

The Anglican-Lutheran Society Conference Visby, 2016

The Voice from Tanzania, East Africa

Discussion on the Situations and Opportunities Confronting
Anglican and Lutheran Churches in Tanzania Today

“The Church and the Problem of Corruption”

Rev. Canon Dr Alfred Sebahene, PhD

St. John's Anglican University of Tanzania

OUR COUNTRY

- a. Located in the region wracked by civil wars
- b. Socially diverse but politically stable
- c. Large degree of national unity for the past fifty years
- d. “oasis of peace” on the troubled African continent
- e. One of the poorest countries in the world!



BUT WE HAVE THE PROBLEM!



TOPIC

Christian Faith and Corruption
Illuminating What Is
Not Seen

MOTIVATION TO THE TOPIC

- A. Parental Care – Mom (Greed – bad)**
- B. Christian Faith**
- C. 25 years of Pastoral Ministry**
- D. 1993 and 1995 Refugee Crisis**
- E. Lecturing – Christian Business Ethics Course (Anglican University)**
- F. Nature of the Country vs Training**

PURPOSE OF THE PRESENTATION

To challenge us to reflect on the **role of the church** and **Christian faith** as a new and potential avenue of inquiry in **addressing the harsh realities of corruption** and injustice in public domain - where we "**Anglicans**" and "**Lutherans**" serve humanity.

SETTING THE SCENE

1. The world is currently witnessing a global increased consciousness and attention to the challenges of corruption and the threat it poses to humanity!
2. Corruption has for many decades been understood as a political, economic, legal, or developmental issue. This is true but there is more to it!
3. Corruption is a result of moral failure and it is a moral challenge. It vandalizes shalom! (Plantinga 1995). An obstacle to human dignity and human flourishing!
4. Corruption is eating our Africans societies in so many ways.

SETTING THE SCENE contd.

5. Since the task of the church is both theological and ethical especially as it bears witness in the context of moral transformation, fighting corruption is one of its key responsibility!

6. By addressing the issue of corruption and injustice effectively, the church will be doing God's mission - that which is about the realization of God's vision for the world, it implies a holistic mission of a new, peaceful, just and corruption free society.

CORRUPTION: WHAT IS IT?

A Definitional challenge,

“there is no universally accepted definition of corruption ... [and] [t]here is a tendency to use the term ‘corruption’ loosely as a catch-all term. There is also considerable disagreement over which specific acts constitute corruption.”

Bacio Terracino (2008:5)

CORRUPTION MEANING AND SOME PROPOSALS

Common understanding;

1. **Physical corruption:** the destruction or spoiling of anything, especially by disintegration or by decomposition with its attendant unwholesomeness and loathsomeness;
2. **Moral corruption:** moral deterioration or decay; perversion or destruction of integrity in the discharge of public duties by bribery or favour;
3. The **perversion** of anything from an **original state of purity** (cf. Oxford English Dictionary, 1978:1024-1025).

CORRUPTION MEANING AND SOME PROPOSALS

A much more detailed meaning

“It covers **fraud** (theft through misrepresentation), **embezzlement** (misappropriation of corporate or public funds) and **bribery** (payments made in order to gain an advantage or to avoid a disadvantage). The different types of corruption are likely to be closely linked. It is an **act of theft** (and hence an offence against human relationships), but it is a **very particular kind of theft**. It is the act by which “insiders” profit at the expense of “outsiders”

Bryan Evans, Tearfund Foundation’s Public Policy (2009:3).

CORRUPTION CHURCH AND THEOLOGY

Voice from God

In the Bible, the common most forms of corruption were **bribery** and **extortion**. Extortion is identified as being sinful (Lev. 6:2-4; Isa. 30:12-13) as is bribery (Ezek. 22:12; Amos 5:12). Bribery and extortion are also at several places closely associated with one another (e.g., Isa. 33:15; Ezek. 22:12; Amos 5:11- 12)

CORRUPTION CHURCH AND THEOLOGY

“[a]t the core of the concept of corruption is a **moral** and **ethical** dimension”..... corruption “**involves deception**”. Kolstad and O’Neil (2008:iv)

Corrupt acts are **sinful**. They are the “**products of the fall and rebellion of humankind against God**”

... corruption both explodes and implodes creation, pushing it back towards the “formless void” from which it came ... [when] ... **humans contradict their created status and so exercise their created freedom in rebellion against God** (Plantinga 1995:30).

