



## An assessment of negative impact of corruption on socio-economic and political developments of societies: The case of Benishangul Gumuz Regional state, Ethiopia

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### Abstract

The aim of this article is to assess the socio-economic and political impacts of corruption on socio-economic and political development of societies. Emphasis is given on the negative impact of corruption on social, economic and political development of Communities in the Case of Benishangul Gumuz Regional State of Ethiopia. The research is conducted based on qualitative methodology which used in-depth interview and focus group discussion in order to raise a better understanding about negative impact of corruption on development of societies. The key informants were taken from ten woreda's towns of Benishangul Gumuz Regional State. Among others, lack of transparency and accountability, lack of consistency, weaknesses of democratic institutions such as in the legislative and judicial systems provide fertile ground for existence of corruption. Thus, corruption is a great obstacle to sustainable socio-economic and political development of societies by undermining the rule of law, the legitimacy of government, financial growth and investment potential, as well as a country's overall development objectives. If appropriate controls are not taken and well-enforced, corruption can progressively degrade a socio-economic and political development of societies in general and good governance and its ability to deliver services to citizens in particular. It has contributed to the sharp rise in income and wealth inequality among nations and it would be a major obstacle to achieve sustainable development agenda of the future.

**Keywords:** corruption, socio-economic, political, impacts, societies, Ethiopia

### 1. Introduction

There is no single definition for the term corruption because what may seem corrupt in one society may not necessarily be perceived as such in another. However, there have been different attempts to define it, but there is no precise, clear definition that can be applied to all forms, types and degrees of corruption. For example, according to Myint <sup>[1]</sup>, Corruption is defined as the misuse of entrusted authority for private gain. It covers a whole range of abuses and can occur at anytime that public officials or employees misuse the trust placed in them as public servants for either monetary or non-monetary gain.

According to Jacques and Muriel <sup>[2]</sup>, Corruption can be defined as "the systematic use of public office for private benefit". It covers a wide range of activities, such as; bribe, pay-off (undue payment made to obtain a favor), bypass of criteria (non-use of legal criteria), capture, leakage (illegal use of public resources), diversion of funds (illegal use of public resources), embezzlement (theft of public resources), misappropriation (illegal use of public resources), favoritism (illegal preference given to a person), fraud (any kind of corrupt practice), ghost worker (draws salary but does not work), nepotism (illegal preference given to a relative), influence peddling (influencing a public decision for a bribe), etc.

In addition, Klitgaard <sup>[3]</sup>, defined corruption as equals to

monopoly of power plus discretion minus accountability ( $C = M + D - A$ ). Based on this formula, the monopoly of power increases corruption, and corruption will likely appear when administrators are granted a large degree of discretionary powers in an environment where an effective mechanism to hold administrators accountable lacks. Thus, it recognized as being a major problem affecting all countries in the world.

The issue of corruption becomes national and universal problem. It exists in all countries, both developed and developing, in the public and private sectors as well as in non-profit and charitable organizations. It becomes a major obstacle in the process of economic development and in modernizing a country. Many people now feel that it should receive priority attention in a country's development agenda because it has a serious negative impact on development of one country. Especially, in developing countries corruption is a major constraint that is hindering their economic, political and social development than that of developed countries <sup>[2]</sup>.

In fact, corruption exists in all countries, but it is more widespread in low income countries (poor countries). This is not because people in poor countries are more corruptible than people in rich countries. But according to Myint <sup>[2]</sup> argues conditions in poor countries are more conducive for the growth of corruption. Low income countries usually have highly regulated economies that give rise to large monopoly rents. Accountability in these countries is generally weak.

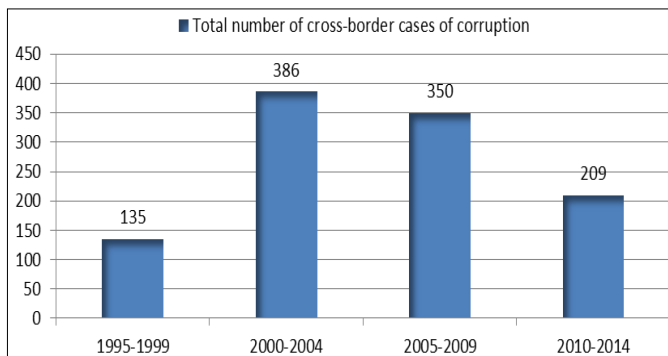
Political competition and civil liberties are often restricted. Laws and principles of ethics in government are poorly developed and legal institutions charged with enforcing them. The causes of corruption are many and vary from one country to others. Among others; failing institutions, poverty, income disparities, inadequate civil servants' payment, lack of accountability and transparency, sector fragmentation and deep seated culture of secrecy due to lack of strong check and balance of government institutions, etc. are among the main factors for existences of corruption [4, 5].

