

BRIEF REPORT ON THE 7:30 BREAKFAST DEBATE – JANUARY 30TH 2009

WHO IS NOT CORRUPT IN TANZANIA? CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS OF ORDINARY CITIZENS.

Corruption is one of the factors for poor economic growth in Tanzania and as a result it generates poverty in the country. Evidence shows that Tanzania has worsening corruption status since the early 1990s. This is shown in numerous studies conducted in Tanzania and Africa in general.

It is for this reason that Policy Forum dedicated the January monthly debate to the issue of Corruption perceptions. The main presentation was done by Bubelwa Kaiza of the Concern for Development Initiatives in Africa (ForDIA) who discussed the findings of a recent corruption perception survey. Mr. Semkae Kilonzo facilitated during the debate.

Mr. Bubelwa started by giving context of the survey including the Tanzania government's response to corruption by initiating strategies which include policy, legislation and programmes. For instance, he mentioned the establishment of the Office of Permanent Commission of Inquiry (Ombudsman, 1966); the enactment of the Prevention of Corruption Act No. 16 (1971)/Anti-corruption Squad (1975); the establishment of the Prevention of Corruption Bureau (1991); and the enactment of the Economic Sabotage and Organised Crime Control Act (1983/4).

He touched on the qualitative and quantitative methods of the study: household questionnaire, key informant questionnaire, focus group discussion (FGDs), CPS (Corruption Perceptions Survey) adopted methodology, and interviews with opinion leaders or key informants.

The sample was chosen from 7 regions which are Mbeya, Kagera, Lindi, Mtwara, Morogoro, Shinyanga and Ruvuma. This is inclusive of 35 LGAs, 35 wards, 70 villages/streets, 600 neighbourhoods, 800 households (433 male and 344 female), 263 Key informants (179 male and 70 female) and 91 focus-group discussions (composed of between 8 and 12 participants, each).

The key informants in the survey were constituted by teachers (dominant), court clerks, community development officers, Village/*Mtaa* chairpersons, Village Executive Officers (second dominant), Interfaith leaders (third dominant), clinical officers, militias, ward councillors, police, agricultural officers, and health officers, Ward Executive Officers (WEOs), magistrates, office attendants, political leaders, parastatal & co-operative, officers, land, wildlife and finance officers.

When asked to respond to whether corruption is known to them, the responses were:

- Households - 91.9 percent of ordinary Tanzanians are aware about corruption, 8.1 percent of Tanzanians are not aware about corruption.
- For key informants; 98.8 percent of opinion leaders are aware about corruption but only 1.2 percent of opinion leaders are not aware about corruption.
- For focus group participants, over 99 percent of focus groups' members were aware about corruption.

Therefore, the presenter asserted that this indicates that a majority of the Tanzanian public is generally aware and highly informed about corruption.

When household, key informants and those in the focus groups were required to mention what they consider critical reasons for indulging in corruption, household respondents mentioned nine reasons while key informants mentioned only eight reasons. For households greed and selfishness was the dominant reason, ranking 49.3 percent. For key informants, 'pressure to get service' ranked the highest by 45.2 percent against 17.2 percent for greed and selfishness.

In his concluding remark, he said that 71.3 percent (against 28.7 percent of households) of key informant respondents are of the view that Government anti-corruption efforts have failed. For

instance, one of the question asked was 'has the Government succeeded in fighting corruption?' the ranking was 45.5- percent small, 42.6- percent medium and 11.9- percent adequate.

Comments and Questions from Plenary Discussion:

Table 1:-

- We need to get experiences from other countries on what they do to combat corruption.
- Improvement in social service provision will help to reduce the rate of corruption in our country.

Table 2:-

- Demand and supply is what determines corruption - if there are many people who are ready to pay bribes and there are officials willing to accept them, corruption will exist.
- Nowadays corruption also has a social dimension (as opposed to being simply economical) i.e. the existence of sexual corruption.

Table 3:-

- Anti-corruption committees will not be the answer. We need to change the current system. The PCCB can still be used and we have to see ways we can improve its functioning.
- We need to find a better mechanism to fight corruption which involves the citizens themselves taking the lead and not the leaders because the perception that people have shows that they are not trusted enough.
- The perception does not show which LGAs are more corrupt and which ones are not.

Table 4:-

- Media have a crucial role to play in terms of upholding transparency and fighting corruption. Hence, we CSOs need to build a coalition with them to see the initiation of the Access to Information Act.
- Need to have serious political will to fight corruption.

Table 5:-

- Apart from government, we CSOs/NGOs also need to reflect on ourselves because there was a study that indicated that the most corrupt sector was that of NGOs/CSOs.
- Let's look on the micro level of corruption which affects our day to day life, for instance corruption in examinations (students/parents buying exam papers prior to the examinations).

Table 6:-

- Corruption in elections is also a very serious issue. We need to review our election system starting from the local level.

Response to comments from the presenter:

- The proposed anti-corruption committees will not be centrally-based. These are committees at the local level with full mandate so as to integrate with the central government level which is the PCCB.
- The LGAs are perceived by citizens to be more corrupt. This will be revealed in the main report which will also be up for discussion at the launching day.