The Global Integrity Report: 2011
Methodology White Paper

The Global Integrity Approach

Global Integrity's Integrity Indicators provide the underpinning for our core reporting and analysis of governance and corruption. The Indicators represent one of the world's most comprehensive data sets providing quantitative data and analysis of anti-corruption mechanisms and government accountability at the national level in countries around the globe. Utilizing our network of more than 1,200 on-the-ground analysts and our unique scoring system, Global Integrity generates actionable, and action-worthy, data and qualitative analysis drawn from more than 300 indicators to assess a country's anti-corruption safeguards and potential for corruption.

The Integrity Indicators are based on a simple yet powerful concept. Rather than trying to measure actual corruption, considered virtually impossible by experts (e.g., Medard 2001; Sik 2002; Arndt and Oman 2006), Global Integrity quantitatively assesses the *opposite* of corruption, that is, the access that citizens and businesses have to a country's government, their ability to monitor its behavior, and their ability to seek redress and advocate for improved governance. The Integrity Indicators break down that "access" into a number of categories and questions, ranging from inquiries into electoral practices and media freedom to budget transparency and conflicts of interests regulations.

We unpack these concepts by looking not only at what laws or institutions are "on the books" but also by assessing their implementation and enforcement through indicators of staffing, budget support, political independence, and citizen access to the most important anti-corruption mechanisms. Combined with vivid narration prepared by our team of leading journalists in the form of accompanying Reporter's Notebooks, the extensive data provided by the Integrity Indicators informs and empowers citizens, activists, donors, businesses, and governments in each country.

Global Integrity country assessments provide detailed data and reporting on the mechanisms in place to prevent abuses of power and promote public integrity. Using a blend of social science and journalism, in-country teams of independent researchers and journalists report on the *de jure* as well as *de facto* reality of corruption and governance. While the Reporter's Notebook on the culture of corruption often paints a depressing picture depicting the average citizen's daily struggles with corruption, the Integrity Indicators identify strengths and weaknesses in the national anti-corruption architecture and serve as a road map for possible reforms. Transparency, both in terms of our methodology and findings, characterizes the Global Integrity approach and enhances the robustness and credibility of our findings. As we continue to improve our methodology and learn from our fieldwork experiences, we welcome and value critical feedback.

Research Team Members and Roles

Global Integrity staff in Washington identify and manage our teams of in-country reporters and researchers who are responsible for collecting the raw reporting and data that ultimately

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generates the Global Integrity country assessments. Headquarters staff recruit, contract, and pay in-country team members; develop and share the methodology with in-country experts; review all data and reporting for completeness and accuracy; manage the peer review process (see below for details); and produce cross-country analyses of the resultant qualitative and quantitative information. A notable point is that Global Integrity does not "assign" countries scores in any category, sub-category, or Integrity Indicator; All our data and reporting is home-grown, bottom-up information generated and peer reviewed by in-country local experts. Global Integrity staff manage the fieldwork process and provide overarching methodological guidance and logistical support.

Fieldwork and Country Selection

From August 2011 to March 2012, Global Integrity conducted field research in the following 33 countries or territories:

Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Burundi, China, Colombia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Liberia, Macedonia, Malawi, Mexico, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukraine, United States, Venezuela, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe

Our 2011 sample is by no means representative but provides interesting country coverage across several key variables.

While our ambition remains to cover all countries and regions of the world over time, the final set of countries for 2011 was chosen according to the following criteria:

Geographic Balance: Global Integrity seeks to ensure a basic geographic balance in its annual rounds of national-level country assessments.

Budget: The 33 countries covered in our 2011 assessment was the maximum number of countries we could afford to assess thanks to the generous support of our current donors.

Availability of experts: The most important criterion that affects whether a country is selected is whether Global Integrity is able to recruit a sufficiently qualified research team in the country. We cannot, and do not, carry out country assessments where we lack confidence in our team. See additional details below on how country teams are recruited and selected.

The 2011 national assessments also represent our third attempt to adhere to a more standardized pattern of national coverage, which will entail biannual samples of a core group of 70 countries moving forward. For details, please visit: http://commons.globalintegrity.org/2009/06/global-integrity-report-2009-country.html.

