

The YouthLED TALKS are a series of webinars organized by the members of UNODC's YouthLED Integrity Advisory Board, with support from the GRACE initiative and with the purpose to discuss the complex and multidimensional nature of topics such as peace, justice, integrity, ethics and anti-corruption at the occasion of various United Nations international observances.

As part of this initiative, the YouthLED Board members are capitalizing on the webinars, benefitting from exchanging practices and knowledge on the multifaceted phenomenon of corruption, to develop a series of opinion pieces to reflect on corruption and its relation to major social issues of modern society.

The opinion pieces, written by YouthLED Board members, reflect the opinions and views of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of UNODC.

# INCLUSION AND LEADERSHIP OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SDG16

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*Written by Esma Gumberidze*

The 1st episode of YouthLED TALKS series of webinars, named "Inclusion and leadership of youth with disabilities to contribute to the achievement of SDG16", took place virtually, on 9 December 2022, on the margins of the International Day of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities celebrated on 3 December and International Anti-Corruption Day, celebrated on 9 December.

The webinar was organized by Esma Gumberidze and Sylvain Obedi Katindi, respectively from Georgia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In view of the lack of literature on the theme of interlinkages between corruption and disability rights, the discussions held during this webinar and the thought-provoking results it has generated in the participants, all represent evidence of the great importance of this theme and the need for further attention from multiple stakeholders, spearheaded by United Nations Organizations such as UNODC.

What is indeed important to raise awareness on and further research, is the fact that persons with disabilities are likely to feel less empowered than other demographics to stand up against corruption and take action against it in varied forms. This could be due to the fact that unfortunately people with disabilities have less choices, less information and less resources and opportunities to voice their concerns and are instead often depending on others which means that even more resilience and drive to fight against corruption is needed in these circumstances.

In addition, disability is still often stigmatized and this is likely to have a destabilizing effect on corruption. Persons with disabilities and their assistants are often indeed perceived as "better people", people that because of their circumstances they are carriers of higher moral standings. Thus it is often unimaginable for the outside public that persons with disabilities, their family members and professionals working with and for them, can actually be moved by greed and other factors that are conducive and enabler of corrupt behaviour. Persons with disabilities, unlike commonly spread misconceptions, may become both the victims and beneficiaries/perpetrators of corruption. They can for instance both accept and give bribes. Although it is necessary that convicted persons with disabilities shall not be disproportionately negatively affected in a prison system (for instance by being incarcerated in prisons that are not fit to

welcome people with disabilities, both in terms of infrastructure and in terms of expert professional support provided by the prison administrators), it must be globally recognized and upheld that nobody is immune from responsibility and everyone must respect the rule of law, including people with disabilities.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) adopted in 2006 tells us that persons with disabilities are hindered in their participation in society by the lack of accessible environment, support services, assistive devices and a lot of stigma, rather than by their individual characteristics. According to a human rights-based approach to disability, which the convention adopts, persons with disabilities are persons first, just like everyone else, and in value of this they too carry positive and negative characteristics and aspirations.

According to research conducted by [Transparency International](#), people with disabilities are exposed to abuse by those that provide care, for instance in cases of embezzlement of funds intended to benefit persons with disabilities and cases of extortion happened in the process of acquiring a disability certificate.

Furthermore, they are often forced to bribe the nursing staff in closed institutions to get their entitlements while under constant control lacking the ability to “blow the whistle” to report such mis-happenings. These instances prove clearly that persons with disabilities can be severely and disproportionately affected by corruption. This impact of corruption on people with disabilities is caused, enabled and exacerbated by discrimination against persons with disabilities.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which oversees the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, has observed that persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with psychosocial disabilities, children, people of senior age and women with disabilities are particularly “exposed to systematic and structural discrimination”.

Discrimination can result in greater exposure to corruption: groups exposed to discrimination indeed tend to suffer from an above-average risk of falling victim to corruption, in which corrupt actors intentionally target them for exploitation. Both corruption and discrimination create and perpetuate structural inequalities and are interconnected and both design circumstances in which people with disabilities are likely to be victimized and incapacitated from receiving needed services and resources necessary for their well-being.

One even more specific case is that of children with disabilities because parents or guardians can be likelier than people with disabilities that have reached adult age, to not report corruption or to engage in corrupted behaviours in order to provide care to their children.

