

The Social Life of Anti-Corruption Narratives: Media and Campaign Representations in Sub-Saharan Africa

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35293/srsa.v48i1.7470>

Abstract

The current study examines how anti-corruption is publicly constructed as a defence of democratic accountability across Sub-Saharan Africa. It analyses a purposive corpus of 80 publicly available texts, comprising news articles, LinkedIn posts and civil society campaign artefacts, produced between 2022 and 2025 across eighteen Sub-Saharan countries. Drawing on Social Representations Theory (SRT) and Narrative Theory (NT) and informed by an adapted Proppian heuristic for narrative sequencing, the study examines how anti-corruption is anchored in familiar moral categories, objectified through public symbols, institutions and events, and mobilised through recurring narrative structures that shape expectations of accountability and reform. The analysis identifies six recurring social representations that function as socially shared interpretive resources through which anti-corruption is understood, communicated and enacted across public narratives: Collective Responsibility, Everyday Accountability, Justice through Law, Civic Courage, Tangible Accountability and Ethical Renewal. Rather than representing discrete governance activities, these representations organise shared understandings of what anti-corruption is, who is responsible for it, how accountability should operate, and what constitutes meaningful democratic reform. Comparative analysis indicates that while these narrative functions appear across the region, South African cases place particular emphasis on procedural visibility and institutional accountability, operating as symbolic reference points within wider continental debates on the credibility of reform. Findings demonstrate that anti-corruption narratives are not merely reflections of governance reform but constitute shared systems of meaning through which democratic accountability is imagined, legitimised and sustained.

Keywords: Anti-corruption narratives; democratic accountability; social representations theory; narrative theory; public meaning; Sub-Saharan Africa

1. Introduction: Anti-corruption narratives as social life

Corruption has become one of the dominant public narratives through which governance failure is interpreted across Sub-Saharan Africa (Mungiu-Pippidi 2015; Shamsuddin 2023). Public understanding of integrity, accountability and reform is shaped not only by policy outcomes, but by the symbolic and narrative resources through which political reality is interpreted. Media, digital platforms, and civil society campaigns translate abstract governance concepts into morally legible stories, images, and exemplars that frame anti-corruption as futile, heroic, procedural, or transformative (Entman 2007; Miller 2012; Polletta 2006). Rather than treating public narratives as reflections of institutional processes, this study examines how they actively constitute civic expectations, draw moral boundaries and elevate positive outliers as evidence that reform is possible. It conceptualises anti-corruption as a form of social life. Second, it foregrounds the role of public narratives in stabilising expectations about what accountability looks like, who is responsible for it, and whether reform is imaginable. In this sense, anti-corruption narratives do not merely describe governance realities. They participate in producing them by shaping the interpretive frameworks through which citizens, institutions and intermediaries engage with questions of integrity and power. Treating anti-corruption as social life enables a more granular analysis of how legitimacy is constructed and contested across different communicative arenas.

2. From institutional failure to narrative governance

2.1. *Mainstream anti-corruption paradigms and their limits*

Mainstream anti-corruption paradigms, shaped by donor agencies, international financial institutions and transnational policy networks, have prioritised legal reform, institutional design, transparency mechanisms and enforcement capacity as the primary means of controlling corruption (Mungiu-Pippidi 2015; Rothstein and Varraich 2017). While these approaches have established important normative benchmarks, their effectiveness has been widely questioned in contexts marked by deep inequality, elite capture and fragmented accountability ecosystems. A recurring critique concerns the dominance of Global North-derived frameworks, which often assume impartial institutions and shared normative commitments that do not consistently hold in postcolonial political economies, limiting sensitivity to historically embedded power relations and governance practices in African states (Olivier De Sardan 2008). In practice, reforms are frequently introduced without reshaping incentive structures, elite coalitions or material inequalities, contributing to reform fatigue and public cynicism.

A complementary critique is offered by Olivier de Sardan's (2008) concept of practical norms, which argues that governance in many African contexts cannot be understood solely through formal institutional rules. Although legislation and administrative procedures establish official expectations, everyday governance is frequently shaped by informal routines, negotiated practices and socially accepted ways of 'getting things done.' These practical norms do not replace formal institutions, but coexist with, and frequently reshape them in implementation. Consequently, anti-corruption reforms may appear robust institutionally while producing limited practical change if they fail to engage with the informal social meanings through which governance is experienced. This insight reinforces the argument that anti-corruption is not merely an institutional phenomenon but socially constructed and culturally mediated. Understanding anti-corruption, therefore, requires attention not only to institutional arrangements, but also to the shared meanings, symbolic practices and public narratives through which accountability is legitimised, contested and normalised.

2.2. *Corruption as a social norm and collective action problem*

From this perspective, corruption persists not because individuals lack information or formal incentives, but because corrupt behaviour is perceived as normal, expected or unavoidable within a given system (Persson, Rothstein and Teorell 2013; Rothstein 2011). This reframing implies that change requires more than detection and punishment. It requires shifts in legitimacy, trust and perceptions of procedural fairness, so that rule-following is experienced as feasible and non-punitive (Rothstein and Varraich 2017).

2.3. *Narrative, symbolism and cultural meaning in governance*

Narratives structure moral sequencing, assign roles and establish expectations of resolution or failure, shaping how power, responsibility and legitimacy are interpreted (Bruner 1986; Polletta 2006). Recent work on state capture shows how accountability can be enabled or disabled through strategically divisive narratives that polarise publics and delegitimise oversight (David-Barrett 2025). Systematic analysis of how this meaning-making operates across news media, professional digital spaces and campaign artefacts in Sub-Saharan Africa remains limited. Collectively, this literature points to a missing analytical layer answering how anti-corruption becomes publicly meaningful. This gap is particularly salient in Sub-Saharan African contexts, where governance is often mediated through hybrid institutional arrangements, informal norms, and historically embedded power relations. In these contexts, the success or failure of anti-corruption efforts cannot be understood solely in terms of institutional design or enforcement capacity. Rather, it depends on how these efforts are interpreted, narrated and legitimised within the public sphere.

The current study responds by analysing anti-corruption as a form of narrative governance. Narrative governance, as used here, refers to the processes through which public meanings, symbols and story structures shape how governance is interpreted, legitimised and contested. By introducing Social Representations Theory (SRT) and Narrative Theory (NT) as analytical lenses, it seeks to bridge the gap, examining not only what anti-corruption initiatives do, but also how they are made meaningful, credible or dismissed within everyday discourse. This study makes three contributions. First, it extends SRT into the domain of governance by showing how anti-corruption is stabilised through shared symbolic forms. Second, it introduces narrative sequencing as a diagnostic tool for identifying where accountability stalls between exposure and consequence. Third, it demonstrates how different communicative arenas (media, professional digital platforms and campaigns) re-weight shared representations in context-specific ways. By examining anti-corruption as a system of socially shared meanings

rather than solely as an institutional challenge, the current study contributes to a growing body of governance scholarship that foregrounds the symbolic dimensions of democratic accountability.

3. SRT and NT

The current study combines SRT, NT and an adapted Proppian narrative structure to analyse how anti-corruption is publicly constructed, stabilised and mobilised across media and digital spaces. The combined approach enables analysis of both the shared meanings that circulate and the narrative structures through which accountability either gains momentum or stalls.

