Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Unit of Assessment: C21 Politics and International Studies

Title of case study: Designing More Effective Anti-Corruption Interventions in Developing Countries

1. Summary of the impact

Heather Marquette's research has influenced aid agencies by encouraging them to recognise corruption as a primarily political issue as opposed to an economic or managerial matter. This shift in understanding has **contributed to a change in perception among professionals on anti-corruption and to alterations in programmes and practices among a number of organisations** including EuropeAid, AusAid and the World Bank Institute.

Marquette has directly contributed to policy thinking by providing expert technical support to the anti-corruption programmes of a range of international aid agencies and non-governmental organisations. As well as direct guidance, her commissioned advisory activity has included the provision of high-level training for donors and their partners, focussing on the politics of corruption, anti-corruption programming and the role of popular attitudes in supporting or undermining governance reform.

2. Underpinning research

The research that underpins this work has been carried out by Marquette, originally a Lecturer and latterly a Reader at the University of Birmingham from 2002-present. Marquette's research has two main strands: (a) the role of aid agencies in governance/state-building, and identifying specifically how good governance and anti-corruption agendas are linked to the politicisation of aid; and (b) explaining how attitudes towards corruption in developing countries are formed and how this may impact on the success or failure of anti-corruption reforms. The result has been a substantial body of academic and policy publications about corruption and aid since the early 2000s.

Research underpinning the claimed impact relates to the ways in which domestic level politics in developing countries condition the effectiveness of donor-funded anti-corruption programmes, and the ways in which domestic level politics are shaped by individual attitudes towards corruption. The research concludes that corruption should be seen as a collective action problem, rather than in terms of the principal-agent/rational choice theory that conventionally informs the design of anti-corruption programmes. The broad, systematic and comparative study of attitudes towards corruption in India and Nigeria commenced in 2007 and utilises primary data generated by original, in-depth qualitative fieldwork. It shows that citizen attitudes, rather than the somewhat amorphous 'culture' referred to in the literature, are the key to understanding the effectiveness of anti-corruption programmes. Because corruption should be seen as a collective action problem, it should not be assumed that 'the public' will be behind traditional governance reforms. Understanding citizen attitudes, and helping to shape those attitudes, is an essential factor in improving the outcomes of anti-corruption programming. Current methodologies used to measure citizen attitudes (often large-n cross-national surveys) have serious limitations, because they often fail to capture this collective action dimension [R5]. As a result of such insights, Marquette has been commissioned by aid agencies to conduct further research, including leading a team drafting the European Commission's Concept Note on Helping Partner Countries in Fighting Corruption (2010-2011) [R3].

Marquette's engagement with policy-makers on research is ongoing, and new research on corruption and collective action, as well as the political economy of aid, has recently been commissioned by AusAid (the Australian Government's international aid agency) as part of its Developmental Leadership Programme (DLP). In 2013, Marquette was approached by AusAid to take over as Director of Research on this $9.5 million programme, and has been described by AusAid as 'an active and highly respected contributor to the field of development politics, both in academic and in policy circles' [source 5]. Marquette's research will be funded under this programme until 2017 and will feed directly into AusAid's programming. In 2013, Marquette also began work on donors and political economy analysis (PEA). This research draws on textual

analysis of PEA frameworks, reports, 'how-to guides' and evaluations, as well as semi-structured interviews with donor staff at a number of agencies, consultants and academics working on PEA. It has also involved participant observation in a number of venues, including invitation-only PEA-focused donor workshops, PEA training at donor events (both as participants and as trainers), at PEA 'community of practice' meetings bringing together donors and consultants, and in conducting PEA in country.

3. References to the research
Research Outputs:
R1) Marquette, H. (2003) *Corruption, Politics and Development: The Role of the World Bank*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan **[RAE 2008 submission, available from HEI on request]**
R2) Marquette, H. (2004) 'The creeping politicisation of the World Bank: the case of corruption', *Political Studies*, vol. 52, no. 3, pp. 413-30 **[RAE 2008 submission, available from HEI on request]**
R3) Marquette, H., Flanary, R., Rao, S. & Morris, D. (2011) *Supporting Anti-Corruption Reform In Partner Countries - Concepts, Tools And Areas For Action*, EuropeAid Tools & Methods Series Concept Note No. 2 **[available: http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/t-and-m-series/document/concept-paper-nr-2-supporting-anti-corruption-reform-partner-countries-concepts-tools-and-a]**
R4) Marquette, H. (2011) 'Donors, state-building and corruption: lessons from Afghanistan and the implications for aid policy', *Third World Quarterly,* vol. 32, no. 10, pp. 1871-1890 **[entered in REF2]**
R5) Marquette, H. (2012) '"Finding God" or "Moral Disengagement" in the fight against corruption in developing countries? Evidence from India and Nigeria', *Public Administration and Development*, vol. 32, no.1, pp. 11-26 **[entered in REF2]**
Major Grants:
- Marquette, H (PI) *Governance, Social Development, Humanitarian Resilience and Conflict Research Support to AusAID – Phase III*, Sponsor: AusAID. March 2013 – February 2017, £456,535.
- Marquette, H (PI) *Director of Research for the Developmental Leadership Program (DLP)*, Sponsor: AusAID. July 2013 – June 2014, £304,368

4. Details of the impact
Marquette's public engagement activities are core to her research and provide the contacts and access for impact upon practitioners and organisations. Such access has enabled Marquette to **contribute to policy debates and influence the development of policy** in donor agencies. Marquette has also been the Director of the GSDRC (Governance & Social Development Resource Centre) at the University of Birmingham since 2010. The GSDRC, provides rapid research and knowledge management services on governance, social development, conflict and humanitarian issues to clients such as DFID, AusAID, the European Commission, the OECD among others. It is a unique centre that has direct impact on policy-making [see source 1 below].

