

## Corruption: The Catalyst for Violation of Human Rights

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### Abstract

*This paper addresses a conceptual linkage between corruption and human rights. The author looks at corruption and the violation of human rights from a power-relation perspective, as it reflects an asymmetric relationship between the subject and object of power. From this perspective, corruption and the violation of human rights comprise a social phenomenon which concerns the distribution of benefits among different groups of people and individuals.*

*Corruption is an important contributing factor to the violation of human rights by facilitating, serving or creating an environment in which the violation can take place. The paper illustrates how corruption subverts human rights in different forms and degrees, from denying the basic rights of people to access services to threatening their lives. The abuse of human rights will be pervasive if corruption does not cease.*

**Keywords:** Corruption, human rights

### 1. Introduction

There is a close connection between corruption and human rights. Increasing empirical evidence around the world reveals a linkage between corruption and the infringement of human rights. Corrupt state officials use their power to silence critics, so that justice would be subverted. Other times corruption has made it possible for criminals to go unpunished. As can be seen from authoritarian regimes, large-scale human rights abuses generally take place along

with endemic corruption, such as in the regimes of Idi Amin in Uganda, Sani Obacha in Nigeria and Suharto in Indonesia.

It could be said that corruption causes a lack of respect for human rights and the rule of law. As seen from the Euro Barometer Survey of 2005, more than half (57 per cent) of the citizens of the European Union see corruption as the driving force behind organized crime in their countries (Transparency International, 2008). This is especially so in the case of organized crime, which contributes to serious violations of human rights, such as human trafficking where corruption has been identified as a major barrier to effective law enforcement (Iselin, 2002). Corruption in such cases can further exacerbate the degree of exploitation and violation of human rights of those who are already disadvantaged.

Corruption is a major barrier to fulfilling the state's obligations to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of individuals (ICHRP, 2009). For instance, a corrupt political system denies the fundamental right of political participation. A corrupt judicial system violates the basic right to equality before the law. Corruption in public administration endangers the right to life when it allows the manufacture of hazardous products. When the state fails to curb the spread of corruption, it may be concluded that the government has failed to fulfill its obligation to protect human rights.

Understanding corruption as the catalyst for the violation of human rights will serve to give us a new perspective which could lead to a more effective anti-corruption strategy. This paper seeks to clarify the interconnections between corruption and human rights. The author submits that corruption leads to violations of human rights, and describes how the two acts are connected to each other, beginning with the logical relationship between corruption and the violation of human rights and following with some illustrations to reveal the nature of the relationship.

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## 2. Proposition 1: Corruption is about Power, Power Relations and Abuse of Power

The term “corruption” could be defined in various ways. One of the definitions of the term is “giving something to someone with power so that he/she will abuse his/her power and act (in a way) favoring the givers.” Another definition is “the offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may influence the action of any person” (Rajkumar, 2002). Transparency International defines corruption as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.”<sup>1</sup> A definition given by the United Nations is “the misuse of public power, office or authority for private benefit” (Pilapitiya, 2004). In the USAID Handbook for Fighting Corruption, corruption “encompasses unilateral abuses by government officials” (ICHRP, 2009).

As indicated by various definitions of corruption, a core component of the term is the “abuse of power.” Corruption would never exist if there were no abuse of power. “Abuse of power” in government could refer to the abuse of the function of state authority, which is defined as “the performance of or failure to perform an act in violation of the law by a public official in the discharge of his or her functions, for the purpose of obtaining an undue advantage for himself or herself or for another person or entity” (ICHRP, 2009). Within this meaning, government corruption may occur when the official fails to perform his/her duties for personal or partisan gain. Corruption could be found in many forms, such as bribery, extortion, negligence of duties, nepotism, cronyism, embezzlement and fraud (Pope, 2000; Terracino, 2008).

The degree of the abuse of power tends to be magnified if the power is increasing, as referred to by Lord Acton, an English historian, who wrote in a letter: “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely”. This was also restated in other words by an economist,

Robert Klitgaard, who defined corruption in terms of the equation: Corruption = Monopoly Power + Discretion – Accountability (Klitgaard, 1988, cited in ICHRP, 2009).

In a setting where there is high degree of monopoly and discretion, corruption takes deep root when the state is captured by private interests that can access and use their power through regulations, laws, judicial rulings, decrees and other legal measures to gain influence for private benefits. Under this scenario, it is likely that violations of human rights will take place when corruption is endemic and power is concentrated in the hands of a few, as often happens in authoritarian regimes.

