

THE IMPACT OF CORRUPTION ON CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE ROLE OF NGOS

Being invited to this event to talk about one of my passions and what we can do about it is an extremely great privilege and honour. Thank you Ambassador and thank you Ms Suvi Valkonen for the arrangements made to make this event possible. This presentation is without prejudice.

I will talk about what NGOs locally can do to about tackling corruption in the context of some global falsifications and sophistry that have a global and local impact. My presentation is in my personal capacity and not in my capacity as being associated with NUST.

The presentation will not so much focus on the impact, however more so on what can be done about changing the culture of corruption and developing Namibian anti-corruption approaches and strategies for NGOs to reduce corruption. I will ask numerous questions to spark a debate because this presentation is not an academic lecture, however an open dialogue to engage and create not only a better understanding of corruption but also what you in your institutions can practically do and together to fight the monster of corruption, known in Oshikwanyama as Ulingilingi.

NGOs fulfil an extremely critical role in developing Namibia. Challenges such as poverty, inequality and land expropriation are complex. NGOs need an open door to offices/ministries/agencies in order to access information, to influence and steer national debate. If NGOs are too critical then they are blamed, labelled and side-lined/excluded by governments. Within the context of the Election Year and given the current national and SADC socio-economic challenges, it will require from NGOs to act with finesse, eloquence and build relationships of trust with public office holders.

Understanding corruption and its impact

Corruption is as old as the hills. One facet of corruption can be described as a perception(s), but it is also a social disease, a lifestyle disease, e.g. excessive consumption of fast foods. It can also be described as an impact, for example, it impacts on the private sector and the private sector impacts on corruption; a manifestation (e.g. bribery), a condition and/or culture – for example, a culture of entitlement associated with the reaction to colonialism and the liberation struggle; and as a co-producer/contributor, for example, human activity contributes to climate change (Coetzee, 2012: iii). From the discussion it is evident that corruption is dynamic and has many ‘faces’ like a chameleon that can adjust its colour and behaviour according to its environment. Corruption can also change its environment; consider, for example, the cliché that ‘corruption creates further corruption’.

The dangers of extreme self-interest to the exclusion of all other values implies that everybody works only for himself or herself, hence we will always look at ways to outdo the next person, regardless of the consequences for the competition or prey or society.

But is corruption a relative concept? What is corruption in Russia is not necessarily corruption in the USA. Is corruption a Western concept? The answer to this question is not easy to determine. There are perceptions that corruption is not an African concept, but ‘imported’ mainly from Europe. Parkhouse (2017) has mentioned that the Far East has a different approach to, and line of thinking about, what constitutes corruption. What is clear is that corruption is situational, or context-based. Determining the origin of the international problem of corruption and who is accountable is comparable to trying to determine the origins of the human capacity to be both ‘good and evil’. It certainly cannot solve the problem situation of corruption in Namibia.

The World Bank (WB) defined corruption as “the abuse of public office for private gain”. The expanded definition of the WB distinguishes between ‘isolated’ and ‘systemic’ corruption (World Bank Report, 1997: 9-10). The WB adjusted its definition slightly to replace ‘public office’ with ‘trusted office’. By implication the role of the private sector is also acknowledged by this modification. However, the WB’s adjusted definition still fails to acknowledge the general nature of corruption as being systemic – a concept that suggests dependence on deviant behaviour in public and/or private sector institutions. From a systemic perspective, the WB’s definition does not capture the essence of corruption and is inadequate for managing corruption (Coetzee, 2012: 123).

The Anti-Corruption Act, Act No. 8 of 2003, describes corruption in terms of gratification (dealing with, using, holding, receiving, or concealing gratification in relation to any office); corrupt acquisition of private interests by public officers; corruption in relation to tenders; bribery of public officers; corruption of witnesses; bribery of foreign public officials; bribery in relation to auctions; bribery for giving assistance in relation to contracts; corruptly using an office or position for gratification; corruption in relation to sporting events; conspiracies; and fraudulent concealment of office. From the Act it is clear that the description of corruption is inadequate for managing corruption, because the description does not capture the essence of corruption, namely that it is not only a public and/or private ‘office’ issue, but that it is systemic in nature, in other words it extends to the ‘whole’ of Namibian society. Given this systemic implication, any strategies to tackle corruption in the private sector must be aligned with strategies in the public and civil sector to be sustainable.

