

“We take action against corruption to promote integrity, transparency and accountability for the good of society, economic growth and national prosperity.”

ACC Mission Statement

What are the causes and consequences of corruption?

What causes corruption? There is no simple answer. Corruption has a variety of causes that differ from country to country. Generally, corruption thrives when the rewards for acting corruptly are high and the probability of getting caught low. In Namibia an increase in the levels of corruption could be linked to the absence of adequate policies and procedures at institutions, a lack of transparency and accountability, especially at governmental institutions, as well as a breakdown of social values.

Although the causes of corruption vary from country to country, the effects of corruption are always the same. Corruption destroys wealth, erodes the effectiveness of government, and impacts severely on the most vulnerable people in society. Corruption therefore has serious political, economical, and social consequences.

Political consequences

Harms Public Services – Corruption severely threatens the provision of basic public infrastructure and services that all residents are entitled to.

Weakens Government Capacity – Corruption erodes the ability of the government to carry out its most basic functions. When people are hired or promoted corruptly due to favouritism or nepotism, or contracts are secured corruptly instead of on merit, it impacts severely on the quality of Namibia’s civil service.

Threatens Democracy – When corruption becomes rampant democracy is undermined; politicians become less accountable to the people and the people in effect lose their voice.



Erodes Rule of Law – When people corrupt judges, policemen or other law enforcement officials, the legal system loses its effectiveness and the crime rate increases drastically.

Economical consequences

Hurts Economic Growth – Corruption directs money away from effective enterprises to corrupt ones. Economies with high levels of corruption perform poorly and suffer high levels of unemployment.

Decreases investment – Foreign businesses and governments are hesitant to invest in countries that are prone to corruption. In addition, corrupt governments have less resources to invest in infrastructure that promotes job creation and economic development.

Leads to higher unemployment – Countries suffering from high rates of corruption have a high unemployment rate as corruption kills business. Furthermore the poorest members of society are unemployed because they do not have the connections or money to secure jobs.

Social consequences

Escalating Poverty – Corruption enriches a few well-connected individuals at the expense of everyone else. In corrupt environments wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few and the gap between rich and poor widens.

The most vulnerable suffer – Marginalised members of society depend on support from the state and they are then also the ones who suffer the most where there are high levels of corruption. Women, children, the elderly and minority groups suffer disproportionately when government funds and resources are abused.

Decrease in trust – Trust is the first victim of corruption. When corruption occurs people lose their faith in the government, the business community, and fellow citizens. This can tear apart the social fabric of communities, leading to an increase in violence and the crime rate in general.

