

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMME IN IRAQ



## Policy Paper on Financial Crime Investigations: An Integrated Approach

Financial Investigations – “Follow the money!”



**United Nations Development Programme**  
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[www.iq.undp.org](http://www.iq.undp.org)

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## Background

Complex organized crime and financial crimes, such as corruption, money laundering, and illicit accumulation of wealth, are prevalent criminal activities in Iraq, which fosters an atmosphere of privilege and injustice, and creates a major impediment to Iraq's economic recovery, stability, and development. Building institutional integrity and ethics in a country that must cope with invisible political and party affiliations, family ties, nepotism, and other patronage networks, which in many instances have contributed to corruption and money laundering scandals, constitutes an enormous challenge.

Since 2003, corruption has been perceived as systemic and endemic, presenting a major challenge for the country. Historical anti-corruption

efforts have been minimally effective for multiple reasons, including political instability and lack of sufficient resolve.<sup>1</sup> All rule of law system elements must function cooperatively and cumulatively to be able to effectively address corruption. First and foremost, the government should consider promoting a comprehensive enforcement policy and a roadmap going forward.

The efforts for designing anti-corruption policies must be based on international standards, including the United Nations Convention against Corruption<sup>2</sup>. Iraq must also strive for membership of anti-corruption mechanisms, such as GRECO and MONEYVAL.<sup>3</sup> Peer pressure generated by such mechanisms could increase the sense of accountability and influence progress.

## Introduction

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Country Office in Iraq, with funding from the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), is implementing a project titled 'Strengthening Justice Sector Capacities to Uphold the Rule of Law in Iraq'. The goal of this project is to strengthen the competencies of investigative judges to lead and conduct complex organized crime and financial crime investigations, including money laundering, corruption, and illicit financing and to improve the policies and procedures for investigations and prosecutions of complex organized crime and financial crimes.

The project will also collaborate with a parallel INL-funded International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Programme (ICITAP) supporting investigative competencies of the Iraqi police.

The UNDP assessment completed in February 2021,<sup>4</sup> along with this Policy Paper, will constitute a key finding brief for the Chief Justice and members of the Supreme Judicial Council to bring awareness to needed changes in the investigation and prosecution protocol within Iraq. These initiatives will reinforce the UNDP and Iraqi Government's partnership and commitment to combating corruption, reaffirmed through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Prime Minister's Office and UNDP, dated 9 December 2020, and support the UNDP's anti-corruption reform agenda, in conjunction with key governmental institutions at both the federal level and within the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The proposed UNDP project will also reinforce the UNDP's broader efforts on anti-corruption. These efforts support the development of strategies, policies, and legislation to prevent corruption, and

1 Transparency International, Will Rampant Corruption Spark an Arab Autumn? 24 October 2019. Available at <<https://www.transparency.org/en/news/will-rampant-corruption-spark-an-arab-autumn>>

2 The United Nations Convention Against Corruption of 2005 ratified by the Council of Representatives of Iraq pursuant to Law number 35 of 2007. Available at <<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/>>

3 The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) was established in 1999 by the Council of Europe to monitor States' compliance with the organization's anti-corruption standards (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/greco/about-greco>). Moneyval is the common and official name of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism. Moneyval is a monitoring body of the Council of Europe (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/greco>).

4 "Strengthening Justice Sector Capacities to Uphold the Rule of Law in Iraq" - Assessment, 28 Feb 2021, UNDP Iraq.

better equip public institutions to implement anti-corruption activities, which will improve public services, reduce inequalities, strengthen rule of law, and rebuild trust between Iraqi citizens and public institutions.

Iraq needs an efficient and proactive tool to investigate and prosecute financial crimes because gaining assets is the underlying reason for, and motivation behind, most criminal offences. Forfeiture of assets that have resulted from a criminal offence supports the rule of law and the moral principle that no one can benefit from a crime. The police and prosecution authorities in Iraq have had some success in this area, but there is room for improvement.

