Civil Resistance and the Corruption-Violence Nexus

Shaazka Beyerle
International Center on Nonviolent Conflict

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SHAAZKA BEYERLE

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There are multiple ways in which corruption is linked to violent conflict, some direct and some indirect. For ordinary citizens, the experience of this nexus is the denial of basic freedoms and rights. In spite of such bleak circumstances, people can move from being victims and bystanders to becoming a force for transforming their societies. Citizens are engaging in civil resistance to curb corruption and win accountability and justice. This article: explores the linkages between corruption and violence; identifies the conceptual and practical limitations of top-down, technical approaches to combating corruption; articulates a bottom-up approach in which the civic realm is included in the anti-corruption equation; and presents case studies of civic action campaigns and movements under conditions of violence, post-conflict transformation or state capture by violent crime syndicates. From these, general lessons learned are distilled.

Key words: *corruption, civil resistance, civic action, nonviolent, people power, accountability, citizen, post-conflict transformation, violent conflict*

Corruption is intimately linked to violent conflict, human insecurity, and oppression. In a checklist of the "root causes of conflict and early warning indicators," the European Commission (2008) includes the corruption troika of bribery in bureaucracies, collusion between the private sector and civil servants, and organized crime. At an aggregate level, corruption has been found to be positively correlated with higher risks of political instability (Le Billon, 2003). Human Rights

Watch (2007) cites a direct relationship between corruption and political violence, in which state officials use stolen public revenues to pay for violence in support of their political ambitions. A 2004 report of the Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change states that "corruption, illicit trade and money-laundering contribute to State weakness, impede economic growth and undermine democracy. These activities thus create a permissive environment for civil conflict" (United Nations, 2004, p. 20). Finally, corruption also creates an overall climate of impunity (Kaufmann, 2006). Human rights organizations link corruption to repression, as it impedes government accountability, and can motivate officials and security forces to commit abuses for financial or other forms of gain (Ganesan, 2007).

There are multiple ways in which corruption is linked to violent conflict, some direct and some indirect. War economies by their nature function through malfeasance; the parties in the conflict depend on fraud, bribery, and criminal groups to expedite the smooth functioning of the system (Scharbatke-Church & Reiling, 2009). Arms traffickers and trans-national organized crime add to the deadly mix by readily providing weapons. The global illicit arms trade is estimated at $200-$300 million annually and Africa is the largest so-called market. As a result, the continent tragically suffers the most casualties from it (United Nations News Centre, 2010).

Moreover, corruption can draw out or perpetuate bloody confrontations. Violent groups themselves engage in illicit activities to acquire weapons and supplies. According to a confidential source, Al Qaeda has access to emeralds mined in the Northern Frontier province of Pakistan, from which it has been deriving approximately $150 million income per year. Nowhere is this process more wrenchingly evident than in DR Congo, where approximately 3.5 million lives have been lost since the onset of war in 1998 and hundreds of thousands of girls and women have been systematically raped (Global Witness, 2004; UNICEF, 2008). The military, rebel groups, and various foreign allies have plundered the country's diamonds, gold, timber, ivory, coltan and cobalt, not only to finance their atrocities but ultimately to enrich themselves, which has become an end unto itself (Global Witness, 2004). Over the past decade,

violent confrontations over the Casamance region have broken out among Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Senegal, and between Cameroon and Nigeria in the oil-rich Bakassi peninsula for an equal length of time. A USAID report concluded that corruption, more often than not, played a key role in fomenting and protracting these conflicts (USAID, 2007).

When corruption is endemic, whereby a complex system of graft permeates the political system, economic spheres, and basic provision of services in a country, it can stimulate social unrest and foment violent conflict. For example, in the Niger Delta, insurgent groups are amassing weapons and recruiting young men from an impoverished, angry and frustrated population that experiences little benefit from oil wealth while living amidst horrendous environmental degradation from its extraction and processing (United Nations Development Program, 2006).

In the post-conflict context, corruption can function as an inhibitor of sustainable peace, the latter needing human security and stability to take root and flourish (Ahtisaari, 2009). First, graft can allow the entrenchment of the political status quo that operated during the conflict (Le Billon, 2007). Second, it undermines the new government's legitimacy, rule of law, and capacity for reconstruction, economic development and the provision of basic public services. For ordinary citizens, the horrors of war are replaced with grueling hardship, to which pervasive malfeasance adds another layer of tangible injustice, such as in Afghanistan. In a 2010 poll, 83 percent of Afghans said corruption affects their daily lives (United States Embassy Kabul, 2010). As a result, the Taliban is recruiting new members from among the marginalized population oppressed by unrelenting graft and poverty.