Furthermore, civil society organizations run by family members of persons with disabilities are often confused with organizations of persons with disabilities, while in reality they constitute yet another interest group. The decisions and activities undertaken by such organizations often are shared with the wider

disability rights community only after being made or planned. This lack of transparency and accountability provides good soil for potential corruption. All the above described issues can be solved through enhanced agency of persons with disabilities and their meaningful inclusion in decision-making processes. If we believe that people with disabilities are people just like everyone else, then we need to accept that they know their own needs better than others. Consecutively persons with disabilities, for example, must be the ones who voice their needs and concerns, they must be the ones who are consulted when treatment and services are to be disbursed, they must be the ones who employ, supervise and dismiss their own assistants, etc.

This is why disability inclusion is an essential condition to upholding human rights, sustainable development, and peace and security. We must uphold and safeguard the “Leave no one behind” value and work together in order to promote the 2030 Agenda with and for people with disabilities, because only in this way we can recognize that protecting and strengthening the rights of persons with disabilities is gateway for more just world and it is an investment in a better common future.

# INTERLINKAGES BETWEEN EDUCATION AND CORRUPTION

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*Written by Camila F. Tort, Eduardo A. S. Figueiredo, Max Amanu*

## *Introduction*

Considering that education is a major driver for personal and social development, a fundamental human right, and an essential precondition for the exercise of many other rights and freedoms, the second episode of the “YouthLED TALKS” webinar series, held in the margins of the International Day of Education, was destined to reflect upon the very complex and multifaceted interlinkages between education and corruption.

On the one hand, several contributions were given regarding how corruption negatively affects the education sector, *inter alia*, hindering or even impeding the realization of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 of the United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (“ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”). On the other hand, different insights were shared regarding how education can be a useful tool to tackle this terrible phenomenon, spreading values of ethics and integrity.

In this episode, we counted on the very valuable intervention of Ms. Roberta Falvo, Associate Anti-Corruption Expert at UNODC; Ms. Victoria Ibiwoye, Founder of “One African Child”, and Ms. Tatjana Jankovic, Project Coordinator of the Training and Capacity Development Department of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA). A huge thanks to all the speakers for their wonderful contributions.

## *Safeguarding education from corruption*

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (hereinafter, “Declaration”). By taking this action, the United Nations Member States recognized a set of rights that should be regarded as fundamental human rights and, as such, must be universally protected.

Specifically, article 26 of the Declaration establishes that “everyone has the right to education”. More than 70 years have passed since the adoption of the Declaration, and, unfortunately, people worldwide are still deprived of their right to education.

The United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes quality education as a property area for reducing poverty and improving the world we live in. However, despite the efforts dedicated to improving the quality of education and ensuring the right to education of everyone, we still have a long

road ahead. Today we are faced with an education crisis. This crisis is the result of multiple factors, including corruption.

Education systems are negatively impacted by this crime, as explained by GRACE in their publication on "Knowledge tools for academics and professionals." If there is corruption in the education system, it undermines the ability of education to achieve its goals. The absence of corruption is necessary to achieve quality education for all. Nonetheless, safeguarding education from corruption is, without a doubt, a challenge.

Corruption in the education sector can take many forms, including for instance embezzlement and bribery. It can lead to the misallocation of resources, the construction of substandard schools, and the hiring of unqualified teachers. As such, corruption in the education system can result in a poor quality of education, with students receiving an inadequate education that does not prepare them for the future. Furthermore, corruption can also lead to unequal access to education, with some students being unfairly disadvantaged while others are able to access better resources and opportunities. This can perpetuate poverty and inequality cycles and undermine individuals' and societies' potential to thrive.

Additionally, corruption can be present at all levels of the education system, from national education policymaking to each little local classrooms, and also it negatively affects all levels of education, primary, secondary and tertiary. As a result, corruption in education has both economic and social impacts. Given the central role of education in human development, corruption in education deepens already existing inequalities.

Dedicating efforts and investing resources to achieve this goal is crucial to ensure that all students have equal access to quality education and to maintain the integrity of the education system. In this line, Ms. Roberta Falvo shared the work done by the GRACE Initiative during her intervention. She highlighted the importance of educating young people on topics related to ethics, integrity, and anti-corruption, particularly the importance of educating young people from a young age. To achieve this goal, the GRACE Initiative elaborated multiple tools targeted at different audiences (primary & secondary education, academia & research, and aimed at empowering youth), which are available on their web page. These tools vary from resources for the teachers to resources for the students to equip students and young people with the knowledge and skills to better understand corruption, its causes, consequences, and how to prevent and combat it. Ms. Falvo also shared that the GRACE Initiative disseminates these materials in different countries and languages and works with the Ministries of Education at the national level, aiming to create a culture of rejection of corruption among children and youth through education. Moreover, the work of the GRACE Initiative seeks to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations Member States to prevent corruption and to promote effective educational

policies that promote the integration of anti-corruption education in the school curricula at different levels.

