EMPOWERING CITIZENS, SECURING LASTING CHANGE: BLOWING THE WHISTLE ON CORRUPTION
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Whistleblowers often put the public good first at great personal risk. They can and do make a big difference in the fight against corruption and deserve our support, protection and admiration.

Cobus de Swardt, Managing Director, Transparency International

“I was scared. I knew that speaking out could cost me everything - but I had to find the courage to do so anyway. How else could I expect change?”

Wendy Addison, financial whistleblower, South Africa
WHISTLEBLOWERS: ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY ACTS

Your boss is producing misleading financial statements. You raise concerns that this is unethical, even criminal, and are told to stop causing trouble or lose your job.

You discover that government contracts are being won through secret kickback payments. The winning companies are using sub-standard building materials, putting lives at risk. The next day you are attacked, beaten and warned to keep quiet, for your family’s sake.
A company you work with is dumping toxic waste into a local river. There are powerful interests at stake. Do you go public? Would it make a difference?

Faced with these choices, what would you do? And would you trust the system to protect you?

Every day, people are faced with such agonising decisions. Disturbingly, whistleblowers in most countries lack adequate, reliable legal protections to shield them from retaliation and provide them with a trustworthy system to report wrongdoing. Without protection, most people simply remain quiet – while funds are stolen, the environment is polluted, and crimes are committed with impunity. In many countries, those who do come forward are often harassed, physically abused or even killed.
WHAT WE’RE DOING

Our goal is for whistleblowers everywhere to be protected from retaliation, for their disclosures to bring about positive change, and for whistleblowing to be widely used as a practical tool to fight corruption.

We work to empower and protect people to blow the whistle in the following ways:

**Identifying the problems:** We research whistleblower protection in countries and companies across the world, advising government agencies, companies, whistleblower organisations and researchers on how protection can be improved.

**Providing direct support and advice:** Through our Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres in more than 50 countries worldwide, we provide free, confidential support and advice to whistleblowers and victims of corruption in their often lonely struggle for justice.

**Raising awareness:** Using channels such as radio, participatory theatre, film and educational workshops, we work with communities to foster positive attitudes to whistleblowing and promote it as a viable method of resisting corruption.

**Building communities for change:** We are building a whistleblower network that uses advocacy, research and outreach to create safe places for whistleblowers to expose corruption.
We work closely with advocacy groups, legal experts and whistleblowers toward enhancing whistleblower protections and rights because we know that in many places it is not an easy choice to step forward.
Securing Lasting Change

From Peru to Portugal, from Lebanon to Liberia, and from India to Ireland, we work around the world to strengthen and promote whistleblower systems. These are some examples of our work:

Our International Whistleblower Initiative brings together the world’s leading whistleblower experts, advocates and organisations in a united effort to strengthen whistleblower protection and ensure disclosures actually lead to change.

Providing legal and other expert advice to organisations and government agencies, the initiative raises awareness of the importance of whistleblowing as an effective corruption-fighting tool, partners with journalists to report on whistleblowing, and works to overcome the political, cultural and social barriers to whistleblowing.

In Ghana, we used film to raise public awareness of the importance of whistleblowing, producing and showing documentaries in 10 communities. Visitors to our free Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre have since reported on a range of issues, from police officers collecting bribes, to employers extorting job applicants.

Active in 15 countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa, our ‘Voices for Change’ project is working nationally and regionally to create safe, reliable spaces for citizens to provide information that supports positive reforms in government and industry. Our efforts aim to establish legal protections for whistleblowers, as well as to enhance the practice and acceptance of whistleblowing. In the wake of the Arab Spring, citizens throughout this region have stepped forward to assert their rights - and our whistleblower project is tapping into this energy.

We have called for change across Europe. Following our in-depth research on whistleblower laws in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia, a landmark vote in the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly took place, unanimously asking member states to implement comprehensive whistleblower protection and promote a culture conducive to whistleblowing.
In Vietnam, we provided input on the drafting of stronger whistleblower protection laws, particularly to cover the private sector and include anonymity for whistleblowers. Our input was openly commended by the government and the new law was passed. We will continue to work for its effective implementation.

Whistleblowers around the world are contacting our free Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres, seeking support and sharing vital information. Providing people with concrete advice and carrying out advocacy based on their information, we’ve seen real change as a result:

“When the phone rang, it was clear the caller was scared. He worked in the government, he said. He had information on a huge public tender that he needed to share. He had tried to complain to his superiors about the bidding process, but they had rebuffed his allegations. Now he wanted to speak out, but his identity had to remain secret.”

The man who called our office in the Czech Republic was referring to ‘the ecotender’, a massive public contract to clean up pollution and waste across the country. According to government estimates, this big clean would cost €4.5 billion. According to the caller, the sums were false. And he had documents to support this. Remaining anonymous and meeting us in secret, we worked on the case with him to protect the public purse, without putting the informant at risk. Using the information he provided, we were able to publicly lobby the Czech government for more information on the bidding process and raise awareness on the issue in the media. Under the glare of public scrutiny, the government cancelled the tender, saving taxpayers an estimated €1.2 billion as a result.
Good for the Public, Good for Business

As whistleblower protection laws have improved, thousands have come forward with information about financial crimes, environmental misdeeds, procurement fraud, bribery and other corrupt and harmful activities.

Worldwide, whistleblowers are saving millions of lives and billions of dollars in public and private funds.

According to a 2012 survey by Ernst & Young, 40% of respondents worldwide identified whistleblowing as a highly effective tool for detecting wrongdoing.

A new whistleblower programme in the United States led 334 people to report tips to government officials in the first two months alone. Allegations included insider trading, foreign corrupt practices and doctored financial statements. The disclosures originated from 37 US states and 11 countries, including Australia, Canada, China, Italy, Spain and the UK.

After one single whistleblower came forward, a prominent financial services company was fined US$158 million.

“Out of all fraud detected, nearly 30% surfaces due to the anonymous whistleblower mechanism.”

Dinesh Anand, partner and co-head of forensic services at KPMG India
COMPLAINT BOX POLICE

PH: 1090
BUT THERE IS STILL MUCH PROGRESS NEEDED TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

In 25 EU Member States that we assessed, only 6 had dedicated whistleblower legislation in place.

In many countries, reporting wrongdoing is seen as being synonymous with being an ‘informant’ or a ‘traitor’ and carries a huge social stigma.

1 in 5 of the world’s 100 largest companies do not have confidential whistleblower mechanisms in place for all of their employees.
HOW CAN YOU HELP?

From rural villages to big cities, we are working around the world to help people break the silence and stand up against corruption. Their message is clear - we are fighting back. And year on year, their numbers are growing. But they need help. Financial support will broaden our work on whistleblowing and increase our ability to help those who need it most.

Your donation could help any of the following:

- Our Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres, which ensure whistleblowers in need have someone to turn to
- Community education and awareness-raising activities to improve social attitudes to whistleblowing
- Workshops and trainings for governments and the private sector to improve their anti-corruption and whistleblowing infrastructure
- Research on the implementation of whistleblower laws to identify areas for improvement
- Advocacy work for strong whistleblower protection laws and their enforcement
- Partnering with investigative journalists to support whistleblowers and expose abuses of power
- Collaborating with organisations that assist whistleblowers to build an international support network.

No-one should have to confront corruption alone. Please become a part of this global movement for change and support our work.

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