Based on the long-term TI trend of Namibian corruption, where corruption is routine in transactions with government and the private sector and not accidental (isolated corruption as defined by the WB), the most comprehensive and systemic definition known to the author can be defined as “*an impairment of integrity, virtue or moral principle; depravity, decay, and/or an inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means, a departure from the original or from what is pure or correct, and/or an agency or influence that corrupts*” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2010). An argument can be made about “a departure from the original or from what is pure or correct”, but whose standards are applicable in determining ‘what is pure and correct’? Nevertheless, the essential attributes of corruption are represented in this definition and will be used in this paper.

Corruption in the private sector is part of the total level of corruption in a country. It is necessary to investigate the level of corruption in Namibia in comparison with other countries. One of the most popular indices used by investors to provide them with an indication of the level of corruption in a country as a decision-making indicator for investment purposes is the Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International (TI) (Coetzee, 2012: 124). The TI Index on corruption and good governance is compiled annually per country. Countries are classified as open, Western-style economies or closed economies. Countries are rated out of 10 – with 10 being a perfect score, indicating no corruption and perfect good governance. The problem with international indices, however, is that they are simplistic indices and do not perceive and tackle corruption from a holistic or systemic perspective.

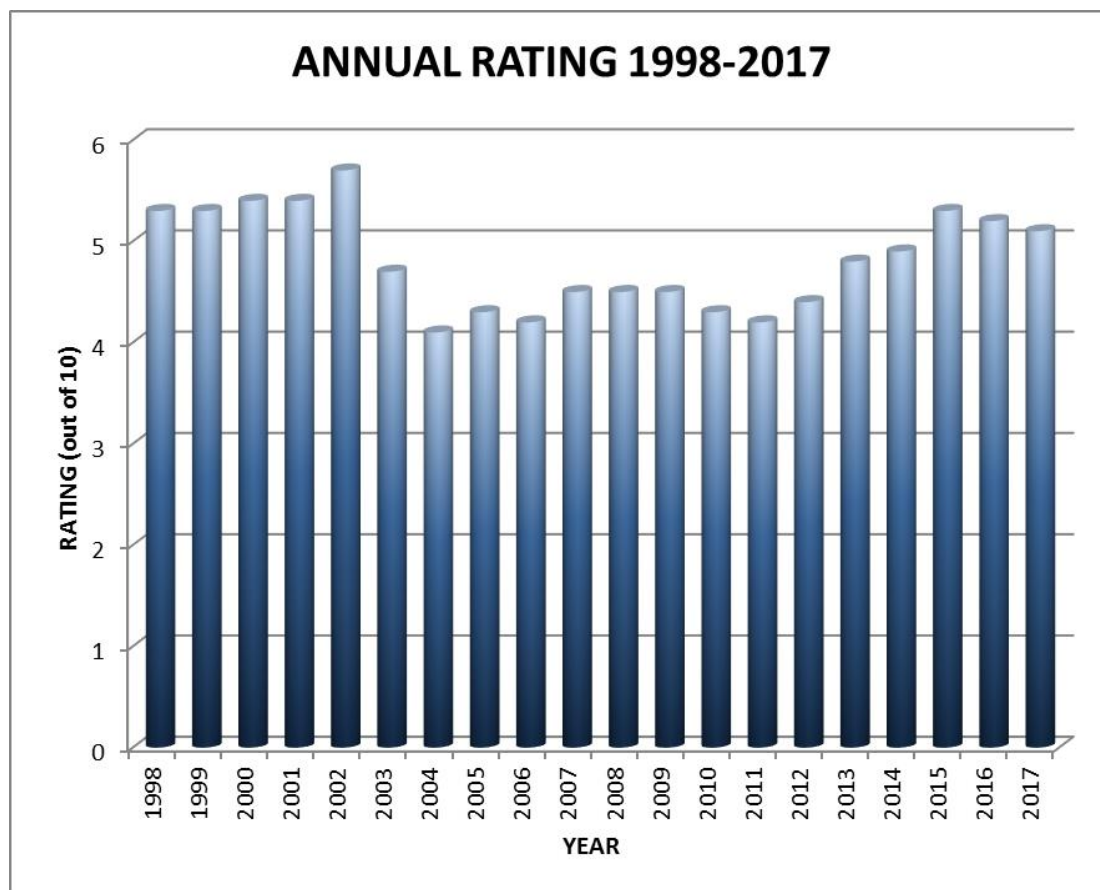


Figure 1: Transparency International Indices of Namibia's Governance & Corruption, compilation by author.

When analysing the TI ratings in Namibia from 1998 up to 2017, the trend was negative; however, what is positive is that since 2004 the 'darkest year' with a rating of 4.1 out of 10 – the trend has been positive overall, and it has slowly but surely been rising, with a rating of 5.1 in 2017. Namibia has always been one of the top five least corrupt African countries. However, a rating of mostly below 5 out of 10 since 2004, indicates we are mediocre, not good but not bad, just 'hanging in there'. The average rating over 18 years is 4.8 and for the last 10 years has been 4.6. This is an indication that Namibia is failing from an international perspective in terms of tackling corruption. From analysing the long-term trend, it can be deduced that there is tolerance of corruption in Namibia that has become part of the culture of engrained corruption that has also 'infected' law-enforcement agencies and the private sector. Some pending fraud cases date back to 2008, e.g. Teko Trading Case. In this case involves a former Public Service Commissioner and her business associates. After several delays in the judicial system, the case still dragging on.

Public service delivery

