Conditions of Collective Commitment in Sector-Specific Coordinated Governance Initiatives

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Abstract

Although both the problem of corruption and its detrimental effects on society, economy, and environment has widely been recognized, corruption remains one of the most challenging problems of today. In light of globalization, the exclusive focus on compliance-oriented measures such as sharpening laws seems to be more and more ineffective. Apparently, the problem is not so much a lack of anti-corruption regulation, but rather a lack of enforcement of existing regulatory frameworks. This governance gap is increasingly tackled by the business sector. As a consequence, new governance mechanisms characterized by the involvement of non-state actors have emerged in recent years, in an attempt to fill this gap.

These Coordinated Governance Initiatives in which companies along with representatives of other societal sectors join forces to tackle the problem of corruption have not been in the focus of research so far. More research is needed particularly on the effectiveness of these collective anti-corruption efforts to explain whether this approach is useful to curb corruption. Therefore, we attempt to identify potential success factors of Coordinated Governance Initiatives that aim to curb corruption by means of a qualitative multiple-case study.

Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of three different initiatives. Additionally, secondary data sources were examined. Three different anti-corruption initiatives were selected: the Ethics Management of the Bavarian Construction Industry (EMB), the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), and the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN). We found five success factors and one basic prerequisite for sector-specific Coordinated Governance Initiatives. Although the identification of success factors of Coordinated Governance Initiatives is just the first step in the assessment of these initiatives, results indicate that a collective commitment obviously matters when it comes to fighting corruption.

Keywords:

Coordinated Governance Initiatives; anti-corruption; collective commitment; multi-stakeholder initiatives

Introduction

Although both the problem of corruption and its detrimental effects on society, economy, and environment have widely been recognized, corruption remains one of the most challenging problems of today. Regarding the problem of corruption it has long been a common approach to expand the regulatory framework by sharpening laws, thereby strengthening criminal codes and punitive structures. However, such compliance-oriented measures often have appeared to be ineffective (Misangyi, Weaver, & Elms, 2008, p. 752). Especially in light of globalization, more punitive approaches seem to be less feasible at the global level (Levy, 2011). In many countries there is a great discrepancy between internationally adopted legal frameworks and the practice of law enforcement and legal prosecution (Khaghaghordyan, 2014, p. 157). Thus, there seems to be a governance gap with regard to anti-corruption, which manifests itself not so much in a lack of regulation, but more in a lack of enforcement of existing regulatory frameworks.

Leading scholars in the field, such as Kaufmann (2005), Lambsdorff (2007), Mungiu-Pippidi (2011), Rothstein (2011), and Pieth (2012) have criticized that in the past too much emphasis has been put on prosecution and not enough on prevention. If the desired outcome is not achieved because laws are existent to a large extent, but not applied appropriately, it may be time for a paradigm shift towards a more indirect and incentive- and prevention-based approach to corruption.

Coordinated Governance Initiatives pursue such an incentive- and prevention-based approach. This novel, collective approach to combating corruption stresses the need for self-regulatory efforts and the involvement of the business sector. However, Coordinated Governance Initiatives (CGIs) have not been in the focus of research so far. Thus, the body of knowledge regarding these kinds of initiatives is still small, particularly concerning the evaluation of their success. The need to further study those anti-corruption initiatives is expressed by a number of scholars (Corrigan, 2014; Frynas, 2010; Lucke & Lütge, 2011; Meissner, 2013; Søreide & Truex, 2013). Baumann-Pauly, Nolan, Heerden, and Samway (2016) particularly name effectiveness as one of the current most important research topics.

The aim of this paper is to add to our understanding of these collective anti-corruption efforts. The main research question is as follows: What are success factors of sector-specific Coordinated Governance Initiatives that aim to curb corruption? Since the field of Coordinated Governance

Initiatives is in a relatively nascent stage, we carry out an explorative investigation. In line with Klitgaard (2012) who explicitly hints at case studies as a method of evaluation that could possibly provide valuable insights into these collaborative initiatives against corruption, we use multiple-case studies to identify potential success factors of CGIs. Success factors are defined here as essential influencing variables which increase the probability that an initiative's medium and long-term objectives are achieved (Geibler, 2010, p. 239). We regard the identification of success factors by means of a qualitative study as a first step in assessing the initiatives' effectiveness. Similar to the Corruption Perceptions Index issued by Transparency International, we work with the perceptions of respondents with regard to the CGIs' success[1].

In the following we will give an overview of the literature on collective anti-corruption efforts. We then describe the multiple-case study design, including the purposive sampling strategy, the sources of empirical evidence, as well as the methods of data collection and analysis. In the main part we present and discuss the empirical data on CGIs. Based on these findings we draw some conclusions for the theory and practice of future collective action-corruption efforts.

Theoretical background

Coordinated Governance Initiatives are defined as a form of collaborative arrangement, consisting of either purely private or public-private initiatives. They represent non-binding, voluntary initiatives in prisoners' dilemma situations (Abbott & Snidal, 2008). CGIs describe a dynamic, network-like approach, within which a range of different joint activities take place, all with the aim of contributing to the solution of a collectively identified governance problem.

We prefer the term 'Coordinated Governance Initiative' to the more common 'Collective Action' because the latter has become a catch-all term for a range of different initiatives and approaches in recent years, often causing confusion instead of clarifying things (Pieth, 2012, p. 5). For example, 'Collective Action' can encompass all forms of collaboration, irrespective of the type of actors that join forces (only competitors or other stakeholders as well), or the goal that is pursued (tackling corruption or other societal problems, such as environmental pollution or sustainability

[1] To make sure we would receive a well-balanced (and not overly positive) picture, we also interviewed a number of independent informants for each initiative. Additionally, we examined documents to compare the findings derived from the interviews against the statements made in those documents.

issues as well). As opposed to this, the CGI term is in our view more precise: Four core principles are the common denominator which all CGIs adhere to, following in broad terms Lobel (2012) and Abbott and Snidal (2008).