Corruption can be an enabler of state-capture in post-conflict or fragile democracies. Tragically on the rise in Central America, "narco-corruption" refers to the interrelationship between transnational drug cartels and state security forces, as well as the infiltration of organized crime interests into politics, governance and the actual functioning of institutions, leading to countries such as Mexico and Guatemala being called narco-states. In the first 2.5 years of Mexican President Felipe Calderon's administration, drug violence took 12,000

lives (Camp, 2009). The United Nation's Office of Drugs and Crime chief has asserted, "Corruption, poverty and poor criminal justice capacity make Guatemala extremely vulnerable to organized crime" (United Nations Office of Drugs & Crime, 2010). Not coincidentally, the country is experiencing the worst violence since the cessation of the 36-year civil war in 1996. Approximately 5,000 people are murdered each year due to organized crime and gangs, now compounded by Mexican drug-cartels expanding south across the border (Dudley, 2010; Sanchez, 2007). Narco-corruption, of course, is not limited to the Americas. The drug trade in Afghanistan also serves as the main source of financing for the private armies of local warlords, which are connected to parts of the post-conflict government (Confidential communication, 2009). The Taliban is in on the game as well, exchanging drugs for weapons (Starkey, 2008).

A vicious cycle can develop, whereby authoritarian and/or ineffectual governance paired with endemic corruption results in the further de-legitimization of authority and rule of law, leading to fragmented tyrannies, which in turn reinforces authoritarian and/or ineffectual governance, impunity, poverty, and so on. In contrast, civil resistance has the potential to activate an anti-corruption cycle. Nonviolent social movements and grass-roots civic campaigns can challenge the corruption–violence nexus, which in turn create alternative loci of power, thereby empowering the civic realm to continue to wage strategic civic campaigns and movements (Zunes, 2008). The civic realm refers to the collective non-state, bottom-up initiatives and relationships in a society. This includes: nonviolent civic campaigns and movements; civil society organizations (CSOs); nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); community-based organizations (CBOs); civic coalitions and alliances; unions; professional organizations; grass-roots networks, committees, and collectives; local citizen groups; activists, community organizers, and last but not least, citizens.

Echoing this dynamic, a Kenyan civic leader explained: "If people are able to be encouraged to go out, today it's CDF [Constituency Development Funds], tomorrow it's something else, and another day it's another thing. So CDF is an entry point to the realization of so many rights that people are not getting" (International Budget Partnership, 2010). To target

corruption is to simultaneously touch the myriad of injustices to which it is linked, from violence and poverty, to impunity, human rights abuses, authoritarianism, unaccountability, substandard social services, and environmental destruction. Thus, fighting graft is not a superficial solution that avoids the underlying problem; it can be a direct attack on oppression.

Civil Resistance

Civil resistance expresses people power through the use of nonviolent strategies and tactics. It is also called nonviolent struggle and nonviolent conflict. "People power" refers to political, social and economic pressure that is exerted by significant numbers of people organized together around shared grievances and goals.

The efficacy of civil resistance is not a matter of theory (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). Nonviolent social movements and civic campaigns have a rich history of ending oppression and injustice and the apparatus of state and other forms of corruption. A 2008 study found that in the last century, violent campaigns succeeded historically in only 26 percent of all cases, compared to 53 percent in the case of nonviolent, civilian-based campaigns (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). A quantitative analysis of transitions from authoritarianism to democracy over the past three decades found that civil resistance was a key factor in driving 75% of political transitions, and such transformations were far more likely to result in democratic reform and civil liberties than violent or elite-led, top-down changes. Of the 35 countries subsequently rated "Free" according to a Freedom House index, 32 had a significant "bottom up" civil resistance component (Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005).

Over the past twenty years, from the 1986 "People Power" uprising in the Philippines to the "Color Revolutions" in the former Soviet Union, corruption has been a source of deep public discontent and a key mobilizing issue of nonviolent social movements. This shows that people themselves, who increasingly experience the nexus of violent conflict, crime and corruption as another form of tyranny, can move from being victims and bystanders to becoming a force for transforming their societies.

Reconceptualizing Corruption

The global anti-corruption arena is relatively new, having emerged over the past two decades. While there certainly has been progress, change has been modest (International Council on Human Rights Policy, 2009). Wide-scale, national anti-corruption programs, favored by donor countries and multilateral institutions, have had less than consistent results (Hussmann & Hechler, 2008). Transparency International's 2010 Global Corruption Barometer found that 60 percent of those surveyed in 86 countries and territories said that corruption has increased over the past three years. Eighty percent stated that political parties are corrupt or extremely corrupt and half asserted that their government's efforts to stop corruption were ineffective. Since 2006, pay-offs to police are said to have doubled, while more respondents reported paying bribes to the judiciary, and for registry and permit services than in 2005. Poorer interviewees were twice as likely as more well-off individuals to pay bribes for basic services.

