

The 6th DILIMAN GOVERNANCE FORUM (DGF)

The Diliman Governance Forum (DGF) is a continuing effort of the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG), University of the Philippines (UP) to initiate collective action for public administration reforms and better governance. Spinning off from the Policy Issues Forum conducted by the College in the past, the DGF has tackled various policy concerns such as reengineering government, fiscal crisis, geoinformatics, electoral reforms and youth leaders of the past and present. The 6th in a series is scheduled on March 16, 2005 from 1-6 p.m. at the NCPAG Assembly Hall, Diliman, Quezon City. Its thematic focus is on "Combating Corruption: Are We Plundering our Chances, or Doing it Better?" Generally, it aims to assess how we as a nation fare in the fight against corruption.

Corruption or the "misuse of public power for private profit" is a sizeable malady in the country. It infests both private and public sectors but essentially focuses on the behavior of public officials, whether politicians or civil servants, policy-makers or administrators, through which they improperly and unlawfully enrich themselves, or those close to them, by the misuse of the public power entrusted to them.¹

Corruption inhibits growth and development. It also distorts access to services for poor communities and undermines public confidence in the government's will and capacity to serve the public. It has various manifestations, causes, costs and consequences.

The sectors of the society are doing their best to combat corruption, enhance government efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. The government, business and civil society are collaborating in various anti-corruption campaigns and policy and regulatory reforms in public administration and governance. Despite these initiatives, however, we continuously rank low in various measures of corruption perception such as the Business International (BI) Index, International Country Risk Guide (ICRG), the political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) Index, the Global Competitiveness Report (GCR) and the Transparency International (TI) Index. Hence at this point, where are we in our fight against the dreaded societal cancer? Are we squandering or plundering our chances to solve the problem? Or are we doing better and making things more right?

¹ Ledivina V. Carino (1998), J.J. Senturia as cited in Nihal Jayawickrama, UNDP (1998).