



CORRUPTION IS THE ENEMY OF DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

In this article we will discuss the types of corruption thoroughly and the impact of corruption on the wellbeing of the population. Besides, the strategies to counter corruption are claimed in a number of examples.

Evidently wellbeing of the country relates to the officials who are governing the state. But now there are some governors whose interest outweigh than the country's development, as a result the amount of corruption is greater than ever before. So, what is corruption itself? **Corruption** is a form of dishonesty or criminal offense undertaken by a person or organization entrusted with a position of authority, to acquire illicit benefit or abuse power for one's private gain. Corruption may include many activities including bribery and embezzlement,

though it may also involve practices that are legal in many countries. Political corruption occurs when an office-holder or other governmental employee acts in an official capacity for personal gain. Corruption and crime are endemic

sociological occurrences which appear with regular frequency in virtually all countries on a global scale in varying degree and proportion. Individual nations each allocate domestic resources for the control and regulation of corruption and crime. Strategies to counter corruption are often summarized under the umbrella term anti-corruption.¹

The catalogue of corruption acts is vast and includes extortion, bribery, fraud, influence peddling, nepotism, embezzlement and favoritism. Generally speaking, there exist two major forms of corruption: Petit and Grand corruption.

¹ Elliott, Kimberly Ann (1997) "Corruption as an international policy problem: overview and recommendations"



Petit corruption is the form in which relatively smaller amounts of money are involved or whose impact holds lesser effects on the country. This form of corruption is often ignored but its effects are even more damaging than those of Grand corruption if summed up. Petit corruption includes such acts as paying undue fees to see a medical doctor, to get a seat in a public school, to go through a check point, obtain professional promotion or a transfer from one locality to another or for a judge to reverse a court judgment.

Grand corruption on the other hand involves more outrageous sums of money and its impact on the country is very huge and long-lasting. For example, government officials who embezzle money meant for the realization of public projects or the increase of the salaries of law makers to legislate in the interest to an individual or a group of individuals, conspiracy with impact assessment officials to award non-environmental friendly projects to extractive industries, the award of public contracts to unqualified tenders, the reception of poorly constructed public projects etc.²

The most destructive forms of Political corruption occur mostly within the ranks of top politically officials and it is evident when politicians and elite, who are entitled to make and enforce laws in the name of the people, legislate to make laws which suit their selfish interests. This may lead to institutional decay, loss of legitimacy and social unrest as the people may no longer

be comfortable with imposed authority as stipulated in J.J Rousseau's social contract. The impact of corruption on our economy can be summed up in the personalization of public wealth by individuals. In Cameroon like in any other country with alarming corruption, the corrupt and politically protected elite have more access to revenue, which most of the time comes from tax evasion, from illegal exploitation of oil, timber, minerals and the embezzlement of public funds. In order to keep the nation running, the stolen funds are squeezed out the common man through salary cuts, tax increase, high prices of commodities like fuel, transportation, education and so on.

The wellbeing of the population is the desire of all democratic governments worldwide but due to corruption, personal interests often outweigh the common good. Here, it is very common to find collusion between enterprises, like the actors of extractive industry with administrative officials who connive to facilitate tax evasion and have other social amenities inscribed in their contracts to the detriment of the population. Bribes paid to central administrative officials and the misdeeds of politicians have led to the misdirection and misallocation of several social projects. It is in this light that certain social amenities and resources suffer wastage in certain localities while populations are in dire need of them elsewhere.

² Senior, I (2006), *Corruption – The World's Big C.*, Institute of Economic Affairs, London.



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