

AFRICA NETWORK FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE (ANEEJ)

# ASSESSMENT OF BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE AS AN OPTION FOR TACKLING CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

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# ABOUT ANEEJ

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The Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ) is a non-governmental organisations whose goal is to amplify the voice of the weak, the less privileged and the marginalized groups in the society including women and youths, in order to increase their participation in the democratic decision-making process. As its basis, ANEEJ believes in a democratic system for managing human interest and operates within two broad focal areas namely environmental and economic justice.

Specifically, ANEEJ implements projects relating to governance and democracy, peace building and conflict resolution, human rights and anti-corruption, environment including water, sanitation and hygiene among others.

ANEEJ worked with over 100 civil society organisations while hosting the Secretariat of the Publish What You Pay (PWYP) Campaign, Nigeria from 2004-2008 and the Nigerian Network on Stolen Assets.

The organisation also coordinated CSOs that were involved in monitoring repatriated Late General Sani Abacha loots under the Public Expenditure Management and Financial Accountability Review (PEMFAR), a tripartite agreement between the World Bank, Civil Society and Nigerian governments.

ANEEJ in 2003 established the Society for Water and Sanitation (NEWSAN), a coalition of over 300 CSOs working in the area of Water and Sanitation. ANEEJ is currently engaging the Nigerian government, international community as well as local and international civil society groups on the recovery of stolen assets to finance development. ANEEJ has consultative status with the United Nations and is a member of United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) Coalition.

ANEEJ is currently implementing the Transparency and Accountability in recovery and Management of looted Assets (MANTRA) project. It is monitoring the returned \$322.5million Abacha Loot being spent on Conditional Cash Transfer Programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria meant for the poorest of the poor.



# ACRONYMS

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ANEEJ –Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice

CCB – Code of Conduct Bureau

CISLAC – Civil Society Legislative and Advocacy Centre

EFCC- Economic and Financial Crimes Commission

ICPC – Independent Corrupt Practices Commission

DFID – Department for International Development (United Kingdom)

GIFMIS – Government Integrated Financial Management Information System

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

IPPIS – Integrated Personnel and Payroll Management Information System

NEITI – Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

NNPC - Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

PFM – Public Financial Management

PSR – Public Sector Review

SDGs- Sustainable Development Goals

TI – Transparency International

TSA – Treasury Single Account

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corruption in developing countries have been of much concern in the past three to four decades. This is because of negative impact of corruption on investment, growth and welfare of the citizens.

There are provisions in the laws of nations for dealing with corrupt practices, special institutions have been created in many countries to handle cases of violation of the law. Much reliance was, therefore, placed on rule of law approach in combating corruption.

Development partners have also contributed to anti-corruption efforts through support for measures to reduce public sector corruption by supporting public sector review and public finance management programmes. Support has also been provided for non-state actors (NGOs) empowerment for effective engagement with public officials for greater transparency and accountability. Despite these measures, little success is recorded in reducing corruption.

Transparency International with its corruption perception index ranked Nigeria 148th out of 180 in 2017 from 138th out of 176 in 2016. Petty corruption and grand corruption are prevalent in Nigeria. Cases such as Bribe for Budget, non-remittance by NNPC to Federation Account, and Pension Fund Scam are a few examples of grand corruption.

Results from survey on prevalence of petty corruption in Nigeria in 2015/2016 found that almost one-third (32.3%) of respondents paid bribes, and only 5.3% of those who had contact with public officials turned down

demand for bribe. Furthermore, only 3.7% did report to authorities. This is due to lack of trust in the justice system and the latent acceptability of corruption.

For example, of those who did not report, 34.6% felt that nobody would care, while 33.4% felt that giving bribes are such common practices that reporting would not make a difference. Studies have, thus found that social norms and networks influence behaviour and perception on corruption in Nigeria.

The search for more effective strategies has led to shift of focus to behavioural approach to anti-corruption. Studies on Nigeria have found that traditional approaches like rule of law and public sector reforms have not led to reduction in prevalence of corruption. Studies have found out also that social norms and networks do influence individual's perception and behaviour with regards to corruption.

This explains the prevalence of corrupt practices in Nigeria. Studies elsewhere have shown that context in which formal and informal frameworks of decision making coexist are more successful in combating corruption, when informal social framework as defined by social norms and values are integrated into formal framework.