First, in Coordinated Governance Initiatives private actors play a central role. Representatives of the business sector as well as actors from civil society come together to tackle governance problems, resulting in the creation of either exclusively private or public-private initiatives. Unlike in traditional regulatory anti-corruption schemes, the state here takes on a rather modest role, being one actor among many. The private sector's new role also reflects a paradigm shift insofar as the business sector is no longer seen solely as part of the corruption problem, but rather as part of the solution. In actual fact, companies have a great interest in fighting corruption. Doing business in an environment that is characterized by a high level of corruption, threatens business in a number of ways. Companies need to cope with an often uncertain investment climate and legal uncertainty (Mauro, 1995). As corruption is highly disapproved by society, companies caught bribing also face considerable reputational risks in addition to financial risks due to the imposed fines (Hess, 2009). Moreover, since anti-corruption enforcement has been improved in recent years, companies today face a higher risk of being caught and paying higher fines (Pieth, 2012). Thus, in most cases, the risk outweighs the potential benefit. Therefore, various scholars have pointed at the pivotal role business plays in curbing corruption internationally (Kaufmann, 2005; Petkoski, Warren, & Laufer, 2009).

Second, CGIs are characterized by a decentralized regulatory authority in two ways (Abbott & Snidal, 2008). On the one hand, regulatory responsibilities *within* initiatives are shared between the state and private actors. On the other hand, there is also a decentralization of regulatory authority *among* initiatives. Coordinated Governance Initiatives have significantly grown in number in recent years, leading to a great diversity of initiatives. Since no initiative has authority over any other, one can talk of a highly decentralized regulatory authority in the field.

Third, initiatives are mostly of voluntary nature. However, 'voluntary' is a malleable term. It is used here in the sense that joining the initiatives is not legally required; however, companies frequently adhere due to pressure from NGOs, customers or industry associations (Abbott & Snidal, 2008).

Finally, CGIs follow a collective action approach. Both terms, 'collective' and 'action', are of significance here. Coordinated Governance Initiatives are collective in that a particular governance problem is tackled jointly, often in collaboration with stakeholders from different societal sectors. It also encompasses those initiatives in which businesses of the same industry (thus, competitors) come together in order to develop strategies on how to curb corruption in that industry. 'Action' refers to the fact that the joint activities go beyond the signing of a memorandum of understanding or a letter of commitment. Initiatives are rather understood as a dynamic network, dedicated to continuous learning, the exchange of good practices, and their implementation. Activities can range from running regular workshops and organizing annual forums to engaging in local projects.

The theory of order ethics supplies the conceptual background of this paper (Homann & Kirchner, 2003; Lütge, Armbrüster, & Müller, 2016). Order ethics represents an ethical conception that emphasizes the meaning of an institutional framework and rules for implementing ethics (Lütge, 2012b, p. 89). The term 'order' is understood here in a political sense and describes the entirety of all rules, regulations, norms, and laws that shape human coexistence (Wolters, 1995, p. 1088). Order ethics attributes social and economic problems such as corruption not to immoral preferences or motives of individuals, but to deficiencies in the order framework (Lütge, 2007).

According to order ethics, corruption should be first and foremost tackled by establishing a well-designed order framework, which makes it beneficial to all actors not to bribe or take part in any corrupt activities (Lütge, 2016a, 2016b). However, companies acting in markets where corruption prevails face a dilemma: Although most companies want to engage in anti-corruption activities, they keep on bribing, anticipating that their competitors may 'exploit' their abstaining from corrupt practices. Companies think the only way to protect them from such a threat is to make use of these illegal methods themselves. Although they know that everyone would be better off if no-one paid bribes, companies cannot credibly commit to law-abiding behavior.

Coordinated Governance Initiatives can be regarded as a competitive-neutral institutional arrangement apt to overcome this dilemma situation by bringing together like-minded organizations and thus leveling the playing field among competitors (Petkoski et al., 2009; WBI Working Group, 2010). In doing so, ethical considerations are taken into account and at the same time companies do not have to bear competitive disadvantages.

A CGI can be organized both, as a cross-sector initiative or as a sector-specific initiative. Sector-specificity means that companies target corruption in one specific sector, e.g. in the construction sector. The focus here will be on the latter type of initiatives, i.e. sector-specific initiatives. The decision to narrow down the object of analysis to sector-specific initiatives has been taken mainly for two reasons. First, there are sectors that are more prone to corruption than others (Rose-Ackerman, 1975). This is particularly true for sectors with a high degree of complexity such as the construction sector or the extractive industry (Truex & Søreide, 2011). According to the OECD Foreign Bribery Report (OECD, 2014), almost two-thirds of the analyzed cases of bribery take place in just four sectors, the extractive sector, the construction sector, the transportation and storage industry and the information and communication sector. How susceptible an industry is to corruption, is apparently closely related to its specific characteristics. Thus, initiatives which bring together actors of one particular industry can take into account peculiarities of that industry when designing the initiative (Beschorner, Hajduk, & Simeonov, 2013). This in turn could result in a more effective anti-corruption initiative. Second, sector-specific initiatives address the challenges linked to combating corruption under competitive conditions better than cross-sector initiatives. They can consider the competitive situation companies find themselves in. The dilemma described above arises only among competitors, thus within a particular market or within a particular sector. By contrast, cross-sector initiatives face the challenge of aligning many interests of companies from different industries. In addition, the type of corruption they aim to target is often not as clearly identifiable as in sector-specific CGIs. This frequently results in rather generic goals being pursued by cross-sector anti-corruption initiatives. Accordingly, the effects of such collaborative efforts are presumed to be rather weak.

Despite the numerous Coordinated Governance Initiatives which have been meanwhile established, academic research undertaken in this field is still relatively limited. While studying the sparse available literature we made two observations: First, there is no consistent labeling for anti-corruption initiatives. Terms vary to a high degree and labels like ‘Public Private Partnership’, ‘Multi-sectoral Partnership’, ‘Multi-stakeholder Initiative’, ‘Transparency Initiative’, ‘Governance Initiative’, ‘New Governance Initiative’, ‘Collective Action Initiative’, and ‘Collective Action Program’ are all found. Second, there is only little empirical evidence with respect to the conditions for success of Coordinated Governance Initiatives. Many research papers are purely conceptual and the few empirical papers found cannot provide sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of these newly emerged governance initiatives. Table 1 gives an overview of the papers reviewed describing the relevant studies with regard to the following characteristics: methodological approach taken, label of initiative used by the author(s), thematic focus, and selected success factors. We boiled down the many different aspects that may influence an anti-corruption initiative's outcome to six clusters of potential success factors. We named these clusters: participants, goals, decision-making, governance structure, monitoring and enforcement, and institutional framework. This brief literature review, which is not claimed to be exhaustive, provided us with some preliminary ideas which directions to look at in the subsequent case study without narrowing down the field of research precipitately.