One of the critical roles of NGOs is to assist in improving public services in a geographically much broader, however deteriorating quality of service delivery (a trend) since Independence. NGOs are accountable towards the citizens of Namibia in providing services and advice as objectively as possible. Accountability requires monitoring systems in improving the measurability of poverty alleviation programs. Given the unemployment rate of 43.3% within the age group 18-35, one of the highest inequality rates in the world, and drought amidst a depression, it is clear that NGOs have their work cut out for them. It is a mammoth accountability to make every Namibian dollar you invest, impacts its maximum potential in improving basic public service delivery.

NGOs working in the public sector has the accountability to liaise with strategic institutions to transform them in improving service delivery. Such services include health, education, and revenue collection. Given the **2018 Afro-Barometer** findings that most people are not satisfied with public service delivery, a decrease in votes in favour of the ruling party will not be a surprise and intimidation is expected. Since no paper verification of votes, it will require a critical presence of NGO observers to prevent intimidation and election fraud. Court cases have been filed after the previous election using the same electronic voting system without a paper trail. Given some of the current contentious challenges mentioned, it is time to talk about one of our social diseases namely corruption.

In the mediocre commitment of politicians to reduce corruption, a bottom-up approach in activating citizen advocacy needs to compliment a direct top-down approach. This includes inspiring citizens to voice their opinions in print and on social media platforms to express their dissatisfaction with i.e. hundreds of unplaced learners weeks after public schools opened synthetics that were not available for surgery during December at the State Hospital and the close of the only public eye clinic in the country. The said mentioned is the situation while approximately seven billion have been wasted in total in post tender fraud (a trend), i.e. the Walvis Bay petroleum facility and the Neckartal Dam. In broader perspective about the tertiary sector, UNAM received during 2018 1 billion and NUST 600 million. What can NGOs do differently during 2019 compared to 2018 to influence decision makers to get their priorities changed from spending on defence (think about the farms bought during 2018 of approximately 100 million) towards education where learners' quality of life can be improved? I am looking forward to engage with you on your answers.

What can NGOs do to reduce corruption in Namibia?

Reporting corruption

Reporting incidents of corruption to the ACC is the right thing to do. The NEF (2017) in conducting a mini-survey amongst its members frequently came up against the statement "I cannot risk my name or my company being identified and then blacklisted for tenders next year". This view of NEF members is confirmed by De Klerk (2017), who said "business entities do not stand up against corruption, as corruption most of the time involves government, and businesses fear reprisal from government."