Ms. Victoria Ibiwoye stated that corruption is one of the biggest challenges in some African countries and that education can be a gateway to surpass it. In this regard, she shared that her foundation works mainly on developing soft skills for young people beyond formal education settings. For her, ethics and integrity are some of those skills which are crucial for future leaders. Finally, she reflected on the importance of analyzing education from a holistic point of view and the role of education at the level of local communities, which also contributed to change. From the academic institutions' perspective, Ms. Tatjana Jankovic introduced the IACA, its values, and its mission. As an academic institution focusing on anti-corruption education, the IACA's principal mission is to deliver and facilitate anti-corruption education and training for professionals, practitioners, and young people interested in the field. With their work, the IACA promotes the right of societies to be free from corruption and contributes to the global fight against corruption while enhancing the values of integrity, ethics, accountability, and transparency, among others. Additionally, Ms. Jankovic also reflected that corruption in the education sector affects not only young people but also the wider society as it increases inequality among students in a long-term perspective. Considering the different forms of corruption in the education system, there is no universal solution to corruption in the education sector. Ms. Jankovic finished her intervention by highlighting the importance of good practices, such as promoting accountability, transparency, and the rule of law, as measures for safeguarding education from corruption.

Education is essential for development and a right that should be ensured to everyone without any sort of discrimination. Today, education is no longer fit for purpose, and, in part, this is due to the effects of corruption in the sector.

Safeguarding education from corruption should be a priority, given the role of education for the future of society and the negative long-term effects resulting from corrupt practices.

If we want to efficiently transform education and make it resilient to corruption, we must:

- increase transparency and accountability in education financing, so to ensure quality and access are never at risk;
- strengthen monitoring mechanisms while promoting increasing penalties for those who engage in corrupt practices, from one side, and incentives for compliance, from the other;
- strengthening integrity and ethics in the education system by making anti-corruption, integrity and ethics permanent pillars of any education system through, first and foremost, the wide use and promotion of the UNODC Anti-Corruption, Integrity and Ethics Module Series.



By focusing on these tasks, we uphold this year's International Day of Education's theme, which was "to invest in people, prioritize education".

#### *How education can be used to tackle corruption*

Tackling corruption requires a holistic approach with multifaceted solutions. Education is undeniably one of the most effective tools of tackling corruption. This is because it helps address some of the root causes of corruption such as poverty, helps create awareness about the dangers of corruption, at the same time acting as a powerful tool in building capacity of future guardians of integrity and anti-corruption advocates.

That being said, it is important to acknowledge that there is no single correct approach to embedding anti-corruption issues in education. Therefore, different measures and interventions are complementary to each other. This calls for strengthened multi-stakeholder approaches.

Such multidimensional cooperative approach is indeed needed in order to address the multiple dimensions of education, which can be formal, informal and non-formal, thus requiring varied strategies based on where and how the learning takes place, for instance as a lecture in a classroom or workshops organized out of the school premises or a peer-to-peer community learning event or finally a family-based teaching activity taking place at home etc.

Education should also be strengthened by the incorporation of entertainment and fair play as elements to innovate learning methods. "Edutainment" indeed opens up many more avenues for the engagement of the youth and the wider community in discussions and interventions aimed at designing new community-based and evidence-based solutions to discourage corruption as it relates to education.

In conclusion, preventing and fighting corruption require collective efforts from all people in different spheres of life and different sectors. Therefore, it is crucial for each and every one of us to identify which role we can play to tackle this phenomenon and how can we take actions to contribute to anti-corruption efforts.



# DISMANTLING CORRUPTION FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE: A CALL TO ACTION FOR ALL

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*Written by Bui Y Nhi, Tania Regalado and Uchkun Abduganiyev*

## *Introduction*

The third episode of the YouthLED Talks on the margins of International Women's Day 2023 gathered international experts in anti-corruption and women empowerment to discuss how the fight against corruption is also a fight for gender equality and discover why women's and girls' empowerment is a powerful tool to foster a culture of rejection of corruption.