3.1. SRT

SRT provides the primary analytical lens for examining how anti-corruption becomes intelligible and actionable in public narrative. Originating in Moscovici's work on how expert knowledge is transformed into common-sense understanding through communication (Moscovici 1988),¹ SRT focuses on the social production of shared meanings that guide everyday reasoning and judgement. Two core processes underpin this transformation, anchoring and objectification. Anchoring situates unfamiliar phenomena within existing moral categories and cultural frames, enabling publics to recognise and evaluate complex governance issues. In anti-corruption narratives, this occurs when corruption and reform are framed through familiar binaries like clean versus corrupt, integrity versus rot, or public interest versus private gain. Objectification renders abstract principles tangible by crystallising them into concrete symbols, images and exemplars, like visual metaphors of corruption as a destructive force, tip-off mechanisms, or headline figures for recovered assets, making anti-corruption morally legible. SRT is particularly well-suited to analysing anti-corruption, because public understanding depends less on formal definitions than on socially circulating representations that stabilise what corruption is, who is responsible and what responses are conceivable (Joffe 2003; Mungiu-Pippidi 2015). In African governance contexts, where institutional distrust often coexists with strong moral expectations of leadership, these representations play a central role in shaping whether anti-corruption is perceived as futile, performative or transformative.

3.2. NT and moral framing

While SRT explains how meanings are stabilised, NT illuminates how those meanings are organised and mobilised through storytelling. Narratives structure events into moral sequences, assign roles, link actions across time and produce evaluations of responsibility and legitimacy (Bruner 1986). Anti-corruption narratives commonly rely on recognisable moral roles (heroes, villains and victims) and position audiences as judges or potential agents of action. Through this framing, narratives not only explain how corruption emerges, but also imply what kinds of responses are possible or warranted (Polletta 2006). Digital platforms add a performative dimension, enabling actors to publicly signal integrity, courage and reformist identity through professional and civic identity work.

3.3. Adapted Proppian quest arc for governance narratives

To analyse whether anti-corruption narratives merely circulate or generate momentum toward reform, this study draws on an adapted Proppian narrative structure as a conceptual heuristic (Miller 2012; Propp 1968). The value of this approach lies not in its formal structuralism, but in its capacity to foreground narrative movement, specifically the progression from problem identification to resolution. In governance contexts, this distinction is critical, as narratives that stall at exposure without consequence may weaken perceptions of accountability, while those that progress toward resolution reinforce the plausibility of reform. The Proppian sequence is, therefore, used to sensitise the analysis to questions of narrative momentum and closure, rather than as a rigid classificatory schema. The operationalisation of this heuristic within the empirical analysis is detailed in the section on analytical procedure.

The integration of SRT, NT and the adapted Proppian structure provides a multi-layered analytical framework with an effective tool that captures both the content and the dynamics of meaning-making. While SRT identifies the shared symbolic resources through which anti-corruption is rendered intelligible, NT explains how these resources are temporally organised into moral sequences, and the Proppian structure allows for the assessment of narrative progression or stagnation. This combination is particularly useful for analysing governance

¹ Writing about post-war France in the late 1950s, Moscovici (2008) described how Freudian psychoanalysis had moved beyond academic circles into newspapers, political debate and everyday conversation. Moscovici observed that different ideological groups reinterpreted the same scientific ideas in ways that aligned with their own values, revealing how knowledge changes as it circulates through public communication. This insight led Moscovici to ask how expert knowledge becomes transformed into common-sense understanding, forming the basis of SRT.

contexts characterised by uneven institutional performance, as it reveals how symbolic coherence can persist even where material outcomes are inconsistent or delayed.

4. Methodology and data

4.1. *Research design and epistemological position*

Guided by an interpretivist, narrative-oriented framework, the current study is structured around two research questions (RQ), which derive from a broader doctoral study employing a multi-method qualitative design that incorporates photovoice, semi-structured interviews and media analysis. RQ1 asks what social representations of anti-corruption circulate within grassroots narratives and practices across Sub-Saharan Africa. RQ2 examines how these representations shape trust-building, participatory governance and advocacy strategies within anti-corruption initiatives. The current study reports exclusively on the documentary component of that broader research programme, focusing on public anti-corruption narratives contained within news media, civil society campaign artefacts and professional digital platforms. The findings presented here should, therefore, be understood as one empirical strand contributing to the broader doctoral investigation.

The study adopts a qualitative, constructionist research design, grounded in the assumption that anti-corruption is not only an institutional practice, but a socially constructed field of meaning (Burr 2015; Denzin 1978). Rather than assessing institutional effectiveness or corruption outcomes, the analysis focuses on how anti-corruption is publicly narrated, symbolised and legitimised, and how these narratives shape expectations of accountability, participation and reform. Publicly visible narratives, including media reporting, professional commentary and campaign communication, are treated as key sites where shared understandings of anti-corruption are articulated and contested (Entman 2007; Polletta 2006). This approach aligns with SRT and NT, which prioritise collective sense-making over individual attitudes or private experience (Moscovici 2000; Riessman 2008).

4.2. *Dataset and case selection*

Empirical analysis draws on a corpus of 80 publicly facing texts, including grassroots-oriented campaign communication, between 2022 and 2025, a period marked by intensified governance scrutiny across Sub-Saharan Africa and the expanded use of digital platforms for civic engagement (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Bosch 2017). Purposive sampling included texts that focused primarily on anti-corruption or accountability, originated from recognised news media, civil society campaigns or professional digital platforms, and contained substantive narrative content rather than purely technical reporting. The sampled documents were subsequently analysed using SRT to identify processes of anchoring and objectification. The final corpus comprised 30 news articles, 40 LinkedIn posts and ten civil society campaign artefacts from across eighteen Sub-Saharan countries (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia), providing sufficient diversity to identify recurrent representational patterns across the corpus. South African cases feature prominently, reflecting the country's centrality to continental debates on state capture and democratic accountability (Shamsuddin 2023). The corpus intentionally spans multiple communicative arenas through which anti-corruption narratives circulate. News media capture the public mediation of accountability discourse; civil society campaign artefacts reflect advocacy narratives produced by organisations working directly with communities and citizens; and LinkedIn captures professional governance discourse among anti-corruption practitioners. Together, these materials illuminate how anti-corruption narratives circulate between institutional, civic and professional publics.

LinkedIn is treated analytically as a professional-elite digital public sphere used by anti-corruption practitioners rather than a representative grassroots space, capturing how governance norms and reformist identities are publicly performed (Marwick 2013; Mutsaers 2016). This distinction is analytically significant. While news media and campaign artefacts often address broader publics, LinkedIn content reflects how governance norms, reformist identities and ethics are constructed and performed within practitioner networks. These spaces play a critical intermediary role, translating institutional discourse into publicly visible narratives that signal credibility, expertise and alignment with global governance standards. Including LinkedIn in the dataset enables the analysis to capture not only grassroots-oriented messaging, but also the discursive practices through which anti-corruption is legitimised within transnational and practitioner communities.

4.3. *Analytical procedure*

All material analysed was publicly accessible and handled in accordance with ethical guidance for digital trace research (Markham and Buchanan 2012). Analysis proceeded through iterative qualitative coding combining deductive and inductive strategies (Braun and Clarke 2006). Initial coding identified recurring symbols, metaphors, narrative roles and calls to action. Subsequent cycles applied the theoretical framework to examine anchoring and objectification (Joffe 2003; Moscovici 2000), moral framing and narrative sequencing (Bruner 1986; Riessman 2008).

An adapted Proppian Quest Arc (Need → Go → Search → Find → Return → Change) was used as an interpretive coding framework to analyse narrative progression. Each text was examined to assess whether and how these stages were present, partially present, or absent. Coding did not assume a fixed or linear structure. Rather, the framework was applied heuristically to identify whether narratives progressed beyond exposure (Need/Search) toward resolution and transformation (Return/Change). Attention was given to points of narrative stalling, where texts emphasised investigation or procedural activity without corresponding evidence of outcome or consequence. This approach enabled systematic examination of variation in narrative momentum across cases.