In an interview Herbst (2017a) mentioned that "the anti-corruption unit is perceived to be for the elite cases and the police task force is non-existent. The task force staff are not trained in fraud or the applicable legislation and is very unpleasant to work with. We performed work for the United Nations Global Fund after fraud was detected. The fraud case slowed down the project for longer than a year as they could not close the matter. The office and documents were left in total disarray, they did not care that the country lost millions in donor monies that was earmarked for health. They did not care". De Klerk (2017) confirmed this view: "The ACC is largely seen as a dead duck, and is known to actually victimise the whistle-blower instead of the reported entity or person". The ACC expects a reporter/whistle-blower to fully investigate a matter and basically provide a complete docket (after which chances are that the Director-General (DG) locks that up forever anyway), he claimed. De Klerk is critical about the value of reporting corruption to the authorities. "Businesses have no faith that a report to the police or the ACC will result in anything other than reprisal from government. Government is the one party to corruption. Do we really think they will take the fighting of corruption seriously, especially at a point where corruption has become systemic in Namibia and South Africa? I always urge people to report corruption".

Very few people and businesses do report corruption for the reasons mentioned. They fear reprisal and do not have trust that the ACC or even NAMPOL will really do something. De Klerk concluded, “How much trust does the public still have in the defunct ACC?”

Private businesses and the United Nations (UN) Global Compact can be approached to fund private investigative units as part of a national vigilance to prevent and expose corruption. Systemic corruption is not just an ethical or moral issue, but also a risk management issue, e.g. death threats and dismissals. Financial incentives should be created for whistle-blowers to report corruption (Coetzee, 2012: 163).

The influence of the UN Global Compact office in Namibia and local advertising companies can be used to get public relations and marketing assistance to identify target markets of corruption (Coetzee, 2012: 172), e.g. schools for branding specific awareness and prevention programmes as part of a national anti-corruption campaign.

From several interviews with members with of the business community as previously cited and a personal conversation with the Chief Investigator of the ACC (Bekker, 2017) it can be deduced that the business community and probably the public at large, are unaware of protection provided under the provisions of Section 52 (4) of the Anti-Corruption Act (Act No.8 of 2003) that stipulates that “No action or proceedings of a disciplinary, civil or criminal nature may be instituted or maintained by any person or authority against any informer or a person who has assisted the Commission in an investigation into an alleged or suspected offence under this Act or any other law in respect of any information, other than a material statement which he or she knew or believed to be false or did not believe to be true, disclosed by him or her to the Commission for the purpose of assisting the Commission in the performance of its functions under this Act”. The implication of Section 52 for the business community is that any person that is aware of corruption and/or have engaged in corruption and shared financially or in kind in e.g. bribery can approach the ACC with complete peace of mind in terms of no prosecution of any kind. The fact that no civil or criminal case can be prosecuted under any Namibian law based on an informer/whistleblower that provides evidence even if they have shared in the spoils of corruption is a great incentive for businessmen to and any other person to report corruption not because it is the moral thing to do, but because they do have protection from prosecution from any kind from the Prosecutor General. Section 52 (4) should be marketed with great vigour to reduce corruption.

From the discussion in this section it can be deduced that positive developments are taking place in the private sector to unite and tackle national issues, of which corruption can soon be included as a priority area. Numerous alternatives are possible in tackling corruption more effectively, e.g. cooperating with civil society and the media in exposing corruption and putting pressure on government to reform systems conducive to corruption.

Cooperation with public and regulatory agencies to prevent corruption

The central anti-corruption agency, the Anti-Corruption Commission, can cooperate with private institutions, community-based organisations and interest groups that have an interest in reducing corruption. Examples of such interest groups include Access to Information Namibia (ACTION), Citizens for an Accountable and Transparent Society (CATS) and NamRights (formerly the National Society for Human Rights) (Coetzee, 2017d). Businesses can uncover corruption by making use of hidden video cameras (linked to central monitoring control units), confidential exit interviews and electronic surveillance (Klitgaard, 2010: 26). NGOs can join in the said mentioned cooperation.

