



15th INTERNATIONAL
ANTI-CORRUPTION
CONFERENCE

**MOBILISING PEOPLE:
CONNECTING AGENTS OF CHANGE**

**BRASÍLIA BRAZIL
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Short Session Report: Game Changers

Session Title: Corruption in education: Transparency in the targeting and management of pro-poor incentives

Date & Time: Thursday 8 November 2012

Report prepared by: Gareth Sweeney, Transparency International

Experts:

DIELTENS, Veerle University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa)

KAPUR, Avani Accountability Initiative (India)

GLENCORSE, Blair Accountability Lab (USA)

TRIPUNOVIC, Jovana Belgrade Open School (Serbia)

KOSTURANOVA, Dona, Youth Education Forum (Macedonia)

Moderated by: Muriel Poisson, IIEP-UNESCO

Session coordinated by: Muriel Poisson, IIEP-UNESCO

Main issues raised in kick off remarks. What's the focus of the session?

Muriel POISSON, IIEP-UNESCO, emphasized the importance of the issue of corruption in the education sector, i.e.: corruption in the education sector can have a high social impact on citizens, including on the poorest and more vulnerable ones; corrupt practices in the education sector contradict one major mission of education, i.e. to transmit ethical values; the education sector represents in most countries the first or second highest share in public budget. She then referred to the diversity of corrupt practices in education, e.g. leakage of school funds, fraud in public procurement (school construction, equipment, and textbooks), nepotism in the allocation of scholarships or seats in dormitories, ghost teachers, corruption in university admission procedures, use of fake diplomas, etc. She highlighted the importance of looking both at strategies undertaken by public authorities to improve the management of the sector, and at initiatives aimed at promoting social control over the use of public resources.

What initiatives have been showcased? Briefly describe the Game Changing Strategies

Veerle DIELTENS, University of the Witwatersrand, Education Policy Unit (South Africa) presented the challenges of the **Quintile Ranking System** in South Africa, which seeks to grade schools on a scale of 1(poorest) to 5(richest) in order to ensure more equitable resource distribution across schools and to decentralize decision-making. She identified risks in this system, including that a lack of understanding of quintiles, particularly grades 2 and 4, limited equitable distribution. Funds also did not reach their intended recipients because of embezzlement by school officials and collusion with fund administrators, or were subject to local political capture. Finally, money was often inappropriately spent (e.g. sports equipment). Significant challenges therefore remained in strengthening accountability mechanisms and raising awareness of the roles and responsibilities at the local level.

Avani KAPUR, Accountability Initiative (India) addressed challenges surrounding the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' programme in India, which has come about through the legal obligation under the Right to Education Act of having school management committees (SMCs) in place to monitor school governance and allocate financial resources from government. However, there exists a gap in implementation, and SMC do not know how complain when funds do not arrive. The Accountability Initiative therefore seeks to **collect information directly** from youth, colleges etc, **use simple tools to explain** how grants are intended to be used in schools, and **then put these tools into action by mobilizing communities** to demand accountability. This 'movement of evidence-based thinking' provides strong incentives to follow up with the authorities, knowing what needs to be done and how.

Blair GLENCORSE, Accountability Lab (USA) addressed corruption in higher education, which has received less systemic analysis, and presented the idea of '**accountpreneurship**' in Liberia and Nepal. In Liberia, they identified a university with the political will to allow **anonymous reporting of corruption on campus via mobile texts**, which were then collected and used to address problems as institutional issues of concern with the administrators, as well as through **public meetings**. In Nepal, where the corruption situation is endemic, a consensus-building approach was preferable. **Technical agreements were found with university administrators as a basis for moving forward** (e.g. clean drinking water) and dialogue centres were established to address the defined challenge. Lessons learned from both approaches included the need to bring in everybody in creating coalitions for change, ensuring continual communication before, during and after, keeping it simple, managing risk and learning from failure, and recognizing the need for different approaches in different contexts.

Jovana TRIPUNOVIC, Belgrade Open School (Serbia) presented her work on the **use of new media through online mapping of** corruption in higher education in Serbia, asking students to pin their universities online where corruption occurs. She highlighted the importance of safety, as there are many reasons for not coming forward, and their approach is therefore to solicit

broader information. The use of visuals sends a powerful message and is particularly accessible to media.

Dona KOSTURANOVA, Youth Education Forum (Macedonia), provided a case study as an innovative, **low cost**, example of youth initiatives to address corruption, in this instance relating to dormitory enrolment in Macedonian higher education. Students again were unwilling to come forward individually for fear of repercussions, so **simple surveys** were used. A **press conference** was organized and this generated media interest, putting public pressure on universities, and also resulting in the Youth Education Forum being invited to directly engage on the design of the national education action plan. This showed an effective use of figures, and the need to change behavioral attitudes to corruption.

Highlights: What are the main outcomes of this session? What's next?

- Highlighting a diversity of tools and initiatives aimed at promoting transparency and accountability in education
- Facilitating exchanges between ministry representatives, CSOs, and youth organizations around this issue
- Informing participants about the forthcoming GCR on education
- Connecting workshop participants to forthcoming TI Education Network

What are the recommendations, follow-up Actions (200 words narrative form)

- Shorten and simplify resource allocation flows
- Engage citizens in budget tracking exercises
- institutionalize citizen platforms to facilitate exchanges between users of the system and public authorities
- Make use of new technologies to create social maps
- Involve youth as agents of change
- Engage youth organizations in data collection on corruption practices, especially at higher education level
- Build consensus and trust around the need to improve transparency in education

What should be done to create opportunities for scaling up the proven solutions discussed in the session? What and by whom?

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Key Insights Recommended to be included in the IACC Declaration

- Recognize the importance of fighting corruption in the education sector, in order to realize the Right to education

Rapporteur's name and date submitted

Gareth Sweeney, Transparency International
8 November 2012