Table 1 Success factors found in literature (in chronological order of publication)

Author	Journal	Methodological Approach	Label of Initiative Used by Author(s)	Thematic Focus	Selected Success Factors
Hess, 2009	Journal of Business Ethics	Conceptual	Multi-stakeholder Initiative (refers among others to the EITI), New Governance Initiative	• Investigation into how the effectiveness of voluntary corporate anti-corruption programs could be increased by policy reforms	• Focus on specific target • Flexible governance structure: initiative's structure should allow the initiative to evolve over time
Petkoski et al., 2009	Journal of Business Ethics	Conceptual	Collective Action Program, Multi-sectoral Partnership	• Analysis of anti-corruption efforts of international organizations leveraging the power of the private sector • Discussion of the role and value of private sector partnerships	• Monitoring, evaluations, and sanctions • Incentives for cooperation
Frynas, 2010	Journal of Business Ethics	Empirical (qualitative)	Transparency Initiative, Governance Initiative (refers among others to the EITI)	• Analysis of CSR activities of companies in the oil and gas sector • Revenue transparency as a major governance challenge in the sector	• Independent media for greater accountability • Participation of civil society • Timing (bargaining power of external actors)

Author	Journal	Methodological Approach	Label of Initiative Used by Author(s)	Thematic Focus	Selected Success Factors
Lucke & Lütge, 2011	Ordo Journal	Empirical (qualitative)	Collective Action Initiative	• Investigation into the challenges of enforcing Collective Action Initiatives by reference to a private sector anti-corruption pact among pipe manufactures in Argentina • Identification of crucial factors for success	• Focus on achievable goals • Involvement of external facilitators • Credibility and integrity of participants • Monitoring and enforcement mechanisms • Enabling environment (strong institutional framework & functioning jurisdiction)
Aaronson, 2011	Journal of Public Administration & Development	Empirical (qualitative)	Public Private Partnership, Multi-sectoral Partnership (refers explicitly to the EITI)	• Assessment of the EITI, focusing on its weaknesses	• Shared vision of participants • Active participation of civil society • Broad public engagement in decisions
Mena & Palazzo, 2012	Business Ethics Quarterly	Conceptual	Multi-stakeholder Initiative	• Examination of conditions of a legitimate transfer of regulatory power from traditional democratic nation-state processes to private regulatory schemes • Identification of input and output criteria for legitimate multi-stakeholder initiatives	Input legitimacy: • Inclusion of all relevant stakeholders • Procedural fairness • Consensual orientation among participants • Transparency of structures, processes, results Output legitimacy: • Enforcement, i.e. ability of initiative to ensure that the rules are complied with

Author	Journal	Methodological Approach	Label of Initiative Used by Author(s)	Thematic Focus	Selected Success Factors
Locke & Henley, 2013	Overseas Develop-ment Institute Report	Empirical (qualitative)	Transparency Initiative (refers among others to the EITI)	• Assessment of a number of transparency initiatives in different sectors and attempt to transfer these findings onto a possible land transparency initiative	• Clear indicators of success and a monitoring system • Flexibility of initiative (evolve over time) • Continuous involvement of key stakeholders • Clear institutional structure with clear responsibilities at national and international levels
Søreide & Truex, 2013	Develop-ment Policy Review	Conceptual	Multi-stakeholder Initiative	• Investigation of the impact of multi-stakeholder groups in the natural resources sector	• Focus on specific target • Local stakeholders as initiators • Clearly defined roles of participants • Healthy competition between private sector stakeholders • Government support and stable legal framework

Research methodology

Multiple-case study design

As the research field of Coordinated Governance Initiatives is still in a nascent stage, we conducted an explorative study. We chose a multiple-case study design to identify potential success factors of sector-specific CGIs. Case studies focus on understanding dynamics within single settings and provide rich and detailed findings about social processes and dynamics (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2014). Multiple-case studies usually yield more robust and generalizable results than single case studies because they typically provide a stronger base for theory building (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). We focused on identifying success factors as a first step in assessing the effectiveness of CGIs, rather than on measuring their overall long-term impact. We selected three different anti-corruption initiatives represented in table 2: the Ethics Management of the Bavarian Construction Industry (EMB), the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), and the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN).

Table 2 Selected cases for the empirical study

Initiative	Sector	Anti-corruption approach	Website
EMB Ethics Management of the Bavarian Construction Industry	Construction Industry	Strengthening the construction industry's reputation by fostering fair competition in the sector and avoiding corruption	http://www.bauindustrie-bayern.de/emb.html
Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)	Extractive Industry	Transparency and good governance in the extractive industry; streng-thening institutions in the country	http://eiti.org/
Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN)	Transport Industry	Maritime transport sector free of corruption; elimination of facilitation payments	http://www.maritime-acn.org/

The three initiatives were selected on theoretical considerations (i.e. we employed purposive sampling, as opposed to statistical sampling used in quantitative studies). We defined three dimensions for our sample in order to achieve maximum variation: The first dimension "participants involved" includes exclusively business-driven CGIs, classical multi-stakeholder initiatives with participants from each of the three main societal spheres (public sector, business sector, and civil society sector) and business-driven initiatives that collaborate occasionally with local key stakeholders where necessary. Each of the three CGIs represents a different form of participant involvement. The second dimension describes the focus of corruption prevention. CGIs with a focus on the demand-side of corruption target the one demanding a bribe, often a public official who has the power to offer e.g. a government contract. By contrast, initiatives with a focus on the supply-side of corruption usually target companies considered as potential bribe payers. The third dimension refers to where the initiative is active, whether it is on a regional, a national or a global level[2]. As a fourth condition, initiatives had to be from a particularly corruption-prone sector. Table 3 shows the three different sampling profiles that emerged as a result of the maximum variation sampling technique.