Corruption and gender inequality are in many ways closely connected. Generally, women perceive and experience the effects of corruption to a greater extent due to unequal gender power relations. Furthermore, certain corruption practices are a heavy burden for women because of their high sexist and degrading components. Unfortunately, these forms of corruption are not always recognized as such. They are even less likely to be reported due to a culture of shaming and victim blaming.

For all of the above, a gendered perspective and a human rights-based approach are critical elements for an effective global anti-corruption agenda. This requires the participation of all social actors and strengthening democratic institutions by ensuring a more significant involvement of women and girls at all levels.

## *The interlinkages between corruption and gender inequality*

Corruption is a pervasive problem that affects individuals and communities worldwide, and it often disproportionately affects marginalized groups, including women. Due to historic socioeconomic marginalization and oppression in many societies, women are more vulnerable to corrupt practices when accessing public services or goods. They often have more to lose when these services are compromised due to corruption, creating a vicious cycle that reinforces gender inequality and further entrenches corruption.

One form of corruption that predominantly affects women is sexual extortion, commonly known as sextortion. In such cases, sexual favors are demanded as the currency of the bribe instead of money, further marginalizing women and excluding their voices from decision-making processes.

Women's vulnerability to corruption is compounded by the fact that they often have different capabilities to report or respond to corrupt conduct compared to men. Fear of retribution for reporting or refusing to pay a bribe can prevent women from speaking out against corruption. Furthermore, economic precarity

resulting from corruption can indirectly harm women, such as limiting their access to education or healthcare.

Governments must recognize the link between gender equality and anti-corruption policies. Policies aimed at reducing corruption can promote gender equality by removing the barriers that prevent women from accessing public services and goods. Simultaneously, policies aimed at promoting gender equality can reduce corruption by increasing women's participation in decision-making and ensuring their voices are heard.

In addition, efforts to combat corruption and promote gender equality must recognize the intersectionality of these issues. Women who belong to other historically socially excluded groups, such as women of color or LGBTQ+ women, are at even greater risk of experiencing the negative effects of corruption. To effectively address corruption and promote gender equality, policies and strategies must consider the unique experiences and needs of women from all backgrounds.

The fight against corruption and gender inequality requires the involvement of everyone, including young people. We must recognize the impact of corruption on women and promote their inclusion in decision-making to help tailor more effective anti-corruption policies and practices.

#### *The way forward*

Here are some practical steps we can take to tackle corruption from a gender perspective:

1. **Raise awareness:** We need to raise awareness about the link between gender inequality and corruption. Educating people about the harmful effects of corruption on women and marginalized groups can mobilize support for anti-corruption efforts and promote gender equality.
2. **Promote transparency:** Governments and institutions must prioritize transparency and accountability in decision-making. This includes ensuring that women and marginalized groups have equal access to information and that their voices are heard.
3. **Empower women:** To tackle corruption from a gender perspective, we must empower women to take an active role in decision-making processes. This includes providing them with the necessary tools, training, and resources to participate in public life and hold institutions accountable.
4. **Foster youth engagement:** Young people are the agents of change and can bring new ideas and innovation to the table. By involving young people in the fight against corruption and gender inequality, we can mobilize creativity and energy to make a meaningful impact.

Only by working together and engaging everyone can we create a better future for all, one where corruption and gender inequality are no longer pervasive issues. Let's join hands and make our communities and societies more just and equitable.

# INTERLINKAGES BETWEEN SPORTS AND CORRUPTION

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*Written by Camila Tort and Diana Pasha*

## *Introduction*

Sports have always been an integral part of human society, and their benefits go beyond entertainment and physical health. As recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in 2013, sports “promote education, health, development and peace”. Given the importance of sports, especially for development, the United Nations Member States proclaimed 6 April the International Day of Sports for Development and Peace.

At the same time, and as recognized by the States Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), “sport is an important enabler of sustainable development, and recognizing the growing contribution of sport to the realization of justice and peace through its promotion of tolerance, fairness and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and young people, individuals and communities, as well as to development objectives relating to health, education and social inclusion” ([CAC/COSP/2019/17](#)). Sports can also play a significant role in preventing corruption, especially among the youth. Sports can promote ethical values such as fairness and respect and can be used as an educational tool to raise awareness and encourage a culture of integrity and anti-corruption.

Unfortunately, sports are not only a means to achieve development but can also be used for crimes. Given the central role of sports in societies and the amount of money generated by sports events and competitions, sports have indeed attracted the attention of criminals. In recent years, we have witnessed a substantial increase in criminal activities within the sports sector. From match-fixing scandals to bribery, doping, and illegal betting, corruption has infiltrated various aspects of sports. Corruption not only undermines the integrity of sports but has negative consequences for athletes, fans, and society as a whole.

