

CRA also helps the government to enhance the transparency of administrative processes within the public sector. CRA results can be publicized regularly to put pressure on ministries with low compliance. CRA, like IA, can effectively prevent corruption without causing resistance from the target organizations.

However, it also requires close cooperation by the target organizations, as CRA will be ineffective without the target organizations actually accepting the recommendations made by ACRC.

4.

Undertake Preventive Measures for System-Wide Anti-Corruption (Measures for the Government and Public Institutions)

Along with the measures that can be employed by the Anti-Corruption agency, there needs to be effective Anti-Corruption measures which involve systematic changes in government and public institutions.

1

Transparent recruitment system

As can be seen in the case of Korea, the recruitment process of public officials needs to be transparent and corruption-free to ensure that competent people can enter the government workforce. By eliminating corruption risk factors such as patronage, nepotism and favoritism from public officials' recruitment procedures and simplifying it to include only written exams, improper solicitation of employment through bribery or personal connections could be prevented in Korea from the 1960s to 1990s. Interviews have become part of the recruitment process of public officials only recently after most corrupt behaviors of the public officials had diminished as a result of the economic development. At the same time, the competitiveness and transparency of the procedure will appeal to many qualified candidates, especially in countries where the wage level is similar in both the public and private sectors.

Benchmarking such an open and competitive system, the government can remove corruption risks by implementing open competitive written examinations to ensure equal opportunities for all citizens, followed by interviews. When reforming the recruitment system, every effort must be made to ensure that corruption does not permeate examination and interview processes. As the interview process is especially prone to corruption risks due to its subjective nature, institutional devices must be arranged to completely prevent the corruption of interviewers in advance.

Transforming the structure and process of the recruitment system must be prioritized for governments that wish to combat corruption. Hiring 20 new employees who are not tainted by corruption is much more effective than working with 1,000 corrupt officials.

2 *Integrity education and training*

After recruiting new employees through a transparent process, intensive integrity education and training must follow. While it is clear that education and training programs on Anti-Corruption for public officials is important, many people believe them to be superficial and thus doubt their effectiveness. In general, Anti-Corruption education is a long-term strategy that may not always have an immediate impact. Moreover, while educated employees may be equipped with Anti-Corruption knowledge, they may not change their behavior accordingly. Therefore, Anti-Corruption education programs must operate more strategically in terms of content, method and utilization.

First, Anti-Corruption education should be mandatory. It should be conducted at least four times a year – but the more, the better. The frequency of education can be determined in accordance with the country's state of corruption. The mandatory integrity education will help the public officials grasp the importance and necessity of corruption prevention.

Second, integrity education must be considered a prerequisite for promotions and other forms of evaluation of employees. Those that have not completed the required number of training courses should not be considered for promotion or given any sort of advantage.

The third and most important strategy in integrity education is the training of new employees on the importance of integrity and the causes of corruption. The effectiveness of training new employees will be much greater than training those who have 10-20 years of experience. This will create a consensus among the new employees on the importance of integrity which can influence their entire career in the public sector. Ultimately, the success of Anti-Corruption policies and the integrity and transparency of the government and public institutions depend on the new employees, who will shape the future of their organization.

3 *Protection of whistleblowers*

Protecting whistleblowers is an essential element in addressing corruption. As the retaliation against whistleblowers and internal rapporteurs is prevalent, relevant laws must include provisions on the protection of whistleblowers. At the same time, the government and public institutions must ensure that whistleblowers are not given any sort of disadvantage or discrimination (i.e. layoff, denying promotion, reassignment to a less desirable position) at the workplace. Their identity and personal information must be kept confidential, and they should be guaranteed continued employment. In addition to the protection mechanism, ACRC has also been granting awards and monetary rewards to whistleblowers, along with financial compensation for any damages caused in the process of whistleblowing.

5.