[2] As the EMB started off as a regional initiative in Bavaria (Germany) and developed only later into national initiative, it has been placed in the middle between the categories 'regional' and 'national'.

Table 3 Sampling profiles of the three cases

Dimension	Characteristics		
Participants Involved	Business EMB	Business, but collaboration with local key stakeholders MACN	Multi-stakeholder EITI
Focus of Corruption Prevention	Demand-side	Supply-side EMB	Supply- and demand-side EITI MACN
Geographical Coverage	Regional EMB	National	Global EITI MACN

Data collection

The main source of information was interviews. One third of the interviews were conducted as face-to-face interviews. The remaining two thirds had to be conducted in the form of telephone interviews as two of the three initiatives are global CGIs with their headquarters outside of Germany and their members dispersed around the globe. The semi-structured open interviews were comprised of three sections: 1.) Early days of the initiative, 2.) Looking back on governance and processes, 3.) Looking back on outcomes and effectiveness. The interviews were conducted between May 2014 and February 2015 and lasted between half an hour and one hour and a half. All of the interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed, and documented in a standardized form, which enhances the study's reliability (Gibbert & Ruigrok, 2010).

In order to be able to take into account the diverse perspectives on the object of investigation, we recruited informants out of three different groups: the representatives of the members, the management/administrative staff, and the independent informants. We slightly adjusted the interview guide used for each group of interviewees. Table 4 shows how the respondents are distributed across the three cases.

Table 4 Distribution of interviewees across the three cases

Case	Representatives of members	Independent informants	Management/ admin. staff	TOTAL
EMB	Interviews EMB_R1 to EMB_R4b	Interview EMB_I1	Interview EMB_M1	**6**
EITI	Interview EITI_R1	Interviews EITI_I1 to EITI_I3	Interviews EITI_M1 to EITI_M3b	**7**
MACN	Interviews MACN_R1 to MACN_R5	Interview MACN_I1	Interview MACM_M1	**7**
TOTAL	**10**	**5**	**5**	**20**

In addition to the interviews, we also examined documents. Using multiple data sources allows triangulation and enhances the case study's validity (Yin, 2014). The documents analyzed included: press releases, Codes of Conduct, guidelines, charters, brochures, articles in company magazines, selected website content, CSR reports of participating companies, and evaluation reports. We used the results of the document analysis to supplement our empirical findings gained from the interviews. Since documents do not represent objective data, but are a way of contextualizing information, we closely followed quality criteria for analyzing textual information to ensure authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning of the documents (Scott, 2014).

Data analysis

As usually done in multiple-case studies, we first analyzed each case separately (within-case analysis) before conducting the systematic cross-case analysis. We compared the three cases with the aim of outlining similarities and differences across the three initiatives with special emphasis on the identification of success factors. This cross-case analysis of the data enhances generalizability, deepens understanding and explanation, and supports theory building from cases (Eisenhardt, 1989).

We employed a certain type of content analysis – template analysis – to analyze the qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Template analysis describes the data set in rich detail, whereby the themes are organized in a hierarchical relationship. Themes need to meet at least two requirements: First, they have to be used repeatedly when coding the data; second, they have to be mutually exclusive. Template analysis is a middle way between bottom up, inductive and top down, deductive styles of analysis (King, 2012). It allows the researcher to develop some themes in advance, which are called a priori themes. We used the six clusters of potential success factors derived from the literature as a priori themes here. While conducting the template analysis for each individual case we searched for underlying themes or patterns in the data. This resulted in the development of three individual coding templates for each case. In the next step we compared the three initiatives and attempted to find patterns across the cases.

Empirical results and discussion

Five identified cross-case success factors and one basic prerequisite

Although the results generated from the three cases are not representative given the qualitative research approach employed, analytic generalization across the three cases (as opposed to statistical generalization) is nevertheless possible to a certain extent (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). In doing so, we applied the technique of comprehensive data treatment in order to avoid anecdotalism (Silverman, 2014). Thus, we only made analytic generalizations where data sets have been inspected repeatedly and where these generalizations could be applied to every bit of relevant data. This procedure also contributes to an enhanced validity of the findings.

We identified five cross-case success factors of sector-specific CGIs and one basic prerequisite. The research design and the method of data analysis we employed do not allow to bring these factors in a specific order or to weight them according to their importance. They are presented here according to the degree to which they can be influenced by the CGIs' participants. Whether there is a situation of crisis in the sector or a generally supportive institutional environment is in most cases outside the ambit of participants. By contrast, a CGI's responsiveness, its enforcement mechanisms and its company composition can be controlled to a certain extent by the initiative's members. Finally, it is at the discretion of each individual member to continuously commit to the cause of the anti-corruption initiative and to abide by the self-imposed rules.

Although several success factors are interconnected they are presented separately for analytical reasons. In addition, we discuss the meaning of these success factors in light of previous findings by other scholars and on the basis of different theoretical conceptions, mainly those of order ethics (Homann & Kirchner, 2003; Lütge, 2016a).

The basic prerequisite: Situation of crisis

Apart from the five success factors identified, the synopsis of the three cases revealed that a certain situation of crisis or some kind of external threat seems to be a prerequisite for CGIs to be initiated in the first place. This emphasizes the significance of the early phase of Coordinated Governance Initiatives and names potential motives of actors for engaging in CGIs. Apparently, a certain pressure form the external environment is conducive to the development of Coordinated Governance Initiatives[3]. All three anti-corruption initiatives have emerged from some sort of crisis or have faced some kind of external threat at the beginning. In the first case, the EMB case, a big corruption scandal in the Bavarian construction industry and the resulting threat of debarment lists to be imposed by the Bavarian public authorities has been identified as a trigger for the foundation of the EMB. The construction companies pursued two goals by launching the EMB: The primary goal was to preempt sanctions or the tightening of the law by the state. In its charter the EMB explicitly refers to the principle of subsidiarity according to which the state should only interfere by means of criminal law in cases where the business sector is not able to solve the issue by its own (EMB, 2007). The second goal was to signal to their stakeholders that

[3] It is theoretically conceivable that an anti-corruption initiative gets off the ground without such a situation of crisis. However, empirical evidence shows that this is rarely the case. Even when companies declare they take part in a voluntary initiative for ethical reasons and because they are convinced to do the right thing, behind these ethical motives there are almost always additional economic reasons as well.

they took the corruption problem seriously and were interested in initiating a sustainable and institutionalized improvement process within the construction sector.