5. Findings: The social life of anti-corruption narratives

5.1. *Dominant symbolic and narrative motifs*

Across the Sub-Saharan dataset, anti-corruption is publicly constructed not simply as a technical response to institutional failure, but as a defence of democratic accountability articulated through shared symbols, metaphors and narrative structures. Anchoring and objectification stabilise common-sense understandings of what corruption is, who bears responsibility and what forms of action against it are legitimate (Joffe 2003; Moscovici 2000). These processes are visible across media reporting, digital practitioner commentary and campaign artefacts, though their sequencing and symbolic emphasis vary across contexts. South Africa emerges not as an exception in representational form, but as a symbolically dense case in which procedural visibility, most notably through the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture (the Zondo Commission), often substitutes for narrative closure, while in other Sub-Saharan contexts, outcome visibility is more prominent.

The six representations were retained because they occurred consistently across the corpus, functioned as socially shared interpretive resources and demonstrated clear evidence of both anchoring and objectification. First, each appeared consistently across multiple texts within the documentary corpus, spanning news media, civil society campaign artefacts and digital commentary. Second, each functioned as a shared interpretive resource through which anti-corruption was explained, justified, criticised or imagined. Third, each demonstrated evidence of both anchoring and objectification. Across the corpus, anti-corruption was repeatedly anchored in familiar moral concepts like fairness, responsibility, justice, transparency and collective responsibility, while these meanings were objectified through tangible symbols, institutions, campaign artefacts, legal processes and public events. The resulting representations, therefore, extend beyond descriptive themes to constitute shared systems of meaning through which accountability is understood and communicated.

In addition to identifying anchoring and objectification, each representation was analysed as a socially shared system of meaning by examining five interrelated dimensions: (1) what anti-corruption is represented as; (2) the moral logic through which the representation is anchored; (3) the symbols, practices and institutions through which it is objectified; (4) the positioning of social actors within the representation; and (5) the tensions and contradictions through which the representation is negotiated. This analytical structure reflects the central concern of SRT with how societies collectively construct and sustain shared understandings of complex social phenomena.

Collective Responsibility – Across Sub-Saharan Africa, anti-corruption is consistently anchored in collective moral obligation through direct address to citizens. A campaign poster produced by the Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda (ACCU) to mark International Anti-Corruption Day (9 December 2023) asks, ‘What should be done to end corruption in Uganda?’ (CA-02)². The open-ended phrasing positions the public as responsible moral agents rather than passive recipients of reform. This representation anchors anti-corruption within collective responsibility, through which anti-corruption is understood as a shared civic obligation rather than the responsibility of government alone. This representation is objectified through community meetings, campaign posters, partnership agreements, public consultations and collaborative advocacy initiatives that render collective accountability visible. The following examples illustrate how these

² Document identifiers (e.g. CA = campaign artefact; NE = news article; LK = LinkedIn post) refer to items in the documentary corpus and correspond to the full source details listed in Appendix A. As these materials comprise the study’s primary dataset, document identifiers are used in place of conventional page reference.

symbolic resources communicate coalition-building as both a practical and moral response to corruption. Campaign materials from across the region reinforce this framing by linking corruption to public loss and institutional failure. For example, the Government of Uganda's National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) 2019/20–2023/24 Assessment Report and the Prevalence of Corruption 2022/2023 report (CA-05) emphasise rebuilding ethics, integrity and public accountability rather than relying on a single campaign slogan. Here, anti-corruption is objectified through concrete social and institutional consequences, anchoring responsibility in communal harm rather than abstract institutional failure. In South Africa, collective responsibility is articulated through professional and institutional identity rather than mass mobilisation. LinkedIn commentary states explicitly that 'it is everyone's responsibility to stand up for *#anticorruption*' (LK-16). However, the placement of this claim within professional narrative re-anchors collective duty within organisational roles, ethical leadership and institutional conduct rather than popular mobilisation.

Everyday Accountability – Across the region's media reporting, accountability is objectified as an ongoing institutional process. News coverage highlights the establishment of coordinated anti-corruption mechanisms and enforcement structures, for example, through multi-agency task forces and institutional coordination frameworks categorised as sustained efforts to combat corruption in Kenya (NE-02; NE-03). These formulations normalise oversight as continuous and procedural, anchoring accountability in institutional practice rather than exceptional intervention. This familiar expectation of routine oversight is objectified through references to task forces, investigative mechanisms, and public declarations of impartial enforcement. In South Africa and comparable contexts, this representation is reinforced through declarative procedural signalling of enforcement intent. The assertion in Kenya that 'there will be no sacred cows' (NE-02) objectifies accountability through the promise of impartial enforcement, anchoring reform in institutional resolve rather than episodic action.

Justice Through Law – Rights-based accountability appears across the dataset where judicial authority is invoked. Reporting emphasises the role of courts in constraining executive action, with coverage noting that a High Court in Kenya 'issued conservatory orders' halting executive implementation of an anti-corruption taskforce (NE-04). Public understanding is organised around constitutional equality before the law, through which accountability is understood as a legal, rather than political obligation. This representation is objectified through court judgments, conservatory orders, constitutional provisions and judicial institutions that render legal accountability publicly visible. Similarly, law-enforcement narratives reinforce this framing through statements in Nigeria like 'no one is above the law' (NE-01), which objectify accountability through legal equality and procedural fairness.

Civic Courage – Across the region, whistleblowing and exposure are positioned as critical mechanisms of accountability. Reporting and commentary highlight the importance of citizen reporting, investigative journalism and institutional tip-off systems, for example, where anti-corruption efforts are described as operating 'one tip-off at a time' in uncovering fraud and procurement irregularities in South Africa (NE-09). In parallel, LinkedIn discourse reflects growing scepticism about the effectiveness of these mechanisms in the absence of systemic follow-through. Posts referencing repeated investigations and limited outcomes emphasise frustration with performative accountability processes, with commentary questioning whether investigations translate into substantive change (LK-12). This reframes whistleblowing as necessary, but insufficient without institutional responsiveness. The familiar moral category is civic courage, in which citizens are understood to have a moral responsibility to expose wrongdoing despite personal risk. This representation is objectified through whistleblower hotlines, investigative journalism, reporting mechanisms, and documented investigations that transform moral obligation into visible public action.

Tangible Accountability – Completed enforcement actions operate as symbolic proof points across Sub-Saharan Africa. Media coverage highlights measurable outcomes like asset recovery and investigations, for example, reporting that anti-corruption bodies have recovered significant financial resources through measurable outcomes including 'GH¢128 million in assets and cash recovered or preserved' in Ghana (NE-07). These figures objectify accountability through quantifiable outcomes, anchoring reform in visible consequences. This representation anchors anti-corruption in the expectation that accountability should produce tangible consequences. Rather than valuing procedural compliance alone, participants associated successful anti-corruption with visible evidence that wrongdoing had resulted in sanctions, recovery or institutional reform. This representation is objectified through recovered assets, prosecutions, public reports, financial recoveries and other observable outcomes that render institutional effectiveness visible. In contrast, where these outcomes are absent or contested, narratives rely more heavily on procedural assurances and institutional commitments to sustain public trust.