This paper will focus on the skills and expertise, techniques, methods, and procedures necessary to carry out investigations of complex, financial crime cases by Iraqi judges and investigators. The paper will outline specific policies, capabilities and procedures for the investigation and prosecution of complex organised crime and financial crime that need to be improved and establish a roadmap for implementing those policies.

## UNDP Assessment Key Findings

UNDP's assessment of February 2021<sup>5</sup> identified strengths and areas for improvement within the Iraqi criminal investigation and prosecution structure.

The Iraqi legal system follows the tradition of the French/Egyptian model. The investigative judge is by law the central investigating authority. Investigations conducted by the investigative agencies require approval and supervision by investigative judges as part of the judiciary under the Supreme Judicial Council. Therefore, trust and cooperation between the judiciary and investigative authorities is critical to efficient and effective investigations of complex organized and financial crimes, as the efforts to combat these types of criminal activities require cooperation and swift actions by the relevant investigative authorities. Hence, it is necessary to strengthen the relationship between judges and key investigative authorities, such as the Commission of Integrity (CoI) and the Ministry of Interior (MoI), as well as those agencies that support investigative efforts, such as the Anti-Money Laundering/Counter Financing of Terrorism (AML-CFT) Office, the Federal Board of Supreme Audit (FBoSA), the Public Procurement Offices in the Ministries, the Business Registration Office, the Property Registration Office, and the departments of the General Commission for Taxes.

The assessment included a range of interviews with representatives from a number of institutions listed in Figure 1.

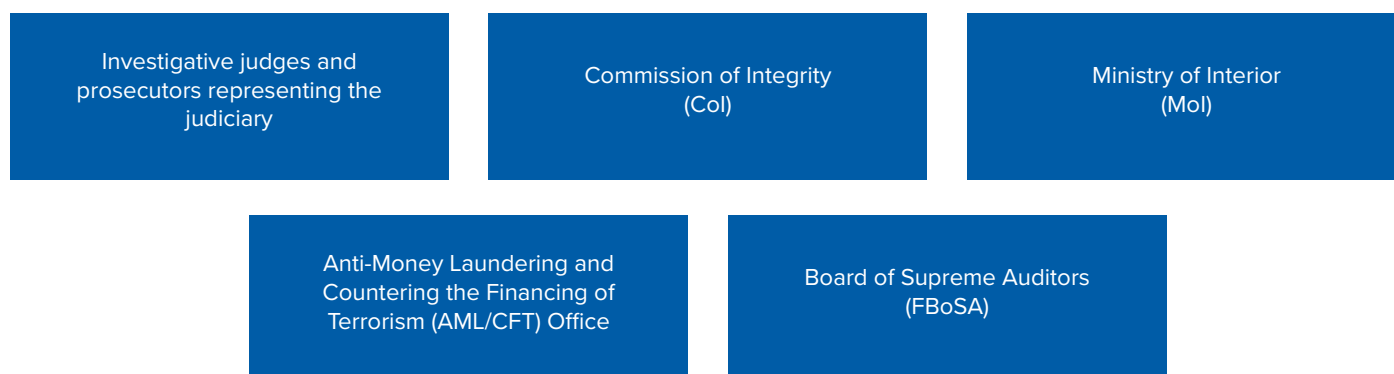


Figure 1: Institutions interviewed as part of the UNDP assessment.

<sup>5</sup> Baseline Assessment Report within the Framework of the Project Entitled 'Strengthening Justice Sector Capacities to uphold the Rule of Law in Iraq' Financial Crime Investigations in Iraq, February 2021, UNDP, Iraq.

UNDP appreciated having the opportunity to interview these officials. All interviews were conducted in a frank atmosphere, despite the often-sensitive subject matter discussed, and many interviews lasted far longer than planned. The interviews showed the eagerness of essential interlocutors to support measures that more effectively address corruption in Iraq and hold corrupt individuals and financial fraudsters accountable. The recognition of shortcomings and the willingness of representatives of the institutions to introduce changes to achieve this objective constitutes a solid foundation for introducing more robust procedures for investigating financial crimes.