In the second case, the EITI case, the oil company BP found itself in the middle of a crisis after it had published – in a unilateral move – payments made for concessions to the Angolan government. BP's unilateral move was preceded by a massive campaign by civil society in the context of the so called Publish What You Pay Coalition. Extractive companies were urged to bring light into the opaque extractives sector in order to thwart the negative effects of resource wealth in particular countries, where the exploitation of natural resources coincided with a high degree of corruption (resource curse). From the insight that one company alone could not change the rules of the game of an industry, the UK government together with civil society and a number of supporting companies launched the EITI. The risk for extractive companies in the EITI case was more indirect and consisted primarily in potential reputational damage induced by the pressure of civil society. The threat to companies' reputation, however, is not to be underestimated. This is especially true when big brand names, e.g. Shell, Statoil, and Total, are involved, which are generally more vulnerable to boycotts or global campaigns by civil society.

In the MACN case, the adoption of the UK Bribery Act served as a trigger for the network to be founded. An important anti-corruption act with extra-territorial application, the UK Bribery Act obliges companies to have 'adequate procedures' in place to prevent bribery. In the opinion of the MACN members interviewed, these provisions went beyond the FCPA provisions and amount to a prohibition of facilitation payments, thereby putting them on the same level as bribes. Since facilitation payments are widespread within the maritime sector, shipping companies were directly threatened by these new regulations. The initiative thus emerged as a reaction to changes in the legal framework. The UK Bribery Act's harsh sentence for facilitation payments (Nichols, 2013) constituted a concrete threat to business in the maritime transport industry. The MACN participants aim to introduce a real change within the sector. However, unlike in the EMB case, the MACN's members already face a new law and therefore attempt to meet the requirements of the law in order to protect themselves from prosecution by UK authorities. This is all the more necessary as the UK Bribery Act requires companies to take preventive actions. Participating in a Collective Action Initiative such as the MACN can itself be considered a preventive action.

Although the situation of crisis as an initiating factor for Coordinated Governance Initiatives seems to be of particular relevance, it has not been prominently discussed in the literature to date.

This is all the more remarkable since it points at another important aspect, which has been considered as constitutive for the CGIs under study: their voluntary nature. At least for the EMB and the MACN, which are primarily business-driven initiatives, it can be inferred that a certain pressure form the external environment appears to be necessary for the business sector to become actively engaged in the fight against corruption. It is unlikely that these initiatives would have come into existence, had there not been the concrete menace to business delineated above. Although the EITI membership is voluntary as well, this is only valid for countries that join the CGI. However, companies' participation in these countries is mandatory.

Although these CGIs may be referred to as voluntary, they apparently derive their dynamic from two antagonistic forces: On the one hand, from clear benefits for participants (pull factor) and, on the other hand, from societal expectations pronounced by external stakeholders (push factor). Respondents named as benefits among others competitive advantages. While the benefits for CGI members can be construed as a positive incentive, societal expectations pronounced by external stakeholders, especially in a situation of crisis, function as a negative incentive for companies. The findings suggest that it needs both negative and positive incentives for CGIs to come into existence. Therefore, the motives for participants to join CGIs may only be voluntary to a certain extent. David-Barrett and Okamura (2013) have described this phenomenon with respect to the EITI as a 'transparency paradox'. Governments that are known for being thoroughly corrupt join the initiative voluntarily, not so much because there is a genuine will for change, but because it is expected, e.g. by their donors. Thus, it is the interplay between positive and negative incentives that induces rational self-interested actors to join CGIs voluntarily.

Supportive institutional framework

The first success factor 'supportive institutional framework' addresses the question of embeddedness of Coordinated Governance Initiatives. Anti-corruption initiatives do not exist in vacuo, but are incorporated in an institutional framework characterized by major or minor deficiencies. In the present case studies, the institutional framework has been a recurring theme and interviewees specified what is meant by institutional framework beyond what has already been known from previous studies. Two features have to be highlighted in particular: The persistent support by relevant external stakeholders and the complementary government-centric regulatory efforts, which contribute to an overall supportive institutional framework.

The persistent support by relevant stakeholders from governments (particularly the UK government), EITI-supporting companies, and the Publish What You Pay Coalition has been critical in the EITI case. This support has also contributed to a greater awareness of the corruption problem, mainly because civil society organizations vigorously fought the resource curse, in which corruption plays a major role. This changing perception of corruption in society at large requires visible efforts by companies to combat corruption. As such, this aspect is closely related to crisis and external threat as a basic prerequisite for CGIs to be initiated. Moreover, the fact that a number of major EU and US provisions which regulate the extractive industries have been agreed upon in recent years has also contributed to an overall supportive institutional framework. The EU Transparency and Accounting Directives and the US Dodd-Frank Act have been of particular relevance here[4].

To the EMB, a supportive institutional framework means that the anti-corruption initiative is embedded in an established organizational structure and is recognized by public authorities. The initiative has experienced support by stakeholders as well, but in a different form. The fact that the EMB is closely related to a greater organization, the German Construction Industry Association, has had a clear supporting effect since the initiative benefits from the infrastructure and the renown of the parent organization. There is also a direct link between the initiative and government regulation. Public authorities recognize the EMB – or more precisely the implementation of a value-driven compliance management program – as a condition for a

[4] Note that there have been recent changes here, as US President Trump signed a law to repeal a controversial regulation that would have required extractive companies to disclose their payments to foreign governments (The Economist, 2017). This repeal is noteworthy for its international impact. Global transparency reforms in Europe and Canada had been introduced as a result of the anti-corruption efforts and leadership of the United States. The new law, however, threatens to undermine these transparency efforts.

company's eligibility for procurement and the restoration of a company's reliability for procurement law reasons. These conditions are prescribed in the Bavarian anti-corruption guideline (n.a., 2004). This formal recognition, which was confirmed in a decision of the Higher Regional Court of Brandenburg, certainly constitutes a substantial part of the EMB's supportive institutional framework.