‘Citizen oversight boards’ can be created at various levels, e.g. for the police, courts and customs (Klitgaard, 2010: 32) and others. Such oversight bodies should cooperate with the ACC. These oversight bodies can convene with the ACC on a monthly basis where the ACC provide feedback about progress made in terms of awareness and prevention programmes. Citizen oversight boards can cooperate with the ACC in organising such programmes and tailoring them for specific businesses and other target groups.

Some of the reasons for delays in court cases are substandard police investigations and documentation. Incomplete ‘dockets’ are a major reason for thousands of pending court cases. ***Civil society can assist much more as part of the Auxiliary/Reserve Police to relieve pressure on overworked, understaffed and underpaid policemen.*** There are so many young men engaging in drinking, What can we do to encourage them to become a member of the Reserve Police? What can NGOs do about it? Or is it not within your mandate? Such initiatives can contribute to more time spent on the proper completion of ‘dockets’ for submission to the Prosecutor General’s Office for reducing the thousands of backlog cases.

Based on the example of several countries, including South Africa, ***a Court for Small Cases should be created to hear and finalise on short notice criminal and civil cases involving corruption, e.g. criminals stealing moveable assets of tourists.*** When the property of tourists is stolen (theft is a manifestation of corruption), tourists cannot wait for a court hearing that could take months or years to be scheduled and postponed several times due to incomplete police ‘dockets’. Criminals target tourists because they know they it is very unlikely that this could have negative consequences for them. Victims return shortly after their vacations to their own countries with no consequences for the criminals. Non-addressing of corruption in the hospitality and tourism industries impacts negatively on these industries and on investment.

Regulatory efficiency in general is severely lacking in Namibia. De Klerk (2017) said in an interview that “Namibia does not harbour the value of accountability. Industry regulators, [e.g. the Namibian Financial Institutions Supervisory Authority (NAMFISA)] and professional regulators [e.g. the Law Society] simply do not come to the party when it comes to fighting corruption. This is due to several factors: (a) No political will; (b) lack of resources and capacity; and (c) lack of statutory mandate. Very often all three factors play a role. The Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Committee under the Ministry of Justice could, for instance, for close to 13 years not remove an attorney who stole trust funds, imagine the lack of interest in something like a free lunch to a government official. In the Ministry of Justice [e.g. Masters Office] free food is a condition for being assisted (I heard from several well placed persons).”

Anti-corruption networks and integrity pacts

‘Integrity pacts’ could be signed between, public and private sector institutions to form a partnership to fight corruption (Coetzee, 2012: 103). NGOs can be included in such ‘pacts’ and facilitate such ‘pacts’ formulation. The institution coordinating such an anti-corruption drive can form ‘integrity pacts’ (moral agreements of compliance, monitoring and reporting) with stakeholders, such as captains of industry in the private sector, the United Nations (UN) Global Compact, NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs), tax-payers’ associations, employers’ associations, trade unions, churches, and sport and cultural organisations to coordinate efforts in an integrated approach (Coetzee, 2012: 165). The forming of anti-corruption ‘pacts’ is not a new idea and has been done successfully in Australia and several developing countries.

Some CIF members (2017) commented that the ACC is not effective in tackling corruption. They recommend that the ACC should be abolished (which is not in line with international requirements, highly unlikely and not appropriate) or complemented with private agencies that are contracted, depending on their track record, in exposing corruption and their ability to prove that offenders are guilty. Watchdog institutions such as the ACC and the Office of the Auditor-General (which are not fully empowered with financial and human resources) should be strengthened by the government and the private sector. Such strengthening could enable watchdog institutions to effectively apply legal instruments to execute their mandate.

From the discussion it can be deduced that an anti-corruption network and integrity pacts coordinating the work of the ACC, private investigative units and civil society organisations can play a key role in addressing corruption and sharing resources, information and speeding up the process of bringing offenders to book. Can NGOs initiate such integrity pacts?