Efforts to combat corruption in Nigeria would, therefore, necessarily have to include measures to reduce influence of social norms in decision making, and particularly on perceptions about corruption.

# INTRODUCTION

Combating corruption in developing countries has been a major concern in the past three decades. Corruption is considered as being responsible for political instability, economic underdevelopment, low administrative efficiency and poor governance structures around the world, and developing countries in particular.

Kaufman (1999) considers public sector corruption as the single greatest restraint to development. This level of concern really took a global dimension when very recently the international community demonstrated its recognition of the harmful impact of corruption by including a specific target to fight corruption in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 16.5 and 16.5.1, which seeks to substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms and "prevalence of bribery" as indicators.

Corruption has been quite prevalent in Nigeria in recent decades. For example, Nigerians consider bribery the third most important problem confronting the economy after the high cost of living and unemployment.

Despite the huge financial resources the country has realized from its oil resources, the level of development is remarkable below that of her comparable countries like Indonesia, a country with abundant oil resources and large population.

Despite various measures introduced over the years to combat corruption, the prevalence seems to be on the increase. Transparency International (TI) in its 2017 report ranked Nigeria 148th out of 180 countries, with a score of 28 out of 100. The ranking in 2016 was 136 out of 176.

The question is why have the various measures not produced required results? In a bid to seek answers to this question, African Network for Economic and Environmental Justice (ANEEJ), with financial support from United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) commissioned this study and provided Term of Reference (ToR).

The report is structured thus. Following Introduction in section 1, section 2 outlines the ToR. Section 3 discusses operational definitions of corruption, as well as the impact of corruption. Section 4 reviews the various approaches discussed in the literature in combating corruption and the current approaches employed in Nigeria.

Section 5 specifically discusses relevance of behavioural approach to understudying corruption in Nigeria. Section 6 presents the conclusion from the study and section 7 presents policy recommendations derived from the study.



Transparency International (TI) in its 2017 report ranked Nigeria 148th out of 180 countries, with a score of 28 out of 100. The ranking in 2016 was 136 out of 176.



## TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

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The TOR of the assignment is as follows:

Review current approach(es) to tackling corruption in Nigeria, which is centred around sanctions.

Review literature on behavioural change as an option in the war against corruption.

Assess how far Nigeria has implemented policies and programmes that engender behavioural change in the war against corruption.

Identify stakeholders involved in the implementation of such policies and programmes.

Assess efforts from other countries which have achieved success in the war against corruption, using behavioural change option.

Make recommendations on how to tackle corruption in Nigeria through behavioural change.

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# DEFINITIONS AND NATURE OF CORRUPTION

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A common definition of corruption classifies it as behaviour deviating from the accepted rules to achieve individual benefits. This definition suggests that corrupt acts are deviations from implicit and explicit behavioural norms, in a legal and ethical sense.

According to Khan (1996:684) corruption is a "behaviour that deviates from the formal rules of conduct governing the actions of someone in position of public authority because of private-regarding motives such as wealth, power or status". And as World Bank (2001) notes, provision found in the laws of many countries classifies corruption as "the abuse of public power for private benefit".

UNDP (2004) defines corruption as "the abuse of public power, office or authority for private benefits, through bribery, extortion, influence peddling, nepotism, fraud, speed money or embezzlement". To capture the fact that corruption is not limited to the public sector, Transparency International (2007) modifies the definition to be "the use of entrusted power for private gain", thus broadening it beyond "public power".

It has also been suggested in the literature that context matters in defining what constitutes corrupt act. While different societies might have a common understanding of what is good and bad, when talking about corruption in particular, one might interpret it as natural or corrupt behaviour based on the societal norms he has been raised in. even such things as gifts are sometimes difficult to distinguish from bribes.

Given this perception, political science literature has suggested three approaches to identifying corrupt behaviour, namely public interest, public opinion and

legal norms.

Corruption from public interest emphasizes deviant behaviour impeding the public interest caused by administration or political bodies. This approach highlights intrinsic motivation of public officials to provide favours to a behaviour that violates specific laws regarding the way public duties should be performed, including illegal exchange of political and nepotism favours for private rewards.

These three approaches provide operational definitions relevant to the focus of this study. Specifically, society's culture tends to influence public opinion which may influence behaviour of individuals in the society or community. Political, social, legal and economic institutions constraint as well as legitimize certain behaviour.

