

**REPORT ON THE ANTI CORRUPTION BARAZA
HELD IN JINJA DISTRICT AT JINJA SHELTERED
WORKSHOP: JUNE 2017**



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Corruption in Uganda has become an intricate issue and a complex phenomenon where we have witnessed sharks swindling public funds and walk away without them being castigated by the law

This has made Ugandans regard the wickedness as a social cancer and a public vice that has undermined the rule of law and made governance impossible, distorting welfare goals, marginalizing development processes and material progress, transporting disaster to the country. It is threatening the value system, corroding the culture and extinguishing civilized life

In Jinja district, it has stretched to the level of peddling and sharing of public land, public buildings and assets among others, amongst the district officials which is leading to sorrow and grief of the local man for example Jinja resting rooms that were in the tax park, public latrines i.e. the latrines built in 1938, public latrines that were opposite Dr Oguga, Masese core primary school and many other public assets. This has deprived the poor citizen access to good services hence leading to travail.

It's against this background that the FABIO in collaboration with the UNNGOF organized an anticorruption baraza to discuss some solutions and share experience on how to fight the deadly monster in Jinja district

Objectives

To offer an opportunity for various stakeholders to explore alternative approaches through which a culture of integrity can be built with society and the public office

2.0 THE PROCESS OF THE BARAZA

For effective implementation of the Baraza, a number of activities were engaged in planning before the actual activity date as seen below:

- i. **Securing permission from the relevant authorities :** In a bid to comply with the Public Order Management Act, request for permission letters were addressed to the Resident District Commissioner, the District Police Commander, District Internal Security Officers and other relevant offices where we managed to get permission to implement the baraza without any interference
- ii. **Delivering invitation letters:** These were distributed to the relevant stakeholders especially the district leadership and other stakeholders

- iii. **Radio adverts:** To get a wide coverage and reach out many participants, adverts were ran on Baaba FM, NBS radio and Busoga one radios to invite the general public and leaders that might have missed getting the invitations.
- iv. **Local speakers:** This was used by an individual to target the business community

3.0 THE BARAZA

The baraza was held in Jinja district at Jinja Sheltered Workshop from 2:30pm -6:00pm where 210 participants managed to attend and these included the district councilors, municipal councilors, sub county councilors, bodaboda leadership, people with disabilities, local council leadership, market vendors and their leadership, Civil Society and the local citizenry at large

3.1 Methodology

- ✓ **Moderation :** The baraza was guided by a professional moderator who is at the same time a radio presenter and he set pace for all discussants so as to be in line with the topic of the dialogue
- ✓ **Panel Discussion:** A unit of five panelists where 4 were men and 1 was a woman was constituted from the entire participants and this comprised of Leader of Opposition in Jinja District who is at the same time a District Councilor, the District Speaker, Representative of persons with Disability and Civil Society Representative
- ✓ **Question to answer approach:** This was mainly practical during the submission of the leaders/panelists where questions were addressed to them through the moderator for clarifications and clear understanding of the issues at hand
- ✓ **Open Discussion:** This involved giving a chance to any participants that was willing to give his/her submission in line with the topic

4.0 SUBMISSIONS BY THE PANNELIST

Every panelist viewed corruption in a different way basing on the experience they had and these are as seen below:

District Speaker (MrNyendeMusanaMicheal)	Leader of Opposition(MrMbentyoMeddy)
He defined corruption as an unpreventable cancer being spread mainly by leaders at all levels. He quoted examples of the petition got as a district from the job seekers that had been robbed by the councilors in exchange for jobs and on the same note loudly argued the public not to pay any monies in exchange for jobs because they are for free. The district speaker also clearly named out the	-The LOP defined corruption as getting what you have to give out in exchange for a favor and he therefore emphasized that corruption can be defined depending on the prevailing situations -He cited out forms of corruption as : Promissory corruption which he explained that it can be in form of a token of appreciation Additionally, the LOP Jinja District also elaborated why corruption is still a problem in Uganda and these