Ethical Renewal – Regional campaign materials project reform into aspirational futures through normative and value-based messaging. Rather than explicitly invoking a single phrase like 'a future without corruption', artefacts emphasise ethical transformation and integrity. For example, the 2021 International Anti-Corruption Day campaign poster produced by Ethiopian federal anti-corruption

institutions and partner organisations promotes the theme ‘Ethical Leadership for Corruption-Free Ethiopia’ (CA-06), while the policy paper by Chemonges (n.d.), ‘Striving for Integrity: Addressing Institutional Redundancy in Uganda’s Fight Against Corruption’ (CA-07) similarly frames integrity as the foundation for institutional renewal. These materials anchor present action in a projected transformation of governance systems. In South Africa, future-oriented narratives are more cautious, with commentary emphasising gradual reform and institutional rebuilding rather than immediate transformation, signalling a shift from promised change to conditional and incremental progress. Public understanding is organised around ethical renewal, through which anti-corruption is understood as a pathway towards a more just and accountable society. This representation is objectified through campaign slogans, aspirational messaging, public commitments, integrity pledges and reform narratives that make alternative governance futures imaginable.

Importantly, these representations do not operate in isolation. They interact to form a coherent narrative ecosystem in which moral obligation, procedural action and anticipated outcomes are mutually reinforcing. For example, collective responsibility gains traction when supported by tangible accountability, while civic courage narratives depend on the expectation that institutional systems will respond. Where these elements align, anti-corruption narratives generate a sense of coherence and plausibility. Where they diverge, for instance, when strong moral appeals are not matched by tangible accountability, narratives risk producing dissonance, contributing to public scepticism and disengagement.

These representations also illustrate cognitive polyphasia. Participants simultaneously expressed strong normative commitments to democratic accountability while recognising political capture, institutional weakness and uneven implementation. Rather than undermining the representations, these tensions reveal how competing understandings of governance coexist within everyday common-sense reasoning about corruption and reform.

Collectively, the Sub-Saharan dataset demonstrates that anti-corruption circulates through six recurring social representations. South Africa does not diverge from these representations, but re-weights them, with the Zondo Commission operating as a central symbolic anchor that intensifies procedural visibility while exposing the limits of narrative closure. This comparative pattern strengthens the explanatory power of SRT by showing how shared representational forms are locally re-anchored and differentially objectified across governance contexts. The documentary component of the study identifies six dominant social representations of public anti-corruption narratives across civic, media and digital commentary in Sub-Saharan Africa, which are anchored in everyday moral categories and objectified through symbols, binaries and narrative protagonists that render anti-corruption intelligible and actionable within public-facing civic narratives.

5.2. *Narrative effects on governance imaginaries*

Whereas SRT explains how anti-corruption becomes socially meaningful, NT explains how these meanings are organised into stories that distribute agency, establish causality and shape expectations of accountability. Across the corpus, narratives consistently positioned protagonists, antagonists and institutional actors within recurring moral sequences that moved, or failed to move, from exposure towards consequence. NT therefore contributes more than thematic description by revealing how anti-corruption stories generate, sustain or undermine expectations of democratic accountability. While these effects are visible across contexts, their narrative expression differs markedly between South Africa and other Sub-Saharan cases, particularly in how accountability is made visible and how reform trajectories are imagined.

These differences are not merely stylistic but reflect deeper variations in how institutional credibility is constructed and sustained. In contexts where enforcement outcomes are visible and regularly communicated, narratives reinforce a causal link between wrongdoing and consequence. In contrast, where procedural visibility dominates without corresponding outcome confirmation, narratives tend to emphasise process legitimacy while deferring judgement on effectiveness. This distinction is critical, as it shapes whether publics interpret governance systems as functioning, even if imperfectly, or as symbolically active, but substantively ineffective.

Trust-building through visible consequence – Trust is most strongly reinforced where anti-corruption narratives foreground credible signals of enforcement and accountability, whether through outcomes or authoritative institutional action. In several Sub-Saharan contexts, media reporting links accountability to demonstrable institutional commitment and coordination. For example, in Ghana, a news report emphasises the importance of institutional independence in sustaining accountability, highlighting that ‘strong institutions... must be given real independence’ (NE-08), framing enforcement as dependent on credible and autonomous governance structures. Similarly, narratives of accountability are reinforced through regional cooperation and collective commitment, like a news report on the Southern African Development Community’s (SADC) commemoration of two decades of regional anti-corruption cooperation and the strengthening of legal and institutional frameworks across member states (NE-11). These formulations objectify accountability by

presenting it as embedded within durable institutional arrangements, providing audiences with reasons to believe that governance systems can enforce integrity over time. Trust-building is further reinforced through symbolic representations that make institutional performance publicly visible. For example, the International Governance Institute's (IGI) 2022 Cameroon Country Report (CA-10) documents integrity education, citizen monitoring initiatives, public-sector capacity building and multi-stakeholder partnerships, reporting that more than 16,000 lives have been influenced to live and work with integrity. By presenting measurable programme outputs and institutional achievements, the report objectifies accountability through visible evidence of implementation rather than aspiration alone. These representations translate abstract commitments into observable governance practices that can reinforce public confidence in institutional integrity. They translate abstract institutional commitments into recognisable signals of intent to reform. By contrast, where enforcement outcomes are less visible, trust is constructed through assertions of institutional intent and reform orientation rather than demonstrable consequence, resulting in confidence that remains conditional on future proof of effectiveness. The familiar moral category is that legitimate institutions act fairly and consistently. This expectation is objectified through visible institutional arrangements, enforcement actions and public commitments that provide tangible evidence of accountability.

Participation through moral identification – Participation across Sub-Saharan Africa is frequently encouraged through moral appeals that position citizens as necessary actors in reform. Campaign messaging explicitly links civic responsibility to anti-corruption action through public awareness campaigns and engagement initiatives that frame integrity as a shared societal responsibility. For example, the 2024 Zambia Anti-Corruption Conference on the Extractives Sector, organised by Transparency International Zambia and the Chandler Foundation, encouraged collective engagement by bringing together government, civil society, the private sector and development partners to strengthen integrity and accountability within the extractives industry (CA-08). These forms of moral address transform anti-corruption from an institutional mandate into a collective civic obligation, encouraging individuals to see themselves as participants in governance reform. These appeals operate by converting grievance into moral responsibility and positioning citizens as co-producers of accountability. In South Africa and across professionalised contexts, participation is more often articulated through institutional and professional identity than through mass mobilisation. LinkedIn commentary frames participation through support for investigative journalism and institutional accountability, emphasising the importance of reporting that 'shine[s] a light on stories that hold power to account' (LK-21). Here, participation is anchored in professional norms, transparency and accountability practices rather than public protest or campaign activism, reinforcing a more institutionalised form of civic engagement.

Advocacy through symbolic portability – Across the dataset, advocacy gains traction through symbolically portable artefacts that condense complex governance claims into shareable cues. Campaign material frequently uses visual metaphors and simplified messages to communicate corruption's effects and required responses. For example, the 'What Kills Corruption?' campaign poster developed through the International Governance Institute (IGI), FITCAM and the University of Buea in Cameroon depicts corruption as a cockroach to be eliminated, transforming an abstract governance problem into a familiar visual metaphor that communicates the need for integrity and collective action (CA-01). These representations translate complex governance failures into tangible and emotionally resonant symbols that can circulate across community spaces and media platforms. By contrast, digital advocacy relies less on emotive symbolism and more on institutional and evidentiary framing. LinkedIn posts consistently emphasise accountability through oversight, transparency and adherence to professional and legal standards (LK-26), rather than through condensed symbolic messaging. These narratives foreground due process, institutional integrity and evidence-based reform, positioning advocacy within professional and policy-oriented discourse. As a result, while these narratives travel effectively within digital practitioner networks, they are less symbolically condensed and therefore less portable across broader civic audiences than campaign artefacts.