Through the framework civil resistance and people power, it's not surprising that a predominantly top-down approach has limitations. One must start with the definition of corruption, commonly characterized as "the misuse of entrusted power for private gain," or the "abuse of public office for private gain" (Transparency International, 2010). While concise and accurate, conceptually they do not convey the systemic nature of corruption, which involves a complex set of relationships, some obvious and others hidden, with established vested interests, that can cut across political, economic and social forces. Moreover, how a problem is defined will affect how it is addressed. Thus, up until this decade, there was an over-emphasis on the state. Less attention was paid to other groups, such as agricultural landowners, private sector, multinational corporations, oligarchies, crime syndicates, gangs, and paramilitaries, as well as their inter-relationships.

Second, the strategies have been top-down and elite-driven, with a focus on developing norms, rules and structures that mainly target administrative graft. According to a former World Bank specialist, there is the fallacy that one "fights corruption by fighting corruption" (Kaufmann, 2005, p. 41). This

has translated into a preponderance of international agreements, policy diagnoses, legislation, and institution-building, such as anti-corruption commissions, improvement of national and local government capacity, and public finance management. The underlying assumption is that once anti-corruption frameworks are put in place, illicit practices will change. But how can institutional mechanisms bring forth change, when they must be implemented by the very institutions that are corrupt? Those who are benefitting from corruption are expected to be the ones to curb it. It's not surprising then, that even when political will exists, it can be thwarted, because too many people have a stake in the crooked status quo.

Lastly, traditional strategies have not appreciably factored people into the equation—although they are the ones who bear the brunt of corruption, have direct experience of it, suffer its ill-effects, and can contribute to curbing it. For those on the receiving end, the experience of corruption can be oppression and a loss of freedom. Aruna Roy, one of the founders of the *Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan* (MKSS) "Right to Information" movement in India, characterizes corruption as "the external manifestation of the denial of a right, an entitlement, a wage, a medicine..." (Roy, n.d.). Viewed from this perspective, the priorities shift to controlling those forms of graft and abuse that are most harmful or common to citizens, particularly the poor. The goals are accountability, participatory democracy, and social and economic justice.

The Dynamics of a Bottom-Up Approach to Curbing Corruption

To its credit, there has been a growing recognition in the international anti-corruption community and among donors and development institutions, especially over the past six years, that corruption cannot be challenged unless the civic realm is involved, including an active citizenry. This paradigm shift was encapsulated in the final statement of the 14th International Anti-Corruption Conference (2010), which stated: "Empowered people create change ... This expanded element of our conference points the way for the future of the anti-corruption movement, one incorporating citizen mobilization and empowerment, as well as the inclusion of youth" (p. 7).

Well-organized, strategic civic movements and campaigns may be particularly suited to a systemic approach to curbing corruption. First, mobilized people, engaged in organized collective nonviolent action, constitute a social force that can exert pressure on the state, as well as on other sectors in society. Second, civil resistance can disrupt both vertical (up and down within an institution) and horizontal (across in-stitutions, groups, sectors) corruption. Third, civil resistance has a strategic advantage, as it consists of extra-institutional methods of action to push for change, when power holders are corrupt and/or unaccountable, and institutional channels are blocked or ineffective. This involves generating political will, demanding specific measures, and reinforcing new patterns of administration and governance centered on accountability to citizens. Hence, top-down and bottom-up approaches are not mutually exclusive. Civic campaigns and movements can com-plement and reinforce legal and administrative mechanisms, which constitute the anti-corruption infrastructure needed for long-term transformation of systems of graft and abuse. Finally, civil resistance can also support honest individuals, within state institutions and other entities, who are attempting reforms and change. All too often, lone figures cannot chal-lenge or dismantle entrenched, multi-faceted systems of graft and unaccountability. Such attempts have been compared to the actions of political dissidents, who stand in singular defi-ance before an entire undemocratic system and are easily sup-pressed (Martin, Callaghan, & Fox, 1997). This was the fate of John Githongo, a former Kenyan anti-corruption chief, who fled the country in 2004 after threats to his life.