WHY CONCERNED ABOUT CORRUPTION? A CROSSCUTTING ISSUE

There are already many other problems that both Anglican and Lutheran churches are addressing and responding to;

- 1. Poverty**
- 2. Unemployment**
- 3. Female Genital Mutilation**
- 4. Food insecurity**
- 5. Refugee Crisis – Rwanda, Burundi and DRC**
- 6. HIV and AIDS**

EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

**Failure in the
delivery of
public services**



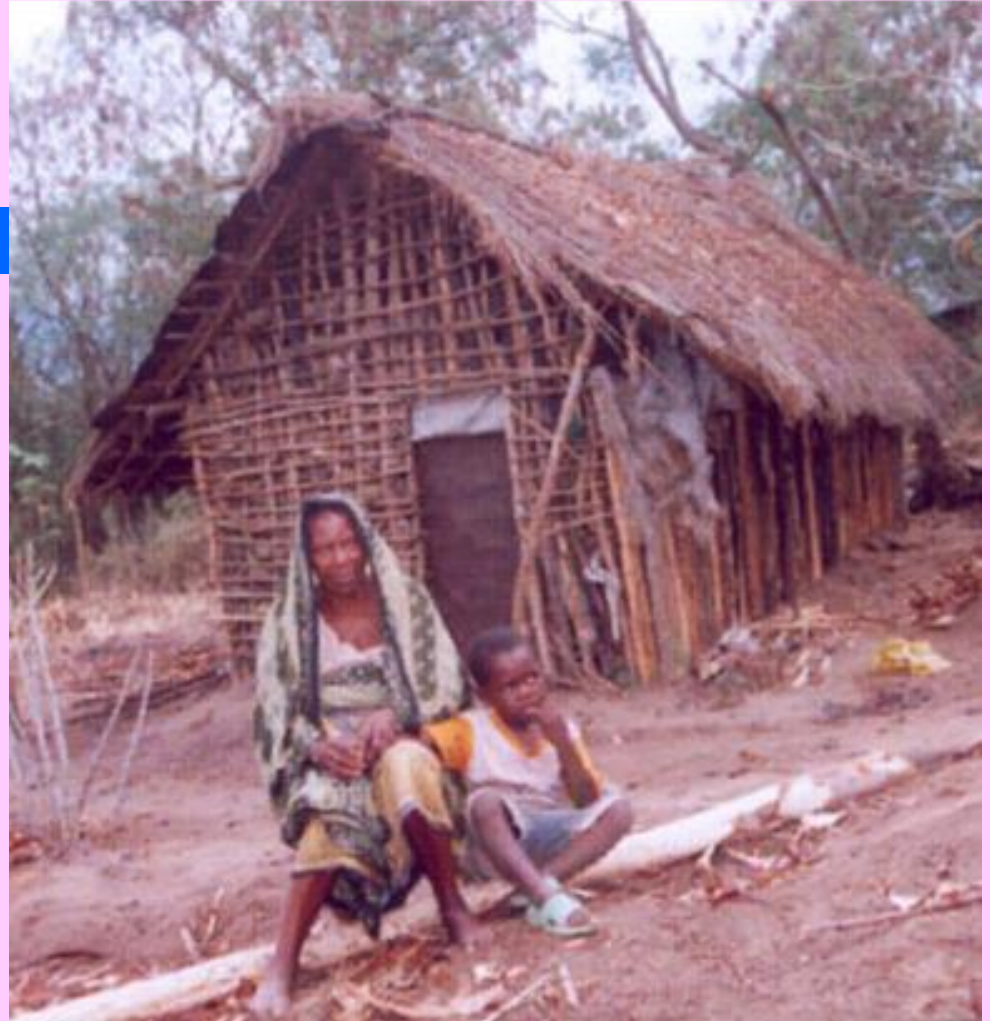
EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

Health service
has been
affected in some
parts of the
country!



EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

**Women and
Children suffer
most!**



EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

Water problem is increased by peoples' unfaithfulness on available resources!



EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

Education is also
affected by
peoples' greed!



EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

**Poor
infrastructure
development!**



EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

**Agriculture is
not safe!**



EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

Personal efforts to survive hampered by corruption!



CHARTING CORRUPTION AND THE CHURCH: WHY ANGLICAN AND LUTHERAN CHURCHES?

1. Both churches have grown considerably in Tanzania in terms of their membership. These churches' historical role in engaging in various problems facing humanity is not a new phenomenon!
2. These churches have remained faithful as a community of character, speaking the truth to power, prophetic witness, reconstruction and public policy advocacy.
3. In some parts of Africa including Tanzania, anti-corruption work by Churches is already well underway!

CHARTING CORRUPTION: WHY ANGLICAN AND LUTHERAN CHURCHES? (CONT.)

4. The church's involvement in combating corruption is not a matter of choice; it is an obligation that stems from the teaching of the Bible. Gospel clarity is the church's base for the war on corruption.

5. The Church has had a longtime, faithful and fruitful partnership with Governments, local, national and international NGOs!

REFLECTIONS ON **OPPORTUNITIES** FOR ANGLICAN and LUTHERAN CHURCHES

1. Devastating effects of corruption
2. Call/Holistic mission of the church
3. The word of God
4. Partnerships (Anglican + Lutheran+...)
5. Government Invitation

REFLECTIONS ON THE **CHALLENGES** FOR ANGLICAN and LUTHERAN CHURCHES

1. Nature of our Theological Education:
“Limited skills – Limited
engagement”
2. Church Holiness - (speck in the eye)
3. Public vs Private Realm
Disagreement
4. Divided and Fragmented Church
(Theology)
5. Culture: Generosity vs Bribe!

SOME WAYS IN WHICH CHURCHES MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE IN ADDRESSING CORRUTPION

1. Help to identify and challenge the church to act on the basis of her **theological-ethical competence**.
2. Help to increase effectiveness of the church in the area of **governance, advocacy, networking** and **partnership** skills.
3. Provide **technical support** in order to **mainstream anti-corruption work** with the existing church programs/projects - schools, peace and reconciliation, poverty and climate change.
4. Strengthen **ecumenical cooperation** and **support** one another for example St. John's University Community Engagement Project on Anti-Corruption Work (a separate slide follow)

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF TANZANIA
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT 2017

We are working on the establishment of the
**“A Christian Centre for Anti-Corruption
Studies and Research?”**.

(ethics, integrity, ecumenism, justice, culture, good governance, etc.)

St. John’s University of Tanzania will
be the home of the Centre? 2017

What people say about the Project: Tanzania? East Africa? SADC region?

YOU ARE WELCOME TO PARTNER WITH US IN DIFFERENT WAYS

PREPARING THE FUTURE GENERATION

**CAN THE ANGLICAN
LUTHERAN SOCIETY DO
SOMETHING?**

Prayer?

Links?

Visit?

Information Sharing?

**Help create
partnerships with
potential stakeholders
in the war against
corruption?**



FINAL WORDS FOR REFLECTION

**At the core of the incidence of poverty is the issue of equity,
and at the core of the issues of equity is the issue of
corruption.**

James D. Wolfensohn, Former President of the World Bank

**[Christian] ideas, leaders, institutions and communities are
missing links in much of the public conversation about public
integrity. That is not as it should be.**

Katherine Marshall

FINAL WORDS FOR REFLECTION

...a church that doesn't actually say to the world, this is the new creation, this is an order of justice, reconciliation, and a counter-cultural movement, that is not really a church.

Rowan Williams Former Archbishop of Canterbury, 2008

...the Church rediscovers her certainty as the church of Christ when she takes theology seriously and makes use of it in her daily life.

Jürgen Moltmann

FINAL WORDS FOR REFLECTION

...you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9

ASANTE/THANK YOU