The assessment identified the following concerns in the Iraqi system of financial investigations:

- **Financial investigations are mostly initiated after criminal charges have been filed** and not because investigators discovered suspicious transactions or wealth accumulation.
- **Delays of financial investigations** lead to increased risks that assets are more difficult to be traced and/or are already taken out of the country.
- **Communications** between investigative judges and investigators **rely on exchange of correspondence and, as a result, slows the investigative process.**
- **Exchange of information and cooperation between the investigative functions and the supporting institutions needs improvement. Additionally, there is a need for better coordination** between law enforcement agencies and investigative judges.
- **There must be a system of prioritisation of serious financial crime cases** and a mechanism of setting minor cases aside or terminating those cases.
- **Overreliance on the use of direct evidence** to the detriment of the use of circumstantial evidence.
- **A program of professional development should be instituted for specialized judges to ensure long-term sustainability,** as judges are

currently regularly rotated between courts for career advancement, thus losing institutional knowledge.

- **Lack of regular, specialised training** of investigative judges, police officers and investigators in financial investigative techniques; and lack of long-term specialisations in the judiciary and law enforcement on financial crime investigations.
- **The use of financial forensic skills in investigations and prosecutions must be emphasized to raise awareness of its value to successful case completion.**
- **The use of a proactive approach to information development and initiation of investigations must be encouraged by the investigative judges to motivate police and investigators to self-develop cases based on available information.**

As discussed with officials during the UNDP assessment regarding the use of financial investigations, the judiciary and government of Iraq should follow the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF),<sup>6</sup> as amended in October 2020, which places emphasis on building capacity for the implementation of complex financial investigations in parallel with criminal investigations, through specialized units within the police (both at the central and provincial levels), employing and training experts, and introducing modern investigative techniques. While the FATF recommendations set international standards, it also recognizes that countries have diverse legal, administrative, and operational frameworks, and different financial systems, so that individual countries cannot all take identical measures. However, countries should implement the recommendations through measures adapted to their circumstances.

The rule of law agencies in Iraq should modify their methods of investigation of complex organized crime and financial crimes. Greater emphasis must be placed on developing the financial evidence needed to strengthen the predicate cases and to identify proceeds of crime for ultimate confiscation of assets.

6 See <http://www.fatf-gafi.org/media/fatf/documents/recommendations/pdfs/FATF-40-Rec-2012-Arabic.pdf>.

## Iraqi Criminal Procedure Code

The term “financial investigation” is not defined nor found in the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) of Iraq (adopted in 1971) and, in fact, only two articles (74 and 75) refer to documents. The term money is used only in the context of asset forfeiture. Iraq’s CPC, Chapter 3 – Seizure of Defendant’s Assets at Article 183 states, in part, the following:

“The investigative judge and the court may seize the assets of a person accused of committing a felony involving movable or immovable property. The seizure will include *all funds that were earned via these assets or which have been received as compensation for them*. Items, which may not otherwise be seized in accordance with the law, *may be seized if it is proven that they were obtained as a consequence of an offence*” (emphasis added).<sup>7</sup>

As can be seen, Article 183 of the CPC details the seizure of illegally gained assets; however, the CPC is silent regarding the techniques to determine the funds or compensation earned, or methods to prove “they were obtained as a consequence of an offence.”

The term “financial investigation” should be defined and be consistent with Recommendation No. 30 of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

The term “financial investigation” should be defined, and be consistent with Recommendation No. 30 of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which recommends an enquiry into the financial affairs related to criminal activity with a view to identifying the extent of criminal networks, that is, the scale of criminality, identifying and tracing the proceeds of crime, terrorist funds or any other assets that are, or may become, subject to confiscation; and developing evidence that can be used in criminal proceedings. The financial investigation should be thought of as a detailed, organized reconstruction of financial transactions, or events, for a specific period and for a specific individual or entity – where the money comes from and where it goes.

The main objective of a financial investigation is to identify and document money flows during criminal activities, that is, to discover where the money comes from (origin), how it is converted and used and, where it flows (disposition) (see Figure 2). The connection between the origin of money and its beneficiaries, the moment when the money is received, and the place where it is deposited/transferred/disposed can provide information about criminal activities and evidence about the committed criminal offence.