Unlike the two first cases, the MACN members are just beginning to form a kind of supportive institutional framework by raising awareness of the problem of corruption in the industry. The anti-corruption network cannot yet rely on an equally institutionalized support by stakeholders. Rudimentary forms of stakeholder support are existent, e.g. the network has received support by organizations such as the Basel Institute on Governance in making contact to potential partners for local collective actions. The UNDP which supported a pilot project in Nigeria is another example of stakeholder support on a case-by-case basis. Since the MACN emerged as a response to the UK Bribery Act, the network is closely linked to this extraterritorial law adopted by the UK government. The UK Bribery Act stresses the responsibility of companies to take adequate procedures against bribery. Participating in a Collective Action Initiative (such as the MACN) is considered as such an adequate procedure and may be recognized by prosecuting authorities in the event that a shipping company becomes involved in a corruption-related incident (TI-UK, 2012).

The institutional framework (or order framework) within which companies act is one of the central elements of order ethics (Lütge, 2016a). According to this ethical conception, the corruption phenomenon is attributed to deficiencies in the order framework. These deficiencies manifest either in non-existent anti-corruption laws or – more often – in a lack of enforcement of existing anti-corruption regulation. By collectively engaging in CGIs, companies not only assume order responsibility (Lütge, 2012a), but also contribute to an improved institutional framework, be it in the maritime transport industry, the construction industry or any other industry. Although Coordinated Governance Initiatives cannot permanently replace an insufficient order framework, this form of cooperation between competitors is at least capable of temporarily compensating for a weak regulatory environment.

Responsiveness and local rule implementation

The responsiveness of initiatives represents another success factor identified. The term 'responsiveness' refers to the initiatives' ability to respond to changing framework conditions. Improvements regarding the CGIs' self-imposed rules and procedures are made as a consequence of a learning process, not so much due to external pressure. In this context, the so-called global-local nexus, thus the nexus between global rules (or rule-making) and local action (or rule implementation) plays an important role. Those CGIs that manage to root their anti-corruption rules at the local level have better insight into the specific corruption problems on the spot and therefore are capable of conceiving these problems in time and reacting to them more directly. By contrast, when an initiative prescribes global rules and does not care about the on-site implementation, no connection to the local level can be established. The initiative will not be able to answer changes in the institutional environment adequately as it simply lacks the knowledge thereof. Thus, local rule implementation contributes to an initiative's responsiveness.

At the EITI, globally binding anti-corruption rules are implemented at different levels via different types of governing bodies: At the global level, rules take effect through global governing bodies such as the EITI Board, the EITI International Secretariat, and the EITI Members' Meeting. At the local level this happens mainly through the local governing bodies, such as the national multi-stakeholder groups (MSGs). While the global governing bodies mainly assume steering and coordinating responsibilities, the local governing bodies with the national MSGs leading the way, have the task of implementing these global rules. By granting national MSGs certain discretion with rule implementation, the diverse institutional settings of different countries and their particular governance problems are taken into account in the best possible way. The head of the EITI Secretariat described this relationship once as *"a nationally-owned process and an internationally-owned standard"* (Moberg & Rich, 2012, p. 117). With the two levels being interconnected in this way, the global-local nexus has become institutionalized in the EITI's governance design and ensures a high degree of responsiveness.

The importance of a local rule implementation is also pronounced in the MACN. It takes place mainly via local collective actions which are initiated by MACN members in different regions around the world. Countries and/or subnational units for collective actions are selected according to the needs of MACN member companies. In most cases, the local collective actions target ports in which shipping companies operate and which bear a high risk of facilitation payment requests. To achieve sustainable results, the MACN always involves local public authorities or local civil society organizations. The anti-corruption network thus fully recognizes the necessity to translate the self-imposed and generally agreed upon global rules into local action in order to ensure the initiative's outreach. Unlike the EITI, the network has not yet institutionalized this global-local nexus, but acts on a case-by-case basis. Nevertheless, participants have quite accurate information regarding the corruption problems on the spot through these local collective actions, which has a positive influence on the CGI's responsiveness.

As opposed to the EITI and the MACN, the EMB so far has failed to attach much value to local rule implementation, which can be partly explained by its primarily national orientation. As a result, EMB members are not engaged in any kind of local action. They confine themselves to implementing the self-imposed rules and values in their organizations. As such, they exhibit a quite introspective attitude. It stands to question whether this commitment will be sufficient in the long run in order to combat corruption effectively in the construction sector. However, owing to the EMB's national focus, the initiative is automatically firmly entrenched in local realties and has knowledge of local conditions of the sector, which may compensate for the lack of local rule implementation.

Those initiatives that strive for a thorough local implementation of anti-corruption rules meet at the same time those requests for better contextualization of the corruption problem, which has been expressed by various scholars (Hough, 2013; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013). Taking into account the local level of CGIs may also be advisable from an order ethics perspective since the underlying local incentive structures play an important role. Where like-minded actors come together to combat corruption, it is essential to understand these underlying incentive structures and involve all relevant local players so that cooperation (not defection) becomes the dominant strategy (Lütge, 2012a).

Effective enforcement mechanisms

The success factor 'effective enforcement mechanisms' is related the question of adequate monitoring and enforcement which needs to be established to lend credence to CGIs and to protect their reputation. The necessity of an effective enforcement of the self-imposed rules was pronounced in all three case studies in equal manner. Every voluntary anti-corruption initiative needs to provide not only incentives, as described above, to encourage proper behavior but also enforcement to act on deviant behavior. Adequate enforcement mechanisms to protect an initiative's reputation are thus an indispensable ingredient for successful sector-specific CGIs. An initiative's reputation can be ruined by just one member acting against the self-imposed rules. Therefore, scholars are by and large in agreement that initiatives which fail to establish such monitoring and enforce appropriate sanctions in these cases, squander their credibility. Only if rules are secured by effective sanctions will there be the confidence among participants that every member will abide by the self-imposed rules. The voluntary binding linked with the threat of expulsion from the CGI and the potential reputational damage brings firms in the position to credibly commit to law-abiding behavior and thus escape the prisoners' dilemma.