Lastly, typologies of corruption have also been suggested in the literature. These are petty versus grand corruption, and bureaucratic versus political corruption. These typologies help to classify the forms and scope of corruption. Petty corruption is need-motivated. Examples are bribes demanded and paid to permanent secretaries, immigration and custom officers.

## Impact of Corruption

Corruption impacts economic, social and political development. It constitutes threat to sustainable development. No wonder United Nations SDGs has reduction in corruption as one of its goals for 2030. Target 16.5 seeks to attain substantially reduced prevalence of corruption and bribery. Its negative impact is not limited to developing countries. As Dimant (2013:2) reports, corruption affects Germany's economy,



with estimated loss of €150 billion in 2012.

The impact of corruption includes inequality of income, low gross domestic product (GDP) per capital, lower investment, budget allocation distortions, worsen public sector quality, distortion of markets, emergence of underground economy, and tax cheating. Corruption distorts competition in public procurement procedures.

It is statistically proven that corruption is more damaging to investment and economic growth in small developing countries than in larger ones. Applying multiple indicators multiple causes model, Dreher et al (2007) reported a significant negative correlation between the control of corruption, the volatility of growth and inflation and banking restrictions. This confirms that corruption negatively impacts on investment and growth (Mauro, 1995).

In explaining the corruption-poverty nexus Gebel Anja (2018) opined that the fight against corruption is a part of the fight against poverty. People living in poverty are victims of corruption because it generates, along with inefficiency and poor administration of the state, low quality public services and infrastructure investment, which directly affects the quality of living of these people.

For Nigeria, Hoffman and Patel (2017:1) reports that about \$400 billion was estimated to have been stolen from Nigeria public account between 1960 and 1999, and between 2005 and 2014 about \$182 billion was lost through illicit transfer from the country. Also, according to Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre, Nigeria has been losing about \$50 billion to illegal financial flows through money laundering, tax evasion and corruption yearly. And that in 2013, Nigeria recorded 3,198 suspicious Transaction Reports, of which only 61 were disseminated to law enforcement agencies.

To crown it all, Nigeria is one of the biggest oil producer in the World, still, for more than half a century of its independence – Nigeria has not been able to translate such enormous natural resource to improved

infrastructure and standard of living of citizens. Most of the resources of the country are located in the hands of several hundred families while the vast majority live in abject poverty.

#### Prevalence of Corruption in Nigeria

Typologies of corruption stated above identify petty bribery/corruption and grand corruption/bribery. The two types of corruption are prevalent in Nigeria. Though focus of this study is on petty corruption, incidence of grand corruption is also highlighted.

This is useful for appreciating the magnitude of corruption in Nigeria and why this magnitude explains ineffectiveness of anti-corruption efforts of government, and why despite the huge resources at the disposal of government level of development of the economy is still behind that of countries with comparable resource profile.

One of the high-level cases of corruption and its impact was the Bribe for Budget Scam in 2005, the solicitation and payment of bribes to facilitate the passage of a sector's budget by the National Assembly. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) alleged that the then President of Senate and six other members of the National Assembly solicited and received bribes from Ministry of Education to facilitate the passage of Ministry's budget. This led to the sack of Minister of Education.

Another case of grand corruption is the Oil Subsidy Scam. A Presidential Committee set up to verify petroleum subsidy claims found that of the N1.3 trillion (\$8.4 billion) verified, N382 billion (\$2.5 billion at the rate prevailing exchange rate) was fraudulent or questionable and should therefore be recovered from 107 oil marketing companies whose activities were verified (Okonjo-Iweala, 2018:39).

Yet another notable case was shortfall in reported revenue to Federation Account by Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). On March 15, 2016, the Auditor-General of the Federation claimed that its 2014



audit showed that 3.2 trillion (\$16 billion) was unaccounted for by NNPC in terms of remittances to the Federation Account. On March 22, 2016, the Revenue Mobilization and Fiscal Affairs Commission claimed that 4.9 trillion was unaccounted for by NNPC (Okonjo-Iweala, 2018:53-54). There are cases of Pension Fund Scam which have not been prosecuted.

UNODC (2017) from an experience-based household survey on the quality and integrity of public services conducted between June 2015 and May 2016 in all the states in Nigeria profiled prevalence of petty corruption in Nigeria. Results from the survey showed that almost one-third of Nigerians (32.3%) pay bribes when in contact with public officials, and paid an average of six bribes in a year. The incidence was higher in urban areas (34.8%) than in rural areas (31%).