Utilize Information and Communication Technology for Enhanced Transparency in Public Service

Since corruption is often caused by individual people, the power of ICT in public administration can increase the transparency of public service to the extent that it makes corruption “very difficult” for people. Automating and digitizing many of the procedures that reduce face-to-face contact is also crucial to preventing corruption. This may require a considerable amount of budget. If necessary, transferring some amount of budget allocated for recruitments to establish a foundation for ICT could be considered, as it would be more effective in the end to have such system than having corrupt public officials.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) assesses the ICT Development Index (IDI) annually to monitor and compare the level of ICT development among countries. As illustrated in Table 1, most of the ICT powerhouses that are in the top 10 of the IDI have been positively evaluated in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) developed by Transparency International (TI), which assesses countries by their perceived levels of corruption in the public sector. The Index uses a scale of 0 to 100, with higher scores given to countries with less corruption. For instance, in 2017, Switzerland ranked third in both IDI and CPI, with a CPI score of 85. Similarly, Denmark, which ranked fourth in IDI, ranked second in CPI with a score of 88.

Table 1. The Interrelation between IDI and CPI

Country	2017		2016	
	IDI Ranking	CPI Ranking	IDI Ranking	CPI Ranking
Iceland	1	13	2	14
Korea	2	51 ⁸	1	52
Switzerland	3	3	4	5
Denmark	4	2	3	1
United Kingdom	5	8	5	10
Hong Kong	6	6	6	15
Netherlands	7	10	10	8
Norway	8	7	7	6
Luxembourg	9	9	9	10
Japan	10	20	11	20

Source: ITU (2017⁹) and TI (2016¹⁰ - 2017¹¹)

In this context, the research by IMF suggests that governments actively apply technology to fight corruption, using an e-Procurement system as an example.¹² In fact, the IMF highlighted Korea as a country that has shown the effectiveness of its e-Procurement system to increase transparency. The following sections will discuss Korea's different ICT initiatives in transforming the civil service and elaborate on the strengths of ICT as a tool to prevent corruption.

⁸ From the author's perspective, Korea's CPI score and ranking may not accurately reflect the level of integrity in Korea as well as the IDI. While CPI is based on measuring perceptions rather than actual cases of corruption, IDI uses more quantitative indicators. As illustrated in Table 1, Korea is the only country with low CPI ranking among all highly ranked countries of IDI, implying that Korea's efforts and accomplishments in enhancing transparency through ICT may not be adequately recognized.

⁹ ITU, "ICT Development Index 2017." ITU.int. <https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-D/idi/2017/index.html#idi2017comparison-tab>.

¹⁰ TI, "Corruption Perceptions Index 2016." transparency.org. https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016

¹¹ TI, "Corruption Perceptions Index 2017." transparency.org. https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017

¹² Campos, "Corruption Costs \$1 Trillion in Tax Revenue Globally-IMF"

1 *ICT in the government system: Korea's case*

As previously mentioned, Korea's utilization of ICT contributed to preventing corruption. Introducing ICT into the government system can dramatically increase transparency and accountability in the public sector. ICT can diminish the risk of corruption by facilitating online contact instead of direct face-to-face communication. For instance, ICT made the petition process much easier by eliminating the need for petitioners to meet the officials at each stage of the petition application process. Box 1 illustrates the different ICT-based government systems in Korea that have minimized corruption risk factors in various administrative processes.

Since 2011, the Korean government has implemented eleven representative projects to facilitate the electronic processing of government affairs and public services. The government is constantly improving the speed and quality of ICT-based platforms to provide faster and more accurate administrative services.

Box 1. ICT-based government systems in Korea ¹³

e-People

Korea's online government civil petition handling system, e-People, received and handled 2.3 million cases of complaints, appeals and requests from citizens as of 2016. The updates on each case are shared regularly on a real-time basis through the internet. The petition results are also notified to the petitioner promptly through a transparent process.

KONEPS

KONEPS is the Korean government's online procurement system that dramatically enhanced the transparency of the public procurement process. Bid results are publicized online on a real-time basis in order to minimize the risks of public officials making arbitrary decisions. As of 2016, 93% of all procurement contracts were processed through e-bidding.

Government 24

Through Government 24, an online government portal, citizens can easily request and receive official documents and certificates from the government without having to visit the government agency in person.