Law enforcement authorities’ and investigative judges’, who direct those authorities, should understand financial investigations that is consistent with the definition provided by the FATF.

Investigative judges should train and work directly with specially selected investigators and police officers. The goal should be to develop the understanding that financial investigations must be conducted simultaneously by the various specialist investigators, and the most important pieces of evidence connected to those investigations must be gathered at the same time as evidence for the predicate criminal offence. Financial investigations should both assist in resolving the case, as well as defining and identifying the flow of monies and assets.

## Case Management

The management in some investigative authorities often resist attempts to change existing investigative procedures. In some cases, managers are not aware of the required competences to identify and address the existing gaps in procedures needed to be effective in financial investigations. Additionally, the absence of a stable, long-term strategy impacts the work of the responsible investigative institutions. This is in large measure because not all Iraqi ministries and institutions have permanently appointed Director Generals (DGs). Many DGs are appointed in “acting” positions to ensure that they can be easily removed from office. This leads to the appointment of new DGs with every change in political leadership, hence negatively impacting the

<sup>7</sup> Iraq’s Criminal Procedure Code, Chapter 3 – Seizure of Defendant’s Assets at Article 183.

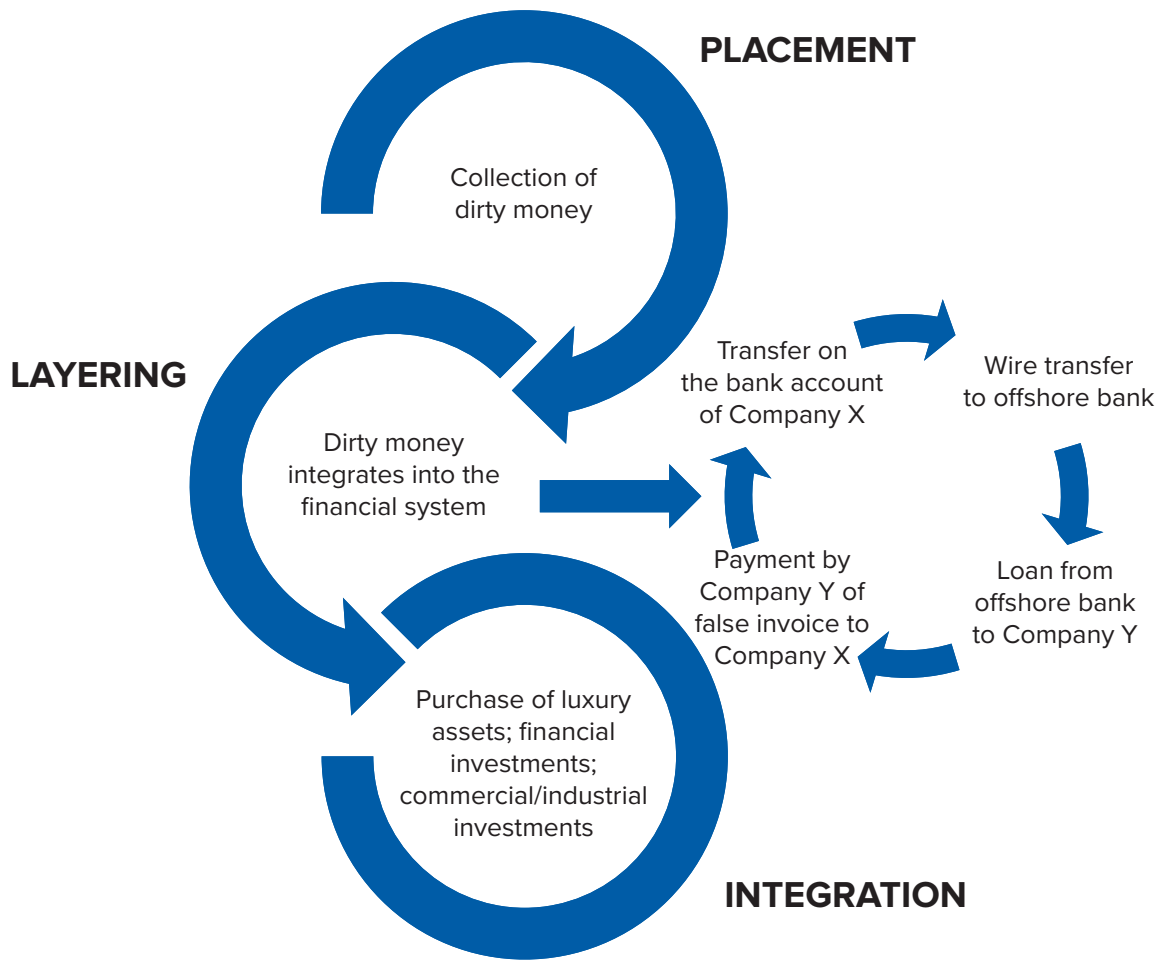


Figure 2: Typical money laundering scheme

work of the permanent mid-level management, and subsequently the operational level investigator.

### Financial Investigations

Financial investigations should be one of Iraq’s priorities to combat organized crime, corruption, money laundering and financial crimes. Adoption of a short-term to mid-term plan to improve financial investigations is urgently required. This plan should address case initiation procedures; techniques of investigation; gathering, analysis, summarizing, and presentation of evidence; case management, and preparation of evidence for presentation to the court.

It is not impossible to improve the capacities of the relevant institutions regarding best-practice

financial investigation techniques. Training and support can be provided to investigative judges and investigators, and the agencies that support those investigations. Competencies at the investigator and supervisory levels can be increased through effective training efforts and an introduction to different investigative procedures. There ought to be an understanding of the prosecution value of integrated investigative methods as a means of developing the necessary evidence to successfully prosecute complex organized crime and financial crime cases.

It is important to develop and implement understandable investigative procedures and encourage judges, investigators, and supporting organizations to cooperate and coordinate their investigative efforts.