Only 5.3% of those who had contact with a public official in the last twelve months prior to the survey turned down the bribery request made by a public official on at least one occasion, while 27% always paid a bribe when requested to do so. Of those 5.3%, only 1.3% never paid bribe, while the remaining 4.0% refused to pay a bribe at least once but paid a bribe on other occasions (UNODC, 2017:9)

Roughly, N400 billion was spent on bribes each year, an amount equivalent to 39% of the combined federal and state budget on education in 2016. Also, an average of N28,200 was paid annually in cash in bribes, which is equivalent to 12.8% of the annual average salary. Majority (85.3%) episodes in Nigeria are initiated either directly or indirectly by public officials and almost 70% of bribes are paid before a service is rendered.

And a large proportion (42%) of bribes are paid to speed up an administrative procedures that may otherwise be delayed.

As to who takes the bribes, the UNODC (2017) found that of all adult Nigerians who had direct contact with a police officer over the twelve month period of the survey, 46.6% paid the officer at least one bribe, 33% paid to

Prosecutors, Judges/Magistrate were paid by 31.5%, Tax/Revenue Officers were paid by 27%, Custom Officers were paid 26.5% and public utility officers were paid 22.4%.

In other words, the police is the most corrupt, followed by prosecutors, Judges/Magistrate, Tax/Revenue Officers, Custom Officers, and Public Utility Officers in that order. There is differentiation in payers of bribes by income group.

According to the result of survey, household in the highest income group are 58% more likely to pay bribes than households in lowest income groups. This demonstrates a coincidence of both ability to pay principle and benefits principle in decision to pay bribes as a result of higher income and greater benefit from services provided by public officers.

The survey also found that bribes payers rarely report bribery experience to any authority, only 3.7% did report. Of those who did not report, 34.6% felt that nobody would care, 33.4% felt that giving bribes of gifts are such common practices that reporting would not make a difference. This reaction, as is argued below, explains why behavioural approach may be useful in understanding corrupt practices in Nigeria.

More so "as one of the most important reasons why Nigerians who experience an injustice, such as ... being forced to pay a bribe, do not report their grievance to any official authority is their low level of trust in the functioning of the legal system, including the criminal legal system... Moreover, up to 51% of Nigerians agreed with the statement that the staff of the justice system often ask for bribes ..." (UNODC, 2017:68).

“ For Nigeria, Hoffman and Patel (2017:1) reports that about \$400 billion was estimated to have been stolen from Nigeria public account between 1960 and 1999, and between 2005 and 2014 about \$182 billion was lost through illicit transfer from the country.



# ANTI-CORRUPTION APPROACHES

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Governments and organizations have in the past three decades implemented various strategies for combating corruption. Fighting corruption on an international level became more coordinated in this period. The year 2000 represents some sort of pivotal moment. The United Nations Global Compact was introduced, with the enrolment of over 1500 companies and over twenty non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from seventy countries, solely for the purpose of fighting corruption.

This followed a decade of efforts at the international level to quantify the level of corruption across the globe, with Transparency International (TI) introducing its corruption perception index in 1996. Various approaches have been implemented by countries in efforts to combat corruption. Disch et al (2009) provides a review of major ones.

These are, one, the rule of law approach. This approach emphasizes institutional arrangements for prosecuting and enforcing anti-corruption laws. This relies on reforms to strengthen institutions and capacity for effective detection and prosecution of acts of corruption. Law enforcement agencies like police are crucial for effectiveness of this approach. Also in many cases special institutions are established for this, e.g. ICPC and EFCC, in the case of Nigeria.

However, as studies have found, including in Nigeria, the context in which the police operates is itself very crucial, as is shown below. Another limitation on this approach is that non-patrimonial system is often likely to capture the legal system. In a patrimonial system, policies and governance are oriented towards maintaining control and influence through personal, commercial or financial

bond, or directly through controlling the state's repressive apparatus (Arne Disch et al, 2009). A third limitation is the time, and thereby cost, it takes to achieve results.

Two, public sector reforms approach. This is a preventive approach, meant to close easy access to public resources. Often with the support of donor agencies, capacity of institutions are built or strengthened for better performance. Typically, this involves public sector reforms (PSR) and public finance management (PFM) for financial accountability strengthening.