However, the possibilities of punishing the participants' deviant behavior are limited in voluntary initiatives. Most Coordinated Governance Initiatives prescribe the exclusion from the initiative, which presumably entails reputational losses for the companies affected, as the most severe form of sanction. There is an argument that external third-party monitoring should be preferred to self-monitoring approaches. Nevertheless, there may be valid reasons to opt for a less strict monitoring, e.g. in order not to deter potential new members right from the start. As participation is voluntary, CGIs need to strike a balance between protecting their credibility by demonstrating preparedness to punish non-compliant behavior and still being attractive to potential new members by setting compliable requirements.

The three initiatives under scrutiny have found different answers to the enforcement problem. The EMB has an external third-party monitoring including a certification process that all members have to undergo every three years. The certificate attests that the company has implemented a management system which reduces the risk of corporate misconduct. EMB participants that fail to take the audit will first be publicly listed as 'not audited' and later be excluded from the CGI. Apart from this, the EMB Board can opt for granting the audit certificate for only one instead of three years, which gives members the opportunity to make up for shortcomings identified during the previous audit. The EMB interviewees have highlighted the importance of repeated external audits and have explicitly referred to the pressure exerted on companies by way of these audits. From the EMB members' standpoint this pressure is necessary to maintain a continuous commitment of all participants.

EITI implementing countries regularly have to undergo independent validations in order to keep their EITI compliant status. In addition, national MSGs need to report annually to the EITI Board on their activities. The EITI stipulates three different measures in case a country does not comply with the EITI rules: a country's downgrading from EITI compliant to EITI candidate status, a temporary suspension, and a permanent delisting.

The MACN builds on self-assessments and relatively low reporting requirements. By means of the recently set up self-assessment tool members report on their progress in implementing an effective anti-corruption compliance program, in accordance with the MACN anti-corruption principles. If a company has been found to be violating the network's charter or its rules, the CGI prescribes the termination of membership as the only measure. Network representatives stress that learning and sharing experience among participants are more important to them than external monitoring at this relatively early phase of the CGI.

In sum, all three Coordinated Governance Initiatives have installed some kind of monitoring and stipulate certain sanctions that take effect if rules are not adhered to. The expulsion of members from the initiative is seen as the ultima ratio in all three cases. Until now, only one CGI, the EITI, has made use of this disciplinary measure. All of the aforementioned sanctions primarily target the participants' reputation. It is assumed that a loss of membership concurrently implies reputational losses for participants. Whether such a kind of sanction will have substantial effects, depends on the initiative's renown and on the brand awareness of the company in question. Being expelled from a widely known initiative such as the EITI has presumably a stronger impact on a participant's reputation than being expelled from a primarily national CGI such as the EMB, or a relatively young network such as the MACN. Moreover, companies with a brand name that have a reputation to lose may suffer more from being excluded than a relatively small firm.

Initiatives' company composition

The initiatives' company composition represents another important success factor of CGIs, which has not been in the focus of research so far. It illuminates the heterogeneity of companies within an apparent homogeneity. The fact that CGIs are concomitantly characterized by a homogeneous and heterogeneous composition contributes to their success.

On the one hand, groups are homogeneous in that their members all belong to the same sector. After all, sector-specificity has been one of the selection criteria for the anti-corruption initiatives of this study. The group's homogeneity adds to a joint perspective of the problem of corruption and to the development of a common problem-solving approach. This collective understanding is a basic prerequisite for effectively tackling corruption.

On the other hand, groups are heterogeneous in that companies differ in terms of size, type of ownership and segments of the value chain they occupy. All three initiatives accommodate a rather heterogeneous group of companies. For example, the EMB accommodates different construction companies ranging from small firms with 20 employees to medium-sized building companies to subsidiaries of big market players with several thousand employees. The companies participating in the EITI differ among others with regard to the type of ownership. Both big privately-owned extractive companies and large state-owned enterprises are equally represented. There is also a great heterogeneity among MACN members, e.g. in terms of the degree of vertical and horizontal integration in the value chain. The MACN accommodates all types of maritime transport companies, from specialized niche suppliers to big vertically integrated shipping companies, which offer apart from their core activity various other logistical services along the maritime transport value chain, such as cargo handling and hinterland transport. One reason why this heterogeneity has evidently conduced to the CGIs' success rather than to their failure is that such a composition inhibits in all probability the rise of one dominant actor forcing its rules on all other actors. In all Coordinated Governance Initiatives under study there has not been one single leader, but rather a few leading companies. Moreover, in a largely homogeneous group of firms the risk of collusion of participants is much higher (Engel, 2015; Lipczynski, Wilson, & Goddard, 2009). A great heterogeneity (in terms of size and other company characteristics) within a rather homogeneous (in the sense of belonging to one specific sector) group thus caters for a certain balance of power and a decreased tendency of companies to collude. In addition, this heterogeneity in the homogeneity is also a precondition for learning from each other.