<p>public to be the leading people in spreading corruption as they refer to it as sometimes <i>“airtime, fuel among others”</i></p> <p>-He also brought to the attention of the public that corruption is hyper in Jinja district especially on land and he therefore advised the public to report such cases to the relevant authorities without fearing whoever is involved.</p> <p>The speaker also admitted corruption in the district and disclosed to the public some of the interventions so far involved in as a district to fight corruption where he mentioned the councilors that were involved in soliciting 200,000 from a women group in Buyengo that they were asked to refund the money to the group immediately</p> <p>Additionally, the district speaker revealed to the public that there is corruption in the Jinja District Service Commission as he cited out an example of commissioners asking for money from job seekers and their parent’s ends up selling land to get what they term as future for their sons and daughters and yet in the end they are not even shortlisted.</p>	<p>are the reasons he gave :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pitiablecognizance of Ugandans and this should be diagnosed from the root cause • The I don’t care attitude (individualism) • Un employment and this he attributed to government failing to fulfill its obligations • Poor policy implementation and he reflected this to some regulations passed by government and not implemented i.e. that smokers should be 50meters away from the public to reduce on passive smoking and the polyether bag regulation but until now, these have not been active. • He also mentioned impunity as one of the key factors • Ignorance at individual and government level • Corruption at house hold level and he cited an example of historical issues visa vie family back ground where we give bribe to our children when they are contesting for prefect ship in schools <p>The LOP gave the following recommendations during his submissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens should embark on Lawful demonstrations • Citizens should be empowered and sensitized and people should learn to report corruption scandals • We should begin at a house hold level • Citizens should be equipped with the roles of the different stakeholders in the district
<p>Civil Society representative(Mrs Margret Kulaba)</p>	<p>PWD representative (MrMuwaya)</p>
<p>In her submissions she defined corruptionas someone not fulfilling their mandate and responsibilities in their offices</p> <p>MrsKulaba cited some of the demerits of corruption as : It deters development in all sectors of life and therefore hinders success of government programs to the intended beneficiaries and she cited a case of corruption amongst street parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She therefore advised Ugandans to be well acquainted with the existing laws on corruption and other issues to avoid being 	<p>MrMuwaya expressed his agony as he whispered to the public that the people that ask for bribe have made business out of it and made Ugandans underprivileged and predisposed.</p> <p>He also disclosed the corruption in the disability grants where the grant is given to a few selected individuals and also in case given the opportunity, one has to pay bribe ¼ of the money and in reimbursing one has to pay the whole amount inclusive of the bribe given out. This has made many businesses vulnerable hence collapsing.</p> <p>In his submissions the PWD representative <i>“pleaded</i></p>

<p>manipulated by what she “called opportunists”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should put serious laws and punishments for the people involved in corruption outrages • Government should increase salaries to people in charge of handling big monies for money is tempting to keep it faithfully with a poor earning 	<p>guilty that PWDs give bribe knowing its wrong but it’s because sometimes it’s beyond their control and in this he cited an example where he needed something in a certain office that he did not want to disclose but because of the stairs, he was forced to give a bribe to be helped”. On the same note he urged the community to equally treat the PWDs as human beings.</p> <p>-He also cited corruption in Jinja as being rampant among police officers</p> <p>-He informed the public that voter bribery is the DNA for corruption in Uganda and therefore intervention should begin from that outlook</p> <p>In his concluding remarks he recommended that the electoral commission scratches off electoral colleges for the PWDs</p>
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5.0 GENERAL REACTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