Shaping the approach to International Anti-Corruption Programming:
Marquette has been asked to advise donor agencies on corruption and governance reform. This includes evidence provided to the US Congress on the World Bank's anti-corruption programme (June 2009); an invitation only consultation on the World Bank's new Public Sector Strategy, held at DFID in London (2011); and consultation on the World Bank's updated Governance and Corruption Strategy (2012). In addition, Marquette is often invited to participate in closed workshops on donors/aid policy, governance/corruption and state-building, including: Overseas Development Institute (ODI) event on 'Transparency and Accountability in Fragile States', where Marquette was a discussant (April 2011); invited speaker at an OLAF (the EU's Anti-Fraud Agency) sponsored event on 'Protecting Aid Funds in Unstable Governance Environments' in Lisbon (May 2010); guest speaker on FCO/Chevening course on 'Democracy, Rule of Law and Security' (2009 and 2010).

The European Commission's Concept Note on Helping Partner Countries in Fighting Corruption (2010-2011) includes direct reference to Marquette's research on attitudes towards corruption [R3],

included as a result of a request from EuropeAid's then head of anti-corruption. This Concept Note has been shared widely with EC staff, including EuropeAid, OLAF, Justice and beyond. It has also been shared with EC partners, and has been described as 'a very useful guide, well-written and detailed' by a Senior World Bank staff member [source 2]. As a result of this work, Marquette has been asked on four separate occasions to develop and help deliver a standard training package on corruption and anti-corruption for EuropeAid and its partners (other EC bodies, development agencies and partner governments).

Work in the Concept Note on measuring corruption has led to two further areas of impact: Since 2011 Marquette has been a member of the International Advisory Board for the Transparency International GATEway project, which provides information and guidance on qualitative and quantitative methodologies for measuring corruption. She was also commissioned to lead a team in producing an Issues Paper on corruption indicators used by donors in budget support; this paper has been included on the World Bank's intranet site (GAC Portal).

Due to her research on corruption and anti-corruption programming, in July 2012 Marquette was invited by Dr Mark Robinson, DFID's Deputy Director of Research, to discuss the strength of research evidence in this area. This led to Marquette being commissioned by a participant in the workshop from the OECD, head also of the OECD's International Anti-Corruption Task Team, to develop a high-level communications tool on donor approaches to corruption/anti-corruption, aimed at political leaders and heads of donor agencies. As a result, Marquette's research is '**feeding directly into the development of policy** at OECD and is **helping to shape [their] thinking** in this area' [source 3].

Enabling the focus on agencies thinking and working 'politically':
Research outputs R1 and R2 (below) called for aid agencies, and the World Bank in particular, to frame corruption explicitly as a political issue. Prior to 2008, Marquette's research had been cited in a UNODC paper – one of the key inputs into debates around the creation of the UN Convention Against Corruption (2002) and a Canadian International Development Agency list of 'recommended reading' (2004); and in 2009, a Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation review of anti-corruption literature [source 4].

Marquette's research led to an invitation by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi to be Team Leader on a Strategic Governance and Anti-Corruption Analysis (SGACA) following the post-election violence in Kenya (Sept-Nov 2008). This role entailed chairing the stakeholder workshops that considered evidence of post-election violence. Findings from the confidential report (in line with findings from Marquette's other research) fed into the Kofi Annan Peace Process, both directly (in that the final report was shared with the Team) and indirectly (in that members of the workshops were Team members). It advised that a) ethnicity should not be the international community's main focus, but rather the focus should be on inequality (often but not only articulated on ethnic lines); b) the Kenyan government has a long history of initiating commissions of enquiry in response to international pressure, but these commissions have almost without exception not led to action, and so the peace process needed to ensure that recourse to the International Criminal Court remained an option for the perpetrators of violence. Workshops linked to the SGACA involved several donor agencies and governments, leading Kenyan civil society activists, staff from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hague and the Netherlands Ambassador to Kenya. The then first secretary at the Embassy describes Marquette's research and approach as having **provided 'the framework and content' for the policy** and having 'had **distinct impact on the work of [the] embassy** in Kenya [source 5].

Marquette provided training on 'political economy analysis (PEA)' to the European Commission in 2010, and she was interviewed for the EC's Community of Practice on PEA, made available on the Capacity4Dev platform [source 6]. Marquette was also invited to present at the OECD-Development Assistance Committee's Network on Governance (Govnet)'s annual meeting, in April 2013, with follow-up presentations requested by UK's DFID, the Norwegian aid agency (Norad) and the World Bank Institute.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[1]   Factual statement provided by Governance Principal Sector Specialist, AusAID

[2]   Factual statement provided by Anti-Corruption Thematic Group Lead, World Bank

[3]   Factual statement provided by Senior Governance Advisor, OECD-Development Cooperation Directorate

[4]   Recommended reading in: Norad. 2009. *Anti-corruption Approaches: A Literature Review*, Evaluation Department Study 2/2008. http://www.norad.no/en/tools-and-publications/publications/publication?key=119213

[5]   Factual statement provided by former first secretary at The Netherlands Embassy, Kenya

[6]   report and interview on Capacity4Dev - http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/article/political-economy-assessment-tools-new-approach