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Overview of corruption in the media in developing countries

Query

Can you please give a short overview on corruption in the media in developing countries? Are there any recommendations, activities, best practices, structures (also inside the media) to counteract corrupt practices?

Content

Summary

The media is often referred to as the fourth pillar in democracy. It has a key role to play in monitoring and investigating the actions of those in power and informing citizens about them. Yet, the media and journalists are not immune to corruption. While there is only limited research and awareness on corruption *within* the media, there is a broad consensus that the development of independent, legally protected, professionally managed, and economically viable news media is essential for ensuring accountable, responsible and ethical media.

In developing countries, the media is often confronted by a combination of factors that create fertile grounds for corruption, such as lack of training and technical skills, low professional standards, limited financial resources, opaque or government controlled ownership structures, inadequate and undemocratic legal frameworks. Types of corruption in the media vary from bribery in the form of cash for news, staged or fake news, gift giving, concealed advertisement to nepotism and capture by vested private or political interests.

Fighting corruption in the media can involve a wide range of approaches, varying from raising awareness of ethical standards, strengthening the freedom of the press, introducing adequate media policies and legislation, promoting media accountability as well as supporting investigative journalism through technical training.

1. Corruption in the media

The role of the media in fighting corruption

The literature on corruption and the media primarily focuses on the role of the media in fighting corruption and there is very limited research on corruption in the media.

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The media is often referred to as the fourth pillar in democracy and a free and independent press has a significant and important role in fighting corruption. Many studies have shown a strong positive correlation between freedom of the press and control of corruption and emphasise the importance of media plurality, media freedom and competition in curbing corruption (Fardigh et al. 2011; Brunetti and Weder 2003;; Freille et al. 2007; Ahrend 2002). There is a broad consensus that a free press helps curbing corruption by improving "citizens' accessibility to information which in turn makes it more difficult for politicians and public servants to get away with corrupt behaviours. In particular, the media plays a key role in exposing corruption and raising general awareness of its detrimental effect upon society, as well as in promoting integrity and accountability norms, values and practices in society. Research has also shown that accountability and transparency tend to improve as the access to information increases (Fardigh et al. 2011).

There are various ways in which the media can help combat and prevent corruption. A news story can have a direct and "tangible" effect, such as resulting in the launch of an investigation, impeachment, forced resignation of corrupt political leaders (Nogara 2009).

Media coverage of corruption can also have longer term, more indirect effects. The media can help mobilise the public against corruption and build pressure for reforms. They can raise standards of public accountability by monitoring and investigating the actions of those who were granted public trust, exposing corruption cases, and increasing the costs and risks associated with corrupt behaviours. Informing the public and presenting different points of views can also encourage public participation as well as support political competition by putting politicians under pressure to take a stand against corruption (Nogara 2009).

Factors likely to influence the integrity of the media

However, the media can be hampered to fulfill its role as a watchdog by obstacles such as restrictions on press freedom, market failures, lack of professional standards, weak civil society, and limitations in media literacy and public access to the media (Norris and Odugbemi 2010).

In developing countries, where the media often faces major challenges in the form of lack of training and technical skills, low professional standards, limited financial resources, inadequate legal frameworks and an undemocratic political system, corruption in the media is likely to further undermine the role that the media can play in fighting corruption and promoting public accountability. This is reflected by Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer findings, which indicate that corruption in the media is an area of concern in many developing countries such as Lebanon, Yemen, Pakistan, Bolivia, Zimbabwe, Ukraine, Malawi, Senegal, Peru, Afghanistan, Thailand, Palestine, Zambia, South Sudan, and Malaysia (Transparency International 2010/2011). Various factors such as media regulations, media ownership, as well as resources and capacity can put the media's integrity and autonomy at risk and make them vulnerable to corruption.

The legal framework

Freedom of expression

A country's legal framework has a direct impact on the space journalists have to do their work with integrity, resist undue influence and report impartially. This is particularly true for developing countries where democratic structures are not well established. In such settings, the media can be prevented from playing its watchdog role by specific restrictions imposed on their operations (Transparency International 2003).

