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## Assessing the anti-corruption strategies in Africa– the case of Institutional Integrity Committees (IICs) in Malawi’s Civil Service

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### Abstract

*This article examines the anti-corruption strategies adopted by Sub Saharan Africa countries to combat corruption. Particular attention is given to Malawi’s Institutional Integrity Committees (IICs) in the civil service. Political transitions from undemocratic regimes to democratic governance in Malawi gave hope for a corruption-free civil service. However, corruption has emerged as a major impediment. The central argument in this article is that much as the attainment of efficiency and effectiveness in the civil service is a function of many factors, the promotion of ethical behaviour by institutional integrity committees is critical. Based on documentary research and key informant interviews, the article contends that the role of integrity institutions in the fight against corruption is increasingly recognized by both public officials and political office bearers. However, despite the institutionalization of integrity committees, the fight against unethical behaviour-- particularly corruption -- is complicated by political interference, ineffective leadership, legal constraints, inadequate capacity, ineffective coordination and the lack citizen engagement. The article concludes that comprehensive policy and legal framework, effective leadership as well as strategies which improve capacity, employee motivation and citizen participation are necessary to strengthen the anti-corruption mechanisms for the effective fight against unethical behaviour, particularly corruption in the civil service.*



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**Keywords:** *Institutional Integrity Committees, Anti-corruption, Civil Service, Ethics*

## **Introduction**

This article examines the anti-corruption strategies which most countries in Sub Saharan Africa have adopted to combat unethical behaviour. Political transitions from undemocratic regimes to democratic governance in most countries in Africa gave hope for ethical civil service and development characterized by integrity, efficiency and effectiveness. However, unethical behaviour is one of the greatest challenges which undermines good governance, distorts public policy and allocation of resources and harms private sector development and the poor (TI, 2019). Thus, addressing unethical behaviour, and specifically corruption, has emerged as a major concern of public officials and development partners, not only in Malawi but also at regional and international levels. In this analysis, particular attention is given to the role of Malawi's institutional integrity committees in the elimination of corruption in the civil service.

The National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) was launched by the Malawi government in 2009 with the aim to provide a holistic approach to the fight against corruption in the country. Among others, the Strategy requires that all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) establish and operationalize Institutional Integrity Committees (IICs) to spearhead the fight against corruption within their respective institutions. In 2010, the Chief Secretary to the government issued a circular directing all MDAs to establish and operationalize IICs. In September 2017, the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) issued a circular addressed specifically to all District Commissioners (DCs) and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Councils to establish IICs and operationalize the fight against corruption within their jurisdictions. To date, almost all Councils have established IICs (Katundu, 2019).

However, despite the establishment of IICs, and the undertaking of various initiatives such as the passing of anti-corruption laws and creation of institutional frameworks, the country is still mired in high levels of corruption from both politicians and public officials. For example, for the past six years, the Capital Hill Cash-gate Scandal has been the reference point of unethical behaviour and corruption in Malawi's public bureaucracy. The scandal involved over 70 individuals including high-level politicians, civil servants and public contractors in grand corruption (Strasser, 2016).

Therefore, the prevalence of unethical behaviour, particularly corruption in the civil service while various anti-corruption initiatives and reform measures are underway, stimulate debate regarding the effectiveness of such initiatives. Therefore, this study assesses the effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies with particular attention paid to IICs in the civil service.

This article is divided into six parts. It starts with the introduction in part one. It is followed by a review of the conceptual underpinnings in part two. Part three presents an overview of the fight against unethical behaviour in Malawi's civil service. The methodological approach adopted for data collection for this study is outlined in part four. In part five, the opportunities

and challenges facing the IICs are analysed. Finally, conclusion and recommendations for an efficient and effective fight against unethical behaviour, particularly corruption, are presented in part six.

## Literature Review

### Theoretical and Conceptual Underpinnings

This section clarifies the key theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of this analysis, namely, ethics, ethical behaviour and corruption, since these concepts have been accorded different meanings and interpretations especially among social scientists.