In terms of power relations, the abuse of power involves a social relationship between human beings as either subjects, or objects of power. There must be at least two parties involved in this power relationship. From a power-relation perspective, corruption is an activity carried out by an individual or a group or groups of people who have gained access to power. It is a form of relationship between different social groups and/or individuals, and is related to the ways that power operates in a society. One way is through those who have more power and another is through those who have less power. Those with more power abuse power, while those with low power are abused. It is an asymmetric power relationship, which determines who controls whom and by what means.

The relationship between corruption and the violation of human rights is framed by unequal power relations. Both acts take place when there is abuse of power. Corruption benefits those who have access to power and abuse it, and victimizes those who do not have access to power. From this perspective, human rights are subjected to violation when power is abused by corrupt practices. Violation of human rights could be a harmful consequence of corruption. However, not all forms of human rights violations are the result of corruption; for instance, gender discrimination is likely to be caused by many

<sup>1</sup> See Transparency International. What is Corruption? at [http://www.transparency.org/about\\_us](http://www.transparency.org/about_us)

factors, including the traditional values of a society which believes that women are inferior to men.

The victims of corruption and those of human rights violations are often the same groups of people. These victims suffer from the abuse of power by those who have more power than they do. Many times, the victims of corruption are vulnerable and marginalized people, such as those who are already suffering from discriminations on the basis of gender, economic status, ethnicity etc. Corruption just brings even more difficulties into their lives. This situation then becomes a double exploitation by the “haves” acting against the “have nots.”

### **3. Proposition 2: Corruption Leads to Violation of Human Rights: Direct and Indirect Violations**

Human rights are regarded as inherent, inalienable and universal. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948, states: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. ... Everyone is entitled to all the rights.” When an individual has human rights, it means the state and other actors have to respect those rights, which in principle would guarantee that no harm would come to individual persons (ICHRP, 2009). However, all forms of corruption could reduce the state’s capability to fulfill its obligations in a way in which the powerful are favored but the vulnerable are harmed, with the imposition of difficulties and threats to people’s lives. For instance, the trafficking of women, which is an organized crime and one of the worst forms of human violation, is made possible because corruption is central to its operation. Bribes are given to officials: police and immigration officers, border control officials and so on in the whole chain of officials involved.

To examine corruption in terms of how it relates to the violation of human rights, a power-relation perspective focuses on who does what to whom. Does the corrupt act itself violate

human rights or does it bring about other actions which eventually lead to the violation of human rights? Who are involved in corruption and the violation of human rights? Is it the same or different actors who corrupt and abuse human rights? By exploring these questions, the consequences of corruption, which result in the violation of human rights, could be identified as two types: direct violation and indirect violation.

#### **3.1 Direct Violation of Human Rights**

Direct violation of human rights occurs when some corrupt acts are deliberately used as a means to violate a person’s rights. It takes place when corruption itself is a part of the violation (ICHRP, 2009). Violations of human rights, in the meantime, are acts of corruption. For example, wrongfully and unlawfully incarcerating one’s political opponent is a human rights violation and a form of political and judicial corruption. Another example perhaps is the best example to demonstrate a direct violation of human rights caused by corruption: corruption in the justice system. This type of corruption denies victims fair treatment and justice, and undermines the rule of law. For instance, a bribe offered to a judge, if accepted, definitely can affect the independence and impartiality of the judge’s ruling. In Global Corruption Barometer 2006, which surveyed people’s attitudes toward corruption in 25 countries (conducted by Transparency International), it was found that 1 in 10 households had to pay a bribe to gain access to justice. The results showed that the first rank of corruption was police and the third rank was the legal and judiciary system (Transparency International, 2007).