Freedom of expression is one of the most important preconditions for unbiased media coverage, from which the rights of the freedom of press and freedom of media derive. This right has been defined in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and in article 19 of the UN Convenant on Civil and Political Rights, which is considered one of the most important instruments to the right to freedom of expression. All countries that are members of the UN are legally bound to the UN Convenant on Civil and Political Rights (Berger 2007).

However, not all of the UN member countries abide by the UN Convenant at the national level. In developing countries, limits to freedom of expression can take many forms such as censorship exercised by the government (e.g. blocking of websites in China), oppressive regulatory systems (e.g. Saudi Arabia and Belarus); the dominance of state media (North Korea and Cuba) and imprisonment of and violence against journalists (Eritrea, Uzbekistan, Syria) (Committee to Protect Journalists 2012). In Myanmar, for example, until 2012, journalists were subject to direct censorship

and had to submit reports to state censors before publication.

In some countries, freedom of expression is restricted by specific legal provisions limiting the scope of media coverage. For example, in Jordan, amendments to the penal code states that coverage on issues that '*could breach national unity, divide the population or damage the image and the reputation of the state*' will lead to prison sentences for journalists that breach this law. Another example is Saudi Arabia where internet providers are obliged to keep track of users who access forbidden websites (Transparency International 2003). Elsewhere government officials are protected from media criticism and exposure, making it hard for journalists to operate.

In other countries, a restrictive legal framework can also threaten journalists' security. In such countries, while freedoms of speech and of the press may be constitutionally protected, they are not respected in practice, as media regulations often do not provide adequate protection of journalists in their professional activity and against (physical) attacks or defamation suits. This is the case in Honduras, for example, where freedom of the press is limited in practice by intimidations, restrictive press laws used to punish journalists who report on sensitive issues such as government corruption, drug trafficking, and human rights abuses, dismissals and even killing of journalists due to their reporting (Freedom House 2012).

Libel laws can also be used for restricting freedom of the press. A Media Foundation for West Africa report indicates that, although media pluralism has increased in recent years in West Africa, the region has seen an unprecedented wave of legal litigation or court cases involving media. According to the author, such cases have invariably been dominated by ruling government officials and the functionaries of ruling political parties (Karikari no date). Another study found that in Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Zambia, libel laws regarding the Presidency are very common. In Mali and Tanzania they even extend to encompass members of other state institutions including the parliament (Berger 2007). Similarly, in Zimbabwe, the law on defamation makes it difficult for journalists to report on corruption. For example, in late 2010, the Standard newspaper was sued by the first lady for publishing excerpts from Wikileaks, alleging high level senior officials, including Grace Mugabe, "had been extracting tremendous diamond profits" (Freedom House 2012).

Right to access to information

A very closely related right to the freedom of expression is the right to access information, providing that the government of a country discloses relevant official information to its citizens and provides access to information for journalists. This enables newsgathering in a timely, accurate and neutral manner and prevents self-censorship.

Developing countries often do not have adequate legal provisions for the right to information. For example, a 2010 study suggests that fewer than 7.5 percent of African countries have an enforceable right to information law (Darch and Underwood 2010). While some progress has been made in recent years and an increasing number of countries provide for access to information in their constitutions and laws, many still deny their citizens access to public files in practice due to a wide range of obstacles such as lack of political leadership, a culture of secrecy, low public awareness, resources and capacity challenges as well as institutional barriers (GSDRC 2010).

Media Licensing and registration

Media licences can also be used by government to keep control over the media. In Malaysia newspapers need to renew their licenses every year, to the effect that editors who have expressed critical views towards the government have been pressured to resign (Djankov et al. 2001). The African Commission on Human and People's Rights, for example, has ruled that the payment of prohibitive registration fees as a precondition to the registration of newspapers was essentially a restriction on the publication of news media and a violation of freedom of expression (Callamard 2009).