Corruption can mislead resources allocation and government performance and finally it could negatively affect economic developments. Evidences suggest that corruption is a constraint to socio-economic and political development of nations. For example, Musila and Sigué [6], find that corruption has a negative effect on the flow of exports and imports. Also Dutt and Traca [7], concluded that corruption mostly hinders trade and trade composition and decreases the size of manufactured exports as a percentage of GDP.

Finally, the main objective of this study is to assess the negative impact of corruption on societies, economy and politics. The issue of corruption becomes a global security threat which is still too common for all countries because corruption has helped fuel most of the serious crises of the world. There are strong correlations between corruption and social exclusion or social inequality which are indeed closely related and provide a source for popular dissatisfaction because corruption leads to an unequal distribution of power in society which, in turn, translates into an unequal distribution of wealth and opportunity. Thus, an excessive tolerance of corruption can have serious negative effects on socio-economic and political development.

**2. Review Related Literature**

Internationally, corruption can be occurs due to allowing huge amounts of illegal financial flows across different countries and cross-border bribes paid by foreign firms, which benefit greedy public officials than people. Evidences show that there are cases which show the prevalence of corruption at international level. For example according to Escresa and Picci [8] identified, there are number of cross-border cases of corruption by public officials. The following table shows Global number of cross-border cases of corruption by public officials.



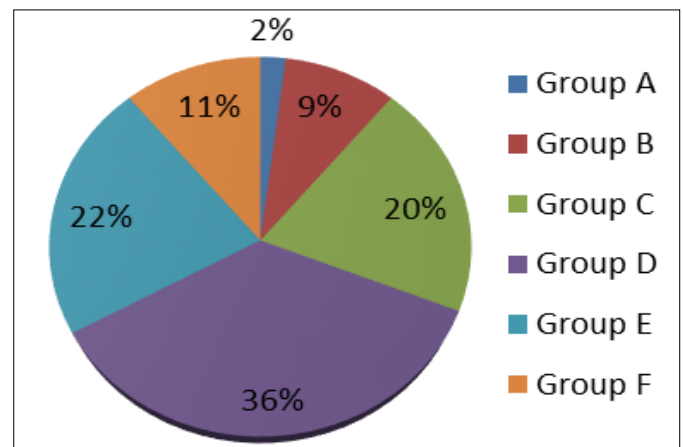
Source: Escresa and Picci (2015)

Fig 1: Global number of cross-border cases of corruption by public officials (1995-2014)

Thus, the above figures show that corruption remains problematic across the world (especially, in developing countries). If there is corruption in one country, it can undermine economic growth via reduced private investment and discourages investment as bribes, kickbacks and other forms of illicit payments increase uncertainty and transaction costs, thereby reducing profitability. Also it can undermine the quantity and quality of public investment and growth because the choice of public investment is driven by the expected private gains for decision makers rather than the public good. It retards growth by reducing tax revenue. Corruption erodes the tax base by opposing the investment climate and perpetuating leakages due to tax evasion and embezzlement by tax collectors which undermine growth [8].

Transparency International has conducted research on review of corruption risk and corruption vulnerability in defense ministries and armed forces. It offers governments, armed forces, civil society organizations and citizens' detailed knowledge and understanding of the corruption risks in the national defense and security establishments. Corruption in this sector undermines national and global security and it is very dangerous, divisive and wasteful which can affects citizens, soldiers and nations in general. Accordingly, the global level of corruption risk of each country was assessed and clustered into five risk areas. These are political risk, finance risk, personnel risk, operations risk and procurement risk [9].

In addition, the global levels of corruption risk in countries are shown in the following figure.



Source: Transparency International (2013)

Fig 2: Global Level of corruption risk

According the above figure, countries categorized under Group a are; Australia and Germany. The levels of their corruption risk are 2% which means very low level of corruption risk. This implies that there are high levels of transparency and strong government institutions and rule of law, institutionalized activity to address corruption risk in these two countries.

