

Glossary and acronyms frequently used in water governance

Here we present a glossary of some of the terms and acronyms often used in anti corruption, water and development advocacy. These words are part of the 'jargon' and knowing them will make it easier to understand document and while dealing with the press.



Accountability

The democratic principle that elected officials and those in public service account for their actions and answer to those they serve. Accountability includes political, administrative, and financial accountability.

Administrative accountability

The need to ensure that the administrative structures and standards concerned with water governance are regularly evaluated and improved where necessary, and that bureaucrats, consultants and technical personnel comply with professional codes of conduct, and professional standards. Increasingly, courts and court divisions are expected to produce annual reports of their performance and spending.

Bribery

This is the bestowing of any benefit in order to improperly influence an action or decision. It can be initiated by a person who seeks or solicits bribes, or by a person who offers and then pays a bribe. 'Active' bribery refers to the offering and paying of the bribe, and 'passive' bribery refers to the receiving of the bribe.

Code of conduct

A set of principles designed to establish standards for the ethical conduct of workers at all levels, such a code has rules outlining the responsibilities of or proper practices for an individual. A code of conduct enables other actors, such as the legislature, the executive and the public, to better understand the roles of those working in various aspects of the water sector.

The International Federation of Accountants provided the following working definition: "Principles, values, standards, or rules of behavior that guide the decisions, procedures and systems of an organization in a way that (a) contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders, and (b) respects the rights of all constituents affected by its operations."

Conditions of service

This refers to the working conditions of includes adequate salaries, good pensions, fair appointment and promotion processes, and objective criteria governing jobs.

Corruption

The misuse of entrusted power for private gain. This applies not just to financial gain, but also to the kind associated with the furtherance of political ambitions, the promotion of one's political party, family or business interests, or the furthering of one's career. There are two generally accepted kinds of corruption – grand and petty. Grand corruption pervades the highest levels of government and distorts its central functions. Petty corruption involves the exchange of small amounts of money, the granting of minor favours or the employment of friends and relatives in lower positions

Financial accountability

This relates to the need for a person or institution to account for both the intended and actual use of resources allocated to it. It may also require that individuals with discretionary powers account for their earnings through a programme of assets declaration.

Institutional independence

The need for the water sector institutions to be free from interference and manipulation by government. In practical terms, it means that water governance institutions must have some budgetary autonomy and control their own management at the level at which they work.

Integrity

Integrity is synonymous with honesty and relates to the need for public officials to be honest in carrying out their functions and to ensure that they are immune from being corrupted. It requires that holders of public office do not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to individuals or organisations that may influence them in the performance of their duties.

Misconduct

There is no generally accepted definition of misconduct, but it will encompass serious violations of standards of business or administrative conduct, such as abuse of office, corruption or the commission of other crimes.

Political accountability

Political accountability relates to the fact that government must be held accountable to the citizens of a country, and that it must not abuse its power. This also implies that the appointment of specific individuals to various decision making positions must be justified on the basis of objective criteria, and the individuals and their departments must account for their activities and spending in transparent ways.

Transparency

This refers to openness and public access to information so that citizens can understand the decision-making processes that affect them, and are knowledgeable about the standards to expect from public officials.

List of acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BPCB	Business Principles for Countering Bribery
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EC	European Commission
ECAs	Export Credit Agencies
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessments
EPFIs	Equator Principles Financial Institutions
EU	European Union
FOI	Freedom of Information
GIPs	Governance Improvement Plans
IBA	International Bar Association
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IHA	International Hydropower Association
IMT	Irrigation Management Transfer
IPs	Integrity Pacts
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NIS	National Integrity System
NRB	New Russia Barometer
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPIC	Overseas Private Investment Company
PIM	Participatory Irrigation Management

PPAs	Power Purchase Agreements
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PRT	Promoting Revenue Transparency Project
TI	Transparency International
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCAC	United Nations Convention Against Corruption
UNCESCR	United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
UNCLNUIW	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses
UNESCO	United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNMD	United Nations Millennium Declaration
US	United States
WCD	World Commission on Dams
WGA	World Governance Assessment
WINS	Water Integrity National Survey
WRM	Water Resources Management
WSCC	Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council
WUAs	Water Users Associations