Journalist registration and licensing is another way to keep control over the media. Such practices continue to exist both in the developed and developing worlds. An 2010 examination of regulatory practices in more than 100 developed and developing countries found that in at least one out of every four, governments have a role in licensing and in approving who can work as a journalist. In other countries, governments explicitly issue press cards only to journalists certified to follow the official line (Center for International Media Assistance 2010). In Saudi Arabia, for example, the government needs to approve the appointment and has the right to dismiss editor-in-chiefs of newspapers. With this power in hand the government has direct influence on the media coverage.

Media ownership

The ownership structure of the media is likely to have an effect on the potential for undue influence on media reporting by either the government or private interests. There are four different models of ownership namely state-owned media, private cooperation media, public service broadcasting (PSB), and community media. In some cases media ownership is directly influenced by media regulation.

State-owned media are often the media that have the broadest outreach in developing countries but their reporting is often biased in favour of government. A World Bank report on media ownership structures in 97 countries indicates that state-owned media tend to be less effective than private media in monitoring governments (Transparency International, 2003).

In Kenya, for example, the state-controlled Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) remains dominant outside major urban centers, and its coverage tends to favour the government (Freedom House 2012). In Zimbabwe, the state-owned Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation controls all domestic and TV stations and is blatantly in favour of the ruling party, ZANU-PF, while side lining the opposition party. According to some media reports, Zanu-PF supporters have already developed a jingle frequently played on state television and radio in favour of President Mugabe in the face of the upcoming 2013 elections (Mavhinga 2013). State-owned media are also often criticised for their susceptibility to political pressure, a focus on urban issues, their lack of professional journalism, and poor quality programming as a result of under-resourcing (GSDRC 2010).

Private media can also be influenced by business interests or even government, for instance through government advertising or tax cuts (GSDRC 2010). The concentration of private media in the hand of a few private owners can also restrain the media, as experienced in many Latin American and Caribbean countries (Transparency International 2003). In addition, the media ownership and the companies and powers behind it are often not transparent and can affect the operations and integrity of the media. This is particularly true in countries, where media control and political power are concentrated in the hands of a single individual (one of the most extreme examples being Italy).

In addition, in privately owned media outlets, journalists often have to ensure that there is enough funding for the media outlet they are working for. This means that, in addition to their journalistic working assignment, they have to secure funding for their position and employer by selling advertisements and sometimes in fact news. They may be fired if they are not able to secure this additional funding or if they express critical views against funding companies or individuals. Hence, this might have direct impact on the media coverage and influence their reporting. In some cases journalists might even take the opportunity to pick their interview partners accordingly, which is likely to affect the impartiality of their reporting. Journalists who are known to have the right connections to secure advertising might be hired for that reason.

Resources and capacity

In many developing countries, professional standards of journalism are generally considered as low, due to inadequate standards of training, lack of quality control within the media, and high turnover of staff. This is particularly the case in Africa and is likely to make the media more vulnerable to corrupt practices (Minnie 2007).

Low salaries for media staff due to under-resourced media are likely to breed corruption in the media. In contexts where journalists have low salaries and fear losing their jobs, ethical reporting can be perceived as a lesser priority than making money and complying with what is expected from them by their superiors. Low pay can also contribute to the high staff turnover in newsrooms in Africa, with journalists leaving to pursue more lucrative careers as public relations officers. In such contexts, journalists have greater incentives to accept gifts, entertainment or bribes to complement their salaries in exchange for favourable reporting, while the prospects of more lucrative careers can also introduce a bias when reporting on potential employers.

Corruption in the media can also be influenced by the broader context of the professional norms and values embedded in the national culture of journalism media (Norris and Odugbemi 2010). In particular, in many developing countries, there is a lack of awareness of integrity and ethical standards. For example, according to the Centre for International Media Ethics' (CIME) Media Ethics Survey 2011, in Latin America the most important problem seems to be that journalists are afraid to lose their job if they comply with ethical standards and resist editorial pressure by their superior to report in favour of certain individuals or vested private or political interests. In Africa, according to the same survey, the main reason for unethical behaviour

by journalists appears to be a general lack of awareness of media ethics. In Asian countries, it seems that journalists do not consider media ethics to be important. Lack of awareness and low prioritisation of media ethics combined with low salaries and fear of losing employment create a fertile ground for corruption (Centre for International Media Ethics 2011).

