

Appendix A: Adaptation of the Bribery Common Pattern

In this example, a practitioner we were working with adapted the basic Common Pattern of Bribery and added in important elements of the Procurement/Contracting pattern. He made considerable changes to the factors in the Bribery pattern (R1) and created a new set of loops to indicate how bribery and contract awards based on relationships interact (R2). He also showed the effects of organizational culture and training (R3).



Note: This example is slightly cleaned up from the original and identifying information deleted.

Adapted from Mohd Rezaidi Ishak, with thanks.

Appendix B: Bibliography

Essential Books/Resources on Systems Thinking

Kim, Daniel, "Systems Thinking Tools: A User's Reference Guide." Pegasus Communications, INC, 1994, 2000. Accessed: https://thesystemsthinker.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Systems-Thinking-Tools-TRST01E.pdf

Meadows, Donella, *Thinking in Systems, Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, VT, 2008.*

Senge, Peter, The Fifth Discipline, Doubleday, 1990, 2006.

Senge, Peter, et al, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization,* Crown Currency, 1994.

Stroh, David Peter, *Systems Thinking for Social Change, Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, VT, 2015.*

Step-by-Step Guides to Systems Mapping

Designing Strategic Initiatives to Impact Conflict Systems: Systems Approaches to Peacebuilding. A Resource Manual. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2016. Accessed: https://www.cdacollaborative.org/publication/designing-strategic-initiatives-impact-conflict-systems-systems-approaches-peacebuilding/

Systems Practice, The Omidyar Group. Accessed: https://social-labs.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Systems-Mapping-Omidyar-Workbook-012617.pdf

Acumen online Systems practice course. Accessed: ttps://acumenacademy.org/course/systems-practice/

Appendix C: About the Author

Peter Woodrow is theoretically retired and serves as a Senior Advisor to the Corruption, Justice and Legitimacy Program at Besa Global. He has been a leading thinker in the application of systems thinking concepts and tools to context analysis and program design in peacebuilding and anti-corruption. Woodrow was the Executive Director of CDA Collaborative Learning Projects from 2013 to 2017 and the Co-Director of CDA's Reflecting on Peace Practice Program (RPP) from 2003 to 2013. In 2018, with co-author Diana Chigas, Peter published *Adding Up to Peace*, the result of ten years of RPP research on how peacebuilding efforts create momentum towards peace. Prior to joining CDA, Peter was a partner at the mediation organization CDR Associates in Boulder, Colorado. He is an experienced mediator, facilitator, and conflict resolution trainer. He holds a Masters in Public Administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and a BA from Oberlin College.

Endnotes

1 A complex adaptive system is characterized by a dynamic network of interactions among factors, and the behavior of the whole can be quite variable and unpredictable. Complex adaptive systems are able to respond flexibly to adjust to challenges; they are resilient in the face of disturbance.

2 See, for instance manuals from CDA Collaborative Learning Project and the Omidyar Network cited in the Bibliography (Appendix B).

3 For an introduction to systems thinking, see books by Peter Senge, Donella Meadows and David Stroh cited in Appendix B at the end of this document.

4 See the full CAR analysis **here**

5 For more information on social norms and corruption, see Scharbatke-Church and Chigas, Social Norms and Corruption Reference Guide **here**

6 Stroh, David, Systems Thinking for Social Change, Chelsea Green, 2015, p. 60; Senge, Peter, The Fifth Discipline, Doubleday, 1990.

7 Scharbatke-Church, Cheyanne and Chigas, Diana, *Taking the Blinders Off. Questioning How Development Assistance is Used to Combat Corruption, The Fletcher School, Tufts Academy, 2016.*

8 See CJL Working Paper on Do No Harm and Anti-Corruption Programming **here**

Driven by change that matters

connect@besaglobal.ca

besaglobal.org

Corruption, Justice & Legitimacy Program

a besa global program

corruptionjusticeandlegitimacy.org