Corruption in sports directly affects the essence of sports. Corruption undermines sports' competitive character, nobility, and fairness of competition. With corruption, sports will not be sports anymore. For those reasons, it is essential to understand the different forms of corruption and their impact on the integrity of sports.

As described above, sports and corruption are related in many ways, and exploring this topic is crucial for understanding the impact of corruption on the integrity of sports, its negative consequences for society, and also, how we can use sports as a tool to promote integrity, ethics, and justice. For these reasons, episode 4 of the “YouthLED Anti-Corruption TALKS”, an initiative organized by

UNODC's YouthLED Integrity Advisory Board Members, focused on the interlinkages between corruption and sports.

*The international community is coming together to safeguard sports from corruption*

During this event, we explored how corruption and sports are related and how sports can be a tool to prevent and fight corruption in societies. We discussed the impact of corruption on the integrity of sports and its negative consequences for society. In particular, the renowned panelists representing the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sports, the Olympic Movement Unit to the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions, and academia, highlighted the role of various stakeholders in combating corruption in sports, including sports organizations, international organizations, governments, law enforcement, civil society, and academia. They emphasized that enhancing sports integrity requires a collaborative approach and multi-actor cooperation. We learned that laws and regulations are the first steps in safeguarding sports from corruption and that education and implementation strategies are also essential. We also discussed best practices and successful interventions to prevent and detect corruption in sports and how sports can promote ethical values such as fairness and respect and be used as an educational tool to encourage a culture of zero-tolerance against corruption. UNODC representative, Ms. Alexandra Sokolova, presented the UNODC Programme on Safeguarding Sports from Corruption and Crime, focusing on the policy background of its establishment as well as providing info on the activities that have been carried out within the framework of this Programme. She also presented UNODC's [Global Report on Corruption in Sport](#) and the report's main findings. As reflected in the report, sports are seriously affected by crime, and crime can take many forms when it comes to sports, for instance corruption. Ms. Sokolova also highlighted the role of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) as a legal base for combating corruption in sports. In this regard, she also shared examples of the work done by UNODC in the matter, including dedicating efforts to ensuring that legislation, regulations, and rules align with the principles of the Convention, and to developing comprehensive policies on anti-corruption in sports for the States Parties. Ms. Sokolova furthermore reflected on the role of international organizations, governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders in supporting such cooperation efforts and ensuring it effectively tackles corruption in sports. In this line, the report recommends, among other things, supporting "programmes, projects, task forces, expert groups and existing initiatives that promote and enhance cooperation and the exchange of information and good practices among law enforcement, criminal justice authorities and corruption prevention authorities, lawmakers, and policymakers".

Ms. Konstantina Orologopoulou, Ethics and Compliance Officer at International Olympic Committee, shared with the audience the work of the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sports (IPACS). Among other things, she explained that IPACS was established in 2017 to combat corruption in sports through a collaborative and that "IPACS was first officiated at the IOC's International Forum on Sport Integrity held in February 2017. She also expressed that, being a multi-stakeholder institution, the mission of IPACS is "to bring together international sports organizations, governments, inter-governmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to strengthen and support efforts to eliminate corruption and promote a culture of good governance in and around sport". As mapped by Ms. Orologopoulou, IPACS mainly has four lines of actions divided into specialized task forces:

- Task Force 1: reducing the risk of corruption in procurement relating to sporting events and infrastructure;
- Task Force 2: ensuring integrity in the selection of major sporting events;
- Task Force 3: optimizing the processes of compliance with good governance principles to mitigate the risk of corruption; and
- Task Force 4: enhancing effective cooperation between law enforcement, criminal justice authorities and sport organizations."

Furthermore, Ms. Rida Ahmed, Ethics & Compliance, Olympic Movement Unit on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions at International Olympic Committee, stated that competition manipulation is a significant problem facing the sports sector and that unfortunately manipulation is done through betting, which has greatly affected varied individuals, including young athletes. Ms. Ahmed also highlighted the role the technologies have on facilitating this crime. In this regard, she expressed that online betting sites are primarily found in countries with few rules and regulations on sports betting, leading to more problems for law enforcement. The speaker continued by informing that this has led to a chain of sports fraud through money laundering carried out through these betting platforms. Since 2013, the number of countries involved in competition manipulation has significantly increased.