Corruption also affects the administration of justice when it takes place before cases reach court. It could happen through the manipulation of evidence at the police level or the altering of facts at the prosecution level. In Thailand, the story of the murder of Sherry Ann Duncan, a 16-year-old Thai/American girl, illustrates this problem, which resulted in tragedy for four innocent persons. Sherry Ann was abducted and killed in 1986. Initially, the police arrested and charged with murder four construction workers

who later were sentenced to life imprisonment by the criminal court on the basis of evidence provided by the police. However, after the workers had spent several years in prison, the Supreme Court found the four suspects innocent. In the meantime, one of the suspects had died in captivity, while two others died of heart failure a few months after their release. The only remaining one was crippled as a result of the torture and harsh conditions he endured while in police detention and prison. It was a new investigative team that reopened the case and eventually cleared the names of the four scapegoats. New suspects were arrested and subsequently jailed. One of the suspects who was believed to have been the mastermind in ordering Sherry Ann's murder was set free due to insufficient evidence. Fake evidence had been presented and a false witness had testified against the four original victims, all of which were formally presented by the police. The former chief investigator in charge of the case was found guilty; however, he resigned from the service before the conviction was made and thus escaped criminal proceedings. Other original investigators in the case received career advancement before their retirement. None of them faces criminal action (The Nation, 2003).

Although no conclusive evidence of corruption was found in the investigation report, it is widely believed that corrupt practices were involved in the case. What could be the prime motive for the former chief of the police investigation to make his decision in a way which would cause menace to his career and life, if it were not for immense private gain?

As mentioned by the lawyer for the four victims: "It was not only a mistake which could happen from just doing (one's) duties. By taking such a high risk and great efforts to find the scapegoats, a person who was involved with the case must know the real wrongdoer and must have used all means to help him/her to escape from his/her guilt." The motive to close the case due to public pressure alone was an unsound reason for a person to frame the four scapegoats and produce a false witness in this murder case.

In addition, the chief of the investigative team was an acquaintance of the believed-to-be mastermind of the murder, a rich and influential person (Manager Online, 2003).

The presumption of corruption in this case was reconfirmed in a study on the ethics of the police. Some incidents of misconduct found in the inquiry into the case of Sherry Ann Duncan, as mentioned in that study, were the arrest, allegation with false witness and fake evidence and bribery (Thaipradit, 2004).

The arrest of innocent people often occurs when some police accuse the victim of drug trafficking and then proceed to extort money from the victims. In one case, a victim was stopped by police at a checkpoint. The police found amphetamines in the victim's car and demanded payment in exchange for his release, or for lesser charges. The victim initially denied the accusation but was tortured to give a confession. He was kept for four days until his mother finally agreed to pay money to these corrupt officials. This case was later brought to the Law Council of Thailand in a request for justice (Markan-Markar, 2008).

Access to justice is a central issue for the protection of human rights. However, the principle of justice for all could not exist if corruption still pervades the justice system. Special attention should be given to corruption through the system of justice, from police officers, prosecutors and judiciary to prison officers. A variety of measures to confront corruption in the system should be installed, such as initiating a credible complaint mechanism for the victims of corruption, promoting an active role for civil society organizations and the media in exposing corruption cases, enforcing stronger punishment for corrupt judges and other officers, establishing a vigorous self-policing system and a strict code of ethics, and building a sense of integrity and pride in the profession. Such anti-corruption measures would help lessen the violations of human rights and enhance justice in society.

Direct violation of human rights caused by corruption is also found in the provision of public services. In principle, public services should be allocated and provided for all members of the entire community without discrimination. Corruption in the provision of public services affects this principle because it requires extra payment for the delivery of services. When public officials demand or expect a bribe for doing an act which the officials are required by law to do, they are misusing their power in order to enrich themselves. For instance, certain health-care treatments in Nigeria, such as the treatment of HIV/AIDS cases, are not available to all who need such care, as a result of endemic corruption in that country. Anti-viral drugs, which should be available free of cost because of donor-funded programs for HIV/AIDS cases, did not reach the poor owing to demands for extra payments, which is a widespread practice. Some people were denied access to those services because they would not or could not pay bribes or did not belong to the clientele network. A Nigerian HIV patient mentioned that “the anti-virus drugs are not given to those of us...but to those big men who bribe their way through, and we are left to suffer and scout around for the drug.” Discrimination also occurs when the use of sterile needles is ignored because some health workers extort illicit payments from patients for the use of such needles (Transparency International, 2008). Corruption in this case was an act of discrimination against those who could not afford to pay a bribe; they were denied access to essential service and were put at risk of contracting HIV infection.

In the public service, corruption which distorts the allocation of public resources could lead to discrimination and arbitrariness. For instance, a corrupt politician may alter the rules of allocation in a social program against poverty in order to benefit his/her constituency but exclude others. It is a blatant violation of the rights and entitlement of those who should have been the beneficiaries of the fund in the first place.