¹³ For more information on these platforms:

<https://www.epeople.go.kr/foreigners/pps/pps.npaid> (e-People)

<https://www.pps.go.kr/eng/jsp/koneps/overview.eng> (KONEPS)

<http://www.minwon.go.kr/main?a=AA041Request000IndexApp&LANGUAGE=eng> (Government 24)

2 *Strengths of ICT in corruption prevention*

Although there may not always be a correlation between ICT adoption and corruption prevention, it should be noted that ICT can contribute to improving the overall transparency of public administration services. For example, Korea's e-Government aimed at improving the values of responsiveness, accountability and transparency.¹⁴ The below examples illustrate the Korean experience of public services before and after adopting ICT.

▪ **Action-at-a-distance**

In the past, since the public officials were given considerable discretion, various corrupt activities such as demands for money were prevalent during face-to-face interactions between public officials and the citizens. ICT eliminated this risk by enabling the citizens to go through online administrative processes at home, without having to visit the relevant government agencies.

▪ **Agility**

The slow administrative procedure itself was the cause of corruption. Because of the numerous documents required, along with the complicated and non-transparent nature of the process, the administrative procedure was very slow and unclear. As a result, the public officials frequently demanded a facilitation fee from the citizens to speed up the process. Today, with ICT implemented, all procedures can now be completed with just a few clicks and are open to the public, eliminating the risk of any facilitation fee or any kind of bribery.

▪ **Openness**

An administrative process that lacked transparency led the citizens to distrust the administration. In order to access the information provided by the government, people had to resort to all kinds of means, including bribery. Since the adoption of ICT, all government data became open to the public with the exception of state secrets. All government agencies now post policy guidelines and related major documents on their website, providing content that can gain people's trust and interest. The agencies even compete to provide more information to the public.

¹⁴ Jin-wook Choi, Jonghoon Park, and Ahjung Lee, "Anti-Corruption Policies and Institutions in Korea and Singapore: A Comparative Perspective and Lessons Learnt on Corruption Prevention and Control for Developing Countries," Development Think Piece Series 2 (July 2017).

- **Propagation**

When information was only open to a few, it became often monopolized and abused. With ICT facilitating information sharing, many people now have access to different kinds of information that only one person used to be able to access in the past.

Moreover, news on corrupt actions by public officials spread faster than before with the development of investigative journalism, preventing those involved in corruption from planning countermeasures in advance.

- **Cost-saving**

The greatest advantage brought by ICT utilization is cost efficiency. Thanks to the development of ICT, incidental costs associated with the administrative process have been eliminated. It also enabled citizens to pay less fees for issuing simple certificates by using their own computers and printers at home or the workplace. Opportunity costs such as waiting and travel times have been greatly reduced as well.

Practitioner's Note No.1

Conclusion

Conclusion

When transparency and accountability mechanisms are not institutionalized with respective checks and balances in place, governments are susceptible to corruption and it affects the overall effective functioning. To prevent this, Anti-Corruption should be understood as a priority, a crucial factor and an essential groundwork in a country's development.

Anti-Corruption policies are, in other words, a strategy to restructure a nation. It should be promoted and implemented at full scale throughout the entire nation. Ultimately, it should aim to build a new governance system. The key to building a new system is ensuring that all areas are redesigned to minimize corruption, followed by implementing new management and operation principles. With the right systems established and new principles settled, existing practices and cultures may gradually change.

In a nutshell, the prevalence of corruption indicates that the government is at the center of such corruption. A building that is about to collapse must be completely dismantled – its frame, pillars and walls must be torn down to be newly designed and built. Likewise, a country suffering from corruption cannot survive with only partial measures.

Based on the author's experience, here are final 9 Anti-Corruption action points for policymakers from a practitioner's perspective.

- **Do what you can do and concentrate on attainable goals**

If you continue to blame your strategy's failure on factors such as the lack of budget, you will not be able to expect any positive outcome. There are lots of tasks you can carry out within the given budget and human resources. Set proper targets and focus on one urgent goal at a time. In other words, start with a small but attainable goal. It will be difficult to make the first successful achievement against corruption – but once you succeed once, it will be much easier to make another.

- **Concentrate on preventing corruption to reduce resistance**

Stop relying on prosecution only. One of the main reasons of malfunctioning of Anti-Corruption strategy stems from its heavy emphasis on investigation, prosecution and punishment rather than on preventive measures. Increasing the number of prosecutors and police officers is not the solution to corruption. Corruption will only be further intensified if you abuse the power of the investigative agencies. Hence, it is important to strike a balance between corruption prevention efforts and law enforcement ones.

