



## Session Report

*Please know you may design the structure of this report to better suit the session. It's important to capture the key outcomes and solutions proposed for the future.*

**Session Title:** Values and ethics to combat corruption

**Date & Time:** Saturday, 10.12.2022, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm GMT -5

**Report prepared by:** Roberto Kukutschka, Transparency International

**Moderated by:**

- Sanjay Pradhan - Chief Executive Officer, Open Government Partnership (OGP)
- Juliana Cano Nieto - Head of Communications, Transparency International

**Panellists:**

- Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

**Share the thematic focus of the session, it's purpose and corruption risks?**

The traditional approach to fighting corruption focuses on generating external pressure, accountability and sanctions against corrupt behavior. While crucial, these "extrinsic" incentives must be complemented by stronger "intrinsic" commitment to values, ethics, integrity and public service. The fight against corruption is first and foremost a fight to cure and regenerate social and cultural fabrics. It's about providing the essential values that younger generations will need to reverse entrenched culture of corruption in society and also lead a virtuous journey in their lives. Fighting corruption is, in this sense, a much-needed fight to return to the youth what is fundamentally theirs: optimism and hope.

## Summary of panellists' contributions & discussion points (please be as detailed as possible)

**Sanjay Pradhan - Chief Executive Officer, Open Government Partnership (OGP)** provided a brief background of the main speaker Mr. Grudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and highlighted how 20 years ago he was also a keynote speaker at one of the first IACCs in South Korea, where he talked about values. He then briefly introduced Mr. Grudev's idea that corruption can be countered by five more Cs:

- **Connectedness:** A lack of connectedness or belongingness breeds corruption in society. Often you see people looking for connections in order to avoid corruption. Corruption is much more in urban areas because there is no community sense there. A sense of belongingness among people can root out corruption.
- **Courage:** A lack of self-esteem or confidence in one's ability, fear or insecurity in a person makes one become more corrupt as they seek security through greed and money.
- **Cosmology:** Looking at one's own life in the context of extended space and time. Seeing life from a different perspective of space and time is what will deepen one's vision about one's life.
- **Care and compassion:** Care and compassion in society can bring dedication.
- **Commitment:** When a person has a commitment to a higher cause in life, it brings a shift from gaining to giving. In society, if everyone keeps thinking, 'What can I gain?' rather than 'What can I contribute', then corruption cannot be rooted out. In society, we need to have this shift in our attitude, from 'What can I gain?' to 'What can I contribute?'

After this brief introduction, the floor was given to Mr. Grudev who reminded the audience that values are important for anti-corruption because they are timeless and without them. He also explained the mechanism through which corruption arises: lack of self love is the source of greed and the lack of connectedness causes insecurity, which are the root of corruption. He mentioned that there is fortunately, much space for hope since the young generations are more socially and environmentally minded than older generations.

After this brief introduction by Mr. Pradhan, Juliana Cano Nieto from Transparency International took the stage with 5 young panellists to interview Mr. Grudev.

**Panelist 1:** in different countries there are different cultures and cultures are transmitted from generation to generation. In India one values the elders, but elders might not have the value of transmitting the fight against corruption, on the contrary it is the young who push for anti-corruption. How can younger people learn the values of integrity and anti-corruption if older people do not have the same values.

**Grudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar (GSSRS):** The elders did not accept corruption. One has to select the strengths of the culture. What the elders could not achieve must be complimented by standing up against corruption. No elder will ever object an anti-corruption movement except out of fear and inability to combat it. The fight against corruption cannot happen by a single person. It requires collective resolve.

**Panelist 2: What type of mindset can be taken by younger people without being aggressive. What can young people have a more peaceful approach.**

**GSSRS:** Activism is absolutely necessary for change, but one must distinguish between activism and aggression. Activism can take more time, but not all revolutions need to be bloody. Many revolutions can happen with a happy face. Examples of this includes the green revolution and the industrial revolution.

**Panelist 3: When we see corruption across different sectors, how can young people build a culture of integrity?**

**GSSRS:** Plant the seed of values. People say no to corruption because they do not like it. At heart nobody wants to be corrupt. It is important to stand up together against corruption and form a collective to better understand the different layers that one needs to cross. Anti-corruption requires good thinking. Calm and steady analysis is needed to take action.

**Panelist 4: What should be the role of young people in fighting corruption and what can they do to help reverse the tide?**

**GSSRS:** Young people own the planet, so they need to start creating awareness. As a collective force there is nothing they cannot achieve.

**Panelist 5: There has been a rise in anti-democratic values and distortions. How can we fight against this?**

**GSSRS:** At the beginning of social media, people believed everything that came from social media. Today, however, we are doing better and people do not believe everything they read. There are sites to check the reliability of the news and the experts featured on the media. While many media outlets have become partisan and are no longer neutral entities, the anti-corruption movement can play an important role in ensuring objectivity by showing the real facts.

**Question 6: Has corruption always been a part of human society?**

This is a tricky question, because saying that it is gives the idea that we have no power to change. Denying that it was never part of it, one would require a lot of research work. One cannot say yes or no. It is futile to ask this question because it is simply not good to have corruption now.

**Question 7: What can younger generations do beyond elections to fight corruption. Beyond voting and elections, social media is a good tool to create social awareness.**

**Questions from the floor:**

**World Cup in Qatar has brought to light the kafala system and we have seen corruption and denial of basic human rights. What is the very first step that one can take to get rid of kafala system and bring justice to people affected by this situation?**

First step is to realize that the system is inhumane. If the system is inhumane nobody will want it and for that reason people will not want it on anyone else. People enforcing the system need to put themselves in the shoes of those who suffer.

**The solution against corruption is in societal ethics. How can one legislate a moral issue?**

The cause of greed is insecurity and the root of insecurity is the lack of self love. People need to find the strength to combat both greed and insecurity. Only then a good human being can shine through.

**How can one maintain neutrality and avoid the blame game between two parties?**

When one only discusses facts there is no place for blame games.

**Public and private sector leaders must go to introspection and meditate. Leaders often overlook or endorse anti-corruption in the name of socio-economic development. What kind of meditation can change this perspective and move the needle towards ethical practices?**

“It is possible, they should talk to me”.

## **Key recommendations for the future and concrete follow-up actions**

- Create a sense of community and build a collective of like-minded people to stand against corruption,
- Introspection and self reflection as a way to find internal peace and combat greed,
- Any agent of social change must come from a place of serenity and calm that can only come from meditation.

## **Rapporteur's name and date submitted**

**Roberto Kukutschka, 10.12.2022**