Studies have found evidence of improved performance of public institutions in financial management, but found little evidence of this resulting in reduction in corruption.

Another element of public sector reform approach is decentralization of service delivery. Since public service delivery is where most corrupt activities take place, decentralisation of public service is considered would strengthen accountability and transparency by getting service providers closer to the public they serve.

This element of the approach, however, does not eliminate elite capture which may truncate its ultimate objective.

Third, Extractive Industries Monitoring approach. With extractive industries posing resources curse to many developing countries, due to grand corruption and due to lack of transparency and accountability, the approach, supported by donor agencies, seeks to improve reporting on financial flows in the extractive sector, principally petroleum sector. Implementation of this approach has



resulted in improvement in financial reporting but has not eliminated corruption in the sector, as evidence on Nigeria reported below indicates.

Fourth, non-state actors empowerment approach. This approach seeks to empower non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other non-state actors for monitoring transparency and accountability through access to information and education for capacity for analytical skills and engagement.

These various approaches, which are premised on the assumptions that corruption takes place because of individual choice, weaknesses in the institutional and legal framework, or lack of capacity to enforce existing rules and regulations have had limited success in reducing corruption, as evidence on Nigeria shows below.

This is principally because they do not take into account the systemic and specific nature of corruption in the countries where prevalence of corruption is high. In other words, local context matters in understanding and combating corruption.

**Efforts at Combating Corruption in Nigeria**  
Efforts at combating corruption in Nigeria have relied mainly on the four approaches discussed above. The penal code and criminal laws and legal institutions of Nigeria contain provisions for prevention, enforcement and prosecution of corrupt activities.

Despite this, corruption prevalence increased in the past four decades. In response, government, with the assistance of relevant donor agencies, introduced additional institutions such as Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), Independent Crimes and related Practices Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). High profile cases have been handled by these institutions and a few high level perpetrators were convicted and jailed (Okonjo-Iweala, 2018).

However, many more cases are being prosecuted for

protracted length of time without conclusion or conviction. And there are cases reported almost daily in the news media which have not been prosecuted. Some of this is due to existence of patrimonial tendencies mentioned above.

Public sector reforms have been introduced since the early 2000s. With the support of the World Bank, DFID and USAID an Economic Reform and Governance Project was introduced in 2004. The project included the implementation of an Integrated Payroll and Personal Information System (IPPIS) and Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS) and the Treasury Single Account (TSA) system.

All these reduced leakages in public finances, eliminated about 65,000 ghost workers in 2015 and streamlined all the various federal government accounts and brought them into the CBN system. Thus, "the institution-building laid the foundation for a long-term but necessary approach to fighting corruption" (Okonjo-Iweala, 2018:123).

Its impact was partial. It was equally admitted that "confronting corruption successfully in the sectors, arenas, and activities where we fought it did not mean that we stopped all corruption" (Okonjo-Iweala, 2018:123). This approach did not cover petty corruption or address the root cause of systemic corruption in the country.

Extractive industries-focused approach has also been implemented, with the establishment of the Nigerian Extractive Industries Initiatives (NEITI) which was meant to improve the transparency in financial operations of oil and gas industry in particular and extractive industries in general. This has not eliminated corruption in the sector, as evident in reports of shortfall in remittances by NNPC to Federal Account mentioned in section 3.1 above.

NGO empowerment approach has also been implemented. Donor partners have in the past decade or so scaled up support to relevant NGOs in Nigeria to engage public sector operators with a view to reducing corrupt



activities. Notable NGOs in this category are ANEEJ and Bugdit. Inasmuch as this approach is gaining increased attention, its impact on reducing corruption is so far limited.

Other Efforts by the FGN to tackle corruption are essential. Of important note is the avowed commitment of President Muhammadu Buhari led government to lead anti-corruption. Consequently, at the London Anti-Corruption Summit on May 12, 2016, the president hinged the implementation of his agenda in government on the participation of citizens in governance and announced Nigeria's intention to become a member of the Open Government Partnership.

The Nigerian Government also committed to strengthening anti-corruption measures through implementing programmes aimed at: exposing corruption; punishing the corrupt and providing support to the victims of corruption; and, driving out the culture of corruption. To deepen institutional and policy reforms, Nigeria joined the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in July 2016 as the 70th country and developed a National Action Plan with 14 specific commitments covering 4 thematic areas such as Fiscal Transparency, Anti-corruption, Access to Information and Citizens engagement.