Country Teams

Global Integrity combines the skills of leading journalists with expert social scientists and researchers to produce its comprehensive country assessments. In each country, Global Integrity retains a team of five to ten experts, working independently, to compile the material for the country assessments. A Global Integrity country team typically consists of:

- A lead reporter who reports and writes the Reporter's Notebook.
- A lead researcher who compiles the initial scores for the Integrity Indicators.
- Two country "peer reviewers" (a mix of other in-country experts and out-of-country experts) who blindly review the raw data and reporting to provide unvarnished corrections, comments, and criticisms. Peer review comments on all data and reporting are published transparently alongside the original data and reporting, offering readers an alternative perspective.

The teams are coordinated from Washington via the Internet and phone. Until the public release of the country assessments, the researchers, journalists, and peer reviewers are unaware of the identities of other members of the country team. This is done to maintain the independence of the individual responses and avoid a peer-influenced consensus. All work is carried out by field teams and headquarters staff via Indaba (http://getindaba.org), a fieldwork management platform developed by Global Integrity to efficiently manage complex global research.

To identify appropriate researchers, journalists, and peer reviewers in each country, Global Integrity actively recruits potential team members through informal partnerships with several well-placed international NGOs working in the anti-corruption and good governance field; those partners assist in publicizing our annual "Call for Experts." We also participate in international conferences and seek referrals from colleagues we work with in various countries. Global Integrity then independently verifies the expertise and independence of prospective team members. For 2011, we received more than 450 CVs from individuals who expressed interest in serving on a country team in one of three distinct capacities: journalist, lead researcher, or peer reviewer.

After a competitive internal selection process, the most qualified researchers, journalists, and peer reviewers in each country are identified, invited, and sent a contract with specific instructions on the scope of the work. The total number of country team members for 2011 was roughly 144 individuals. Interested readers can review the instructions sent to each team member on the Indaba Help Desk (http://getindaba.org).

The Country Reports

The country assessments that make up the Global Integrity Report contain the following elements:

- **Corruption Timelines:** Compiled by Global Integrity researchers in Washington, these are unique political/historical timelines of significant corruption-related events at the national level. Designed as a quick reference resource, each timeline summarizes the main corruption-related events in the country from the past 10-15 years. Based largely on reliable English-language international and national media sources, the Corruption Timeline pulls together in an easy-to-read, chronological fashion what exists in the public domain about corruption in a particular country.

- **The Reporter's Notebooks:** Prepared by the lead in-country journalist, these are 1,250-word original essays analyzing the culture of corruption and state of governance in a particular country. This hard-hitting, impressionistic essay provides a snapshot of corruption in daily life as well as the recent history and context of the high-profile

corruption cases dominating that country's media. Reporter's Notebooks are reviewed by the country's respective peer reviewers.

- **The Integrity Scorecard:** Each country's 300-plus Integrity Indicators are aggregated to generate a country scorecard. Scorecards are prepared and scored by the lead in-country researcher and are reviewed by the country's respective peer reviewers.

Note: The cross-country Global Integrity Index was eliminated as an element of our annual round of national assessments beginning in 2010. A rationale for eliminating the index is provided below.

Details on the Integrity Scorecard

The **Integrity Scorecard** for each country examines three concepts:

1. The **existence** of public integrity mechanisms, including laws and institutions, which promote public accountability and limit corruption.
2. The **effectiveness** of those mechanisms.
3. The **access** that citizens have to those mechanisms.

More specifically, indicators of **existence** assess the laws, regulations, and agencies/entities or equivalently functioning mechanisms that are in place in a particular country. Indicators of **effectiveness** assess such aspects of public integrity as protection from political interference; appointments that support the independence of an agency; professional full-time staff and funding; independently initiated investigations; and imposition of penalties. Indicators of **citizen access** assess the ready availability of public reports to citizens, or publicly available information, within a reasonable time period and at a reasonable cost.