#### *Ethics*

The term 'ethics' has various definitions, some more technical and precise than others (Cooper, 2012). Some of the technical definitions are that ethics is what makes actions to be good or bad, and 'the collection of moral principles, norms, values and obligations that serve as rules to be observed by officials' (Ssanko, 2010). In the context of public bureaucracy, ethics is defined as the 'determination of what is right, proper and just in decisions and actions that affect members of the public, the principles, standards and rules of moral conduct for public servants outlined in official documents, codes of conduct and public service regulations' (Kuye & Mafunisa, 2003). In Article 22 of the Charter of Public Service in Africa, ethics is defined more comprehensively as 'the standards which guide behaviours and actions of personnel in public institutions and a sound culture based on values and principles such as honesty, accountability, openness, courtesy, responsiveness, respect of rule of law, excellence, efficiency and economy, equality, neutrality, continuity, integrity, skillfulness in the exercise of one's duty, professional discipline, dignity, equity, impartiality, fairness, public spiritedness, in the discharge of the public duties'. Therefore, ethical behaviour in this analysis is interpreted as the conduct of public officials which reflects societal values and equated to obeying law since social standards are defined by law.

#### *Corruption*

Ethics is an antidote to corrupt behaviour in its various forms. The basic elements emphasised in most definitions of corruption are that it involves the abuse of publicly entrusted power for private gain (CPI, 2000); a deviant behaviour and an illicit form of influence associated with private gain exacted at public expense (Johnston, 1989); and any conduct or behaviour of public officials which violates their duties and responsibilities (CPA, 1995). Corruption boils down to the behaviours which defy the norms and regulations binding public office holders. It includes unethical behaviours such as misuse or abuse of power and public office, immorality, self-seeking behaviour, disregard of integrity and virtue for selfish and personal gains, embezzlement, maladministration, nepotism, discrimination, dishonesty, fraud, bribery, conflict of interest, intolerance, negligence of duty and sexual harassment (Chapman, 2000). According to Hutchinson (2005), unethical behaviours that border on corruption include

manipulation of policies, institutions and rules of procedure in the allocation of resources, extortion, transferring of public funds to foreign countries, patronage, nepotism, speed money, payments to ‘ghost’ workers, duty evasion, embezzlement and bribes in the bidding and implementation of large-scale government projects. Despite the differences in the definitions and conceptualization, ethical behaviour in the civil service is in essence about compliance with the fundamental principles, values and norms that govern the conduct of public servants.

### *Sources of Ethics in the Civil Service*

Ethics for civil servants emanates from several sources and vary from country to country. However, there are several common sources of civil service ethics. Firstly, civil servants derive ethical standards from the Weberian bureaucratic principles such as efficiency, legitimacy, rationality, and meritocracy (Fredrickson & Ghere, 2013). Secondly, good governance and democratic principles give rise to ethical principles such as fairness, accountability, efficiency, transparency and participation (Lawton, Rainer & Lasthuizen, 2013). Thirdly, ethics for civil servants also emanate from the fundamental human rights which place a duty and an obligation on civil servants not to act in ways that undermine people’s rights, such as indulging in corruption. Finally, administrative law defines the power, limits and procedures of administrative agencies and the right of civil servants to the due process of the law.

Therefore, the fight against corruption in the civil service entails addressing unethical behaviour manifested by the abuse of discretionary powers in the use public resources and any deviation from the norms and regulations which bind the public bureaucracy. However, the prevalence of unethical behaviour, particularly corruption, in the Malawi’s civil service amidst the various initiatives including the establishment of the Anti-corruption Bureau (ACB) stimulated this assessment of the anti-corruption strategies with a focus on institutional Integrity Committees in Malawi’s Civil Service.

### **Overview of the Fight Against Unethical Behaviour in Malawi’s Civil Service**

There is no single organizational form or approach which is capable of entirely eliminating unethical behaviour and particularly corruption. The fight against unethical behaviour involves diversified approaches. In Malawi, several initiatives, approaches and strategies have been put in place to fight against unethical behaviour specifically corruption in Malawi’s public bureaucracy. The study established that the major instruments used to fight against unethical behaviour in Malawi are the legal and policy frameworks and the institutional and administrative systems. These are explained below:-

#### *Legal and Policy Framework*

The adoption of legal and policy safeguards and protocols is a major mechanism by the government to combat unethical behaviour. At the international level, Malawi ratified the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) on 4 December 2007, the Africa Union Convention on Combating and Preventing Corruption (AUCCPC) on 26 November 2007 and the SADC Protocol against Corruption on 2 September 2002 (OSISA, 2015).

The common aspects of the international instruments seek to promote and strengthen anti-corruption mechanisms, facilitating international cooperation on corruption prevention and developing and harmonising policies to prevent and combat corruption (NACS, 2022).