- **“Weaponize (Institutionalize)” preventive measures**

Typical examples of Anti-Corruption policies include Integrity Assessment (IA) and integrity training and education. If these two components can be used widely, it will surely result in positive outcomes to prevent corruption. The results of IA can be used to compare and evaluate the organizations and the high-level management's performance, effectively pressuring the target organizations to improve their integrity level.

Integrity training and education will raise the awareness of individual public officials on corruption and integrity. It can be used as an important criterion in reviewing employees for promotion. At the same time, incentives should be provided to those who have completed and excelled in the training course.

- **Demonstrate concrete results for public support**

There are many areas that need to be improved in order to have a successful Anti-Corruption strategy, but the first thing to consider is selecting an area that you can excel at. Continuous progress is the key. The existence of Anti-Corruption agencies depends on its ability to produce a concrete result so that it gains trust and support from the public. Only with public support can Anti-Corruption policies succeed.

- **Emphasize integrity in promotion**

The organization should reinforce the idea that only those with awareness of corruption can be promoted and thrive in their careers. If you continue to promote competent people who understand the value of integrity and Anti-Corruption, everyone will surely recognize integrity as the organization's top priority. Therefore, the consistent emphasis on integrity by the high-level officials will spread the importance of integrity.

- **Focus on changing your own subordinates first**

Related to the earlier point, make every effort to ensure that your subordinates are not corrupt if you are in a managerial position. Reinforce the importance of Anti-Corruption by actively promoting integrity as a crucial component of promotion. If your subordinates become clean, then their subordinates are more likely to have integrity later as well.

- **Focus on entry level employees**

For Anti-Corruption policies to be successful, all organizations should employ people who are free from corruption. However, existing employees who are already familiar with the organizational culture are unlikely to change fundamentally. They should be thoroughly monitored and regulated to prevent further corruption. Therefore, focus on the new employees. Educate them on the importance of integrity and the causes of corruption. This will be much more effective than educating public officials with years of experience. New employees equipped with Anti-Corruption knowledge and awareness will be able to shape the organization's future more positively.

- **Fill the government with competent people through an open and competitive recruitment system**

Highly qualified officials can achieve great outcomes. Encourage them and make sure they are highly satisfied with and proud of their work in the public sector. This will make it easier to sustain the government's competence and efficiency. With the best people working in the government, Anti-Corruption policies can be planned and implemented with more ease. In order to achieve this, ensure that the civil service recruitment process is transparent and fair. The success of the Korean government largely owes to its transparent recruitment system, which resulted in a lot of talented people joining the government workforce.

- **Provide big Incentives for the high performers**

Give rewards to the government and public institutions that have achieved excellent outcomes in terms of integrity. For example, ACRC has utilized various incentive mechanisms (e.g. government prizes, overseas training) to promote Anti-Corruption efforts by the public institutions. It will be more effective than punitive measures that could possibly be perceived as a threat. At the same time, the organizations can provide incentives internally during the process of job assignment, department transfer and promotion by giving advantages to the employees who prioritize integrity and Anti-Corruption.

“1g of Experience is More Important than 1t of Theory”

- Euywhan Kim

Around the world, Anti-Corruption organizations have been established and Anti-Corruption laws have been enacted. There is also an overflow of various in-depth corruption diagnostic programs and indicators, analyses of causes of corruption in response to monitoring results, and alternative proposals. While many countries still heavily rely on traditional investigations rather than corruption prevention policies, these punitive approaches, in the author's view, have had limited successes in fighting corruption. In this paper, the author draws on 18 years of his experience at the Anti-Corruption & Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) of Korea and emphasizes the importance of implementing Anti-Corruption strategies and approaches that are designed to effectively prevent corruption across the public institutions. He also emphasizes that it is necessary to prioritize practical measures for corruption prevention that are implementable within the current limits of budget and human resources. Overall, this practitioner's note seeks to share the author's experience and provide practical guidance to Anti-Corruption practitioners on how to devise a tangible roadmap to prevent corruption.