

No matter how I choose to start this essay, the introduction and preamble will always be familiar: "how corruption is ravaging Nigeria in a violent inferno". I will not bore you with any preamble that will only magnify the corruption plaguing Nigeria. We are all living witnesses.

The action plan is not to be like our elder spokesmen who only amplify problems without stating solutions of equal magnanimity. Thus, I jump hastily to the heart of my essay to proffer solutions in my humble opinion; humble but not to say that I don't take pride in fostering points, which if taken into consideration and put into action will possibly put an end to the plague of corruption in Nigeria.

It is disturbing and disheartening to grow up knowing that as an average Nigerian child with no/less privilege, our future as leaders of tomorrow is not only blink or insecure but ruthlessly jeopardized. We grow up knowing that we've been born and tossed mercilessly into a vast jungle of wild wolves with no map nor hint of navigation. What are we to do? Our hearts hardened, we breed barbaric greediness and uncivilized selfishness in our minds. From then, we are corrupted. Whatever years we manage to survive, we become ruthless predators to avoid being preys. The resources we find available, we would not bother using it productively for the greater good of the nation, instead we will blindly trudge ahead to exploit the minerals of the land for our selfish interest. That's an analogy of how our dear nation nurture corruption, it runs in our blood veins and we resign to the notion that "we can not fight corruption". Thus I say corruption in Nigeria is an inborn trait.

The first thing we should do to fight corruption as a nation is to reject it. We should not accept it as a way of life. Just as it runs in our blood veins, every fiber of our being should reject it. Every single citizen of Nigeria need to understand the detriments, damages and dangers tied to any kind of corruption act, there's a need for an awakening education as to what corruption is. When people know how nefariously cancerous corruption is, then that will be a step towards rejecting it. This rejection will beat the drum of war with corruption. Our schools, institutions, media houses, and any outlet that can pass information should collectively be used to disseminate this message.

Secondly, investigative journalism and press power should be used as a weapon in this war. The press have such an upperhand in any nation that no individual or entity dare go against. We have seen so many instances where prominent persons were cast down by the press, the recent saga of former Nigeria's minister of finance, Kemi Adeosun will attest to that. It all started with diligent journalism, today investigative journalism has exposed so many public officers and dignitaries convicted of corruption acts ranging from certificate scandals, money laundering, mismanagement of public funds and even shameless collection of bribery. We would never have known the cobwebs in Governor Ganduje's cupboard had it not been for the dogged investigations of the renown journalist Jaafar Jafar of the Daily Nigerian newspaper. An irrefutable evidence of the governor shamelessly pocketing dollars in a video clip set the internet agog. Imagine how many corrupt politicians and public officials will be brought to law through investigative reports, imagine the billions and trillions of dollars that might be recovered from looted funds, imagine thousands of abandoned projects and public infrastructures that would be monitored and implemented, imagine how corruption could have been chased out of Nigeria

had it been journalism was prioritized and we breed and train competent, dogged journalist in this nation.

Thirdly, we should get everyone involved. There has been frequent campaigns on getting people involved in politics and elections but this ought to be boosted in all spheres of human concerns. There's a power in a collective voice, a continuous outcry from the citizens can bring about a revolutionary change and transformation that no administration or commission could. If investigative journalism can expose the corrupt persons, the citizens should follow up with a concerned outcry until those persons are properly brought to law and dealt with accordingly.

Also, to fight corruption there have to be accountability and transparency. We can promote that if citizens of Nigeria make proper use of the Freedom of Information (FOI) act, every Nigerian have the right to demand for information, ask questions and get answers pertaining the welfare of the nation, it's our right to know what happens to our money, how our resources are utilized, how are our revenues are diverted. our youths should advocate for Open Government Partnership (OPG) which will give room for transparency and due accountability. Organizations such as Connected Development (CODE) gives a platform that serves this purpose, such NGO's needs to be strengthened and empowered, and more of such organizations should be created.

Fourthly, Nigerian citizens must be paid fruitfully for their labors. That is to say there's an urgent need to raise the minimum wage for low earning Nigerians. There's no reason why an executive will be paid millions of naira as salary to come and loot public funds while a hardworking Nigerian will be paid an embarrassing stipend of N18,000 grudgingly. To fight corruption, every citizen needs to be comfortable with his/her earnings. This will bring about contentment and minimize greed and gluttony to the minimum.

Fighting corruption should not be one time stunt, we should aspire to eschew corruption from the root of it. That's why in conclusion, I will suggest we make the fight sustainable. We can do that by planting fresh seeds of integrity, accountability and morally sound values in our society, those fresh seeds are our children, "the leaders of tomorrow" as we fondly call them. After we conquer this fight, we shouldn't relax our guard for corruption definitely fights back, that's why I suggest lastly, we reform our education system. Every vices that plague our society today is founded from our educational system. An incompetent doctor, a lawless legal practitioner, a selfish banker are all breeds of questionable education. Thus, our curriculum needs to be revamped and thoroughly reformed to keep up with time and change. Our children needs to review the history of Nigeria from the beginning so they will have a clear perspective of what they may want to build in their generation. Ethics and moral education needs to be introduced in our curriculum if we are to avoid cultivating rotten seeds that will again corrupt our nation, we have to cut this wretched circle, and what better way to do that than through sound education?