Table 5 Preconditions for continuing commitment in CGIs

	EMB	EITI	MACN
Type of corruption	Grand corruption	Grand corruption	Petty corruption
Basic principles	Four EMB rules (KIKO)	Seven EITI requirements	Seven MACN anti-corruption principles
Specific goal	Implementing a value-driven compliance management system in the member organizations	Disclosure of revenue flows according to EITI Standard in EITI implementing countries	Implementing anti-corruption compliance programs in member organizations; participating in local collective actions
Particularity	Lean governance structure with simple rules and leeway for companies	Narrow scope of objectives, especially in terms of revenue orientation	Knowledge and experience sharing among participants
Cooperation fostered through	Annual membership meetings	Board committees and other governance bodies	Work streams and Chatham House meetings

Table 5 sums up the CGIs' specific goals and the type of corruption the respective initiative aims to target. In addition, it shows how each CGI has operationalized their goals (particularity) and by which means cooperation is fostered. Sector-specific CGIs automatically have a narrower focus than cross-sector initiatives and correspondingly their goals are more specific. For instance, the EMB participants have agreed on implementing a value-driven compliance management system. As regards the type of corruption, most initiatives attempt to tackle either grand corruption or petty corruption. Naturally, these different types of corruption call for different approaches. If participants are aware of the specific corruption problem their sector is faced with, this alleviates the search for an effective anti-corruption approach in the context of the Coordinated Governance Initiative. The willingness to learn from each other and to share information regarding successful anti-corruption practices is an indicator of the participants' ability to cooperate. It evinces to what extent they are capable of coordinating their interests and thus do pursue the same goal. For that reason alone, it should not be neglected when trying to curb corruption in the collective. As in all collective action initiatives there is the risk of free-riding behavior. Olson (1965) and Ostrom (1998) have elucidated in their works on social dilemmas and collective action that these negative side effects can be avoided by fostering face-to-face communication between group members. This holds also true for the CGIs under study that have implemented different mechanisms to foster interactiveness of members and thus cooperation among them.

Continuing commitment of participants

Finally, the continuing commitment of participants has been identified as a crucial success factor. This success factor focuses on the preconditions that need to be met in order to motivate participants to show continuing commitment for the anti-corruption initiative. In actual fact, collective anti-corruption initiatives in the form of CGIs will not come without effort and continuing commitment. The risk of losing momentum after some early successes is rather great (Locke & Henley, 2013). To facilitate this commitment, it needs certain prerequisites: First, it is essential for the CGI to have specific goals, second, to be clear about the type of corruption it wants to target and thus to develop a common understanding thereof, and third to promote the willingness to learn from each other among participants. Scholars have previously suggested that the participants' commitment plays a vital role and have also mentioned the need for specific goals in this regard. However, a clearly identifiable type of corruption as a precondition for commitment appears to have emerged as a new aspect from the cross-case analysis as well as the willingness to learn from each other.

Conclusions

In recent years, new private actors have increasingly assumed responsibility for countering corruption in the context of Coordinated Governance Initiatives. This happened particularly in such circumstances in which existing anti-corruption regulation was not enforced adequately. These CGIs are characterized by a central role taken up by private actors, a decentralization of regulatory authority, the voluntary commitment of their participants, and a collective action approach. In CGIs, like-minded MNCs, often along with other stakeholders, join forces to tackle corruption. So far, little has been known about these initiatives and in particular about their effectiveness.

In this paper we presented five success factors and one basic prerequisite for CGIs derived from our explorative multiple-case study. We focused on sector-specific initiatives as opposed to cross-sector initiatives. In doing so, the study concentrated on sectors most susceptible to corruption according to available empirical evidence. This has allowed for an appropriate contextualization of the anti-corruption initiatives, which is regarded as a constitutive element of qualitative inquiries. Furthermore, the orientation towards specific sectors has helped to better address the typical collective action problems to be expected when direct competitors join forces. In this respect, sector-specific CGIs are considered in the present study as a competitive-neutral institutional arrangement suitable to overcome this dilemma situation by leveling the playing field among competitors.

The five success factors presented are a first proposal based on three carefully selected case studies. The findings present a deeper insight into and better understanding of the functioning of the novel governance mechanism of CGIs. However, they do not support the conclusion that the level of corruption in those sectors where they operate has decreased as a result of the CGIs' activities. There is not yet any empirical evidence regarding the actual success or impact of the CGIs under scrutiny. The main aim of our research was limited to identify potential success factors of sector-specific CGIs, giving an answer to the question: What are success factors of sector-specific CGIs that aim to curb corruption. Questions relating to the initiatives' overall impact have not been part of this research. Nevertheless, most interviewees considered their initiative to be successful.

Our findings are mainly based on the perceptions of the individuals interviewed, whereby most respondents have been directly involved in the CGIs and have reported almost exclusively on issues relevant to their own initiatives. To enhance the external validity of the study, we therefore suggest interviewing other stakeholder groups, e.g. neutral experts that have only marginally been taken into account in this study. This will broaden the empirical basis and yield new differentiated insights on CGIs.

Moreover, as time goes by, an increasing number of qualitative studies on CGIs will be available, offering a better insight into this phenomenon. It will then be possible to conduct supplementary quantitative studies with a focus on the impact of anti-corruption initiatives. Consequently, the here identified success factors could be used as hypotheses to be tested, e.g. by employing survey designs. To sum up, while this study represents an in-depth analysis of some CGIs, future researchers should focus more on breadth and quantification.

Corruption prevention and good governance are high on the agenda in politics and economics and will be in the near future. At the same time, the global community struggles with establishing and most notably enforcing a coherent global regulatory anti-corruption framework. The challenge of governance gaps remains, for the time being. CGIs are expected to be a possible answer to some governance gaps and will play an increasingly important role in the years ahead. Correspondingly, the private sector will assume a more decisive role in matters of global governance. MNCs need to meet their responsibility as global player, join forces with their competitors, and thus actively contribute to the development of a global good governance framework.

However, CGIs should not be expected to be the panacea for all corruption problems. They are just one – albeit promising – instrument in the fight against corruption. Instead of all craving for the one and only global anti-corruption strategy, anti-corruption actors should rather strive for diversity. This implies, on the one hand, combining different anti-corruption approaches, e.g. CGIs and citizen report cards or CGIs combined with Integrity Pacts (Hawkins, 2013). On the other hand, it also means experimenting with different organizational settings to find out what works and what does not, along the lines of the behaviorist 'fail fast'. Such a pragmatic and flexible approach would also be in line with the request for contextualization of anti-corruption efforts expressed by Hough (2013) among others. Furthermore, it follows a recent trend in business ethics and anti-corruption efforts, where scholars increasingly make use of experimental methods (see Lütge, Rusch, and Uhl (2014) and Serra and Wantchekon (2012) among others).

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