Corruption in public services, as described in these cases, prevents individuals

from gaining access to their rights. When conditionality of access to basic human rights to such services involves corruption, it is a direct violation of human rights.

### **3.2 Indirect Violation of Human Rights**

Corruption becomes a necessary condition in cases of indirect violation of human rights (ICHRP, 2009). It occurs when corruption is the origin of subsequent violations of human rights. It is an essential factor among the factors that violate human rights. This type of corruption leads to actions by other actors, which eventually adversely affect human rights. It causes deteriorating effects, but by itself it is not an act that violates human rights. Human rights are violated by an act which stems from an act of corruption. For instance, in human trafficking and other crimes, when corrupt officials turn a blind eye to those who have been trafficked and to other criminal activities in exchange for bribes, their inaction could even threaten the victims' lives. In this example, bribes comprise an essential factor in the chain of events that lead to the violation of human rights.

Corruption is also found to be an indirect cause of human rights violation when corrupt officials seek to prevent exposure of their corruption. In the framework of power relations, corruption is an instrument that helps to sustain the order in which the powerful would often gain advantage. Corrupt officials will use all means to protect and maintain their position of power, a situation which may cause further violations of human rights.

Telling the truth to the public about power relations may endanger those who speak out. Journalists, activists, and “whistle-blowers” have been attacked after exposing corruption. Threats to witnesses and whistle-blowers may vary from jeopardizing their physical safety to psychological threats, harassment, imprisonment and discrimination. A civil society organization called the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reported that 734 journalists around the world were murdered between January 1992 and April 2009. Of the murdered journalists, 20 per

cent were killed as a result of their coverage of corruption (CPJ, 2009).

In Thailand, violent acts against whistle-blowers have been numerous and well known. For instance, in a recent case, Athiwat Chaiyanurat, a local reporter with a newspaper and a television channel, was found dead in his home in the southern province of Nakhon Si Thammarat. His death was suspected to be related to his attempt to expose corruption in the local administration. Athiwat had been told beforehand that some influential officials in the province were "dissatisfied" with his reporting on local corruption issues (CPJ, 2009).

Violence can increase and become a common occurrence when attempts are made to expose cases of corrupt practices. For instance, Sergeant Chit Thongchit, a 56-year-old former Thai highway police officer, was brutally shot and killed in order to stop him from exposing and helping to prosecute corrupt officials. During his life, Sergeant Chit exposed more than 10 cases of corruption involving police and local politicians. He also helped people who had been subject to unjust treatment from the authorities. Just before his murder, Sergeant Chit lodged complaints against the police on behalf of an innocent man who was accused of selling amphetamines in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province (Amnatchareonrit, 2009).

In a different case, Charoen Wat-aksorn, a local community leader, was shot dead because he exposed a corruption case involving a conflict with an electricity generating plant. He was murdered on his way home after testifying before the Senate committee on social development and human security and the House committee on counter-corruption concerning the alleged malfeasance of local land officials. He had accused the officials of trying to issue title deeds covering 53 rai (2.5 rai = 1 acre) of public land to a local "influential person." He accused many government officials and influential figures of encroaching on public land (Asian Center for Human Rights, 2004). All these accusations related to the corrupt practices of public officials.

Corruption is similarly related to the violation of the human rights of whistle-blowers. It is corruption which causes such people to blow the whistle but this act results in all kinds of human rights abuses and violations against them. Whistle-blowing and witness protection are key concerns when incorporating into an anti-corruption framework, human rights protection measures for those who expose corruption and are victimized by corruption. A well-designed program for protecting witnesses in corruption cases and whistle-blowers is urgently needed for protecting these persons from violence and all forms of human rights violations. Such mechanisms may include ensuring the confidentiality and identity of the witnesses and whistle-blowers, providing special forces to safeguard their lives and their families' safety, providing financial support and job security, and psychological counseling services, among other such measures. In the meantime, such measures are likely to contribute to a more effective anti-corruption strategy. If the lives of the witnesses and the whistle-blowers are threatened with danger, it should not be surprising that they would remain silent. On the other hand, if there are certain conditions which could ensure their safety, it is likely that they would release more useful information which would enhance the advancement of the investigation into corruption cases. These protection measures would also encourage other would-be whistle-blowers and create confidence among the public to report corruption cases to the authorities.