Key institutions and ‘hot spots’

Some institutions are strategic because of their visibility in the public eye, for instance, border control units and institutions issuing permits and licences. Such institutions are also ‘hot spots’ of corruption. If the gains of corrupt institutions are made visible to the public (e.g. bribes and/or pay-offs), there is some leverage for reducing corruption by means of transforming such corrupt systems. Klitgaard (2010: 18) called the process of transforming strategic leverage points ‘picking visible low-hanging fruit’. These are, in terms of this paper, the most ‘annoying’ organisational units and/or components in the public sector resisting transformation. For example, tax and customs offices; budgeting and accounting offices; procurement (e.g. the Ministry of Works and Transport); tendering – the Central Procurement Board, especially in the case of increasing tender exemptions, and the evaluation of tenders; social benefit programmes (e.g. pensions – e.g. the Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF) fraud; social security – the Social Security Commission (SSC) fraud; and motor vehicle accident fund). The purpose should be to break the recurring negative loops of the mutually self-serving behaviour of those engaged in networks of reciprocal obligations (Coetzee, 2017a).

Other Namibian ‘hot-spots’ of administrative and regulatory control units, where one is most likely to find corruption, include the following: quotas and licences (e.g. fishing, transport, imports and exports, prospecting and mining), permits and regulations (e.g. environmental, occupational health and safety, and labour agencies), inspections (e.g. taxation and construction), and subsidies (e.g. infant industry protection, drought and housing). The process of applying for permits and licences needs special mention, because public servants create delays to make such services appear to be scarce (restricted and fixed supply), thereby increasing the demand for the service and inducing applicants to pay higher bribes. These hotspots and/or strategic institutions that co-produce corruption should be dealt with within a relatively short period of 24 months. Based on the experience of Hong Kong, Singapore, the UK and the USA (as previously mentioned in this paper), successful transformation of strategic institutions can create momentum for sustaining the change process and broadening it to the rest of the public sector. The Inland Revenue Office is being transformed into a public agency (SOE nr 100 according to my numbering system), with hopefully improved performance. You can register online, however, will tax avoidance be reduced as indicated as one of the corruption areas by the President of NIPAM, Mrs Herbst during an interview in 2018?

It is the accountability of NGOs to be aware about corruption in these ‘hot spots’ and/or strategic institutions and be vigilant when dealing with them including reporting them to the respective authorities when experiencing or suspecting corruption.

MBV

Gender Based Violence is the politically correct name for Male Based Violence (MBV) a national evil associated with a traditional and chauvinistic system where men make the decisions and abuse their physical dominance at the expense of women, abusing and raping them. Contributors towards MBV include excessive alcohol consumption (De Klerk, 2018). It is the accountability of the applicable NGOs to expose such atrocities, to assist in increasing 'save houses'. MBV is not the only issue affecting women negatively. A trend is that men deserted women and refuse to pay maintenance for the upbringing of their children. The development of children is negatively affected in terms of nutrition, education and quality of live.

Leadership and political representation

NGOs need to focus on inspirational and transformation leadership. Role models can inspire the youth. National issues in Namibia are too much politically orientated, based on ideology and very little on economics. Such an approach breeds exclusiveness, intolerance and inflexibility, i.e. the refusal to classify former SWADF members as war veterans with accompanying benefits irrespective of the fact the RSA government allocated millions to all Namibian veterans for distribution by the current government. Structurally, the political landscape of Namibia is canvassed by 100 Central Committee members of the ruling party and not by the people of the country, making Namibia for years being classified as 'a failed democracy' by the **Democracy Index**. What can be done to influence change of the undemocratic political representative system?

Initiating a court for corruption cases

Due to the immense backlog in court cases, it is proposed that NGOs assist in advising the authorities at the highest level to form a court for only hearing corruption cases. This can speed up the process of delays, i.e. about the SME Bank fraud and Overseas Development Cooperation that is only being taken to court a decade after it has been reported in the media.

Lowering banking fees

Project financing, to be specific - private equity (PE) financing - is a national disinvestment challenge that affects the ownership of projects. The baseline rule is that investors, especially foreign investors tend to insist on a debt to equity ratio of 70:30. This is also the going ratio of PE financed by banks. Irrespective of minimising project specific risks, product life cycle and bundling of mature technology, Return on Investment and other financial ratios, projects are financed in almost all cases on a 70:30 bases. This means that local entrepreneurs have meagre ownership in projects. Their intellectual capital is transferred to greedy and demanding equity investors. It is extremely critical that the standard project financing ratio be adjusted when quantified and qualified risk assumptions can be modelled with certainty. Research has taken place in Namibia that provided adequate scientific certainty that the current PE financing ratio can be adjusted when risks can be accounted for, modelled and verified with 95% certainty.

