

# **Research Statement**

Amadou Boly  
University of Montreal

## **1. Overview**

My research interests are in the areas of Development Economics, Experimental Economics, Industrial Organization and International Economics. More specifically, my current research revolves around the analysis of the experimental approach as a tool to study the determinants of corruption, as well as anti-corruption measures.

## **2. Current research**

Although corruption occurs in all countries, it is more prevalent and its consequences are more damaging in developing countries. Because of its secretive nature, corruption is difficult to study directly in the field, and has recently been analyzed through lab experiments. Non-monetary considerations (e.g. legal, ethical, cultural...), however, may be major determinants of corruption that are difficult to integrate into lab experiments. Although promising, the experimental approach on corruption is in its infancy, and its practical relevance will not be fully established as long as the question of external validity remains unaddressed. The main object of my thesis is to examine the relevance of lab experiments conducted in developed countries i) in studying corruption and producing results applicable to the real world; and ii) in drawing anti-corruption policy recommendations for developing countries. Joint with my adviser, Professor Olivier Armantier, we conducted similar field and lab experiments, respectively in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) and Montreal (Canada) in order to compare the results.

## **3. Future Research**

New research projects will extend the analysis of corruption:

1. In the near future, I plan to conduct a lab experiment on corruption in Ouagadougou, mirroring the lab experiment in Montreal. Such experiment can help us better understand the differences or similarities in results between the lab experiment in Montreal and the field experiment in Burkina Faso. Compared to the field experiment, this lab experiment in Ouagadougou can also be used as a further check of the external validity of lab results.
2. I intend to further study the determinants of corrupt behavior and anti-corruption measures. In particular, I plan to conduct additional experimental treatments to analyze corrupt behavior when i) the copy with the bribe belongs to a good rather than a mediocre candidate; and ii) helping the briber is explicitly detrimental to the other candidates. I am also interested in the effect of moral suasion on corrupt decision making.
3. I am interested in analyzing channels through which micro-economic decisions about corruption translate into macro-economic effects. In particular, the theoretical and empirical links between corruption and incentives to learn or exert effort at the student level may be relevant. Indeed, effort and learning are central to human capital accumulation, which itself is considered the engine of growth.