Narrative momentum and stalling – Using the adapted Proppian narrative structure, Sub-Saharan artefacts that foreground completed enforcement more readily progress towards narrative closure. Media reporting that confirms enforcement outcomes enables audiences to imagine the stages of Return and Change, reinforcing the plausibility of reform through visible institutional follow-through. By contrast, narratives that emphasise legal contestation or procedural delay tend to stall before these final stages. Across the dataset, reporting frequently highlights ongoing investigations, institutional review processes and unresolved legal proceedings, like NE-15 in Kenya and LK-19 in Ghana, without confirming substantive outcomes. While this language signals institutional activity, it suspends narrative resolution. Exposure and investigation dominate the narrative, yet the absence of visible consequence weakens momentum, leaving accountability framed as an ongoing process rather than an achieved outcome.

Drawing on the documentary corpus, this analysis contributes to answering RQ2 by demonstrating how public-facing narratives frame trust-building, participatory governance and advocacy within anti-corruption initiatives. The campaign artefacts analysed, from

the Ethiopian International Anti-Corruption Day campaign, the Zambian Anti-Corruption Conference materials and the Cameroonian What Kills Corruption? Poster, illustrate how visual and symbolic communication complements institutional discourse by making integrity, accountability and civic responsibility publicly visible. While these narrative mechanisms do not replace legal or institutional reform, they shape how governance is interpreted across contexts, as credible and consequential, or as procedurally active yet substantively unresolved, an interpretive dimension central to democratic accountability (Alexander 2006; Persson et al. 2013; Polletta 2006).

6. Discussion: Implications for governance and anti-corruption practice

The findings demonstrate that anti-corruption operates simultaneously as an institutional practice and as a socially shared system of meaning. Across the corpus, accountability was represented not simply through governance mechanisms themselves but through the symbolic meanings attached to those mechanisms. Courts, investigative agencies, community meetings, journalists, whistleblowers and campaign artefacts functioned as objectifications through which abstract moral ideas about justice, fairness, responsibility and democratic accountability became publicly recognisable. This distinction is central to SRT because the study explains not governance institutions themselves but the shared meanings through which those institutions become socially intelligible.

However, building on the findings, the study demonstrates that anti-corruption operates not only as an institutional field, but as a narrative and symbolic arena in which democratic accountability is rendered credible or hollow through public meanings. Narrative analysis brings these upstream conditions of legitimacy into view, revealing the metaphors, icons, moral binaries and protagonist roles through which anti-corruption becomes common sense (Joffe 2003; Moscovici 2008; Polletta 2006). From a collective-action perspective, these representations shape expectations of reciprocity, fairness and enforcement, which in turn shape whether anti-corruption is experienced as a shared civic project or dismissed as performative politics (Mungiu-Pippidi 2015; Persson et al. 2013; Rothstein and Varraich 2017).

The findings also extend ongoing debates about the limits of technocratic anti-corruption approaches. By demonstrating how narrative coherence and symbolic visibility condition the perceived effectiveness of reform, the study highlights the importance of aligning institutional action with communication strategy. Anti-corruption interventions that fail to produce or communicate intelligible outcomes risk being interpreted as performative, regardless of their technical merits. Conversely, even incremental reforms can gain legitimacy when embedded within narratives that clearly link action to consequence. This emphasises the need for a more integrated approach that considers institutional design and narrative construction as mutually constitutive elements of governance reform.

More broadly, the findings qualify that narratives should not be viewed merely as communication tools that accompany governance reform. Rather, they function as part of the interpretive infrastructure through which governance itself becomes publicly intelligible. Institutions derive legitimacy not only from their formal authority or legal mandate, but also from the stories, symbols and collective expectations that enable citizens to recognise institutional actions as credible, fair and consequential. From this perspective, narratives that stall before reaching resolution represent more than a communication problem. They constitute a governance challenge, because they weaken the shared interpretive frameworks through which accountability is recognised, legitimised and sustained.

The Proppian heuristic proved particularly useful in identifying points of narrative stalling, where exposure did not translate into consequence. A central implication is the strategic importance of symbolic beacons and positive outliers. Across the corpus, these frequently appear as portable icons and symbolic cues (anti-corruption slogans, visual metaphors of corruption as a destructive force and integrity-based messaging), moral protagonists (whistleblowers, investigative journalists, reform-oriented actors) and outcome signals (asset recovery, prosecutions and enforcement actions). These elements counter fatalistic narratives of impunity by supplying concrete story components that populate the Return and Change stages of the adapted Proppian narrative structure, preventing narratives from stalling at exposure without resolution (Miller 2012; Propp 1968; Riessman 2008).

In South Africa's post-state capture context, moral clarity co-exists with deep cynicism. Despite the revelatory force of the Zondo Commission, the absence of sustained visible prosecutions, institutional repair, protected whistleblowing and credible transparency mechanisms has limited the restoration of civic efficacy and trust (Rothstein and Varraich 2017; Shamsuddin 2023). These dynamics echo scholarship on state capture, which shows that accountability often fails not at the level of exposure, but at the stage of narrative consolidation, where revelations must translate into consequences that restore moral and institutional order. David-Barrett's (2025) analysis of strategically divisive narratives further demonstrates how polarisation and identity-based framing can neutralise accountability by recasting institutional scrutiny as partisan attack rather than democratic defence. In contrast, the anti-corruption narratives identified in this study seek to counter these divisive dynamics by foregrounding procedural visibility, institutional action, and concrete proof points of enforcement. Whether these counter-narratives can sustain reform momentum ultimately depends on their capacity to populate the Return

and Change stages of the governance narrative arc, where exposure is followed by demonstrable consequence and normative restoration. This demonstrates the value of narrative sequencing as an analytical lens for diagnosing gaps between exposure and accountability in governance systems.

For policymakers, the findings suggest that anti-corruption strategies should be designed with public meaning in mind. Communicating intelligible outcomes, narrating procedural fairness, and clarifying reform sequences can stabilise expectations that enforcement is impartial and participation rational (Fox 2015; Persson et al. 2013). For civil society and media actors, narrative governance offers a practical repertoire, linking moral appeals to concrete participation pathways while avoiding oversimplified binaries that risk reinforcing cynicism when promised change fails to materialise (Entman 2007; Polletta 2006). Strengthening democratic promise requires not only stronger institutions, but credible, plural and outcome-linked narratives that keep reform imaginable while remaining alert to manipulation and anti-corruption theatre (Alexander 2006; Mungiu-Pippidi 2015).

7. Conclusion

This study has argued that anti-corruption is best understood not simply as an institutional or legal endeavour but as a socially shared system of meaning through which democratic accountability is imagined, communicated and enacted. By integrating SRT with NT, the analysis demonstrates that public understandings of anti-corruption are organised around six recurring representations: Collective Responsibility, Everyday Accountability, Justice through Law, Civic Courage, Tangible Accountability and Ethical Renewal. Together these representations provide common interpretive resources through which citizens, practitioners and institutions make sense of corruption, assign responsibility, negotiate legitimacy and imagine governance reform.

While laws and enforcement remain indispensable, their effectiveness is mediated by the credibility of narratives. Reforms gain traction when institutional action is rendered visible through intelligible stories of process and outcome, and when abstract principles like integrity are anchored in everyday moral reasoning. By contrast, narratives that stall at exposure without resolution weaken trust, even where formal reforms exist. South African cases are especially instructive, illustrating how prolonged gaps between revelation and consequence can undermine democratic promise despite strong constitutional frameworks.