Civic campaigns and movements, by their nature, emerge from the civic realm and include the participation of ordi-nary people united around common grievances, goals and demands. People power is generated through the sustained, strategic application of a variety of nonviolent tactics that are designed to:

- Strengthen citizen participation and campaign capacity;
- Disrupt systems of corruption, including dishonest relationships, illicit practices and the status quo;

- Weaken the sources of support and control for unaccountable and corrupt power holders; entities, systems, and their enablers; and/or

- Win support of sectors, groups, institutions, and people over to the civic campaign or movement, the latter including from the public and from within corrupt systems, for example, political leaders and honest officials.

Nonviolent tactics constitute the methods of civil resistance. Scholars such as Gene Sharp have identified over 200 tactics, and most campaigns and movements create new ones. Civic anti-corruption initiatives engage in varieties of:

- noncooperation, civil disobedience

- low-risk mass actions, displays of symbols

- street theatre, visual dramatizations and stunts

- songs, poetry, cultural expressions, humor

- civic "report cards" for political candidates

- citizen "report cards" for public services

- monitoring of officials, members of parliament, institutions, budgets, spending and public services

- social audits and "face the people" forums

- social networking technologies (e.g., Facebook organizing and petitioning, blogging, SMS communication)

- education and training, youth recreation

- social and economic empowerment initiatives, creation of parallel institutions

- anti-corruption pledges; citizen-sponsored anti-corruption awards

- protests, petitions, vigils, marches, sit-ins, leafleting

- strikes, boycotts, and reverse boycotts (e.g., patronizing businesses that refuse to pay protection money or bribes)

- nonviolent blockades, nonviolent accompaniment

Civic Campaigns and Movements to Fight Corruption

Though not widely known, there has been a grass-roots, bottom-up "eruption against corruption," to borrow a popular slogan of the Fifth Pillar movement in India. The author has been conducting a research project to document and distill general lessons learned from civic campaigns and movements to fight graft and abuse, demand accountability and win rights. It is examining the skills, strategies, objectives and demands of such civic initiatives, rather than the phenomenon of corruption itself. The focus is on what civic actors and citizens—organized together, exerting their collective power—are doing to curb corruption as they themselves define and experience it.

Over 30 cases have been identified, of which 15 are being documented and analyzed in depth. A number of common attributes of civic campaigns and movements to fight corruption are emerging from the case studies. Bottom-up initiatives can be found around the world, among democracies, semi-democracies and authoritarian regimes. Contrary to common misconceptions that civic mobilization is only possible when there is political space, a relatively educated populace and a nonviolent legacy, they are prevalent in societies enduring poor governance, poverty, illiteracy, repression, and violence, the latter two perpetrated by the state, organized crime, paramilitary groups and gangs. Rather than spontaneous outbursts, organization and planning precede action, even when a scandalous event first arouses public indignation. Taken together, they confirm what some civil resistance scholars assert; skills and strategy generally matter more than pre-existing conditions (Ackerman, 2007).

Women and youth are also playing galvanizing roles in many campaigns, notably in Muslim settings. "Defining methods," around which a host of nonviolent tactics revolve, are common (Schock, 2010). Success in one struggle or context inspires new applications, knowledge-sharing and campaigns—locally and even across borders and continents. Finally, the struggles are quite often multidimensional in focus, reflecting the reality that corruption does not occur in a vacuum; it is linked to other forms of oppression and injustice.

The following four cases have been chosen for their

relevance to peace building and conflict transformation contexts and strategies.

Guatemala: Grass-Roots Resistance to Violence and Impunity

In Guatemala, innovative grass-roots civil resistance movements have been undermining the corruption-violence nexus at the community level, maintaining resilience in the face of brutal repression, and fostering social and economic development. One particularly poignant case is in Santa Lucia Cotzumalguapa, a mid-size town populated largely by indigenous people, which suffered great losses during the civil war (1960-96). It was the cradle of the organized peasant movement, and the site of persecution and mass murder of peasants, church members and unions by state forces, which was sponsored by sugar plantation (Finca) owners. Every guerilla faction had a presence as well. Dozens of the organized paramilitary groups have since been transformed into hit-men operations, and it is now unfortunately situated in a geographical spot convenient to cross-border narco-trafficking, from Columbia up to Mexico for the North American market (C. Samayoa, personal communications, various dates, 2008-2010).

Reflecting a collective "outcry of despair," a local citizen's movement emerged in the aftermath of the civil war. Its objectives were to recover the community and local government from the hands of drug lords and organized crime, promote economic and social development, create a collective sense of worth and empowerment, challenge the climate of impunity, prevent electoral fraud, and defend hard-won gains along the way. Organizers put together a strong coalition that included women, youth, and community groups. In spite of the legacy of repression, they initially built alliances with Finca owners (which later broke down) to support an honest candidate in the local elections and kick out a drug lord from the local government.