Ms. Ahmed also shared with the audience the work that the Olympic Movement Unit to the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions is doing to prevent and combat the manipulation of competitions and the related need to work with National Federations and the wider public at grassroots level to keep mobilizing resources to ensure that the necessary actions are taken against those found committing crimes in the sports industry. The speaker continued by stressing the importance of youth education and awareness of what manipulation of sport competitions is, what it looks like, and what to do if faced with it. This is necessary because, as posited by the speaker, successful anti-manipulation efforts must not only be grounded on the rule of law but must likewise seek the

integration of multilateral partnerships to strengthen education and empowerment, especially for and with youth as main partners. Lastly, Andy Spalding, Associate Professor at University of Richmond School of Law, shared with the participants the work of the Olympics Compliance Task Force, a collaboration of international anti-corruption and human rights academics and practitioners that is working to help design a new anti-corruption and human rights compliance approach to be applied to major sporting events, such as Olympics for instance. Particularly on this issue, he highlighted the necessity of clear, specific, and enforceable codes of conduct and anti-corruption provisions and the need for including civil society into the efforts.

#### *Main takeaways and recommendations*

Corruption in sports can take many forms. To effectively safeguard sports from corruption, we must:

- Understand the interlinkages between sports and corruption so to be able to address them;
- Strengthen multilateral cooperation to face this global challenge;
- Establish and safeguard a shared legal framework, including awareness-raising activities ( such as education and youth empowerment) and bind them together through a realistic implementation strategy to do successfully safeguarding sports from corruption and promoting integrity in sports.

More in details, the legal framework, regulations, and guidelines must be implemented at the national and international levels. To achieve these goals, international organizations need to continue dialogue facilitation on sports and anti-corruption. For this purpose, bringing together representatives from all relevant stakeholders is crucial for adopting recommendations, sharing lessons learned, exchanging best practices, and coming up with pragmatic and practical solutions for dealing with corruption in the sports industry, as well as, to prepare for new challenges.

Compliance programs, codes of conduct, and contracting standards can also play a crucial role in preventing corruption in the sports industry, especially in organizing big sports competitions and events. However, for these instruments to succeed, they must be clear, specific, and enforceable. Establishing oversight mechanisms and sanctions for lack of implementation is also crucial. In this regard, community-based organizations, such as the Olympics Compliance Task Force, can play an essential role in reducing the risks of corruption in sports among the communities.

Youth also has a role in safeguarding sports from corruption. Many athletes represent the youngest sectors of the population; however, despite their young age, they might witness acts of corruption and injustices in the sports industry.



Educating them on what corruption is, the consequences of corruption in sports, how to identify instances of corruption, and what to do when faced when one type of corruption is crucial for holding the criminals accountable and ensuring the integrity of the sport.

As young people, we play a crucial role in shaping the future. As such, we can also play a crucial role in promoting integrity in sports and, ultimately, safeguarding the essence of sports. Even though there is no secret successful formula for achieve these goals, here are five tangible suggestions and actions that young people can lead or participate to contribute to these efforts:

1. **Raise Awareness:** Young people can take the lead in organizing campaigns and awareness programs within their schools, universities, communities, and at the national and international level to educate others about the negative impacts of corruption in sports. For this purpose, social media and other traditional and non-traditional communication channels can be a perfect tool for disseminating knowledge and promoting a movement in favor of safeguarding sports from corruption and crime.
2. **Promote Ethical Values:** We are future leaders. As young people, we need to be champions of the values of fairness, respect, and honest competition in our sports engagements. Good leaders led by setting an example and encouraging others to act similarly. By doing this, young people can contribute to creating a culture of integrity in sports only among the youth and cross-generational.
3. **Engage with Sports Organizations:** Young people already participate in multiple sports competitions and events. By actively participating in youth forums, councils, or committees associated with the local, national, or international organizations of the sports they play, young people can share their perspectives, propose anti-corruption initiatives, and collaborate with decision-makers to implement corruption prevention strategies and activities aimed at promoting a culture of integrity and ethics in sports.
4. **Collaborate with NGOs and other existing civil society efforts to promote integrity and ethics in sports:** Collaboration and teamwork are key. Only by joining efforts can we maximize the creating an impact. Young people can volunteer, inter, support awareness campaigns, and contribute with their skills, energy, and ideas to strengthen the ongoing efforts to safeguard sports from corruption.
5. **Anti-Corruption Education:** Young people should participate in anti-corruption education activities to learn how corruption can manifest in a sport setting, what to do if faced with this situation, and if there are whistleblowers channels to report the crime. Young people can also work with educational institutions and organizations providing training to

incorporate anti-corruption education in the curricula, including anti-corruption education concerning sports.

