Experiences in combating corruption from the South: Singapore and South Korea

Anga Timilsina
About the presentation....

• History of the fight against corruption in Singapore and South Korea
• Contributing factors in Singapore and South Korea
• Differences in Singapore and South Korea’s approach
• Lessons for West and North African Countries.
### Singapore and South Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singapore</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 7/ 175 on corruption perception index in 2014</td>
<td>• 43/ 175 on corruption perception index in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Corrupt Practices Investigations Bureau in 1952</td>
<td>• Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission in 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on investigation, law enforcement and punishment</td>
<td>• Focus on corruption prevention and protection of people’s rights (for a transparent and accountable government. So the emphasis is on the effectiveness of the public sector).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Total permanent staff: 88</td>
<td>• Total permanent staff: 465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Annual Budget: US$ 20.9 Million in 2010. (6.9% of the Prime Minister's Office total operating expenditure)</td>
<td>• Annual Budget: US$ 54 million (2010)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Corrupt Practices Investigations Bureau

• Corruption was seen as a detriment to the economic growth of post-independent Singapore.

• The People’s Action Party, under the leadership of Lee Kuan Yew, came into power in 1959. Combating corruption and promoting rule of law was given a priority.

• An aggressive corruption repression strategy was followed. CPIB established in 1952 with a strong focus on investigation and punishment.

• At the same time, equal emphasis was placed on complementary reform processes to address broader socio-political and economic factors affecting corruption.
Wider governance reforms complimenting the fight against corruption

“You give peanuts, you get monkeys” - Goh Choc Tong, PM of Singapore 1990 – 2004

- To address structural issues with the civil service that breed corruption and impunity, Singapore also undertook several complementary reforms in the civil service.

- This includes: pay scale reform, establishment of Service Improvement Unit, and Civil service Computerization Programme.

- In addition, the Contractors Registration system was established to improve transparency in the awarding of public contracts, and in public procurement.

- Public sector for 21st century is the newest iteration of the civil service reform – and focused on improving public sector efficiency. “No wrong window”!
CPIB closer links with criminal justice system
CPIB today

• Complaints are the lowest in the last three decades.

• However, 85 percent of 2014 complaints are related to private sector.

• More in-person complaints result in investigation than the complaints received via email and fax.

• But, whistle-blowers protection should be further strengthened to increase in-person complaints.

• Attention should also be given to follow-up on email and fax complaints.
1993: Establishment of a civilian government. Post-transition, a marked rise in corruption. The government was determined to fight corruption. 1998: Declaration of war on corruption. Corruption was seen as a rights issue (stemming out of strong labour movement). Addressing corruption is seen as fundamental to protection of the rights of people by building fair and transparent society. The emphasis is on establishing an efficient and accountable public sector.
ACRC structure
ACRC link with broader governance reforms

- Strong **preventive measures**, and closely linked with public sector reforms.
- The Anti-Corruption **Integrity assessment** conducted by ACRC of over 250 public institutions annually. It identifies gaps and weaknesses in anti-corruption framework and allows institutions to take mitigation measure.
- South Korea has also taken extensive steps towards **Bureaucracy simplification**. E-Procurement (KONEPS) was one measure, which helped to cut out middle mean and avoid corruption risks.
- Korea is a member of the **Open Government Partnership** and is focused on strengthening government’s transparency and accountability.
INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

First developed in 1999 by the Seoul Metropolitan City Administration

The indices give a precise measure of corruption/integrity. They allow vertical and horizontal comparison (in time, and across different agencies)

Source: www.aca-forum.org Figure in parenthesis are weights used for the factors
South Korea’s Engagement on Governance, Anti-Corruption and Public Service

- Role model in G-20 and OECD processes

- Korean Institute of Public Administration provides technical assistance to strengthen public service delivery and administration as a means to prevent corruption

- ACRC brings a wealth of experiences and expertise on integrity assessment

- RoK won the UN Public Service Award in 2012 and 2013
  - 2012: “The Integrity Assessment Initiative”
  - 2013: “Anti-corruption Clean Construction System” for the category Preventing and Combating Corruption in the Public Service
Lessons from Singapore and South Korea for Successful Anti-Corruption Initiatives

Though the Singapore and South Korea anti-corruption agencies model may differ, the factors contributing to their success are very similar. These are:

- Political will at the highest level
- Linking anti-corruption efforts with wider civil service and public sector reforms
- Independence of anti-corruption agencies, and adequate resources (financial and human resources) allocated to the function of ACA
- ACA’s working in partnerships and close collaboration with other branches of the government (i.e. justice system)
- E-governance systems – specifically E-procurement, and e-payment systems