The Integrity Indicators are a unique instrument designed to provide a quantitative assessment of anti-corruption safeguards in a particular country at the national level. Carefully selected from a comprehensive review of the anti-corruption literature and other democratic governance sources, including Transparency International's National Integrity Systems framework, the Integrity Indicators are used to "score" the institutional framework that exists at the national level to promote public integrity and accountability and prevent abuses of power. For 2011, the Integrity Indicators were organized into six main categories and 23 sub-categories. They were:

1 Non-Governmental Organizations, Public Information and Media
1.1 Anti-Corruption Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
1.2 Media's Ability to Report on Corruption
1.3 Public Requests for Government Information

2 Elections
2.1 Voting & Party Formation
2.2 Election Integrity
2.3 Political Financing Transparency

3 Government Conflicts of Interest Safeguards & Checks and Balances
3.1 Conflicts of Interest Safeguards & Checks and Balances: Executive Branch
3.2 Conflicts of Interest Safeguards & Checks and Balances: Legislative Branch

3.3 Conflicts of Interest Safeguards & Checks and Balances: Judicial Branch
3.4 Budget Process Oversight & Transparency

4 Public Administration and Professionalism
4.1 Civil Service: Conflicts of Interest Safeguards and Political Independence
4.2 Whistle-blowing Protections
4.3 Government Procurement: Transparency, Fairness, and Conflicts of Interest Safeguards
4.4 Privatization of Public Administrative Functions: Transparency, Fairness, and Conflicts of Interest Safeguards

5 Government Oversight and Controls
5.1 National Ombudsman
5.2 Supreme Audit Institution
5.3 Taxes and Customs: Fairness and Capacity
5.4 Oversight of State-Owned Enterprises
5.5 Business Licensing and Regulation

6 Anti-Corruption Legal Framework, Judicial Impartiality, and Law Enforcement Professionalism
6.1 Anti-Corruption Law
6.2 Anti-Corruption Agency or Equivalent Mechanisms
6.3 Judicial Independence, Fairness, and Citizen Access to Justice
6.4 Law Enforcement: Conflicts of Interest Safeguards and Professionalism

Followers of the annual Global Integrity Report will notice that many of the labels we use to describe various categories and sub-categories of indicators beginning in 2010 have changed from previous years. This was done in an attempt to better communicate the concepts actually being assessed by the indicators themselves; previous labels such as "Government Accountability" or "Rule of Law" proved confusing to many readers of the Report given their vague definitions. The indicators themselves were not changed meaningfully in 2010; previous sub-category and category scores for a country can be compared over time despite the changes in labels in some cases.

Generating an Integrity Scorecard

Each Integrity Indicator is scored directly by the lead researcher and substantiated as far as possible with relevant references and additional comments. The data is relayed from the field to HQ via the internet using Indaba. There are two types of indicators: "in law" and "in practice." All indicators, regardless of type, are scored on the same ordinal scale of 0 to 100 with zero being the worst score and 100 perfect.

"In law" indicators provide an objective assessment of whether certain legal codes, fundamental rights, government institutions, and regulations exist. These "de jure" indicators are scored with a simple "yes" or "no" with "yes" receiving a 100 score and "no" receiving a zero.

"In practice" indicators address "de facto" issues such as implementation, effectiveness enforcement, and citizen access. As these usually require a more nuanced assessment, the "in practice" indicators are scored along an ordinal scale of zero to 100 with possible scores at 0, 25, 50, 75 and 100.

Lead researchers are required to provide a reference to substantiate each of their scores. This may be an interview conducted with a knowledgeable individual, a website link to a relevant report, or the name of a specific law or institution, depending on the particular indicator. Lead researchers are also offered the opportunity to include additional comments to support their score and reference for a particular indicator. These are particularly useful in capturing the nuances of a particular situation, namely the "Yes, but…" phenomenon which is often the reality in undertaking this type of research.

Personality, language, and culture can all affect the interpretation of a particular indicator and the score assigned to it. To minimize this effect and maximize inter-coder reliability, Global Integrity provides researchers and peer reviewers with scoring criteria for every single Integrity Indicator. The scoring criteria anchor each indicator and sub-indicator to a predefined set of criteria. In essence, the scoring criteria guide the lead researcher by suggesting, "If you see X on the ground, score this indicator in the following way." For binary yes/no "in law" indicators, scoring criteria are provided for both "yes (100)" and "no (0)" responses. For "in practice" indicators, scoring criteria are defined for each of the 100, 50, and 0 scores with 25 and 75 deliberately left undefined to serve as in between scoring options. Scoring criteria for each indicator can be accessed via any of our online Integrity Scorecards by hovering one's mouse over a given indicator's scoring scale.