The countries categorized under Group B are; Austria, Norway, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, United Kingdom and United States of America. The levels of their corruption risk are 9% which means there are low levels of corruption risk in these countries.

The countries categorized under Group C are; Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Spain. The levels of their corruption risk are 20% which means there are moderate levels of corruption risk in these countries.

The countries categorized under Group D are; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, India, Israel, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mexico, Nepal, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates (UAE) Bangladesh, Belarus, China, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestinian National Authority, Russia, Rwanda, Tanzania and Turkey. The levels of their corruption risk are 36% which means there are very high levels of corruption risk in these countries. This implies that there are very low levels of transparency and weak government institutions and rule of law to address corruption risk in these countries.

The countries categorized under Group E are; Afghanistan, Bahrain, Cote D'ivoire, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. The levels of their corruption risk are 22% which means there are high levels of corruption risk in these countries.

The countries categorized under Group F are; Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, Syria and Yemen. The levels of their corruption risk are 11% which means there are critical levels of corruption risk in these countries.

Every day, all over the world, ordinary people bear the cost of corruption. In many countries, corruption affects people from birth until death. For example, according to the report of Transparency International <sup>[9]</sup>, in Zimbabwe, women giving birth in a local hospital have been charged 5 US\$ every time they scream as a penalty for raising false alarm. In Bangladesh, the recent collapse of a multistory factory, which killed more than 1,100 people due to a breach of basic safety standards, has been linked to allegations of corruption. Finally, corruption has direct negative impacts on socio-economic and political development of societies.

In Ethiopia, according to research conducted by Kilimanjaro International, 10 Corruption was not only prevalent, but had also become a severe socio-economic and political problem that was hampering the development of the country. Also Transparency International, 11 said that corruption was the third most serious problem in Ethiopia.

### 3. Methodology

In this study, the researcher used qualitative method of data analysis. In order to assess the negative impact of corruption on socio-economic and political development of societies, the researchers used focus group discussion and in-depth interview with key informants from ten woredas' town which include Assosa town, Wenbera town, Mankush town, Bulen town, Metekel town, kemashi town, Yaso town, Koncho town, Mengetown and Bambasi town of Benishangul Gumuz Regional State of Ethiopia. The relevant information were obtained through 'snowball' sampling which depends on initial contacts suggesting further people to be contacted by the researchers. Thus, as a primary source, the researcher used

focus group discussion and in-depth individual interview with different key informants in order to feed the study with recent and updated information about negative impact of corruption on socio-economic and political development of societies. In addition, secondary sources such as books, articles and research papers were also critically used.

### 4. Aspects of Corruption

The researchers had made interview with key informants regarding to aspects of corruption and come up with the ideas that, corruption does have some common characteristics across the world. All forms of corruption are performed in secret which make it difficult to avoid. It occurs in all countries regardless of the level of political, social and economic development. For existence of any forms of corruption, there must be a public official with discretionary power followed by a misuse of that power. In the case of bribery, there is a kind of agreement between the dishonest official and one or more public or private officials and a benefit in money or in kind to all parties involved.

The key informants responded that corruption is most likely will occur in the interaction between the public and private sectors. And it is generally practiced by public officials who have direct responsibility to deliver services to the public, apply or enforce specific regulations, or impose fees or taxes. Despite these common characteristics, corruption takes on very different features from one place to another. Corruption flourishes in different places in different forms including: land rezoning, customs duties, income tax collection, appointments, promotions, etc. The actors amenable to leading or supporting reform also vary significantly from country to country. Still, it is unlikely that a detailed attempt to achieve a global or even regional typology would serve a useful purpose because of the number of variables involved.

All respondents agreed that the degree of corruption may vary from country to country but it has been existed in all countries. A likely possibility is a country's level of development, as richer countries might have enough money to spend more money on social services and redistribution of wealth while also addressing corruption. On the other hand, in less developed countries the failure to pay a living wage lies, at least in part, at the root of the problem. The public servants still engage in corrupt behavior despite adequate pay. Some developing countries enjoy the rule of law and benefit from an independent judiciary that carefully reviews the legality of official actions; elsewhere the judiciary is bribed, compliant, or neutralized.

