



Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative

The World Bank • UNODC



Success in asset recovery requires action by all stakeholders

Government officials in developing countries and financial centers who identify and pursue asset recovery cases, cooperate with other jurisdictions, and allocate sufficient resources. Those involved in the administration of justice (police, prosecutors, judges) play an important role.

Financial sector professionals who know their customers and report suspected proceeds of corruption.

Development organizations that address the issue as part of a broader governance and anti-corruption agenda.

Civil society and the news media to shape international standards and monitor activities of various stakeholders.

The StAR Initiative partners with stakeholders to work toward ending safe havens for proceeds of corruption by providing guidance and tools in support of stolen asset recovery process.



StAR —the Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative— is a partnership between the World Bank Group and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime that supports international efforts to end safe havens for corrupt funds. StAR works with developing countries and financial centers to prevent the laundering of the proceeds of corruption and to facilitate more systematic and timely return of stolen assets.



“ There should be no safe haven for those who steal from the poor. Helping developing countries recover stolen money is key to funding social programs and putting corrupt leaders on notice that they will not escape the law.”

Robert Zoellick, World Bank President

The Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative supports international efforts to confiscate and recover the proceeds of corruption that have been accumulated by corrupt officials. StAR works toward the return of stolen assets to their country of origin, which is one of the fundamental principles of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

Prosecuting corruption and recovering stolen assets help restore confidence in the rule of law and reflect engagement in what is now a global priority.

Corruption-hunting and asset recovery figure at the top of the G20 global agenda, having been underscored by the G8 countries at their 2011 summit in Deauville, France, particularly in relation to the recent uprisings in the Middle East.

Why is StAR important for development?

By conservative estimates, US\$20 billion to \$40 billion – the equivalent of 20 to 40 percent of total annual international development assistance – is stolen from developing countries each year. The costs go far beyond the amount of money lost. Corruption of this kind undermines trust and confidence in government officials, companies, and banks. It degrades public institutions, hinders the delivery of basic services, diminishes public faith in honest markets, and discourages private investment, thus slowing economic growth and poverty alleviation.

Stolen Assets are the proceeds of corruption: money, property or other assets amassed through corrupt conduct. Such misconduct includes bribery, embezzlement, misappropriation of public property or funds, trading in influence, illicit enrichment, and abuse of functions in the public sector.

Asset Recovery is the process by which the proceeds of corruption are recovered and returned to the country of origin.

What Does StAR Do?

Provide training and capacity building

StAR delivers introductory awareness-raising workshops and more advanced training courses on asset recovery to institutions involved in the asset recovery process. To date, more than 720 participants from 70 countries have participated in regional and national training in Latin America, Africa, South Asia, East Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. In addition, StAR actively engages with several countries, helping them - upon their request - develop legislation to strengthen legal frameworks to support asset recovery and assisting in the development of their institutional frameworks.

Assist countries in recovery of stolen assets

Upon request, StAR provides technical assistance to countries that are operationally engaged in asset recovery cases. Working with all the relevant institutions – including financial centers and anti-corruption agencies – StAR adds value by offering technical advice and best practices in the development of case strategy, as well as in the identification and mobilization of the most appropriate asset-tracing tools – such as mutual legal assistance, seizing and confiscating assets, and assisting in the acceleration of international cooperation. StAR performs the role of a neutral convener or “honest broker” among parties in the international asset recovery process.

Policy analysis and knowledge-building

StAR has published policy papers, expert guides and a database of asset recovery cases in collaboration with a wide range of practitioners from diverse professional backgrounds, regions and legal traditions. They include TRACK (Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge), developed by UNODC and the StAR Asset Recovery Watch. These knowledge products help practitioners work effectively on stolen asset recovery and promote policy development in international asset recovery. Civil society organizations and the news media use these tools in their research, information campaigns and advocacy work. StAR also assists in developing practitioner networks, such as the global Focal Point Initiative – a joint initiative with INTERPOL – which facilitates the exchange of information among practitioners prior to the filing of mutual legal assistance requests.

Support global anti-corruption agenda

StAR cooperates with the Group of Twenty (G-20) Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and INTERPOL, as well as other organizations. These advocacy and policy partnerships support asset recovery.

“Corruption aggravates inequality and injustice, and undermines stability, especially in the world’s most vulnerable regions.”

Yury Fedotov, Executive Director, UNODC

StAR Practitioner Handbooks, Policy Analysis and Knowledge Tools

Handbooks For Practitioners

- Asset Recovery Handbook
- A Good Practice Guide for Non-Conviction Based Asset Forfeiture
- The Puppet Masters: How the Corrupt Use Legal Structures to Hide Stolen Assets and What to Do About It
- Income and Asset Disclosure: Guide for Practitioners and Policy Makers
- Income and Asset Disclosure: Case Study Illustrations
- Illicit Enrichment Study
- Identification and Quantification of the Proceeds of Bribery- An OECD-StAR Analysis

Asset Recovery Policy Analysis

- Toward a Global Architecture for Asset Recovery
- Politically Exposed Persons: Preventive Measures for the Banking Sector
- Barriers to Asset Recovery: An Analysis of the Key Barriers and Recommendations for Action
- Meeting International Anti-Corruption and Asset Recovery Commitments: Progress Report and Recommendations for Action (StAR/OECD Report)
- Management of Returned Assets: Policy Considerations

Asset Recovery Research Aids

- StAR Asset Recovery Watch Cases Database
- TRACK (Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge)

www.worldbank.org/star

www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/StAR.html

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