The banking industry is charging Namibians some of the highest banking service fees in the world. This has been revealed in a study by the IPPR during 2005. It is proposed that a follow-up study be executed.

AGWA

Some of the biggest falsifications that should be exposed by NGOs globally and in Namibia includes **Anthropogenic Global Warming Alarmism** (AGWA) by governments, scientists and MNCs. Evidence exists that the current level of carbon dioxide is mainly due to what happened millions of years ago and not due to human activity during the previous century. Al Gore's video '**The Inconvenient**

Truth is a falsification because a correlation between the rise in carbon dioxide and global temperature does not establish causality if the underlying assumptions for the contributors to the current quantity of carbon dioxide is a falsification. The climate is changing, however all models to predict it long and medium term are not reliable. In the aircraft industry, valid projections of the weather are not possible for a 24-hour period due to too many variables that cannot be modelled with certainty. It is improbable that Al Gore's projections until 2050 about the rise in global temperature due to an increase of current carbon dioxide levels can be reliable. Al Gore bought an apartment in Florida below sea level. It is time that NGOs expose AGWA as a sophistry and refrain from joining the mainstream of global thinking such as the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that is being manipulated by governments and businesses for making profit.

Does benefits so much from the AGWA in terms of funding that this falsification should not be addressed by relevant NGOs in Namibia? Should we rather continue with this sophistry instead of exposing it?

Organised religion

Over thousands of years organised religion has been used to provide people a higher purpose in life, i.e. being associated with values and ethical principles that provide order and discipline in society, e.g. the Christian Bible and the Koran. Religion is based on beliefs about one should conduct your life. About 4500 plus organised religions are practiced in the world. However, there is another side to religion. From the Crusades and colonialism and imperialism it is possible to deduce that religion can lead to exclusiveness and fundamentalism as we experience in religious wars in the Middle East and in Africa. We have seen people in Namibia being exploited emotionally and financially by fundamentalistic religious groups. Such fundamentalism contributes to polarisation of groups, e.g. the South Sudan and North Sudan, the south and North of Nigeria. Polarisation contributes to segmentalism and can contribute to corruption. During 2018 we have experienced a growth in organised religions in Namibia 'imported' from other African countries in misleading the poor of Namibia. It is time that the role that organised religion plays in contributing towards corruption be exposed. Is the topic to controversy to be taken up by NGOs? Why do we not see research being conducted about the impact of organised religion in abusing Namibians?

Summary

Preventing corruption should take place within a transparent legal and regulatory environment. Strategies for transforming the system should include a blend of:

- short-term, formal or hard structures: increasing policing and law enforcement
- long-term, informal or soft approaches: reducing poverty and inequality, and increasing the quality of education, including the value for money per capita spent on education by transforming the education system to make it industry-driven. There should be an educational system that prepares students much better for technical skills such as carpentry and building. Other aspects that should be part of the curriculum include stimulating creativity, team building, nutrition, handling conflict, values, leadership, and insights about love – how to seek purpose in life, and finding wisdom by making use of retired people and providing community work
- structural (strategic or prospective) strategies: transforming offices dealing with licences (driver and vehicle road-worthy licences issued by employees administering the Namibia Traffic Information System), quotas (such as fishing quotas allocated by the Ministry of Fisheries), permits (for example import and export permits issued by Tax and Customs offices of the Ministry of Finance), building compliance licences issued by local municipalities and subsidies (such as drought subsidies issued by the Emergency Management Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), which were discussed as the 'hot spots' of corruption) and strategic institutions, such as the GiPF, NAMFiSA, the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) and the ACC

■ tactical/operational strategies: increasing efficiency, effectiveness and performance, through determining unit costs of public goods and services (such as the cost of issuing a driver's licence), benchmarking of public services against best international standards – this includes off-time of the inter- and intranet of public offices' websites, relevancy and frequency of updating public websites, ease of internet payments for public services and the number of days for businesses to be open.