In addition, respondents said that some governments have incentives that encourage law enforcement officers to be willing partners in anti-corruption activities. Others have politicians who create legislation that seems designed to render corrupters free from prosecution, even if they are caught. In some countries, the private sector and other elements of civil society are well-organized and poised to assume an assertive role; in others, they are weak and unaccustomed to having a 'voice' or speak authoritatively to their government. All of these factors dictate the importance of carefully choosing the strategy and entry points for anti-corruption measures.

## 5. Result and Discussion

Evidences have showed that corruption become increased a lot and gotten much worse especially in developing countries. For example according to Transparency International <sup>[12]</sup>, in countries like Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia (FYR), Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe corruption has increased.

Thus, corruption has a serious negative impact on socio-economic and political developments of societies of any country and it leads to the weakening of national wealth. It is often responsible for increased costs of goods and services, lack of social services, distraction and misallocation of resources, change of public wealth to private and personal property, inflation, imbalanced economic development, weakening work ethics and professionalism, hindrance of the development of fair in market structures, increasing unhealthy competition, political instability and finally, it will hurts the economy and weakens entire population.

## 6. Economic Impact of Corruption

According to data obtained from key informants through focus group discussion and interview, the economic sectors are highly vulnerable to corruption. When researchers have asked about sectors which are highly vulnerable to corruption, the respondent said that economic sectors are highly vulnerable to corruption, especially those large and expensive projects whose costs are hard to determine are highly vulnerable to corruption with huge potential for bribes and economic rent which are also good candidates for corrupt deals.

When researchers have asked about negative impact of corruption on economy, the respondents said that underground economic activities are also areas where the negative impact of corruption could be existed. This can be occurs due to illegal activities such as engaging in the drug trade or the smuggling business and secondly, consists of those activities that are legal but are not officially recorded to evade taxes or for some other reason. Thus, corruption gives rise to both these types of activities and contributes directly to the rise of the underground economy.

In addition respondents said that under a corrupt system, the privileged and the well-connected enjoy economic rent. Economic rent, by definition, represents abnormal or monopoly profits and can give large benefits. As such, there is a tendency for wealth to be concentrated in the hands of a small minority of the population. Income distribution, therefore, becomes highly uneven. In addition, the burden of

corruption falls more heavily on the poor as they cannot afford to pay the required bribes to get their basic need.

Other key informant said that the prevalence of corruption resulted in an unequal income distribution among people with creation of extremely rich urban elite and concentration of wealth in the hands of a few people. For example, a few urban elite have expensive cars which journeying along dirt roads and eye-catching construction with luxury apartment buildings rising among poor and dirty home which shows there is high gap between rich (few) and poor (majority).

In addition, other respondent said that including private sector, bribes may have to be given before any investment takes place and upon entering into negotiations for the establishment of an enterprise. For example, procurement of leases for land and buildings, permission to engage in activities such as production, transport, storage, marketing, distribution, import and export, etc. can involve payment of substantial bribes at various stages and may require the services of agents with specialized expertise on how to get around complex rules and procedures to acquire these things. Unfortunately, these agents and middlemen, instead of being part of the solution can often become a part of the problem. Then, when the enterprise is finally established and up and running, corrupt officials may demand cuts from the firm's earnings. Moreover, in order to establish and maintain good public relations, and for continued viability of the enterprise as a business concern, entrepreneurs may have to contribute to all sorts of charities and worthy causes that are unrelated to their line of work.

In the private sector, corruption increases the cost of business through the price of illegal payments themselves, the management cost of negotiating with officials, and the risk of broke agreements or detection. Although some claim corruption reduces costs by cutting bureaucracy, the availability of bribes can also induce officials to contrive new rules and delays. Where corruption inflates the cost of business, it also distorts the playing field, shielding firms with connections from competition and thereby sustaining inefficient firms.

Hence, corruption not only raises the initial costs of investment but by substantially increasing risks and uncertainty for a project, can significantly reduce the incentive to invest. According to Myint <sup>[2]</sup>, surveys revealed that business people have to spend a lot of management time in discussions, negotiations and waiting for appointments with bureaucrats and public officials in corrupt regimes than in countries where there is less corruption.

Thus, corruption has undesirable negative impacts on both the revenue and expenditure sides of the government budget. The consequences on the revenue side are more familiar. Paying bribes to reduce taxes, fees, dues, custom duties and public utility charges such as for water and electricity, are common in many countries. Bribes are also used to make illegal water, electricity, gas and telephone connections to have access to these facilities without paying for the services obtained. All these result in serious losses of revenue for the government. Fraud, embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds add to the losses.