1. It came out from the public that bribery is hyper in the Judiciary yet it where people expect to get some genuine rescue and the discussant expressed his agony where he was denied justice in courts of law when a rich man claimed ownership of his house.
2. It also came out that high ranking officials interfere in cases in courts of law which denies justice to the people due to the influence of the officials for examples ministers and members of parliament
3. It also came out clearly that leaders at all levels have not informed/sensitized public on how governance should be in this country to the extent of electorates not knowing their roles to play even during exigent times
4. Some discussants viewed corruption **“as part of the government’s techniques of governing and keeping Ugandans in poverty and so they consider it a deliberate move by government to manipulate and deprive Ugandans of their rights”**.
5. Discussants also revealed to the public some of the corruption involved in the youth fund where the technical people in the district were said to have set certain terms for the people interested in the money **“Even when the applicant meets the official requirements these are not considered enough unless the personal benefits of relevant officials are met”** and in this they cited the division town clerk to have become a member of the committee that authorizes the release of money purposely to fail those that would have not complied with their fixed personal terms and conditions.
6. Corresponding with the panelist, it also came out from the open discussions that commercialization of politics in Uganda plays 60% in accelerating corruption and he therefore called upon the people of Uganda to wake up where he quoted **“one writer who**

said the world doesn't suffer because of violent people but because of people who know the truth but decide to keep quiet"

7. It also came out during the general submissions that police has also played a very big role in hastening corruption where they cited an example of a bond that is officially free to be charged depending on who is handling the case. Participants expressed agony as they opened up that even when they know the truth, they are sometimes overwhelmed by the prevailing circumstances
8. It furthermore came out that leaders have not performed to the expectations of the public and therefore public gives bribe or receive to satisfy its anxieties and yearnings
9. Lack of transparency was cited in the district especially in the road sector where the Nalufenya Roads was cited to be of poor quality and the road from Gaddaffi to town was said to be in a poor condition because of corrupt officials
10. Land grabbing which is a very common vice in Jinja was also cited out by the participants and in this Napier Market was said to have remained a small piece as the biggest part was reported to have been divided by the leaders in the district and municipal council
11. Likewise, Corruption was named to be very common in the Jinja Referral where trailers were said to have been seen offloading drugs but after one day the patients are asked to buy drugs from the nearest health clinics
12. It also came out that corruption at a local level is very common in amongst the LC1s when they ask for money in exchange for signatures
13. The militarization of politics during the elections was said be a corruption act that scares the masses from making right decisions
14. Corruption in the district was cited in the district where billions are passed in the budget and it is spent on mirages and other minor things
15. It also came out the Jinja show ground is being sold in disguise without any hindrance
16. The business community expressed the corruption agony that funding opportunities are only given to organizations of their interest and the registered ones are left out in pain

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Discussants recommended that Uganda should resort to Sharia laws
2. Government should support NGOs to sensitize people on corruption
3. The participants argued NGOs to involve the different influential stake holders in the fight for corruption like cultural leaders, religious leaders and church leaders to engage the public on the same whenever they have a platform
4. There should be sustainability of youth livelihood programs
5. Parliament should install solar panels to all main hospitals to avoid the effects of load shedding

6. All Regional referral hospitals should be given ambulances to cater for emergencies

7. One of the participants was quoted verbatim **“corruption should frankly be called theft not sugar coating it”** and thieves should be punished like thieves

8. Some participants indicated that the only way to sort corruption is if the Government in Power is overthrown.

7.0 CHALLENGES

- i. There was a challenge poor time management amongst the leaders and the participants which hindered the meeting program
- ii. There was also a challenge of un willingness of the leaders and other stakeholders to attend the meeting to a short notice
- iii. We also experienced a challenge of colliding programs at the district which to some extent affected the turn of the leaders
- iv. We also experienced a challenge of limited time for mobilization since the Baraza was organized in just a few days

8.0 LESSONS LEARNT

- ❖ We learnt that there is still high demand for sensitization and empower masses on corruption to avoid them being victims of opportunists
- ❖ We learnt that civil society has a very big role in helping out the local citizenry in getting justice the communities and National level and this was evident as participants shared sad several experiences caused by corruption and they had no help even from the relevant offices
- ❖ There is institutionalized corruption within the Government Programs and therefore specific interventions need to be developed to tackle this cancer.

9.0 CONCLUSION

In a nut shell, the Anti-corruption Baraza was very relevant as it came in the right time when people needed an interface with their leaders to give accountability on their land scandals and this therefore calls for more Accountability platforms in the district

PHOTOGALLERY