#### **4. Proposition 3: Grand and Endemic Corruption Heightens Massive Violations of Human Rights, Conflict and Violence.**

Grand and endemic forms of corruption create mass victimization, which may result in threats to the rule of law, people's lives and massive incidents of violence. They involve the abuse of power on a large scale. One example is the current conflict in the Niger Delta, where authorities have been extremely corrupt, diverting public funds away from local communities. The result has been massive communal violence in that region of Africa.

*The Niger Delta is an oil-rich region in southern Nigeria where ethnic groups have lived for centuries. When large oil reserves were discovered in the area in the 1950s, multinational oil corporations began to invest in the region. With the assistance of the government, the companies established their oil-related plants in the region. At the same time, the government forced local communities to relocate for the construction of the plants and pipelines. It was believed that the oil industry would bring wealth to the local communities and the country. However, after 30 years of operation, the large oil reserves have not brought prosperity to the region or the country, as promised, but massive ecological deterioration. The gas emissions from the oil industry have caused severe pollution in the area. In fact, Nigeria introduced regulations to outlaw the emissions of gas 20 years ago but bribery thwarted law enforcement (Conflict in the Niger Delta, <http://www.en.wikipedia.com> March 12, 2009)*

*The environmental devastation associated with the oil industry and the lack of distribution of oil wealth in the Niger Delta have caused further public dissatisfaction with the oil corporations and the government. For instance, in the 1990s, an ethnic people launched a movement to demand benefits from the oil industry under the responsibility of the corporations and the government. However, the movement was stopped by a military operation which resulted in the death of 2,000 civilians. A few years later, the surviving activists from the movement were arrested and sentenced to death under the dictatorship of Sani Abacha. The activists were denied the due process of law. Politicians who benefited from the oil corporation bore false witness against the activists. The companies gave money to the military to silence the voices which called out*

*for justice. One company was criticized for trying to divide communities by paying off some members to disrupt a non-violent protest. (Conflict in the Niger Delta, <http://www.en.wikipedia.com> March 12, 2009)*

*Some years later, a few militant groups emerged in the Niger Delta. These groups attempted to control the regional petroleum resources. They claimed that the local people were being exploited and had never benefited from the profitable but ecologically destructive oil industry. These groups illegally accessed the oil resources by tapping into oil pipelines and extracting the oil into barges. To make this bunkering process possible, they armed themselves and formed alliances with local politicians. Illegal arms trading has also been facilitated by the officials. The militant groups fought to control the bunker routes, which has resulted in the death of civilians. Employees of the oil corporations have been taken hostage by the militant group in a conflict that causes about 1,000 deaths each year. Rampant corruption in that area and in the country has fueled the conflict and the violence. For instance, the corporations reportedly bribed some officials to win contracts to build a natural gas pipeline and oil plants. Bribes were also given to the government to protect these businesses, which cause massive environmental degradation, and to maintain their source of wealth. Payments are also given to the military and the militant groups to protect the corporations' businesses. (Shah, 2004 and Watts, eds., 2008).*

Ongoing cases of grand corruption, such as the one described above, will inevitably result in violations of human rights in various forms. With such endemic corruption, the conflict and violence will not cease.

## 5. Proposition 4: Corruption Exacerbates Violations of Human Rights and Exploitation

The impacts of corruption tend to be harsher for disadvantaged groups of people, such as minorities, the poor, migrant workers, and disabled persons, who are relatively marginalized and powerless. This phenomenon could be explained from a power-relation perspective. Corrupt people who possess higher status and power attempt to maintain their position of power. In doing so, it is easier to further oppress people under their domination because they are vulnerable and lack power. Disadvantaged people tend to be exploited more often and are less able to defend themselves than more well-off people.