## 7. Social Impacts of Corruption

When the researchers had made interview and focus group

discussion with key informants regarding to social impacts of corruption; come up with the ideas that in social sphere, the impact of corruption is often manifested through political intolerance, problems of accountability and transparency to the public, low level of democratic culture, principles of consultation and participation dialogue among others. If there is corruption, it discourages people to work together for the common good. Frustration and general apathy among the public result in a weak civil society. Demanding and paying bribes becomes the tradition. It also results in social inequality and widened gap between the rich and poor, civil strife, increased poverty and lack of basic needs like food, water and drugs, jealousy and hatred and insecurity.

In addition, corruption can divert talent and resources, including human resources, towards 'lucrative' rent-seeking activities." Employees drawn to inefficient or rent-seeking behaviors are unlikely to be oriented towards quality, citizen-focused service delivery and therefore may contribute to negative feedback loop that erodes the social contract.

In any society, there are laws and regulations to serve social objectives and to protect the public interest, such as building codes, environmental controls and traffic laws and banking regulations. Violating these laws for economic gain through corrupt means can cause serious social harm. When researchers have asked about social impacts of corruption, respondents said that in fact, the corrupt individuals caused serious social problem. For example, the collapse of apartment buildings, department stores, hotels, road, etc. which was resulted in loss of life and property was due to corrupt contractor. There have been numerous cases where soil erosion, resulting from illegal logging has led to whole villages being washed down hill sides in flash floods or buried in mud slides, taking a heavy toll in lives.

"...the failure to observe proper fire prevention and safety regulations has caused supermarkets; hotels and other buildings go up in fires. Overloaded ships and passenger ships have sunk in seas and rivers all over the region. Paying bribes to operate poorly maintained public vehicles and road have led to accidents on the highways and buses plunging down ravines and gorges due to mechanical failure which can be resulting in heavy loss of life and property in society."

Other said, "Where there is corruption, quality of goods and services provided is poor and citizens will suffer directly. For example, below standard of public health services or supplies can directly endanger lives, and lack of adherence to building codes and standards can create hazardous living or working conditions, some of which may not be known until an emergency occurs. Not all quality issues are going to cause such dire risks, but even in more routine procurement, such as the purchasing of printed application forms to receive government services, if these goods are not delivered on time or with correct information citizens are most impacted. Simple quality issues like these frustrate citizens and contribute to citizen lack of trust in government service delivery and finally it might negatively affect their life."

Other said that, "Corruption can aggravate poverty. It results in lower economic growth rates and weakening the main factor that can pull people out of poverty. Moreover, corruption has a direct impact on the living conditions of the poor people. For example, corruption can undermines the

social safety net and may deter the poor from seeking basic need and other public services which can directly and negatively affect their lives.

In the fact, corruption tends to shift government spending away from the social areas towards the construction of unneeded projects or lower quality social infrastructures which can reduce its contribution to output. As corruption has long been around the existing infrastructure has also been contaminated because past investments were administered or distorted by corruption.

## 8. Political Impact of Corruption

As a result of data collected through interview and group discussion have showed, in political sphere corruption can hinders democracy and the rule of law. In a democratic system, public institutions and offices may lose their legitimacy when they misuse their power for private interest. As a result, reducing interest of political participation, political instability, reducing political competition, reducing the transparency of political decision making, distorting political development and sustaining political activity based on patronage or money, etc. can be prevail.

Thus, democracy can be endangered by corruption due to it disintegrate the state which can leads collapse of good governance and unresponsive government. Corruptions can threaten the democratic development of one country. People may existing poor social-economic conditions and widespread corruption link with the process of democratization which in turn creates serious obstacles for further social democratization. Thus, as we have seen high and rising corruption by effecting on the effectiveness of social spending, eroding the tax and custom administrations and destroying the legitimacy of existing political system may affect very negatively the whole socio-political system. For example, according to UNDP <sup>[13]</sup> reports, corruption stymies democratic development and breaks down the democratic process by reducing citizen trust in government and inhibiting government's ability to efficiently provide services and respond to citizen needs.

When researchers have made interview with one of my respondent about negative impact of corruption on politics, he said, "Elections are another crucial component of democratic governance where corruption can be occurs. It may generate dynamics that can be conducive to corruption, though, for example, patronage and vote-buying can be taken as favorable environment for prevalence of corruption. Patronage can be occurs when to government is favoring its supporters. For example, it can be seen as corruption if this means that incompetent persons, as a payment for supporting the regime, are selected before more able ones. In many nondemocratic countries, government officials are often selected for loyalty rather than ability."