In summary, a given indicator or sub-indicator has the following elements:

- Indicator question, provided by Global Integrity
- Indicator scoring criteria, provided by Global Integrity
- Indicator score (either yes (100)/no (0) or ordinal scale of 0 - 100 with steps at 25, 50, and 75), assigned by the lead researcher based on:
  - References, provided by the lead researcher
  - Comments (optional), provided by the lead researcher
  - Peer review comments (optional), as provided through a double blind peer review process (see more on the peer review process below).

Data Aggregation

For the purpose of producing a country's aggregate scorecard, a simple aggregation method is used. As described above, original indicator and sub-indicator values are assigned by the lead researcher for the country (some of those scores may be adjusted following the peer review process; see more below). Each indicator score is then averaged within its parent subcategory, which produces a subcategory score. The subcategory score is in turn averaged with the other subcategory scores into a parent category score. Category scores are averaged to produce an overall country score. The Global Integrity Report groups countries into five performance "tiers" according to a country's overall aggregated score:

- Very strong (90+)
- Strong (80+)
- Moderate (70+)
- Weak (60+)
- Very Weak (< 60)
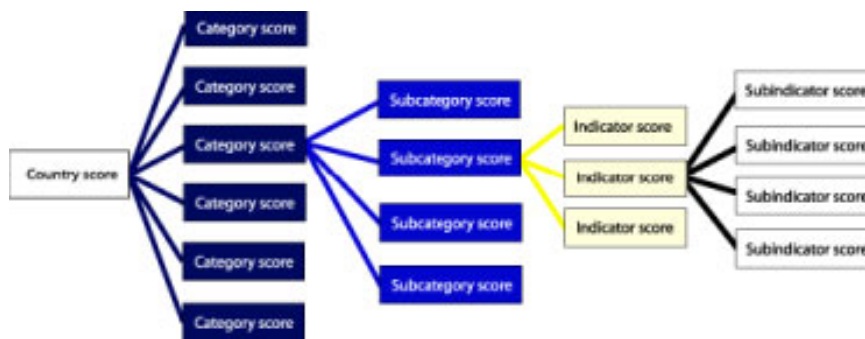
Because some aspects of governance and anti-corruption mechanisms are harder to measure definitively, some categories require a more complex matrix of sub-indicators questions than others. Thus, the categories are equally valued, even if some categories are derived from a more lengthy series of sub-indicators/ questions than others. Similarly, the subcategories are equally valued within their parent category.

In other words, each score (sub-indicators, indicator, and so on) is equally weighted with its peers addressing the same sub-category/category. However, indicators from different categories are not necessarily equally weighted. Our approach of using equally valued concepts and adding subordinate elements as needed has produced score weightings that reflect the six main conceptual categories evenly. Although we recognize the rationale for a non-equal weighting system (to give emphasis to issues of greater import), we have yet to develop a compelling defense for valuing certain categories, sub-categories, or indicators more importantly than others.

(Not) Generating the Global Integrity Index

Beginning with the Global Integrity Report**: 2010,** Global Integrity is no longer publishing an overall Global Integrity Index, which previously ranked countries according to their overall aggregate country score on the Integrity Indicators. Why the change in policy?

First, as we have reduced our scope of national coverage in the past two cycles of data gathering to focus an increasing amount of effort and resources on our Local Integrity Initiative projects (see http://local.globalintegrity.org for details), the utility and attractiveness of a country ranking has waned given the limited coverage of roughly 35 countries each year.

Second, the decision to cease publishing the Index was a conscious attempt to reinforce a key belief that we have come to embrace after many years of carrying out this kind of fieldwork: indices rarely change things. Publishing an index is terrific for the publishing organization in that it drives media coverage, headlines, and controversy.   They are very effective public relations tools. But a single number for a country stacked up against other countries has not proven, in our experience, to be an effective policymaking or advocacy tool. Country rankings are too blunt and generalized to be "actionable" and inform real rebate and policy choices.

We realize this decision may be controversial and welcome feedback on our policy shift, both positive and negative.