The findings emphasise the importance of integrating narrative and cultural analysis into governance research and practice. Effective anti-corruption strategies must attend to meaning-making alongside institutional design, cultivating visible outcomes, credible symbolic beacons and participatory pathways that sustain reform momentum. Future research could extend this analysis by examining how these narrative dynamics evolve, particularly in response to major governance events, policy shifts or high-profile corruption cases. Longitudinal analysis would provide further insight into how narrative momentum is sustained or disrupted, and how shifts in symbolic representation correspond to changes in public trust and institutional legitimacy. Additionally, comparative work across the BRICS countries could illuminate whether similar narrative patterns emerge in other governance contexts or whether distinct representational logics prevail.

As one component of a broader multi-method doctoral study, the documentary corpus demonstrates how public narratives contribute to the social construction of anti-corruption across Sub-Saharan Africa. Together, these strands will contribute to a richer understanding of how anti-corruption is socially represented, enacted and contested across Sub-Saharan Africa.

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Appendix A

Source_ID	Media_Type	Outlet/Author	Country/Region	Date	URL_or_Reference	Headline/Title
CA-01	Campaign	IGI/FITCAM with University of Buea	Cameroon	2011/01/01	IGI (International Governance Institute), FITCAM, and University of Buea. 2011. What Kills Corruption? Campaign poster. University of Buea Integrity and Anti-Corruption Support Project, Cameroon.	What kills corruption? (Poster)
CA-02	Campaign	Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda (ACCU)	Uganda	2023/12/09	Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda (ACCU). 2023. International Anti-Corruption Day: What Should Be Done to End Corruption in Uganda? Campaign poster, December 9, 2023.	International Anti-Corruption Day: What should be done to end corruption in Uganda?
CA-03	Campaign	AminArts (editorial cartoon)	Somalia	n.d.	AminArts (Amin Amir). n.d. Elite Profiteering from Famine. Editorial cartoon, Somalia.	Cartoon: elite profiteering from famine
CA-04	Campaign	Editorial cartoon (attributed to Nigerian context)	Nigeria	n.d.	Anonymous. n.d. No Funding for Police Operations. Editorial cartoon, Nigeria.	Cartoon: “No funding for police operations”
CA-05	Campaign	Government of Uganda	Uganda	2023/11/01	Government of Uganda. 2023. National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) 2019/20–2023/24 Assessment Report; Prevalence of Corruption 2022/2023. Kampala: Government of Uganda.	NACS 2019/20–2023/24; Assessment Report; Prevalence of Corruption 2022/2023
CA-06	Campaign	Ethiopia Federal bodies & partners (IAC Day poster)	Ethiopia	2021/12/09	Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (Ethiopia) and partner institutions. 2021. Ethical Leadership for Corruption-Free Ethiopia. International Anti-Corruption Day campaign poster, December 9, 2021.	Ethical Leadership for Corruption-Free Ethiopia
CA-07	Campaign	Chemonges, Timothy M., (Policy paper)	Uganda	n.d.	Chemonges, Timothy M., n.d. Striving for Integrity: Addressing Institutional Redundancy in Uganda’s Fight Against Corruption. Policy Paper.	Policy Paper: “Striving for Integrity: Addressing institutional redundancy in Uganda’s Fight Against Corruption”
CA-08	Campaign	Transparency International Zambia; Chandler Foundation	Zambia	2024/11/26	Transparency International Zambia and Chandler Foundation. 2024. 2024 Zambia Anti-Corruption Conference (Extractives). Conference campaign materials, November 26, 2024.	2024 Zambia Anti-Corruption Conference (Extractives)
CA-09	Campaign	IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings (with R. Lifuka et al.)	Global	2022/10/11	Lifuka, Reuben, et al. 2022. Unmasking Control: Beneficial Ownership Transparency. IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings side event, Washington, DC, October 11, 2022	Unmasking Control: Beneficial Ownership Transparency
CA-10	Campaign	International Governance Institute (IGI) Cameroon	Cameroon	2022/12/31	International Governance Institute (IGI). 2022. 2022 Cameroon Country Report. Yaoundé: International Governance Institute.	2022 Cameroon Country Report (IGI)

Source_ID	Media_Type	Outlet/Author	Country/Region	Date	URL_or_Reference	Headline/Title
LK-01	LinkedIn	Christophe Kouamé	Côte d'Ivoire	2023/09/20	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/christophe-kouame-87759758_localelected-activity-7112167811585556481-L35e/	Local elected officials: after your brilliant election, the time has come to declare your assets
LK-02	LinkedIn	Daniel Eriksson	Madagascar	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/erikssond_madagascar-activity-7212406195213471744-Cs_V/	Spotlight on corruption in Madagascar – interview share
LK-03	LinkedIn	W.K. Adeniyi	Nigeria	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/w-k-adeniyi-a16152130_the-intervlog-channel-an-international-activity-7204875966056189952-MveD/	Applauding reps who reject luxury SUVs
LK-04	LinkedIn	Maria Ndapandula Nambahu	Namibia	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/maria-ndapandula-nambahu-705303142_nogc2024-owncontent-activity-7232412461461585921-tvgd/	Transparency in Namibia's oil & gas – lessons from Fishrot
LK-05	LinkedIn	Aideen Gilmore	Rwanda	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/aideen-gilmore-102a9150_thanks-for-hosting-us-ti-rwanda-activity-7302429909119827968-XYSp/	Workshop with TI-Rwanda on open & accountable budgeting
LK-06	LinkedIn	Jean Claude Agbortem	Cameroon	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/agbortemobi_barrister-akere-muna-a-fearless-advocate-activity-7239284041638658048-0bih/	Akere Muna – fearless anti-corruption advocate
LK-07	LinkedIn	Alioune Camara	Senegal	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/aliounec_fmi-pour-les-blancs-fmi-pour-les-noirs-activity-7340117508365996032-R34A/	IMF fairness & Senegal's reforms – debate post
LK-08	LinkedIn	Jeffrey Yates	Liberia	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/jeffrey-n-yates-mba-cfe-cfip-b376663b_national-liberia-current-activity-7291200170770268160-yj19/	National Integrity Forum actions on fees transparency
LK-09	LinkedIn	Bright Simons	Ghana	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/bright-simons-1390432_1-the-former-boss-of-ghanas-fuels-market-activity-7352011999943286785-PG8b/	Why detailed narratives matter in OSP prosecutions
LK-10	LinkedIn	Zoe Leoudaki	Ghana	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/zoe-leoudaki-7b59a810_ghana-votes-for-change-activity-7273675696655253504-0JUW/	Ghana votes for change – will new president curb corruption?
LK-11	LinkedIn	Emmanuel K. Bensah Jr.	Ghana/AU	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/ekbensah_for-immediate-release-hon-kwami-edem-senanu-activity-7056677352403030016-f8oU/	Press release: Ghanaian sworn to AU Advisory Board Against Corruption
LK-12	LinkedIn	'Fisayo Soyombo	Nigeria	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/fisayo-soyombo-04376630_i-read-that-interior-minister-olubunmi-tunji-ojo-activity-7245098405583048706-IIIF/	'It's all cruise'—on performative prison 'investigations'
LK-13	LinkedIn	Auwal Sani	Nigeria	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/auwal-sani-5a1853b7_policy-conversation-on-anti-corruption-crusade-activity-7277727877888962560-X4qZ/	Policy conversation on anti-corruption—key takeaways