In this sense, corruption is an instrument that helps to define, sustain, expand or reduce the social order on the basis of unequal power between the powerful and the powerless. Persons in positions of power involved in corruption would attempt to maintain the status quo. Those who benefit from corruption would try by every means, including further corruption, to maintain their power. As a result, people who are not in a position of power, especially and vulnerable groups, are further oppressed and rendered unable to prevent any change in this power relationship. In other words, corruption reinforces the exclusion of the vulnerable groups and violations of human rights. For instance, corruption contributes to human trafficking, which is a modern form of slavery and the worst form of human exploitation. According to a United States government report, a correlation has been found between corruption and trafficking. The level of corruption has been perceived to correlate with standard efforts being made against trafficking. That is to say a state with a low level of perceived corruption is likely to have higher standards against trafficking (Lezertua, 2003). As mentioned previously, the victims of human trafficking are usually the most vulnerable or underprivileged groups of people, such as the poor, illegal migrants, minorities and women. These victims lose total control over their lives and are stripped of their self-determination and sometimes even their lives. This serious crime could not be

possible if the authorities were not paid off by organized crime for either facilitating the traffickers or neglecting their duty by looking the other way. Organized criminals often bribe border guards and use personal networks to move their victims across countries.

Another example concerns migrant workers. Corrupt officials may extract money from transnational migrant workers who lack a residence permit by threatening them with deportation. In Thailand, a law restricts migrant workers' freedom of movement. As a result, there is plenty of room for corruption and extortion by law enforcement officers.

*Min Min, 18, a migrant worker who works in a restaurant said "our life is difficult now. A few days ago at around 2 or 3 a.m., three men knocked on the doors of the migrants' home. Nobody dared open the door but these men entered forcibly and took away all of their mobile phones." Sometimes their motorcycles were taken away by the police. Migrant workers need to offer bribes to get their property back (Malikaew, 2007).*

In a report released by the Mekong Migration Network and Grassroots Human Rights Education and Development (2007), it was found that corruption often violates the fundamental rights of migrant workers. For instance, in a case known as "Arrest in Khao Lak by Bangkok Police," the arrest of five alien workers was described. Police from Bangkok negotiated with the Thai employer of these aliens and asked for 70,000 baht for the five people. Finally agreement was reached to pay 40,000 baht. This bribe money would be deducted from the paychecks of the five workers; it should be noted that their salaries were only 4,500 baht per month. In another story, four alien workers were arrested while they were walking on the street. Two of them who had work permits were released after paying 2,000 baht each to the police officers. The two without work permits initially were detained, but later released with the payment of 6,000 baht each to the police officers (Mekong Migration



Network and Grassroots Human Rights Education and Development, 2007).

These examples illustrate how corrupt officials benefit from abusing power for private gains while enforcing the law. Such behavior exacerbates the vulnerabilities of the weak and visibly magnifies the existing human rights problems of disadvantaged groups.

## 6. Conclusion

As seen above, human rights and corruption are related in ways in which corruption leads to violations of human rights. Acts of corruption can directly and indirectly violate human rights, especially those of the disadvantaged. These two acts are complimentary. Reducing one helps to lessen the other. Resolving one issue could possibly lead to another issue. Therefore, anti-corruption measures need a human rights perspective. Similarly, effective human rights protection measures need to incorporate and integrate anti-corruption measures as well.

When violations of human rights are portrayed as being a result of corruption, this will raise the awareness of people concerning the consequences of corruption on the well-being of individuals. This perspective helps to demonstrate clearly to the public the destructive effects of corruption on human beings. Trafficking in human beings is so inhumane that it might create a common spirit and public support for the cause of attempting to limit or eliminate corruption. The negative impacts of corruption on humanity would thus be more convincing and tangible to the public. People will have more understanding about the detrimental effects of corruption when seeing that it can threaten their lives. They will have greater sympathy for the victims of corruption because they are the same victims of human rights violations. Any individual could become one of the unfortunate victims if the state is not able to protect them and if the public remains passive and unaware. Public support for combating corruption will create demands and

put pressure on the government to be committed more seriously to this cause and generate the true political will to eradicate corruption. Giving a human face to corruption may lead to more effective anti-corruption strategies through better awareness of the destructive effects of corruption, which should no longer be tolerated.

Considering the issues of corruption and human rights through the lens of power relations enables us to see them as relationship between different social groups or individuals who are able to access power differently. We see that it is an asymmetric relationship between the subjects and objects of power. Both acts are social phenomena which concern the distribution of benefits between different groups of people and individuals. From this perspective, fighting corruption is fighting against powers that lack integrity and abuse power. This explains why corruption is a difficult and painful problem. However, if those who are powerless are empowered and synergized with courage, commitment and patience, the problem of corruption could be tackled. Perhaps the hopes and dreams of people to build a corruption-free society may be possible.

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