In conclusion, the International Day of Sports for Development and Peace recognizes the importance of sports for promoting education, health, development, and peace. However, corruption has infiltrated various aspects of sports, and only by working together can we ensure the integrity of sports and enjoy the benefits that sports bring to our society.

# UNITING DIVERSE VOICES TO STRENGTHEN THE ROLE OF YOUTH, JOURNALISM, AND PRESS FREEDOM IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

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*Written by Parnneh Mallobe, Rafael Leite and Tsenguunbileg Naranpurev*

On 3 May 2023, UNODC's YouthLED Integrity Advisory Board hosted the fifth episode of the thought-provoking online dialogue series "YouthLED Anti-Corruption TALKS", titled "Media and Corruption, in celebration of the World Press Freedom Day. This stimulating event brought together a comprehensive array of speakers, for instance young leaders, journalists, and media experts from various backgrounds and regions. By assembling such a diverse group, the event fostered rich discussions that shed light on the multifaceted challenges faced by the media in combating corruption.

The event commenced with opening remarks from renowned Ghanaian journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas and Liberian investigative journalist Alline Louise Dunbar. Anas, known for his groundbreaking undercover work and innovative methods, emphasized the numerous challenges African journalists face, particularly when tackling corruption. He highlighted the need for young journalists to build resilience against persecution and legal issues and urged them to forge alliances and collaborate with organizations such as the [CENOZO](#) (Cell Norbert Zongo for Investigative Journalism in West Africa).

Anas' insights provided a fitting complement to Dunbar's remarks. Dunbar, a freelance investigative journalist from Liberia, shared her experiences of overcoming various challenges during her investigations. Despite feeling demotivated due to the lack of support in her country in 2021, Dunbar eventually returned to investigative journalism with a renewed sense of patience, persuasion, and prayerfulness. She underscored the importance of exercising caution, adhering to rules, and seeking help when necessary.

The diverse line-up of speakers included Professor Tunde Akanni, Head of the Journalism Department at Lagos State University, who eloquently discussed the importance of press freedom in combating corruption and ensuring government accountability. He underscored the media's role in informing, educating, and undertaking surveillance in society, while urging civil society organizations to prioritize anti-corruption efforts, engage in coalition-building, and establish international networks.

Theophilus Sng, a digital strategist and filmmaker, shed light on the role of social media in the fight against corruption. He presented two case studies demonstrating the power of social media and memes in raising awareness, mobilizing collective action, and holding institutions accountable. Sng emphasized the importance of media literacy and critical thinking for effectively utilizing social media.

Maria Vitória Ramos, a Brazilian journalist and co-founder of [Fiquem Sabendo](#), highlighted the significance of freedom of access to information and a free press in combating corruption. She presented various case studies, showcasing how her organization leveraged freedom of access to information laws to expose irregularities and enforce government accountability. Maria stressed the value of collaboration, education, and transparency in the fight against corruption.

The YouthLed TALKS event not only emphasized the vital role of press freedom in promoting transparency and accountability but also inspired young people to actively participate in anti-corruption efforts through media engagement. By engaging in this dialogue, young leaders acquired the knowledge and tools needed to make a meaningful impact in the global effort to eradicate corruption. It is important that multilateral partnerships are established in order to empower Youth to understand the complexities of corruption, especially in relation to media freedom. This complex interplay between youth, journalism, press freedom, and the fight against corruption, is indeed a reminder that progress in combating corruption demands not only individual resilience and determination but also a collective effort that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. By harnessing the power of diverse perspectives and experiences, we can develop more nuanced and effective strategies to prevent and counter corruption.

Moreover, we must work together to respond to the need for an environment that fosters freedom of expression, critical thinking, and access to information. As young journalists navigate the treacherous waters of investigative reporting and expose corruption, they must be equipped with the necessary tools, resources, and support networks to weather the challenges that lie ahead. In doing so, they will be empowered to catalyze change, hold power to account, and reshape societal norms.

In conclusion, in the year of the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), young people are no longer mere spectators, nor beneficiaries. Young people are not the future generations of leaders, but rather the current generation of integrity champions.

We are ready to step-up and be co-leading partners, a resource that today is very much needed to contribute to long-lasting and impactful global anti-corruption efforts.