Over the years, they conducted a wide range of nonviolent actions, such as: civil disobedience; solidarity demonstrations; literacy, education and development programs; radio call-in programs; theater; art festivals; and recreation projects aimed at youth, who are often the targets of organized crime recruitment. Their successes wrought severe counter-attacks.

By 2007, 11 community leaders had been murdered, four attempts were made on an honest mayor's life, slandering and defamation cases were lodged, electoral fraud was orchestrated, and the police, prosecutors and judges favored the drug cartels, an odious confirmation of the extent of corruption and state capture.

In spite of this extreme intimidation, citizens refused to be subdued. Solidarity demonstrations and civil disobedience persisted. People engaged in new methods to disrupt the corrupt status quo, such as monitoring the actions and spending of the new authorities in power, as well as criminal activities, reporting the latter to the newly instituted International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala, though it appears the case will not be pursued. However, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has accepted the case of the first assassination that struck the town, which will proceed in 2011.

A significant dimension was added to the struggle—the international community. Guatemalan human rights defenders drew world attention to the movement. They garnered support for civic initiatives from the United Nations Development Program and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. A security plan was devised, bolstered by human rights organizations that networked to bring international observers and non-violent accompaniment to protect people at risk. Santa Lucia Cotzumalguapa became the host of national and international meetings, thereby sending a message to the corrupt power holders that the country and the world were watching and stood together with the townspeople. Finally, home-grown, grass-roots solidarity and coordination networks have been established with other indigenous communities engaged in civil resistance both in Guatemala and across borders. They share information, experiences, and strategies, send out alerts, and even have come to one another's aid, for example, by blocking a road.

In extending the arena of resistance from the local to the regional and international, the community is increasing its capacity of people power, the source being strength in numbers. From unity within, they are building a broader front involving allies at all levels. In confronting a system of violence, graft and impunity involving the state and transnational organized

crime, in essence, the citizens' movement is now creating an alternative system of civil resistance, involving national and transnational networking, solidarity and action. In seeking to overcome marginalization and poverty through education and development initiatives, for women and youth as well as the town at large, the movement calls to mind Mohandas Gandhi's "constructive programme in the nonviolent effort," (Gandhi, 1945) in which equality, education, and economic self-reliance were core elements. Finally, the people of Santa Lucia Cotzumalguapa embody what Gandhi observed decades ago, "Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will" (Gandhi, n.d.).

Indonesia: People Power Provides Protection

After 32 years of authoritarian rule and state violence under General Suharto, the multi-ethnic Indonesia began a new chapter of governance in 1999. Nonviolent civic coalitions played a significant role in his demise (Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2005). The fledgling democracy inherited a multitude of ills not unlike those of post-war contexts, from widespread poverty to a 30-year armed conflict in Aceh that resulted in close to 15,000 deaths (World Bank, 2005), dysfunctional state institutions, security force impunity, and corruption, the latter embedded into the power structures and social fabric of the country. Into this mix was born the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in 2003. When both the institution and leading figures in it were assailed, a nationwide civic campaign came to its rescue, providing a rich example of how civil resistance can protect government structures and honest officials in fragile states.

While some anti-corruption commissions are dismissed as "window-dressing" to satisfy donors and multilateral institutions, others are at the forefront of fighting corruption and gaining transparency. The KPK has earned the public's respect and admiration since it was created in 2003. It was seen as the "hope to fix a broken country" (confidential source, 2010). KPK did not hesitate to confront the powers that be, and expose corrupt behavior and relationships among the local and national governments, Parliament, Administration, private sector, and police, the latter having a particularly

negative reputation with the public. It convicted politicians, governors, judicial figures, and in 2008, the Deputy Governor of the Central Bank, who is also the father-in-law of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's son (Lindsey, 2009).

By threatening the entire tangled system of influence and graft benefitting the ruling elites, KPK soon became a target. Since early 2009, efforts to weaken, if not destroy, it have intensified, including police criminalization of some of its activities, the arrest of its Chairman for murder, investigations of deputy commissioners, and parliamentary attempts to cut its budget and authority. The situation came to a head mid-year, in the wake of ongoing investigations of embezzlement in the infamous Bank Century bailout, in which a wiretapped conversation documented the senior police officer handling the Century case and a politically connected tycoon, Boedi Sampoerna, discussing an arrangement to safely withdraw Rp 2 trillion deposited at the bank in return for a Rp 10 billion payoff.