Source_ID	Media_Type	Outlet/Author	Country/Region	Date	URL_or_Reference	Headline/Title
LK-14	LinkedIn	Olanrewaju Suraju/HEDA	Nigeria	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/olanrewaju-suraju-0807143_the-rate-of-corruption-at-the-sub-national-activity-7204093993587015680-7Ynj/	HEDA Space: corruption at sub-national level
LK-15	LinkedIn	Gabriel Ani	Nigeria	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/gabrielanijr_judicial-corruption-undermining-nigerias-activity-7354201047151632385-Ro41/	CISLAC: judicial corruption undermines anti-graft fight
LK-16	LinkedIn	Hamzat Lawal	Nigeria	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/hamzat-lawal-85409129_anticorruption-activity-6967932639085236224-9VIy/	Stand up for #anticorruption (Hausa video)
LK-17	LinkedIn	Søren Vester Haldrup	East & Southern Africa	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/s%C3%B8ren-vester-haldrup-87159a57_call-for-proposals-activity-7351594583950016515-zdvX/	Call for proposals: civil society vs illicit financial flows
LK-18	LinkedIn	Kavisha Pillay	South Africa	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/kavisha-pillay-44745b61_why-does-it-still-feel-as-if-were-losing-activity-7049456608996659200-GvR2/	Integrity is the antidote we need
LK-19	LinkedIn	Heather Marquette	Ghana	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/heather-marquette-1331903_policing-corruption-or-corrupted-policing-activity-7283064351916195841-VErS/	Policing corruption or corrupted policing? New paper
LK-20	LinkedIn	Wayne Duvenage	South Africa	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/wayneduvenage_south-africa-must-substantially-intensify-activity-7245275029259665408-7sDr/	South Africa must intensify the fight against corruption
LK-21	LinkedIn	Steven Zwane/ Absa Group	Pan-Africa	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/steventotiezwane_absa-yourstorymatters-activity-7258752287001509889-WvR7/	Saluting investigative journalists – Absa x Wits CJ
LK-22	LinkedIn	Kabwe Chongo	Zambia	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/kabwe-chongo-k-55472112a_chapteronefoundation-cofzambia-activity-7034535585503428608-aAoz/	Chapter One Foundation: standing for constitutionalism
LK-23	LinkedIn	Nicodemus Minde	Tanzania	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/nicodemus-minde-50583657_why-is-samia-struggling-to-sustain-reforms-activity-7233371959042990080-r5Sa/	Why is Samia struggling to sustain reforms?
LK-24	LinkedIn	Mpoki Thomson	Tanzania	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/mpoki-thomson-4482514a_will-tanzania-rejoin-the-ogp-tanzania-initially-activity-7284159480156622848-ab3m/	Will Tanzania rejoin the OGP?
LK-25	LinkedIn	Janet Ngombalu	Kenya	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/janet-ngombalu-7b423726_transparency-taxpayers-publicfinance-activity-7312475597622972416-Iqu2/	Transparency for taxpayers in public finance
LK-26	LinkedIn	Samuel Kariuki Gitonga	Kenya	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/samuel-kariuki-gitonga-98274b10b_justiceforboniface-stoppoliticalpersecution-activity-7353735634856960000-sbVw/	#JusticeForBoniface – due process concerns

Source_ID	Media_Type	Outlet/Author	Country/Region	Date	URL_or_Reference	Headline/Title
LK-27	LinkedIn	Pamela Laourou	Ghana (focus)	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/pamela-laourou-00a701180_flashbackfriday-activity-7356977645252751362-3fd2	Reclaiming stolen wealth & rebuilding trust
LK-28	LinkedIn	Geraldine A. Itana	Namibia	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/geraldine-a-itana-057543a7_goodgovernance-ethicaleadership-anticorruption-activity-7364361762764210176-z0k6	ACC/UNDP ethics workshops – onwards and upwards
LK-29	LinkedIn	Andrew Page Wood (sharing Oladele Dosunmu)	PanAfrica/UK history	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/andrew-page-wood-34384bb_oladelethoughts-africa-africadiaspora-activity-7363808755337019392-TXeh	The silent robbery—Britain's wealth & colonial loot
LK-30	LinkedIn	Maurice Nyamunga	Pan-Africa	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/maurice-nyamunga-01096872_an-open-letter-to-leaders-stop-the-rot-of-activity-7364751532514332672-G3H6	Open letter to leaders: stop the rot
LK-31	LinkedIn	Terence M. Yhip	Senegal (comparative)	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/terence-m-yhip-066244121_senegal-president-exempts-himself-from-new-activity-7361971303051898880-tJNH/	Asset declaration debate & 'tone at the top'
LK-32	LinkedIn	Dina Boyele K.	—	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/activity-7363477842644320258-KpvK/	Why corruption awareness can be a matter of survival
LK-33	LinkedIn	Grace Van Niekerk (UWC Law Librarian)	Brazil (lessons)/SA audience	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/grace-van-niekerk-uwclaw-librarian-1608a755_the-fight-against-systemic-corruption-activity-7361365690508894208-drVG/	The Fight Against Systemic Corruption—Lessons from Brazil
LK-34	LinkedIn	Uven Moodley	South Africa	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/uvnmoodley_r25k-to-buy-a-teaching-job-probe-to-flush-activity-7363467986520727553-DUzc/	R25k to buy a teaching job? Ghost teachers probe
LK-35	LinkedIn	Juliet Etefe	Ghana	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/juliet-etefe-1a1b54187_amend-anti-corruption-laws-to-close-loopholes-activity-7363728376353771520-knii/	Amend anti-corruption laws to close loopholes
LK-36	LinkedIn	Nwichi Daniel Ikechukwu	Nigeria	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/nwichidaniel_anti-corruption-an-indispensable-value-for-activity-7362404811830345728-Smke/	Anticorruption: an indispensable value for growth
LK-37	LinkedIn	Samuel Tadesse	Ethiopia (Addis Ababa)	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/samuel-tadesse-31256a35b_goodgovernance-transparency-publicfinance-activity-7363444431422636032-1wMU/	Addis bans gov't meetings in hotels—antiwaste step
LK-38	LinkedIn	Farhia Noor	PanAfrica	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/farhia-noor-7a127b263_presidenthilema-presidentruto-presidentramaphosa-activity-7364598447326248962-Tr5S/	Africa's one currency dream? Not yet—fix institutions first
LK-39	LinkedIn	Dr. Etuka C. Obinwa	Sudan/ South Sudan (comparative)	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/dr-etuka-c-obinwa-ph-d-978ab013_why-is-sudan-ranked-the-most-corrupt-country-activity-7362542588496613377-nTl_	Why is Sudan ranked the most corrupt country?