Other respondent said, "Corruption can be negatively affect political election. For example, Electoral fraud is illegal interference with the process of an election. Acts of fraud (fake) can affect vote counts to bring about an election result, whether by increasing the vote share of the favored candidate, depressing the vote share of the rival candidates, or both. Also called voter fraud, the mechanisms involved include illegal voter registration, intimidation at polls, voting computer

hacking and improper vote counting are considered as corruption.”

On the other hand, political corruption takes place when political decisions are made about the budget and the administrative corruption takes place during the budget implementation. Political corruption has particularly damaging effects on the allocation of resources because it tends to divert resources away from the function to which they would have been allocated. On the other hand, it is the use of authorities by government representatives for unlawful private gain. An illegal act by an officeholder constitutes political corruption only if the act is directly related to their official duties.

On the other hand, corruption can increase the risk of political instability and it has negative consequences on growth, peace and stability. It can intensify rent seeking, conflict over resources and increase the risk of political and social instability. It paves the way for elite to control of power to raise opportunities for rent seeking and speeds up the process by which the public becomes marginalized.

When researchers have asked about impact of corruption on politics, other informants said that a corrupt regime by itself is highly vulnerable to corruption. For example, corrupt regimes tend to allocate a huge share of their national budget expenditures on obtaining sophisticated military hardware and large projects while they offer fewer shares on education and health which would contribute a lot towards the development economy. Other respondent said that, most of the time corruption is associated with dictators’ governments or undemocratic system of governments and their partners. They can involve embezzlement of huge sums of public funds, and the mismanagement, wastage, inequity, and social decay that come along with it which can be disastrous for an economy. As a result, hundreds of millions of dollars spent in acquiring real estate abroad and in depositing into their foreign bank accounts which can be resulted in economic problem.

Thus, it is clear that corruption is a great problem which has negative impact on socio-economic and political development. One of my key informants said that, “When people are not in a position to pay for a bribe, they prevented from buying a home, starting a business or accessing basic services.” This shows that, corruption can, and often does, infringe on fundamental rights of people and it became devastating.

Other key informant said, “Currently, corruption is seen to be running through the foundations of the democratic and legal process and affecting public trust. The judiciary and the police are among other key institutions which are highly vulnerable to corruption. It is become widespread, governments are not thought to be doing enough to hold the corrupt to account. The democratic pillars of societies are viewed as the most corrupt, Personal connections are seen as corrupting the public administration, Powerful groups rather than the public good are judged to be driving government actions.”

Finally, the present corruption indicators show that there is high prevalence of corruption in Ethiopia. Among others, globalization and developments in communication technology have transformed the international financial system and enhanced the ability of individuals to engage in corruption. The rise of electronic fund transfers makes it difficult for

countries to deal effectively with corruption. This implies that corrupt activities can be effectively hidden from the public, making it virtually impossible for such illicit funds to be recovered in the event of conviction which resulted in affecting negatively the socio-economic and political development of one country.

## 9. Conclusion and Recommendation

Currently, the issue of corruption becomes national and universal because it exists in all countries, both developed and developing, in the public and private sectors as well as in non-profit and charitable organizations. Thus, corruption remains great problem across the world especially, in developing countries. It has a serious impact on society, economy and politics of one country.

The policy recommendations of this article are; enhancing ownership and participation in development planning; improving transparency and accountability; building credible governance institutions; and fostering international cooperation and improving the regional and global governance architecture is a required urgent action to overcome the problems related to corruption.

In addition, people should refuse to pay a bribe, wherever asked and whenever possible and they should use their voice, vote and spending to punish the corrupt, such as only voting for clean candidates and parties that stand in elections or only buying from companies that have strong integrity systems and clean business practices. Finally, policing agencies need to innovate and come up with technology that can effectively monitor circulation of corruption in electronic networks.

Governments and businesses must do more to encourage free speech, independent media, political dissent and an open and engaged civil society. Civil society and governments should promote laws that focus on access to information. This access helps enhance transparency and accountability while reducing opportunities for corruption. It is important, however, for governments to not only invest in an appropriate legal framework for such laws, but also commit to their implementation.

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