"Rooting out corruption to ensure inclusive service delivery and equal land rights in Africa towards 2030 and 2063"

TI Side Event at ARFSD-10, Cairo, 23 – 25 April 2024

-PROPOSAL-

1. Introduction

Transparency International (TI) proposes to hold a side event during the tenth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-10) with the aim to highlight the central importance of mainstreaming anti-corruption (Sustainable Development Goal 16) towards the attainment of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and particularly those related to ensuring equal rights to basic services as well as ownership and control over land for all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable (SDG 1). This is in line with the aspirations, goals and targets of Agenda 2063 of inclusive growth and sustainable development underpinned by good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.

2. The challenge

The 2023 Africa Sustainable Development Report (ASDR), which focused on SDGs and the corresponding Agenda 2063 aspirations, goals and targets, noted that while the continent was making steady progress towards the achievement of the SDGs, the number of on-track targets was less than the number of targets that require acceleration or reversal. The previous ASDR noted that Africa made slow progress in the provision of quality education for all (SDG 4), with the COVID-19 pandemic reversing gains made in the past years, and towards gender inclusivity (SDG 5).

A UN progress report notes that "the COVID-19 pandemic and other ongoing crises are hindering progress in achieving SDG3, exacerbating existing health inequalities and threatening progress towards universal health coverage."

TI's research shows that corruption is a major barrier to access to basic services particularly for women, girls and other groups at risk of discrimination. Across virtually all stages of the public service delivery cycle, including operational processes and the interface of users with service providers, in which there is corruption - bribery, favouritism, conflict of interest, sextortion (or sexual corruption) – which trickle down and lead to a lowering of quality in education, healthcare and other sectors while occasioning a rise in barriers to access. The prevalence of discriminatory forms of corruption in service provision serves to widen inequalities, leaving marginalised segments of the population behind in the fulfilment of the rights to education and health. Also, corruption is a major inhibitor in the effective, efficient allocation of public resources for basic services. Where corruption is systematic, governments tend to spend less on public services.

Corruption worsens inequalities due to asymmetric power relationships. In the land sector, recent research has illustrated how corruption and discrimination intersect to deepen experiences of inequality, impeding fair land outcomes and the achievement of States' voluntary commitments to "leave no one behind." The position of disadvantaged groups in society can increase their exposure to corruption when exercising their land rights – for example in Madagascar, people with albinism have been denied compensation that they believed they were owed under the law, with a strong perception that corruption played a role. Corruption may also undermine restitution and resettlement programmes which aim to address racial and ethnic disparities in land distribution in countries like Zimbabwe and South Africa. Land corruption also deepens gender inequality by depriving women of access and control over resources that they are heavily reliant on to survive.

Against this background, to guarantee and inclusive and equitable access to land and basic services delivery on the road to 2030 and 2063, solutions that systematically address corruption in all its forms, and the barriers it presents, especially to those most vulnerable and marginalized, are an urgent imperative. The ARFSD provides an excellent platform for multi-stakeholder engagement to this end.

3. Objectives

The overall objective of the side event is to highlight the central importance of SDG 16, particularly target 16.5, for the achievement of all SDGs and Agenda 2063 goals;

Specifically, the objectives of the event are to:

- Highlight corruption-related barriers to inclusive access to education, healthcare and land services in selected African countries as well as the impact of discriminatory corruption;
- Share experiences and good practices on mainstreaming anti-corruption in basic services delivery and land governance in selected African countries;
- Contribute to key messages and the declaration of the ARFSD-10 by way of recommendations

4. Speakers and moderator

Speakers at the event include:

- Mary Awelana Addah, Executive Director, Ghana Integrity Initiative;
- Melusi Ncala, Senior Researcher, Corruption Watch South Africa;
- Ghana government official (to be determined);
- Florence Syevuo, CEO, SDG Kenya Forum, Leave No One Behind Partnership

Moderator: Samuel Kaninda, Africa Regional Advisor, Transparency International

5. Target audience

The side event is targeted at state and non-state actors of the education, health and land sectors ranging from lawmakers, policy makers, service providers, investors to academics, researchers, civil society actors, coalitions, journalists, etc.

The event should be of interest to any participant or organisation currently engaged or planning to work on SDG 16 monitoring, reporting and other accountability initiatives as well as in building national and regional multi-stakeholders' platforms/partnerships to ensure accountability for SDGs and Agenda 2063 goals.

6. Structure of the Session

1	Welcome, session overview and introduction of panellists (5 min.)
2	Conversation with panellists (35 min.)
3	Open floor discussion with panellists (25 min.)
4	Towards lasting solutions – recommendations/ contributions to key messages and declaration of ARFSD-10 (15 min.)
5	Wrap up - Summary of key points and recommendations (10 min.)

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