Peer Review Process

The importance of the peer review process cannot be overstated. Since Global Integrity utilizes an "expert assessment" approach to compile the Integrity Indicators and Reporter's Notebook, it is crucial that we employ quality control mechanisms to ensure our data and reporting are as accurate and balanced as possible. Individually contracted and carefully vetted peer reviewers, selected for their independence and expertise in particular countries, are asked to blindly review both the raw Reporter's Notebook and the raw Integrity Indicators through Indaba. The double-blind peer review process ensures that peer reviewers are unrestrained in their commentary, which likely adds to frankness when commenting on the draft country report. Peer review comments are used to interpret—and in some cases adjust—scores and reporting that they identify as containing errors, bias, or out-of-date information. Indicator score adjustments follow certain rules and generally require repetition (i.e., similar comments from multiple peer reviewers) or solid referencing of a factual dispute. See further details on this below (Final Scores).

In reviewing the Reporter's Notebook for the country, peer reviewers are asked to consider the following:

- Is the Reporter's Notebook factually accurate?
- Is the Reporter's Notebook fair? Is anything misrepresented or unclear?
- Are there any significant events or developments that were not addressed?

Peer reviewer comments on the Reporter's Notebook are captured in narrative, paragraph form and are published anonymously alongside the final Reporter's Notebook.

For the Integrity Indicators, peer reviewers are asked to consider the following:

- Is the particular Indicator or Sub-indicator scored by the lead researcher factually accurate?
- Are there any significant events or developments that were not addressed?
- Does the Indicator or Sub-indicator offer a fair and balanced view of the anti-corruption environment?
- Is the scoring consistent within the entire set or sub-set of Integrity Indicators?
- Is the scoring controversial or widely accepted? Is controversial scoring sufficiently sourced?
- Are the sources used reliable and reputable?

The peer review process for the data scorecard, like that of the Reporter's Notebook, does not assign direct attribution to peer review comments. This ensures that peer reviewers are unrestrained in their commentary. Peer review comments on the country's data scorecard are published alongside the final scorecard and play an important role in final scoring adjustments prior to publication.

With regard to peer review feedback on the Integrity Scorecard data, peer reviewers are offered one of four standardized choices in responding to a given indicator or sub-indicator, using the above guidance to evaluate each data point:

1. *"Yes, I agree with the score and have no comments to add."*

2. *"Yes, I agree with the score but wish to add a comment, clarification, or suggest another reference."* Peer reviewers then provide their comment or additional reference in a separate text box which is published alongside the original data.
3. *"No, I do not agree with the score."* In this third case, peer reviewers are asked to explain and defend their criticism of the score and suggest an appropriate alternative score or reference.
4. *I am not qualified to respond to this indicator.*

For 2011, Global Integrity retained the services of approximately 66 country peer reviewers for the annual around of country assessments, with a small number of peer reviewers reviewing multiple countries.

Regional and Methodology Peer Reviews:

Beginning with the 2011 Report, Global Integrity will also employ the services of regional peer reviewers to conduct a methodological review as well as provide an overview of regional trends in anti-corruption. Their expected output is a narrative report reviewing the methodology and a regional overview of the state of governance transparency in their concerned region, identifying the main trends (such as a country-by-country comparison). Seven regions are covered in the 2011 Report, with one peer reviewer assigned to each region for a total of seven regional peer reviewers. The regions are:

EU members and aspirants (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Germany, Ireland, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine)
Caucausus Trio (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia)
Americas (Nicaragua, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Venezuela)
Middle East and North Africa (Algeria, Jordan)
East Africa (Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Zimbabwe)
West Africa (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone)
Asia (China, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Vietnam)

Methodology Review:
Even though Global Integrity goes to great lengths to carefully define scoring criteria and to explain the methodology to the Lead Researchers and Peer Reviewers, we also understand that sometimes they will interpret scorecard questions differently, depending on varying factors and their corresponding effects.

Consider the following three examples, all taken from previous years' Global Integrity Reports.

"In practice, civil service asset disclosures are audited." One researcher may understand 'civil service' as *all* civil servants, while other researchers may understand it as only *senior* civil servants. The different interpretations may distort the scores assigned to the same indicator in different countries.

Another example refers to how the term 'audited' in that question may be interpreted. Some would give a high score based on whether there is an audit mechanism in place, even if it's applied randomly to only a small part of all the disclosures or only to those involved in

corruption investigations. However, others would score based on whether the audit is applied on an annual or even monthly basis.

Placing factors in context can sometimes be a challenge as well. For example, the Lead Researcher may consider that the passage of a new media law is reason to select a high score to the corresponding indicator. However, that interpretation could be at odds with expert assessments showing the new legislation is a really gag law.