The UNDP assessment recommends that it is important to develop and implement understandable investigative procedures and encourage judges, investigators, and supporting organizations to cooperate and coordinate their investigative efforts. Additionally, the trial judges, who are the trier of facts, should be made aware of the methods that are being introduced to the prosecution so that they are aware of the changes in evidence use and presentation that will come before them in trial proceedings. Short, concise workshops can facilitate this introduction to changes.

## Developing Competencies

The UNDP assessment findings recommend a short-term plan to develop the competencies of investigative judges, investigators, police, and support institutions, which should include the following:

- Develop and conduct a financial investigations **training** programme for investigative and support functions.
- Develop a **handbook** on investigation and prosecution procedures in collaboration with Iraqi subject matter experts.
- Increase **cooperation** between investigative judges, law enforcement investigators and support institutions.
- Encourage the use of the **FATF approach** to investigations.
- Increase awareness of the value of **financial forensics** in investigations.

## Training

The challenges of financial crime investigations and prosecutions stem from their perceived complexity. On the one hand, there are offenders, who often pay financial experts to help them create complex transactions that cover the traces of their criminal activity and conceal and launder illicit gains. On the other hand, representing the law, there are trial judges, investigative judges, investigators, and police, who do not have this level of financial expertise. A balance or parity of knowledge can only be obtained through training and experience.

Any activities developed to improve investigative, prosecution, and litigation competencies must focus on complex organized and financial crimes investigations. Additionally, any training in this specialized area must address how judges and investigators can approach cases of unexplained accumulation of wealth, measures of temporary freezing, and recovery of illicit gains, to include identifying and tracing funds within the country and abroad.

A policy on financial investigations should reflect a comprehensive approach to combating financial crimes. Such a comprehensive approach is also needed when it comes to training. All investigative judges, investigators, and police who investigate these types of cases should undergo a rigorous training programme developed from the findings of the UNDP assessment. A majority of the training needs were expressed by the judges, investigators, and police themselves. This training should be conducted in coordination with the respective investigation agency's training institute to ensure sustainability. The training should include topics on how to effectively organize, staff, and manage task force investigations.

