

TRANSPARENCY THROUGH TELECOMMUNICATION

Group #15

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MEMORANDUM FOR: The World Bank

FROM: Group #15- Miracles of Development: Good governance and capacity building

Action-forcing event:

Corruption, in its many forms, has tainted our political, economic, cultural, as well as social circles. The growing tendency of governments and other authorities to abuse their power has not only deterred economic growth but it has led to massive destruction throughout the globe. The rich are getting richer at the expense of the poor and the poor are in a downward spiral of wars and disease among many woes. In instances of corruption, which are rising by the day, the rural population is the most deprived. Corrupted governments will only serve their own interests. Therefore, since the World Bank and other donors put so much money into aid and emergency relief programs, it is our desire that it is made aware of the problems faced by the poor rural folk in accessing aid and how technology can play a major role in reducing the effects of corruption.

Background Analysis:

The World Bank is one of the leaders in fighting against corruptions and it has launched hundreds of anti-corruption programs in developing countries since 1996. Corruption, just like any vice, stands the test of time. In Uganda, between 1991 and 1995, surveys showed that on average, only 30% of aid funds were being received by the poor. According to Randi Ryterman, an estimated \$1-1.6 trillion dollars per year is lost in corruption. Recovering as little as 1% of this (\$400 mil) could have a crucial impact on development such as funding initiatives for bed treatment for insecticides which could lead to profound relief for the poor. Most initiatives so far employ a passive approach to the problem by setting strict guidelines and imposing a top down operational framework. However, we believe that changing the current approach to a bottom-up approach will be for the general good of not only the poorest people in the rural areas but for society as a whole. We also focus on capacity building to increase local transparency, enhance local infrastructure, and raise education and technological level.

Recommendations:

We suggest the establishment of a community telecommunications center which will be provided on a provisional basis to the locals. This means that for them to get this service, they would have to also pledge that they will report any corruption in a timely and accurate manner. The people in the village or other rural setting are to use this amenity not only for local communication needs but to communicate directly with the World Bank through a hotline service to report any acts or suspicions of corruption. Mandatory participation is required for those put in charge. Their duties will entail ensuring fair use of the center by all members of the community as well as regular enforcement and reporting to the World Bank. Reporting will take the form of both verbal as well as visual stimulation as further proof. Cell phones will be used as a means of communication. Due to the lack of electricity in most rural areas, the center will be powered by solar energy and communication is transmitted via satellite. However, should any technical difficulties arise; help will be sent from a World Bank ally in that country to resolve the problem.

Since corruption is based on a buyer and seller presence, the rural community's opt-out decision will cease corruption, which will enhance transparency and accountability. It will also be a technical upgrade to most rural communities. Participation of both the community members as well as the local government authorities will accelerate the process of reaching a consensus on the issue. Economic growth will occur as more and more aid money is spent righteously. It is cost effective because it uses solar energy and transmission is via satellite. The youth, in general, will be empowered to continue this task for the greater good of the economy. Clearly, a better economic field entails better health, education and thus, a reduction in the community's poverty level. This will augment the efforts of the World Bank in meeting some of its Millennium Development Goals. This project will be appropriate in rural settings because it does not take too much time to implement and the results are almost immediate if communication is regularly maintained. This approach will also protect the World Bank's loans, interests, and its integrity as a lending institution.

Cost is definitely going to be a major deciding factor. It will cost money to set up solar panels and to train the local people on how to use and maintain the equipment. Another major demise may occur if the people do not willingly accept the proposal. Corruption within the community itself can also cause this system to fail. Another important problem could be government intervention. If the government enacts rules and laws that inhibit the communication process between the community and the World Bank, then all efforts at bringing transparency to bad governance will fail. There are so many ways of doing this but the government could simply close down the communications center to bar all contact with the outside world. Entities involved in the project will be the World Bank and other lending institutions for funding.

Role as group:

The role of this group would be to secure funding preferably through the World Bank's CDD grants and initiatives, take part in the pilot programs, do the training and run the hotline.

Works Cited

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