Source_ID	Media_Type	Outlet/Author	Country/Region	Date	URL_or_Reference	Headline/Title
LK-40	LinkedIn	David Barnard	PanAfrica	n.d.	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/davidbarnardza_internationalanticorruptionday-unitedagainstcorruption-activity-7271805596448796672-yed_	International AntiCorruption Day—24 African NGOs
NE-01	News	Sahara Reporters	Nigeria	2025-08-23	https://saharareporters.com/2025/08/23/tinubu-government-warns-atiku-no-one-above-law-backs-efcc-manhunt-son-law-abdullahi	Tinubu Government Warns Atiku ‘No One Above The Law’, Backs EFCC Manhunt For Son-In-Law Abdullahi Haske
NE-02	News	The Star (Kenya)/Felix Kipkemoi	Kenya	2025-08-19	https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2025-08-19-ruto-establishes-team-to-spearhead-war-on-corruption	Ruto establishes multi-agency team to spearhead war on corruption
NE-03	News	The Standard (Kenya)/Mike Kihaki	Kenya	2025-08-19	https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/national/article/2001527251/judge-and-jury-ruto-forms-multi-agency-team-to-fight-corruption	Judge and jury? Ruto forms multi-agency team to fight corruption
NE-04	News	The Standard (Kenya)/Daniel Chege	Kenya	2025-08-20	https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/national/article/2001527320/court-halts-operations-of-ruto-anti-corruption-team	Blow to Ruto as court halts operations of multi-agency team on graft
NE-05	News	Nairobi Law Monthly/Samuel Njihia	Kenya	2025-08-20	https://nairobilawmonthly.com/court-grounds-rutos-anti-graft-taskforce/	Court grounds Ruto’s anti-graft taskforce over ‘imaginary powers’
NE-06	News	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation/Henrietta Afful	Ghana	2025-08-19	https://www.gbcghanaonline.com/general/osp-remains-ghanas-best-instrument-in-fight-against-corruption-osp-2025-half-year-report/2025/	OSP remains Ghana’s best instrument in fight against corruption – OSP 2025 Half-Year Report
NE-07	News	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation/Seli Baisie (by Spendilove Incoom)	Ghana	2025-08-19	https://www.gbcghanaonline.com/general/osp-half-year-report-shows-gh%C2%A2128m-recovered-in-anti-corruption-drive/2025/	OSP half-year report shows GH¢128m recovered in anti-corruption drive
NE-08	News	Vanguard (Nigeria)/Reported remarks by Nana Akufo-Addo	Ghana/Africa	2025-08-18	https://www.vanguardngr.com/2025/08/corruption-remains-africas-biggest-governance-challenge-akufo-addo/	Corruption remains Africa’s biggest governance challenge – Akufo-Addo
NE-09	News	Daily Maverick/Estelle Ellis	South Africa	2025-08-23	https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2025-08-23-national-health-laboratory-service-busting-corruption-one-tip-off-at-a-time/	National Health Laboratory Service – busting corruption one tip-off at a time
NE-10	News	Nation (Kenya)	Kenya	2025-08-20	https://www.nation.co.ke/kenya/news/hours-after-formation-high-court-slams-breaks-on-ruto-anti-graft-taskforce--5161168	Hours after formation, High Court slams brakes on Ruto anti-graft taskforce
NE-11	News	AllAfrica (republishing SADC)	Southern Africa	2025-08-19	https://allafrica.com/stories/202508200010.html	Southern Africa: SADC Celebrates 20 Years of Anti-Corruption Cooperation

Source_ID	Media_Type	Outlet/Author	Country/Region	Date	URL_or_Reference	Headline/Title
NE-12	News	Africa Confidential (preview)	DRC	2025-08-18	https://www.africa-confidential.com/article/id/15611/tshisekedi-seeks-to-broaden-his-base	Tshisekedi seeks to broaden his base
NE-13	News	Vanguard (Nigeria)/ Luminous Jannamike	Nigeria	2025-08-17	https://www.vanguardngr.com/2025/08/tinubu-displays-courage-in-corruption-fight-ahacci/	Tinubu displays courage in corruption fight – AHACCI
NE-14	News	ICAC Hong Kong (press release)	Kenya/Hong Kong	2025-08-15	https://www.icac.org.hk/en/p/press/index_id_2156.html	High-level anti-graft delegation of Kenya visits ICAC to foster international cooperation
NE-15	News	Kenyans.co.ke/ Rene Otinga	Kenya	2025-08-15	https://www.kenyans.co.ke/news/115267-real-threat-justice-comes-dropped-anti-corruption-cases-not-bail-cj-koome-tells-ruto	Threat to Justice Comes from Dropped Anti-Corruption Cases, Not Bail - CJ Koome Tells Ruto
NE-16	News	Daily Post Nigeria/Hadiza Musa	Nigeria	2025-08-15	https://dailypost.ng/2025/08/15/fight-against-corruption-selective-northerners-react-to-tambuwal-arrest-by-efcc/	Fight against corruption ‘selective’ – Northerners react to Tambuwal’s arrest by EFCC
NE-17	News	SAPIENS/ Nicole van Zyl	South Africa	2025-08-14	https://www.sapiens.org/culture/corruption-south-africa-colonialism-apartheid-justice-system/	The Tangled Roots of Corruption in Today’s South Africa
NE-18	News	Daily Monitor (Uganda)/ Juliet Kigongo	Uganda	2025-08-14	https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/ex-policeman-admits-to-drawing-salary-for-5-years-after-resigning-5154330	Ex-policeman admits to drawing salary for 5 years after resigning
NE-19	News	Africanews	Senegal	2025-08-14	https://www.africanews.com/2025/08/14/senegal-president-exempts-himself-from-new-anti-corruption-law/	Senegal president exempts himself from new anti-corruption law
NE-20	News	The Economic Times (Nigeria)	Nigeria	2025-08-13	https://theeconomictimes.com.ng/2025/08/13/just-in-nigeria-moves-up-five-spots-to-rank-140th-out-of-180-on-global-corruption-index/	Just in: Nigeria moves up five spots to rank 140th out of 180 on global corruption index
NE-21	News	JURIST (rights groups statement)	Kenya	2025-08-20	https://www.jurist.org/news/2025/08/rights-groups-call-for-total-break-up-of-kenya-police-in-response-to-widespread-corruption/	Rights groups call for total break-up of Kenya police
NE-22	News	Corruption Watch (SA)	South Africa	2025-08-22	https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/border-authority-cracks-down-on-corrupt-officials/	Border Authority cracks down on corrupt officials
NE-23	News	SACBC (Church news)	South Africa	2025-08-18	https://sacbc.org.za/bishop-sipuka-urges-church-to-take-lead-against-corruption/	Bishop Sipuka urges Church to take lead against corruption
NE-24	News	Reuters	Kenya	2025-07-21	https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/kenya-rights-activist-freed-bail-charged-with-unlawful-possession-ammunition-2025-07-21/	Kenya rights activist freed on bail after ammunition charge
NE-25	News	Deutsche Welle (DW)	Kenya	2025-07-22	https://www.dw.com/en/kenya-drops-terror-charges-against-activist-boniface-mwangi/a-73351406	Kenya drops terror charges against activist Boniface Mwangi

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NE-26	News	Sahara Reporters/ Omoyele Sowore remarks	Nigeria	2025-07-20	https://saharareporters.com/2025/07/20/buharis-so-called-integrity-was-one-greatest-propaganda-projects-sold-nigerians-sowore	Buhari's 'so-called integrity' was one of the greatest propaganda projects sold to Nigerians – Sowore
NE-27	News/ Analysis	MonDAQ (legal insight)	South Africa	2025-08-12	https://www.mondaq.com/southafrica/corporate-governance/1666006/south-africas-new-anti-bribery-law-setting-the-stage-for-corporate-accountability	South Africa's new anti-bribery law: setting the stage for corporate accountability
NE-28	News/ Analysis	Out-Law (Pinsent Masons)	South Africa	2025-08-12	https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out-law/news/south-africa-bribery-scandal-warning-compliance	South Africa bribery scandal caught on camera, in warning to businesses on compliance
NE-29	News/ Analysis	Yale E360	Liberia	2025-07-24	https://e360.yale.edu/features/liberia-forest-payment-scheme	Paying People: Liberia's novel plan to save its forests
NE-30	News	The African Mirror	Rwanda/ DRC/Great Lakes region	25-Aug-25	https://theafricanmirror.africa/news/rwanda-calls-for-urgent-action-on-drc-peace-as-regional-efforts-intensify/	Rwanda calls for urgent action on DRC peace as regional efforts intensify