Types of corruption in the media

Against this background, corruption can occur in various forms in the media landscape. Types of corruption in the media can vary from the abuse of confidence or position when hiring or firing staff or making editorial decisions, inducting editorial content and by doing so influencing media coverage. Although there is limited research available on corruption in the media, there is anecdotal evidence that corruption in the media can manifest itself through various forms:

Bribery

There are many examples of journalists, editors and media houses accepting bribes and paid material disguised as news stories, or extorting money either for publishing favourable stories or for not publishing damaging ones (Ristow , 2010). A survey by the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) suggests that taking cash for editorial and unethical media practices are common practices especially in Eastern and Southern Europe and in Latin America. In Latin America for example, 60% of the respondents stated that paid articles published were not declared as advertisement but as editorials (Transparency 2003).

In addition the content published in a media outlet might be influenced by giving bribes to get more information on a story or report false information or taking bribes to cover a story or changing the coverage of an event to the advantage or disadvantage of a third party.

Such practices undermine the integrity and impartiality of media reporting, resulting in widespread practice of fictional news, biased news or news for sale (Spence 2008). A 2010 report documents the phenomenon of "cash for news coverage" across the world and highlights different levels in which bribery can take place in the media: 1) at the interpersonal level - where cash is handed directly to the journalist by a news source; 2) at the intra-organisational level, - where the editor tells the journalist what to write or not write, due to some sort of internal pressure such as from advertising; and 3) at the inter-organisational level, for example in countries such as China, Ukraine, or

Russia, - where there can be fairly formal arrangements, and even a legal contract under which a company pays a news organization a monthly amount in exchange for having a certain number of articles published about that company (Ristow 2010; Tsetsura 2008).

Gifts and advertisement

Giving gifts and placing advertisements in the media can be alternative ways to influence media reporting in favour of private or political interests. As mentioned earlier journalists tend to be especially vulnerable to this form of corruption in developing countries where their salaries are often very low.

This type of media corruption often results from the widespread collusion between journalists and public relations and advertising organisations (Spence 2008). Placing advertisement in the media, which in some cases are not declared as such, is another way to influence the positive coverage of an issue and pervert the editorial process. For example, some media organisations report on the growing trend of public relations companies using pseudo independent and objective news release to promote their clients' products. Similarly to such media release, the practice of cash for comment involves presenting paid advertisement as editorial comment or opinion (Spence 2008).

In Ukraine, for example, concealed advertising-material that has been paid for and provided to the media without being identified as an ad is widespread and collectively referred as "jeansa", with TV packages of news and whole programs, articles and covers being sold for a positive coverage of private interests (Tsetsura and Grynko 2009).

Hidden advertisement can also occur for political reasons, when a political party or a candidate manages to gain influence over a media outlet. For example, such a case of media bias and hidden advertising was detected through the monitoring of media coverage during the parliamentary elections of 2007 in Armenia. The Yerevan Press Club uncovered the misbalance in coverage of business trips, official visits and meetings of those candidates holding political and discretionary positions in the Public TV (H1) news. According to the report, "*in a number of materials on the campaign events of opposition parties there were elements of irony, which were not reflected in the quantitative indicators of monitoring, but, nevertheless, they impacted on the perception of the information by the*

audience"(Yerevan Press Club, 2007). Despite drawing such criticism from the civil society, similar patterns were observed during the presidential election campaign in 2008 in Armenia (OSCE/ODIHR 2008).

Nepotism

Nepotism when hiring or firing staff or publishing a feature is another form of media corruption which can have a direct influence on the media coverage. As mentioned above, in some countries, the government has the right to appoint staff members and can misuse these provisions to give positions to family members, thus securing positive coverage of government actions.