The FGN has also harmonized policy documents drafted to reduce gaps in existing anti-corruption laws. The National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) was approved

by the Federal Executive Council (on July 5, 2017), to identify and close existing gaps in the anti-corruption institutions.

Such effort at fighting corruption and deepening good governance as reflected in its OGP commitments and other initiatives are being recognised and applauded globally. Nigeria was in 2018 elected into the global steering committee of OGP and in 2017, President Buhari was designated as the African Union's 2018 'Anti-corruption Champion.

However, despite implementation of these approaches and the subsequent commendation, corruption in Nigeria has not shown evidence of noticeable reduction. Cases of corruption and embezzlement are reported in news media daily, and Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index indicates an increase in perceived level of corruption in the country, as reported above.

This is because, apart from not capable of addressing petty corruption, the approaches do not take cognizance of local context in which corrupt practices take place. It is in this regard that focus is shifting in the literature to other approaches to combating corruption.

An emerging popular approach is the behavioural approach to anti-corruption. Evidence from some countries suggests that this approach may be more useful in the context of developing countries.

“ Despite implementation of these approaches and the subsequent commendation, corruption in Nigeria has not shown evidence of noticeable reduction. ”



# BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH TO ANTI-CORRUPTION

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The recognition of the fact that the neglect of the social-political nature of the concept of corruption in the design of anti-corruption policies might to some extent be responsible for the lack of success of those policies gave rise to the need for context-specific anti-corruption policies.

A number of studies have in the past few years assessed the prevalence and combating corruption from the perspective of behavioural sciences (Camargo, 2017a&b, Camargo et al, 2017, Hoffman and Patel 2017).

Behavioural perspective recognizes that people often make decisions without taking into account formal (legal, administrative) incentives, but rather rely on factors such as in-built mental short-cut and social and cultural expectations of accountability (Camargo 2017a). It recognizes the importance of social networks, which may be constituted along several criteria such as family, clan, village, friendship, professional group or political cleavages.

A key behavioural principle postulates that individual's decision-making is characterized by mental models prevailing in their culture. Mental models refer to categories people use to make sense of the world legitimize behaviour that may have no correlates to formal roles and legal mandates, thus making illicit actions tolerated and even accepted (World Bank, 2015).

Social networks based on relationships and reciprocity penetrates the public sphere. This influences the expected behaviour associated with holding a public

office. The role of networks in fueling corrupt practices is closely associated with locally recognized norms of sociality enforced through normative constraint based on respect, shame, guilt, peer pressure and reputation. These are drivers of behaviour.

Social ties reduce uncertainty when formal criteria and formal rights cannot be relied upon. Recent evidence suggests that corruption is often seen as either a "necessary evil" or "the way things are done".

In other words, there is a sought of social acceptability of corruption in local context. Mental state which influences the idea that corruption is a normal state of affairs and that normalizes expectations about deficient provision and quality of public service often creates beliefs which can influence what societies collectively view as expected and acceptable behaviour of citizens and officials. In such a context, what contributes a corrupt act may be considered differently in another context.

Studies on Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda demonstrate relevance of this perspective in explaining prevalence of corruption and differential success rate of anti-corruption policies. For example, in Tanzania, it was found that corruption and bribery are perceived as being the normal rather than its exception among service users. As such, corruption is seen as inescapable by 45%, 65% and 24% of national, urban and rural population respectively (Camargo et al 2017:27-28).

The lower incidence in rural areas may reflect relatively lower contact with public officials by rural population. In such context, failure to adapt to the normalize behaviour linked to corruption may bear social cost when community expectations are not met. For example,



community expectation might be that once a son of the community secures and occupies a high public office, he should extend benefits of the office to its members, regardless how he accomplishes it. Failure to do this attracts reduced respect.

Acceptability of corruption varied among Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Whereas 81% of respondents to a survey in Uganda described the level of corruption in the country as high, corresponding figures for Rwanda and Tanzania is 44% and 39% respectively.

In the same vein, 60% of respondents in Uganda considered corruption inescapable, 45% in Tanzania and 23% in Rwanda (Camargo 2017:8). Thus, Rwanda has the lowest acceptability of corruption.