Finally, it is through such thoughtful introspection and the forging of robust partnerships, grounded on the vital role of youth for tangible behavioral change, that we can pave the way for a more just, transparent, and accountable world.

# CORRUPTION AND THE YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA – SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE INTERLINKAGES

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*Written by Prekkshya Bimali*

UNODC's YouthLED Integrity Advisory Board, with support from Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security (GCYPS) Knowledge Cafes, led a discussion interlinking corruption and the Youth Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda under their dialogue series "YouthLED Anti-Corruption TALKS".

*Youth Peace Agenda and Security Agenda*

[United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250](#) in 2015 marked a pivotal moment in acknowledging the vital role that young people play in shaping lasting peace. Encompassing the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda, this resolution recognized the proactive involvement of youth in preventing conflicts, countering violent extremism, and championing peacebuilding efforts. This has further helped in building an inclusive narrative that views youth as active agents in peacebuilding rather than just the victims or perpetrators of the violence. Their innovation and ownership are of utmost importance in the post-conflict or recovery stage.

*Interconnection between Youth, Corruption and Conflict*

Corruption casts a long shadow over the trajectory of young people as they embark on their careers and education, sowing the seeds of cynicism and limiting opportunities. The impact of corruption on the youth is profound, leading to a cascade of negative consequences. It becomes a driver of conflict, giving rise to instability, inequality, injustice, and widespread dissatisfaction. In many cases, the attempt to counter the corruption of this dissatisfaction is the conflict that escalates with time.

Unfortunately, the challenge to tackle corruption during conflict is next to impossible. However, the crucial aspects lie in how we design and recover the post-conflict stage and peace-building phases. Corruption significantly complicates and slows down the rebuilding process, posing difficulties.

This raises critical questions about how to rebuild and reconstruct societies, addressing the needs of those who have been devastated and upholding the principles of transparency and equality. If not handled correctly, there is a risk of losing an entire generation of youth living in post-conflict scenarios, ultimately pushing society backward.

### *Challenges Faced by Youth in Countering Corruption and Peacebuilding*

There lies a very dominant point of view that portrays youth as disruptors of peace. This very thought further distances them from political engagement, reinforcing the perception that they are unsuited for politics. This leads to their absence in meaningful channels of dialogue and discussion and forever keeps them at bay when it comes to their inclusion in decision-making. This will only lead to an increased gap between the youth and decision-makers; the mutual feeling of distrust that consequently develops becomes the seed of the conflict. Furthermore, the root of many societal challenges also lies in the educational system which usually fails to foster critical and logical questioning and instead promotes the mentality of conformity, discouraging the development of individuals who question and challenge prevailing norms. This deficiency extends to a need for more support for holding the government accountable. Data and information come as the major hindrance in this process of making substantial moves in combating corruption. Data and policies necessary for accountability are often lacking and, even when present, are not accessible. This undermines the campaigns and actions initiated by the youth to address any issues related to corruption.

Adding up the fear of being persecuted also discourages youth from taking action. There are lots of examples of human rights violations and extreme measures taken by those in power and authority, discouraging the active participation of youth and contributing to the culture of fear.

#### *What Can Youth Do?*

Despite lots of challenges, there are still many ways young people can contribute to the global fight against corruption and build substantial peace.

*Get involved:* Participation is the key. Young people need to be aware and get involved (see the UNODC Youth Opportunities [page](#) for more info). Indifference has never been an option. Young people need to be willing to contribute to rebuilding the institutions. They can get connected with like-minded networks and build allies.

*Hold governments accountable:* Young people can act as watchdogs and whistleblowers, calling out every wrongdoing. They can keep up with how the resources are being used, follow the resources, and voice out for any inconsistencies. By holding those in power accountable, they contribute to a more transparent and accountable system, ensuring that corruption is exposed and addressed promptly.

*Participate in decision-making processes:* To promote transparency, accountability, and systemic change, young people need to participate in decision-making processes actively. Their involvement ensures diverse perspectives, challenges, and prospects leading to policies and practices that



benefit everyone. This active engagement becomes a catalyst for positive transformation, creating a more just and equitable society.

In conclusion, corruption poses a threat to global peace and security. Young people, who are often the victims of corruption and conflict, are also the way out of it. We must foster dialogue, collaborate, and support the youth in reaching their potential and building robust systems that reject all forms of corruption. Together we can build sustainable peace and a resilient, secure space which is the shared goal of everyone.