Conclusion

NGOs do have to find a balance between working with government services and working in the interest of the citizens. Maintaining scientific reputation and credibility of the highest standard are more important than to be politically correct. However, it should be done in an inspirational way to develop trust while promoting citizen advocacy.

A huge challenge is the few public office bearers that attend presentations of NGOs when research findings are discussed. What can NGOs do to increase public officials' attendance at such presentation.

Given the historic and current context of African politics and in SADC, alarming Namibian trends include an increasing defence force and national security sector under the pretext of employment creation, and increasing private debt. NGOs should steer and influence investor and stakeholder interests locally and abroad to prevent a similar situation as in some African countries where the military is being used to suppress a variety of freedoms including taking the lives of the public in the turmoil of protests. It is time for NGOs to be bold and to act with eloquence and finesse and inspire citizens. Build bridges of hope with the public and influence politicians without getting too close to politicians. Protect your credibility, however expose falsifications, greed and corruption with commitment and courage. There is an expression that in one's comfort zone nothing can change.

Help Namibians to fill the unlimited open spaces of hope in inventing the future with and for them. Leave an NGO and personal legacy by being the change you and your organisation dream about.

Finally, I would like to abuse the opportunity to invite you all to the launch of the first Namibian based textbook printed by Juta for pre- and post graduate students titled *Namibian Government: A Public Administration and Management Perspective*. We are eight authors and I have written two chapters. The one is titled *Governance, Accountability and Transparency in the Namibian Public Sector*. The other and final chapter of the book is titled *Containing and Dissolving Corruption in the Public Sector* that is a framework for addressing corruption in any public sector based on systemic best practices with specific reference to what Namibian should do. I will communicate the invitation via Ms Suvi if the Ambassador permits? Thank you for misusing your time to talk about the book.

References

Coetzee, JJ. 2012. Systemic corruption and corrective Change management strategies: A Study of the co-producers of systemic corruption and its negative impact of socio-economic development. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch.

De Klerk, S. 2018. Gender Based Violence in Namibia: A Contemporary Perspective. Presentation by Chairperson of the Namibian Women Lawyers Association on invitation by the UNAM Law Review, 10 October, Windhoek.

Republic of Namibia. 2003. *Anti-Corruption Act, Act No 8 of 2003*. Government Gazette.

References not included is available in the document titled *The Role of the Private Sector in Tackling Corruption*, IPPR Briefing Paper, April 2018, it can be retrieved at: <https://ippr.org.na>.

Preventing corruption should take place within a transparent legal and regulatory environment. Strategies for transforming the system should include a blend of:

- short-term, formal or hard structures: increasing policing and law enforcement
- long-term, informal or soft approaches: reducing poverty and inequality, and increasing the quality of education, including the value for money per capita spent on education by transforming the education system to make it industry-driven. There should be an educational system that prepares students much better for technical skills such as carpentry and building. Other aspects that should be part of the curriculum include stimulating creativity, team building, nutrition, handling conflict, values, leadership, and insights about love – how to seek purpose in life, and finding wisdom by making use of retired people and providing community work
- structural (strategic or prospective) strategies: transforming offices dealing with licences (driver and vehicle road-worthy licences issued by employees administering the Namibia Traffic information System), quotas (such as fishing quotas allocated by the Ministry of Fisheries), permits (for example import and export permits issued by Tax and Customs offices of the Ministry of Finance), building compliance licences issued by local municipalities and subsidies (such as drought subsidies issued by the Emergency Management Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), which were discussed as the ‘hot spots ‘of corruption) and strategic institutions, such as the GiPF, NAMFiSA, the Financial intelligence Centre (FIC) and the ACC
- tactical/operational strategies: increasing efficiency, effectiveness and performance, through determining unit costs of public goods and services (such as the cost of issuing a driver’s licence), benchmarking of public services against best international standards – this includes off-time of the inter- and intranet of public offices’ websites, relevancy and frequency of updating public websites, ease of internet payments for public services and the number of days for businesses to be open.