Due to the wide spectrum of interpretations for any given question, scores will range accordingly but not always as desired.

The analytical process aims to address this issue through a high level examination of scorecard data to pinpoint results that seem anomalous or incongruent in any way. This will be followed by a drill-down assessment of the identified areas to determine whether or not they are supported by sufficient and accurate evidence.

The ultimate goal of a regional analysis is to assess consistency in application for refinement of internal methodologies. In our experience, inconsistencies arise in results namely through:

1) Subjective interpretation of scoring which can be minimized (although not eliminated) through refinement of scorecard questions and explicating expectations of researchers;

2) Lack of reference to historical information and/or results; and

3) Lack of reference to general or common perceptions and understandings.

Regional Analysis:

The second portion of the report consists of a qualitative understanding of the region's state of governance transparency and anti-corruption, grounded in a time and geographic-based analysis.

The narrative is the result of analyzing the research results and consists of pointing out the main governance and corruption trends for the assigned region, likely addressing questions such as which are the strongest and weakest areas for the region as a whole, possible reasons why one or other country stands out –for better or for worse- in any particular area, the implications for good governance/corruption, and whether scorecards confirm or question widely accepted perceptions about an issue/theme.

Understanding of broader transnational processes that affect countries in the region is highly desirable. Applying knowledge of the policies and development of multilateral and regional agencies vis-a-vis governance/accountability/anti-corruption (e.g., European Union, OSCE, etc.) to the region could also be useful.

We encourage analysts to draw comparisons (similarities and variations) based on the scorecards across countries to make generalizations about trends, patterns, and challenges within the region. Although anchored in local knowledge, a good regional analysis and review should move beyond the boundaries of a single country.

For example, based on their regional knowledge of current issues, the analyst may understand that executive power to be particularly strong and poorly reigned in by ineffective checks and balances/accountability mechanisms in the countries in the region. Or perhaps neo-patronage is a salient issue peculiar to the region, or decentralization is characterized by lack of accountability mechanisms, etc.

Final Scores

Global Integrity takes full and final responsibility for the scores contained in the Integrity Scorecard for each country. These scores are generated following an elaborate and collaborative review process that includes balancing information from several (sometimes conflicting) sources while being guided by the master scoring criteria.

Following the peer review process, Global Integrity staff identifies specific data points where peer reviewers have flagged problematic scores. The staff then engages the entire country team in a discussion of the issue in question and ultimately decides on appropriate changes, when necessary, to the original data based on the country team's feedback.

While Global Integrity makes every attempt to produce credible information, we welcome all feedback on the veracity and accuracy of our data. Please email Global Integrity with specific comments on indicator scores that you may not agree with, particularly with regard to factual accuracy.

Confidence Intervals

In 2007, Global Integrity began publishing margins of error for the top-level scores generated for countries. Beginning in 2010, however, we stopped publishing margins of error for the overall country-level scores due to a technical challenge associated with moving our research to the Indaba fieldwork platform. More importantly, our decision to not publish an overall Global Integrity Index diminished the need for us to remind readers of the Report that a 73 for Country X's overall score was likely not meaningfully different from a 72 for Country Y. Please see previous Global Integrity Report Methodology Whitepapers for an explanation of the techniques implemented to generate margins of error in past years.

Implementation Gap

Beginning in 2007, Global Integrity began to publish what we term "implementation gaps" for each country. The implementation gap refers to the difference between the country's legal framework for good governance and anti-corruption and the actual implementation and enforcement of that same legal framework. We generate an implementation gap only at the country score level as opposed to the category and/or sub-category levels.

The implementation gap is created by first generating a legal framework score and an actual implementation score for each country. These two values are generated through two separate calculations. In each case, we perform the same aggregation technique described above for the country's Integrity Indicators *except* that we first remove either all in law" or "in practice" indicators from the data set (for example, to generate the "legal framework" score, we first remove all "in practice" indicators from the country's data set and then perform the typical indicator aggregation technique described above). Once the legal framework and actual implementation scores have been generated, we simply subtract the actual score from the legal score to generate the implementation gap for the country.

Example:

56 (legal framework) − 26 (actual implementation) = 30 (implementation gap)

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