There are approximately 400 investigative judges in Iraq supported by one to two judicial investigators each. Ongoing specialized and professional education of investigative judges, investigators, and police requires improvement, which results in investigations being conducted in ways that limit the opportunity for success. There is often a lack of best practice experience regarding complex organized and financial crime. Since these types of cases rely heavily on documents and circumstantial evidence, and since investigative judges normally rely on documents received from investigators, it is critical that investigative teams have a thorough knowledge of documents and document analysis. These skills can be developed and reinforced through training.

Investigative judges are often unfamiliar with the experience and capabilities of the investigators in various agencies. As a result, those resources are

often not used to the benefit of the case. The use of investigation teams is rare, and the composition of the investigation teams appears to happen randomly, without informed decision-making on how, and with what support, to develop each case evidentially. This understanding can be developed through training in a task force environment.

The investigative judge regularly supervises investigations with an emphasis on developing the evidence necessary to prove the predicate criminal offence and or activity, without regard to developing the financial evidence needed to strengthen the predicate cases and identify instruments and proceeds of crime for ultimate forfeiture.

Developing a pattern of circumstantial evidence must be emphasised. The UNDP assessment revealed that most investigations only develop direct evidence supporting the charges, with little emphasis on developing circumstantial evidence.

The UNDP assessment determined that the training beneficiary institutions require instruction on the following areas:

- Criminal investigations and crime detections skills.
- Preparing, implementing, and following up on strategies and tactics to enhance integrity and combat corruption.
- International expertise to identify movable and immovable property and best practices to obtain, analyse, and present evidence.
- Methods of investigating and collecting information on fugitives and assets.
- Modern methods of investigating and detecting financial crimes.

Based on the training needs highlighted by judges, prosecutors, and representatives of the Commission of Integrity, the Ministry of Interior, and the Police Directorate for Organized Crime and Financial Crimes, a program, which follows a ten-step investigation and prosecution process, should be developed. The process is as follows:



To address these core investigative/prosecution functions the following training curriculum topics are suggested:

- The value of financial investigations: identifying motive, opportunity, and means.
- Financial profiling: identifying known and unknown profile.
- Case planning and preparation: using the joint investigative judge and investigator/police approach to investigative planning.
- Sources of information: government, public, and banking; understanding human intelligence development, and the use of other sources to gather evidence.
- Case organization: evidence chain of custody; administration/duties of the investigation team in long-term task force formation; organizing, controlling, and presenting evidence obtained in the investigative process.

- Financial document analysis: analysis of multiple types of documentary evidence obtained during the financial investigation.
- Use of search warrants: overview/checklists/procedures/evidence control.
- Financial interviews/questioning/interrogation: interview preparation and planning.
- Evidence collection and evaluation: legality and relevance of evidence collected.
- Relationship between the investigative judge, the Col, the AML-CFT Office, the Mol, and the FBoSA: duties, expectations, responsibilities, and coordination.
- Multidisciplinary task force investigations: combining predicate and integrated financial investigation, money laundering crimes, and asset tracing activities.
- Documenting unknown funds/unexplained accumulation of wealth: evidence collection, presentation, and relevance.
- Use of circumstantial evidence: how to present a pattern of indirect evidence from multiple evidentiary sources.
- Report writing: how to present the elements of a crime, fact pattern, and evidence in a concise, understandable manner.
- Asset recovery: identifying illicitly gained assets throughout the investigation.
- Money laundering investigations (Anti-Money Laundering Law).
- Case management, case prioritization, resource management, suspension, or termination of minor or unsubstantiated cases.

The training topics identified could be presented in four-day seminars, bringing investigative judges and expert investigators together in one location. Each seminar could have 25 – 30 participants, divided into five or six groups of five participants. These five participants would form exercise task forces/operational teams consisting of investigative judges, Col investigators, police investigators and one representative from a supporting institution, such as the AML-CFT Office, FBoSA, Public Procurement

Offices in the Ministries, Business Registry Office, and the Property Registration Office.

Training could be presented in four-day seminars, bringing investigative judges and expert investigators together in one location.

During the four-day training each “task force” would be required to investigate a case involving organized crime activities, corruption, money laundering, and illicit accumulation of wealth. The investigation would begin on day one of the seminar and continue throughout, with periodic introduction of course content needed for each phase of the investigation.