Media capture

As mass media are often the most important source of information on public affairs for citizens, they represent an important means of manipulating public opinion for private or political interests. Media capture is a present or latent risk in most developing countries, with attempt by either private or governmental interests to capture the media for their own benefit. As already mentioned, at one extreme level, media capture can involve direct monetary payments (bribes) that were for example reputedly common in Peru during Alberto Fujimori's government, while at another level, the media owner can exert a more subtle and indirect influence over administrative decisions or a legislative interventions affecting media regulations in her/his favour (Besley and Prat 2006).

In developing countries with deeply entrenched patronage systems, the media may also be affected by clientelism patterns, making it difficult break free from its political or business constraints (Governance Social Development Resource Centre (GRDC) 2010).

2. Fighting corruption in the media

Fighting corruption in the media can involve a wide range of approaches, varying from raising awareness of ethical standards, strengthening the independence of the media through adequate media policies, promoting media accountability through increased oversight and controls as well as supporting investigative journalism through technical training.

General recommendations

As already mentioned, there is still relatively limited awareness of the issue of corruption in the media, little research on the topic and it is difficult to draw recommendations from the literature on good practice to address such challenges.

The legal framework

The pre-condition for fighting corruption in the media is to ensure that adequate legal frameworks are in place and effectively implemented to guarantee that the right to information and media freedom as outlined in article 19 of the UN Convenant on Civil and Political Rights are ensured. Provisions can also include revising rules and regulations that limit the scope of the right to information such as restrictive libel laws or costly and cumbersome registration and licensing processes, with the view to protecting journalists from political arbitrariness, legal punishment and physical harm.

For example, in societies on the road to democracy, it is important to provide constitutional and legal guarantees to make press freedoms enforceable. This can include legal and constitutional provisions that 1) prohibit censorship and protect freedom of expression; 2) guarantee free access to government information and protect journalists from being forced to disclose confidential sources of investigative stories; 3) guarantee the fair and transparent administration of media business such as registration, licensing, ownership disclosure and taxation (OSCE 2008).

Ownership

As neither the government nor private media owners should have control over the media, there is a need to move away from state-controlled media, encourage media pluralism through a variety of competitive media outlets. Some reports underline that countries that have reduced government ownership of the media have experienced rapid improvement in the volume and quality of coverage (Transparency International, 2003). For example, following Mexico's privatisation of broadcasting in 1989, coverage of government corruption scandals subsequently increased.

Whether private or state owned, there is a need for media freedom organisation or journalist professional organisations to lobby media owners to recognise principles of editorial independence. Conflict of interest legislation would also need to be enacted to counter the concentration of media ownership and ensures multiple sources of information (Transparency International 2003).

According to the International Federation of Journalists, it is important to explore new funding models for

traditional media that sustain the values of public interest journalism. To help promote these values and enhance the quality and integrity of journalistic reporting, special attention should be given to raise the professional standards, including principles of transparency both of ownership and political affiliation. In terms of media ownership, there is a need for governments "to enforce strict transparency rules concerning the management, funding and ownership of media" (Bristow 2010).

Journalists professional standards: training and salaries

Professional standards of journalism need to be raised in developing countries, by the provision of adequate technical and ethical training. The international community, civil society and governments should step up efforts to build the capacity of journalists to cover corruption issues. This includes training in investigative techniques. As journalists can face considerable obstacles and physical risks when they investigate government or powerful interest groups, training in investigative journalism needs to be context-specific and address risks and security issues.

In particular, a number of specialist organisations such as the Association of Investigative Journalism, the World Bank or others (see below) have developed training programmes for journalists interested to cover corruption.

Journalists also need to be made aware of their countries' media policies and laws. Training them on those policies and regulations will better enable them to exercise their rights. One regional example of such approach is the Brazilian group Abraji who trains journalists among other things on their legal rights (e.g. to access information).

Journalists also need to be paid adequate salaries to be able to work independently and ethically and not be tempted to sell their news coverage for cash.