There is also differential state quality and efficiency, exemplified by quality of output, abuse of power by service providers, and upholding of the rule of law. According to Camargo (2017), in Tanzania and Uganda there was very much consensus that assessing public services and interacting with public sector have for most part very little to do with formal rights and entitlements, whereas in Rwanda, public officials earn higher wages, compared to Uganda and Tanzania.

This itself is a factor in perception and attitudes towards public official and corruption. As mentioned above, social norms are influenced by social networks. In the case of Rwanda, in contrast to Tanzania and Uganda, the core networks are considerably smaller, limited to the family and close friends.

In the case of Rwanda, social networks may also be used to deter corruption practices. Individuals caught engaged in corrupt practices do not only have their names published, but those of the parents and community of origin, thereby externalizing the shaming. It was noted above that, unlike Tanzania and Uganda, in Rwanda the perception was that all public services are provided according to the formal stipulation.

This means that, coupled with the harsh legal punishments that they know they may incur and the shaming consequence, while officials may experience social pressure, they nevertheless have very limited ability to deliver particularistic favour.

Camargo (2017) found that there are differential levels of commitment to anti-corruption stance and enforcement of relevant laws. In Rwanda, government has successfully tackled corruption, particularly petty corruption, by ensuring that adequate anti-corruption legal frameworks and monitoring institutions are in place, and through an overall strict enforcement of the rule of law.

Strong political commitment is operational in a zero tolerance approach to corruption, based on harsh punishments and strict enforcement and sensitizing the public about the value of anti-corruption and integrity. All this resulted in Rwanda being among the least corrupt countries in Africa.

Evidence on Rwanda, relative to Tanzania and Uganda, thus show that coexistence of formal and informal frameworks is essential for successful tackling of corruption in developing countries.

Relevance of Behavioural Approach to Anti-corruption in Nigeria  
In section 4.1 efforts at combating corruption in Nigeria was presented. It was argued that despite existence of numerous legal frameworks and institutions, less success has been recorded. This was attributed to the lack of incorporation of behavioural frameworks into the legal, formal framework.

This is all the more so as there is evidence that social norms influence individual's behaviour and perception on corruption. UNODC (2017) documents prevalence of corruption, particularly petty corruption in Nigeria, and experience of participants in the study indicates that there is to some extent acceptability of corruption.

For example, it was reported that 33.4% of those who



paid bribes felt that giving bribes or gifts are such common practices that reporting would not make a difference.

When respondents are considered according to their average acceptability of three corrupt practices – those who consider such types of behaviour never acceptable, sometimes or usually acceptable – the results show that the prevalence of bribery among the group of Nigerians who consider bribery as always acceptable is 14 percentage points higher the group who consider bribery as never acceptable (UNODC, 2017:70).

Hoffman and Patel (2017) also found evidence of existence of social norms influencing bribery in Nigeria. The study identified drivers of collective participation in corrupt practices to include one, existence of social norms in soliciting bribes, though not in giving bribes; two, people consider giving an unofficial payment in certain context less objectionable than in other contexts; and three, a local social contract determines people's opinions and evaluation of corrupt behaviour.

Social contract in this context is a system factor that combines with social drivers to sustain corruption. The authors found that there exists a local social contract that governs the relationship between citizens and state officials in Nigeria. People's expectations of the behaviour of people with access to government resources is that it should be used for the benefit of those with a personal or social relationships (social networks) to them. This generates incidence of communal tolerance of corrupt practices.

Formal legal system is less effective in combating corruption in a society characterized by local social contracts and a lack of national social contract. This explains why despite implementation of rule of law approach, little success is being recorded in reduction of corruption in Nigeria.

Experience on Rwanda shows that coexistence of formal and informal frameworks, especially with existence of

national social contract, has contributed to success recorded in anti-corruption policies.

## 5.2 Social Norms

There is temptation to think that corruption is the 'norm' in Nigeria. The notion of 'norms' is applied in a wide range of academic disciplines, including behavioural economics, philosophy, social psychology, and sociology. Thus it is multidisciplinary.

A norm is a social construct whose existence is based on collectively shared belief about what others do and what is expected of what others do within the group. What others do is 'typical', and the expected is 'appropriate'. In other words, norms detail what is appropriate behaviour, and those expectations define what the group does, and who the group is.