Throughout the training, investigative cooperation is reinforced, and the value of the multiple disciplines utilized in the task force approach is emphasised.

## Retaining Trained Expertise

Another accompanying measure must be to keep those trained personnel in departments and directorates that investigate financial crimes and permit them to develop a career with those specialisations. Personnel rotating in and out of these positions leads to loss of acquired expertise and experience, and ultimately makes capacity building endeavours unsustainable.

## Handbook on Financial Investigations

It is necessary to develop a handbook/guidelines for conducting financial investigations.

The assessment findings highlight the necessity for the development and preparation of a handbook/guidelines for conducting financial investigations. This handbook, which would be prepared in accordance with the Iraqi Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code, would detail investigative procedures from case initiation, financial investigation steps, collaboration requirements between institutions through the preparation of a criminal report.

During the training described above, this handbook would be introduced and applied throughout the workshop. The handbook would summarize Penal Code articles pertinent to the case being studied, investigative procedures, evidence gathering and analysis, and preparation of a criminal report. Prior to use in the training sessions, a meeting would be held with operational level management from the Supreme Judicial Council and investigative agencies to agree on the order and use. The first few sessions of training will be used to seek feedback, modify, and develop the handbook for its ultimate publication and use.

## Institutional Cooperation in Investigations

Lack of cooperation and exchange of information between investigative judges and investigators, on the one hand, and supporting government institutions that may possess important information for investigations, on the other hand, negatively impacts the frequency of success of initial detection and further investigation of financial criminal offences.

Cooperation between law enforcement authorities and other government authorities, in its current form, is often slow and affects the investigation. An obvious example for this is exchange of information. The police and investigative judges are required to wait for feedback from other government authorities for long periods of time, and once such information is received it is often poorly processed, late and cannot be used. Also, at case initiation, requests for information filed by investigators and investigative judges need to be worded in such a way that there is no confusion to the requested institution regarding the information needed. Requests for information made by investigative judges and investigators must be clear and specific for them to receive a quick and specific answer. There is little two-way communication between investigative judges, investigators, and other government authorities.

The concerns stated above clearly show that improved communication and cooperation between the investigative judge, investigator, and supporting institution would increase the effectiveness of the investigation process.

To remove this shortcoming, every authority that comes across facts indicative of financial crimes, which may be used as evidence in criminal proceedings or lead to evidence, while performing activities within its purview, should have a liaison function to coordinate with investigative judges, investigators, and police. The supporting agencies that could potentially assign liaison officers with each other are the Organised Crime Directorate of the Mol, the Commission of Integrity, the AML-CFT Office, the Tax Administration, the Customs Administration, the Business Registers Office, the Federal Board of Supreme Audit, the Property Registration Office, and the Public Procurement Office.

Liaison officers could effectively transfer knowledge and skills to investigative judges, investigators, and police.

Liaison officers could effectively transfer knowledge and skills to investigative judges, investigators, and police. These liaison officers could share their knowledge, skills, experience, and expertise by taking part in task forces/operational teams established by investigative judges, where they could be embedded, or on call.

A liaison officer bridges the gap between the institution that embedded him/her and the authority in which he/she was embedded. A liaison officer enables authorities to recognize additional ways of cooperation and enables faster exchange of information. However, those selected liaison officers must be incentivised to be proactive in their work approach or their appointments risk not adding quality to the interaction between institutions.

The most complex cases of financial crime require the highest degree of cooperation of government authorities with the police and investigative judges to efficiently manage investigation and criminal prosecution.

If there is a complex case that requires the presence of officers of different institutions and a multidisciplinary approach, the investigative judge should form an *ad hoc* task force to handle such a case.

Memoranda of understanding could be developed between the investigating institutions and the supporting institutions to institutionalise enhanced collaborations. These memoranda could establish procedures for exchange of information and procedures for assignment of personnel to assist the investigating judge and investigating institution.

## Multi-disciplinary approach to investigations

A task force approach to investigations requires a multi-disciplinary team that brings diverse skills and experience to an investigation.