Specific recommendations targeted at different stakeholders

The above mentioned CIMA report on "cash for news coverage" identifies specific recommendations targeted at the various stakeholders:

International journalism organisations should:

- Raise awareness on the issue by supporting a summit, including representatives of the public-relations industry and experts on how corporations deal with bribery
- Acknowledge the issue by publishing regular reports documenting instances in which journalists have received–or extorted–payment for news
- Take the lead in documenting–and publicizing–the pay levels of journalists around the world.

Media-development organisations should:

- Promote ethics training as an integral part of professional standards of journalism, with specific training on why and how to avoid taking cash for news coverage
- Support the creation of media accountability systems such as ombudsmen and other complaints mechanisms to increase transparency and accountability of media operations.

News media owners, managers, and editors should:

- Adopt, publicise and implement a firm policy of zero tolerance for any form of cash for news coverage–from simple "facilitation" payments to reporters to paid ads masquerading as objective news. This can include reviewing pay policies to remove incentives for journalists to indulge in unethical practices
- Acknowledge that pay can have an impact on ethics
- Create accountability systems for establishing more transparent relationship with their audiences.

Public relations professionals and their organisations should:

- Encourage their members to practice zero tolerance, declining the sometimes too-easy path of paying in hopes of getting the best spin on their clients' stories, and helping them with strategies to do so without hurting their business.

Examples of tools and approaches for fighting corruption in the media

Raising ethical standards

There is a growing awareness of the importance of ethical journalism, which is underlined by all reports, authors and professional organisations. In 2008, for example, the International Federation of Journalism launched the Ethical Journalism Initiative, which is a global campaign of programmes and activities to support and strengthen quality in media and promote ethical journalism through accountable media. The website of the initiative is:
http://ethicaljournalisminitiative.org/en.

Raising the professional standards of the profession involves developing an ethics management system for the media that includes raising journalist's awareness of the ethical challenges they face in the exercise of their professions through the adoption of a robust code of ethics. This code should meets universal standards at a global level and be implemented at a local level. This is not yet the case in many developing countries. According to the Centre for International Media Ethics' (CIME) Media Ethics Survey 2011 in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe only half of the media outlets do have a code of ethics in place.

In principle, every accredited journalist should commit to the code of ethics. In Russia, for example, the journalism union only issues press cards to media houses and journalists who accept their code of ethics which condemns corrupt practices (Transparency 2003).

Beyond the adoption of the code, providing training on journalist ethics ensures journalists understand the importance of ethical standards as well as its potential impact on sustaining readership as a consequence of ethical reporting. There are several initiatives that provide ethical training for journalists. The Latin American Journalist Program, the Thomson Foundation, Transparency International as well as the Knight Centre for Journalism are some of the organisations that provide training on media ethics aiming to ensure a free and independent press. A similar training curriculum to the one mentioned above is provided by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB).

The Center for International Media (CIME) has developed a one-year long fellowship programme aimed at training journalists from around the world to become ethics leaders of their profession. As part of this programme, journalists carry out a small research in the field of media ethics in their region (Please see: http://www.cimethics.org/).

Media oversight and accountability

Regulatory bodies play an important role to monitor the media and ensure that ethical standards are met by the profession. These institutions manage the rights to information and freedom of expression and the media. These bodies should be independent and free from any interference.

One example of the work of such bodies to fight corruption in the media is a nationwide campaign conducted by the Media High Council in Rwanda, which aims at sensitising citizens on the issue of giving 'giti' to journalists (bribing them). Bribing journalists is a common practice in Rwanda to get media coverage.

Tanzania's Media High Council aims to prevent corruption within the media by a robust code of ethics for journalists to adapt (Expression Today 2010).

Media accountability systems have been established to ensure that the media and journalists respect the ethical rules set by the profession. Such systems can take various forms across country and media institutions. They can take the form of press councils, which brings together all three major actors of social communication (proprietors, reporters and public), of an an internal system of review and correction in each media house, or systematic monitoring and reporting of media activity by civil society organisations.