By July 2009, a core group of civil society leaders—veterans from the Reformasi civic movement against the former Suharto regime—"saw the signs" (non-attributable activists, 2010). They decided it was necessary to proactively develop a strategy to protect KPK—the institution, its mandate and authority. One activist said, "We realized that what we faced was so big and so strong and has so much authority, we needed to come together." (non-attributable personal communication, April, 2010). They launched the CICAK campaign, which had a dual meaning. It's an acronym for "Love Indonesia, Love Anti-Corruption," but it also refers to the gecko lizard. During the Bank Century investigations, the Chief of the Police's criminal department said that the KPK was like the gecko fighting the crocodile. One hundred civic organizations joined, and a graduate student on his own accord created a CICAK Facebook group, which soon played a role bigger than anyone imagined. CICAK groups formed in 20 of the country's 33 provinces and well-known public figures came on board.

On October 29, the police arrested two KPK deputy Chairmen, Chandra Hamzah and Bibit Samad Rianto, on charges of abuse of power. The arrests came a day after President Yudhoyono ordered an investigation into wiretapped telephone conversations involving a senior Attorney General's

Office official, in which the president was said to support efforts to quell KPK. On October 30, the President gave a tele-vised address stating he would let the police continue with the case. People were furious with the police and embittered with their leader, who had recently been re-elected on an anti-cor-ruption platform. This repression backfired; CICAK was ready to channel popular anger into civic mobilization. The Facebook group grew so quickly that television news ran hourly updates of the numbers, which reached 1.3 million and became a key tool through which to communicate with and rally citizens. CICAK organized actions in Jakarta, while local chapters and high school and university students spontaneously initiated events throughout the country.

Campaign tactics included demonstrations, marches to the Presidential palace, petitions, wearing a black ribbon symbol-izing the death of justice, gecko T-shirts, pins, stickers, leaflets, banners reading "Say no to crocodiles," street murals, sit-ins, gatherings in front of police stations, a hunger strike, street theater, concerts, and "happening art" that often involved humor and garnered national media coverage, for example, jumping off the KPK building with parachutes. Popular singers added their support and composed an anti-corruption song, which people used for ringtones, with the refrains "gecko eats crocodile," and "KPK in my chest." Citizens of all ages, socio-economic groups, and religions participated. CICAK leaders report that the upper middle and middle classes joined in streets actions; professionals could be seen standing together with students and poor people. Senior clerics of Indonesia's five faiths paid solidarity visits to KPK.

CICAK demanded an immediate independent investiga-tion and called on the President to save the KPK. As people power escalated, he agreed to it, and the investigation began soon after. Millions around the country heard a wire-tape in which senior officials from the police and attorney general's office and a big businessman planned to frame the KPK of-ficials, including killing Chandra. The independent commis-sion recommended the charges against the KPK officials be dropped. Bibit and Chandra were released and went back to work. Senior figures in the police and attorney general's office resigned and other investigations have been launched. The

CICAK campaign was the single largest social mobilization in Indonesia since the Suharto dictatorship. Civic leaders remain vigilant against new attacks on the KPK, but also exert pressure on the KPK itself, in order to keep it clean and accountable.

Kenya: Overcoming Marginalization, Winning Accountability

Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI) is a nongovernmental organization (NGO) based in Mombasa that operates among impoverished communities in the area, which was a site of political and ethnic violence in 1997 and after the 2008 elections. It is catalyzing grass-roots civic campaigns to access information about budgets, curb corruption, win accountability, and ultimately, fight poverty. It empowers poor communities in making their voices heard to their elected representatives and local officials, thereby channeling frustration, hopelessness and anger away from hostilities to changing unjust conditions. The immediate focus is on the use, or rather, misuse of constituency development funds (CDFs), which are annual allocations of approximately one million dollars to each Member of Parliament for his/her district. MUHURI's long-term vision is to cultivate a sense of agency among Kenyans (International Budget Partnership, 2010; Ramkumar & Kidambi, 2010).

CDF is the result of a popular idea in the development world; devolve power and give local communities resources for their own development schemes. However, when there is no meaningful independent oversight and corruption is endemic, the end result is often mismanagement and graft. For MUHURI, it's up to the people to provide the oversight. Since 2007, the NGO has worked to animate and train citizens in civic mobilization. Through a pioneering collaboration with the International Budget Partnership and veteran activists from the MKSS movement in India, it has developed a defining nonviolent method—the five-step social audit. The first step is information gathering–records from the local CDF office. MUHURI representatives are initially sent, because it's daunting for ordinary citizens to approach officials and obtain information. The second step is training local men and women to become community activists. They learn how to decipher documents and budgets, monitor expenditures and scrutinize public works.