A task force approach to investigations requires a multi-disciplinary team that brings diverse skills and experience to an investigation. The judiciary should establish a method or procedure to form such task forces.

A task force is led by an investigative judge and comprised of police officers, other specialised investigators, such as from the Col, and representatives of other government authorities, depending on the case.

Investigative judges' capacities should be reinforced to manage task forces. Training activities will include skills development for investigative judges to realize international best practices to manage task forces. A task force is not a tool for daily use; it should be used exclusively for the most difficult or most serious criminal cases. Each task force is formed to meet a special objective, and its success and results will mostly depend on the skills of the leader in the task force and his/her ability to manage the group and provide guidance to its members to utilise their capacities.

Inter-agency cooperation must be approached strategically considering that the objective of *ad hoc* task forces is to enable the exchange of information and skills to support the work in progress in specific cases.

## Financial Forensics

Manipulation of goods and services, offering bribes to persons responsible for managing public contracts with the intention to obtain more favourable consideration, tax evasion, abuses of public procurement, concealing of illicit gains and the financing of terrorism are practices requiring the ability to follow the flow of funds and identify desired evidence. As economic transactions can be complex, the legal knowledge and skills of investigative judges alone do not suffice for conducting efficient criminal investigations, in particular when accounting issues are present. For this reason, investigative judges should have an awareness and working understanding of financial forensics (however, they are not required to become forensic experts themselves, only to know when and how to use forensic experts). Forensic accounting is a multidisciplinary area that combines knowledge of finances, accounting, auditing, banking and exchange operations, information systems, knowledge of the legal framework, the criminal procedure code, the procedures of government institutions, investigation techniques and other financial skills. All this combined is vital to clarify facts and economic transactions for the purpose of criminal proceedings.

The UNDP assessment revealed that even though some institutions have so-called forensic units, those units often have no financial forensic capability. A financial forensic capability is important to identify criminal activity from the financial perspective; the expert should also be familiar with investigations and evidentiary techniques. Similarly, a forensic accountant must know how to present findings, both orally and in writing, and to have a probing mentality.

Financial forensic investigators should assist investigative judges in resolving investigative issues complicated because of the complexity of cases such as: providing a description or definition of what happened in a financial transaction, detecting, and identifying the offender through financial transactions, detecting where and when the offence was committed through financial transactions, and the scope of damage in criminal activity. Answers to those questions are necessary for successful criminal proceedings. This is where a financial forensic investigator can find traces and assist the

investigative judge and the police with their financial investigations to gather the evidence in support of the charges. This expertise and knowledge can be enhanced through a rigorous financial investigative techniques course as described above.

A financial forensic investigator can assist the investigative judge and the police with their financial investigations to gather the evidence in support of the charges.

## Conclusion

The implementation of a rigorous training programme, adoption of investigative procedures, and detailing them in an official handbook, increasing cooperation between investigating judges and specialised investigators, and between those institutions that support investigations, introducing a multi-disciplinary approach to investigations, and emphasizing the use of financial forensics in investigations are vital steps in introducing a new approach with consequent results in prosecution success.

By implementing forward-looking plans, a country can improve its system of financial investigations, with the aim of protecting society from the damaging consequences that organized crime and financial crimes pose for political and economic development.

Through improved collaboration of relevant agencies, by introducing new profiles of experts, and by continuous training of all participants in the investigation process (i.e., the judiciary,

law enforcement and institutions that maintain information important for financial investigations daily), Iraq could take a significant step forward.

The outcome of that plan would be a modern system of financial investigations, led by an efficient judiciary, which promptly and skilfully responds to signs or reports of financial crimes and undertakes proactive investigations.

The introduction of a modern system of financial investigations would increase citizens' trust in the judiciary and law enforcement because of efficient investigation, adjudication and confiscation of assets resulting from criminal offences. Speedily and efficiently gathered evidence by investigations would result in more convictions. Especially in more serious financial crime cases, it would become an instrument to hold the most harmful perpetrators to account. This would send a clear message dissuading many more people from engaging in corrupt practices.





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