In Kenya for example, the independent Media Council of Kenya (MCK) was established in 2007 as the leading institution in the regulation of media and in the conduct and discipline of journalists. This includes promoting high professional and ethical standards amongst journalists.

Fighting corruption through investigative journalism

One of the pre-requisites for fighting corruption in the media is that the problem is publicly acknowledged and denounced by the media community through regular reports and stories. Investigative journalism can help in this regard, as a powerful tool to fight corruption and uncover corruption in the media.

There are several initiatives that have been implemented across the world to support investigative journalism:

- **Training and fellowship programmes**

A number of organisations have developed training modules for building the capacity of journalists interested in investigating corruption. Pact Tanzania for example implemented an initiative to enhance the capacity of journalists in investigative journalism through trainings and provision of resources for investigation of their stories. A manual on investigative journalism for anti-corruption and good governance was developed as part of this process.

As in some cases journalists might not have the necessary support of their media outlet or the funding to spend time investigating a case, support through fellowships may help enhancing investigative journalism. For example, the Kenyan civil society organisation Africa Centre for Open Governance (AfriCOG) piloted an Investigative Journalist Fellowship, which aims at boosting investigative reports on key governance and anti-corruption issues. During the first investigation commissioned, serious corruption was found in two of the main media outlets in Nairobi to the extent that journalists were on politicians' payroll (Expression Today 2010).

Another organisation that offers an investigative reporting grant is the Kampala-based NGO African Centre for Media Excellence (ACME). A similar initiative was launched in late 2012 at the International Anti-Corruption Conference where journalists received small grants to cover stories that resulted from a four-day training they attended during the course of the conference.

Another initiative has focused on ensuring independent funding for investigations. In Latin America journalists have teamed up to report on cross-border issues. To ensure independent funding of their investigation they have used crowd funding.

- **Awareness raising through conferences**

A number of conferences have been organised to raise awareness and set the agenda on investigative journalism, varying from local to global events.

In Bali the Thomson Reuters Foundation has invited journalists from the region to the Bali Media Forum. Amongst the outcomes of the event were the launch of the Alliance of Press Councils for the Asia Pacific

region and the acknowledgement that more practical ethics training for journalists is needed.

A similar conference (Conferencia Latinoamericana de Periodismode Investigación COLPIN) is periodically organised in Latin America by the Peruvian organisation Instituto Prensa y Sociedad (IPYS) and Transparency International.

In 2013 the Global Investigative Journalism Conference will be held in Rio de Janeiro organised by the Global Investigative Journalist Network (GIJN), Abraji and IPYS. GIJN has 50 member organisations in 30 countries which is yet another indicator of how serious journalists themselves take the issue of ethical investigative journalism.

- **Journalists networks**

In Latin America, the Journalists Against Corruption Programme was established in 2000 by an NGO in El Salvador (Probidad). The organisation facilitates the exchange of articles, information, contacts and resources among Latin American journalists investigating corruption (Transparency International 2003).

There are a variety of journalist organisations that aim to ensure quality reporting by cutting themselves off from media outlets. 100Reporters, for example, represents a group of international journalists who work together on covering corruption. To ensure the protection of whistle-blowers they are building a platform, which enables anonymous reporting.

In Accra, the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) in collaboration with the British High Commission has launched a network of journalists against corruption in the country. Network members are drawn from both private and public print, online, radio and TV media houses. The aim is to mentor journalists to improve their journalistic writings on transparency and accountability issues and to enhance the watchdog role of the media.(Online news article: Network of Journalists against corruption launched in Accra)

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4. Additional information

For further information the following resources might be consulted:

George Monbiot proposes a code of ethics in the *Guardian*:

http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jul/11/media-corrupt-hippocratic-oath-journalists.

Find an overview of journalist codes of conducts here:
http://www.mediawise.org.uk/codes-of-conduct/codes/.

and here
http://www.pactworld.org/galleries/resource-center/IJ%20ManualFinal%2015%20Sept%202008.pdf.