The third step is inspecting the CDF project site. Newly trained activists conduct systematic, meticulous documentation, comparing records to the reality on the ground. They also use site visits to speak with local people, in order to generate interest in the social audit, get them to attend the public hearing, and gather additional information about corruption and abuse. The fourth step is educating and motivating fellow citizens about the CDF and their right to information and accountability. Community activists and MUHURI attract attention, directly engage people, and encourage them to attend a "public hearing" through nonviolent tactics such as street theater, puppet plays, trumpet and drum processions, and leafleting by volunteers. Information about CDF misuse and graft is shared and people's reactions and input are gathered.

The final step is the public hearing with CDF officials, the media, and in some cases, the Member of Parliament. MUHURI first leads a procession through the community, complete with slogans, chanting and a youth band. It gathers dancing children and adults as it goes along. Once the forum begins, local activists present the results of their investigations, CDF officials are questioned, and citizens demand accountability of them. At MUHURI's first ever public hearing in August 2007, approximately 1500-2000 residents in the Changamwe slum attended, many standing for over four hours. The MP finally agreed to register their complaints and charges against the concerned contractors. MUHURI then rolled out a cloth banner petition demanding that accountability and transparency measures be added to the CDF Act and the RTI law be passed. The MP initially refused to sign it, but after all the people and opposition candidates signed it, he acquiesced to civic pressure and added his name.

In 2009, whilst conducting the Likoni constituency social audit, MUHURI's office was ransacked and their guard was stabbed. The intimidation backfired. The next day a popular radio station interviewed the Executive Director and a local activist, which gave them another platform to communicate with people and increase attendance at the public hearing. That same year, activists from eight constituencies that conducted social audits joined a national campaign, transcending ethnic and social divisions, to change the CDF law. By June, the

Kenyan government set up a task force to review it. MUHURI is increasing its efforts to develop new campaigns (H. Khalid, personal communication, November 12, 2010). For instance, during the final week of October 2010, a social audit was conducted in the Mwatate constituency. Earlier that month the local public Chair and Secretary had been arrested and charged in court for misappropriation of funds. The audit is investigating whether or not other project funds had been embezzled in addition to those under scrutiny in the court case.

Turkey: Low-Risk Mass Actions Surmount Fear and Apathy
    Public apathy and fear of reprisals from either the state or vicious non-state actors are common among countries engulfed in violent conflict or emerging from it. Nonviolent street actions, such as protests, marches and sit-ins may, at least initially, be too risky. As was the case in Santa Lucia Cotzumalguapa, this did not mean that people were powerless. To the contrary, the brilliance and creativity of ordinary citizens to disrupt systems of malfeasance and impact the corruption–violence nexus is staggering. The following case illustrates the force of civic pressure from low-risk, mass actions.
    In 1996, Turkey was plagued by a nationwide crime syndicate that involved paramilitary entities, drug traffickers, the mafia, businesses, government officials, members of parliament, and parts of the judiciary and media. Extra-judicial killings were common, some linked to the mafia and some political in nature. That November a speeding car crashed on a highway late at night near the town of Susurluk. Among the passengers were a police chief and police academy director, a member of parliament, and an escaped criminal and paramilitary member (wanted by the Turkish courts, Swiss police and Interpol) who possessed a fake ID signed by the minister of internal affairs. The car contained cash, cocaine, and weapons. The following day students held unplanned protests throughout the country, but were harshly repressed by police, while other youth already on trial for previously breaking the "demonstration law" were sentenced to 15 months in prison (Akay & Mahoney, 2003; E. Salman, personal communication, June 24, 2010).
    A small group of professionals, lawyers and civil society

advocates decided that this scandal provided an opportunity to tap public disgust, mobilize people to action, and push for definable measures. Their demands were to remove parliamentary immunity, prosecute the founders of the criminal groups; protect judges trying such cases; and reveal the crime syndicate relationships. They formed the Citizen Initiative for Constant Light. From the outset, they made strategic choices—citizens should feel a sense of ownership in the effort and the campaign would be apolitical—in order to build a broad alliance, protect against smear attacks, and attract the widest possible base of people. Prior to taking action they defined goals, analyzed the media's views on corruption, and developed a publicity strategy. Because the mafia had recently been taking control of a major broadcasting corporation through manipulating legislation and business links, the press and National Broadcasters Association were looking for ways to improve the media's image, and prior to the Susurluk crash, had hired a PR expert to help them. Following the scandal, he personally became involved in Citizen Initiative for Constant Light.