The instruments for the general maintenance of social norms are approval and/ or disapproval. There is an individual construct, which refers to an individually held belief with an evaluative component to determine what is 'good', 'bad', 'exciting', 'boring', 'sacrilegious', and 'disgusting'.

This is more of an attitude. Norms are generally enforced through either positive sanctions or negative sanctions. People's conformity to group expectations are a result of human need for social approval or belonging. "If individuals depart from a norm, they frequently lose approval and may be ostracized, gossiped about, or sanctioned in some other way."

Hence, an individual may continue the practice in order to receive an approval even if he or she does not believe in its value. A shift in social norms would require interventions to create new beliefs within an individual's reference group (those whose opinions are important) to allow the emergence of new behaviour.

Sometimes what will be required to change a behaviour will be the correction of information that are factually inaccurate.



Some insights about social norms have been distilled from research and evidence-based practice. First, it will often be easier and more strategic to build a new norm than attempting to dismantle a harmful one. Perhaps, building a norm of saying no to giving and accepting bribe would be a departing point to dismantling the rather toxic corruption.

Second, a deliberative process in clarifying values and consensus-building appears critical to successful norms-based approaches. This is applicable to engagement in anti-corruption policy development and implementation. Third, it will be easier to shift associated norms by breaking one norm.

The belief that one honest player cannot 'change the game' shows the pervasiveness of corruption in Nigeria. Perhaps breaking the norm would help to shift associated norms, such as not escalating a corrupt practice due to the social disapproval that would follow. Fourth, change can be effected by identifying those individuals or groups whose opinion matters most.

Opinion leaders would be in the context of charismatic leadership, but this seems scarce in Nigeria today. Fifth, it is important to communicate change (through testimony, organised diffusion and pledges) in an initial core group. A sense of shared values is important in building trust and community.

# 65%

Corruption is seen as inescapable by 45%, 65% and 24% of national, urban and rural population respectively (Camargo et al 2017:27-28).



# CONCLUSION

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Government in Nigeria has in the past three decades implemented policies to combat corruption in the country. This is in recognition of the negative cost of corruption on quality of governance and the economy. These policies have relied principally on the rule of law and enforcement approach and public sector reforms approach. Only in the past five to ten years has non-state actors empowerment approach being introduced, supported by donor partners. Despite these efforts, corruption prevalence is high and rising in the country.

Studies have established that social norms and networks exist in Nigeria and do influence perception on corruption, to the extent of making corrupt practices tolerable and acceptable. Failure to take this into account in designing anti-corruption policies explains to a large extent the limited success recorded from the policies. Experience in other developing African countries shows that coexistence of both formal and informal frameworks make for success of anti-corruption policies.

Evidence from those countries and studies on Nigeria confirms the perspective that deliberately implementing behavioural approach is more effective in designing anti-corruption policies.



Experience in other developing African countries shows that coexistence of both formal and informal frameworks make for success of anti-corruption policies.





# ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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A starting point in designing strategies for combating corruption in Nigeria would be to raise the level of sensitisation of the citizens on the cost of corruption to the individual, community and the economy, and the value of integrity. Cultivate young people to instill a low tolerance for corruption and the value of integrity.

Second, change incentive system in context where corruption is a rational response or environmentally driven. The cost of being caught for involvement in corrupt activities should be sufficiently raised to serve as deterrent, and the reward for not engaging in corrupt activities should be incorporated into the policy as its usefulness has proven in the case of Rwanda.

Third, national social contract should be created to reduce and possibly make local social contract less attractive. Fourth, with prevalence of public officials soliciting bribes in return for public services that it is their duty to deliver and having little fear of being caught and

sanctioned, there should be more stringent enforcement of discipline to strengthen accountability and integrity and reduce feeling of impunity.

Fifth, introduce measures to encourage people to report violations and bribery. Whistleblowing scheme recently introduced is a policy in that direction.

Six, empower those who openly refuse to pay bribes through recognition and a reward system.

Seven, strengthen the system of legal enforcement to make rule of law approach more effective and therefore combine with behavioural approach to reduce corrupt practices in the country.

And eight, reinforcement of Nigeria's ongoing anti-corruption by giving full consideration to the societal factors that may contribute to normalising corrupt behaviours. This will better position public institutions to engage Nigerian society in anti-corruption efforts.



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