The civic group systematically built a coalition by reaching out to non-political entities, including the Istanbul Coordination of Chambers of Professions, the Bar Association, unions, nongovernmental organizations, and the professional associations of pharmacists, dentists, civil engineers and electrical engineers. The organizers sought to create an innovative nonviolent action that would overcome real obstacles, such as violent crackdowns, imprisonment, and public fear and feelings of powerlessness. The teenage daughter of a lawyer involved in the campaign came up with the idea of turning off lights. A chain of mass faxes and press releases signed by "an anonymous aunt," who became the image of the campaign, got the word out.

On February 1, 1997, citizens began to turn off their lights at 9:00 p.m. for one minute. After two weeks, approximately 30 million people participated throughout the country, adding their own embellishments such as banging pots and pans and staging street actions. Neighborhood squares took on a festive character as people overcame their fear and gathered together. The campaign lasted six weeks. In the short-term, it broke the

strong taboo over confronting corruption. It empowered citizens to fight corruption and forced the government to launch judicial investigations. What was not anticipated was that the military would remove its support for the government, which was forced to resign. Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan remained in power until a new government was approved by the parliament six months later.

The next prime minister continued the court cases, handed out verdicts, and set up an investigative committee, which prepared a report listing the names of all people murdered by the crime syndicate. A parliamentary committee was also created to document the syndicate's activities. In 2001, the interior minister launched a series of investigations. In cooperation with the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency, widespread embezzlement was exposed, and well-known business executives were arrested. What was not achieved, one of the original objectives, was the removal of parliamentary immunity, which would have allowed an investigation of the Susurluk parliamentarian. However, by 2003 most of old guard was voted out. Analysts believe that voters punished both the political establishment and the military by electing the AK (White) Party, the moderate Islamic party.

Lessons Learned

The case studies provide general lessons learned about the application of civil resistance to curb corruption and win accountability, rights and equity. Whether within one community or on a larger front, unity is essential. This includes unity around goals, and among people and groups wanting change. This goes hand-in-hand with shared ownership, the sense that everyone is part of the struggle and can play a role in it. Both unity and ownership can be strategically cultivated. Civic campaigns and movements link corruption to widely-held concerns, such as state capture to grievances and tangible injustices that impact people's daily lives, including basic human security, poverty, lack of medical care, access to water, etc. Information itself, in the form of budgets, spending, and power holders' assets, is a source of power when accompanied by civil resistance to demand accountability and change,

as was the case in Kenya.

Creativity is a hallmark of effective mobilization, tactical development, and communication. Effective tactics can derive from local circumstances and reflect local culture. Consequently, while a particular tactic may not necessarily be transferable across situations, the strategic considerations and impact can be emulated. For example, low-risk mass actions can activate people power even under conditions of intimidation and public resignation, and once enacted, can embolden citizens to further action. In Turkey, it began with coordinated switching off of lights, soon augmented by unanticipated outpourings on the street. In the digital age, joining a Facebook group and uploading SMS ringtones in Indonesia had a similar function, and led to further dissent.

Communications are strategically important to build awareness, win support and actively involve citizens. Depending on the audiences and objectives of the messaging, the medium of communicating can be the media itself, from songs to street theater. Though not often considered part of the nonviolent tactical repertoire, education, training and youth recreation can be vital to build campaign capacity, confidence and resilience. Tactical innovation, such as turning everyday actions into acts of resistance, can thus be crucial to build support, overcome repression, human rights abuses, and maintain campaign resilience. An honest image is critical for winning support. The association of groups and individuals who are seen as incorruptible can have a galvanizing effect.

As in other nonviolent struggles, in disrupting systems of graft and the corruption-violence link, power comes from numbers—locally, nationally, and even internationally, in the case of Guatemala, when citizens confront endemic corruption involving national and cross-border relationships and actors. Power is indeed not monolithic; allies and support can be won from within corrupt systems and individual institutions, which can yield information, access and strategic negotiations, especially when backed by citizen mobilization.

Conclusion

An examination of the corruption–violence nexus presents

a bleak picture of human anguish. In spite of difficult circum-
stances, or perhaps because of them, citizens are mobilizing,
engaging in civil resistance and wielding people power to curb
corruption and injustice, in some cases weakening linkages
with violence. They exemplify the capacity of civil resistance
to potentially prevent some forms of violent conflict, foster
conflict transformation, and strengthen post-conflict peace
building. As importantly, the achievements of citizen cam-
paigns and movements fighting graft and abuse plant seeds of
hope—hope that those living under oppression have options
beyond quietly suffering or resorting to violence.

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