At the national level, Malawi seeks to combat unethical behaviour through, among others, the Constitution and various laws (legislation), regulations and the Code of Ethics and Conduct. For instance, section 12(iii) of the Constitution provides that public trust must be maintained through open, accountable and transparent government. Similarly, section 13(o) requires the State to establish mechanisms that guarantee accountability, transparency, personal integrity and financial probity to strengthen public trust and good governance. Safeguards against unethical practices by high-level public officials are also provided in various laws. In Malawi, the laws and legislation include the Public Service Act No. 19 of 1994, (Corrupt practices Act) Public Audit Act, Ombudsman Act, Corrupt Practices Act, Corrupt Practices Act (2004); Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act (2017); Public Audit Act (2003); Financial Crimes Act (2017); Public Officers Declaration of Assets Liabilities and Business Interests Act (2013); Public Finance Management Act (2003) and National Anti-Corruption Strategy; Malawi Public Service Regulation (MPSR), the Code of Ethics and Conduct for the Malawi Public Service and the Malawi Public Service Charter.

Section 25 of the Corrupt Practices Act No. 18 of 1995 (as amended in 2004), for example, provides for the protection of whistle blowers and encourages the reporting of corrupt practices. The Act also criminalizes attempted corruption, extortion, active and passive bribery, bribing a foreign official, and abuse of office. Sections 3 to 14 of the Public Service Act No. 19 of 1994 provides that public administration must be guided by principles of efficiency and effectiveness, impartiality, independence, integrity, meritocracy and equal opportunity. Other important laws that guard against corruption include the Anti-Money Laundering Act No. VII of 2010 (as amended 2016), the Ombudsman Act No. 10 of 1996, the Public Audit Act No. 6 of 2003, the Public Procurement Act No. 8 of 2003, the Public Finance and Management Act No. 7 of 2003 and the Declaration of Assets, Liabilities and Business Interests Act No. 21 of 2013. The Corrupt Practices Act was enacted in 1995, the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) was established in 1996 and the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) was launched in 2008.

However, it is the Code of Ethics and conduct for the Malawi Public Service (2012) which comprehensively set out standards for correct behaviour expected of Public Officers. It draws on the Public Service Act and complements existing legislation and rules. It applies to all permanent, part-time, casual, temporary and contractual public servants. It covers Principles and values relating to Work ethics, Personal behaviour, Obligation to government, Political neutrality, Responsibility towards the public, Conflict of interest; acceptance of gifts; Use of public resources; and Human rights and Sexual harassment.

#### *The role of the Integrity Committees (IICs) in fighting against unethical behaviour*

The fight against corruption in Malawi is seen as the primary responsibility of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB). The ACB institution was established in 1998 to be the lead

institution in the fight against corruption in Malawi under the Corrupt Practices Act No. 18 of 1995 in line with section 13(o) of the Constitution, which requires the state to establish mechanisms to guarantee accountability, transparency, personal integrity and financial probity to strengthen public trust and good governance. Section 10(1) of the Corrupt Practices Act mandates the ACB to prevent corruption in public and private bodies, receive complaints, reports or other information on suspected corruption and to investigate and prosecute persons suspected to be involved in corrupt practices. The national framework for tackling corruption in Malawi has revolved around the development of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) in 2008; introduction of initiatives aimed at strengthening the fight against corruption particularly the establishment of the National Integrity System (NIS) meant to involve all sectors of society in Malawi in the fight against corruption. The National Integrity System aims to institute anti-corruption reforms and promote ethical culture in all sectors of the institutions and economy by promoting integrity, transparency and improving service delivery, promoting public involvement in the fight against corruption and intensifying prevention of corruption (NACS, 2008).

As a way of fostering the National Integrity System, government Institutional Integrity Committees (IICS) are being established in all Ministries, Departments and Parastatal Organizations including Councils comprising at least five senior officers in 2010 (Memo Ref.15/02/15). In most ministries, the Institutional Integrity Committee has two committees -- the main committee which comprises all directors at the Ministry headquarters and sub-committees which are set up in all the Ministry's cost centres comprising head of sections at the cost centres. The Ministry's main committee is coordinated by the Administration department which is also the secretariat of both the main and sub-committee.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (2021) further stipulates that the Institutional Integrity Committees have been set up in an effort to promote institutional empowerment and capacity to deal with corruption issues, mainstream anti-corruption efforts and ensure the decentralization of responsibility. The Institutional Integrity Committees are mandated to: develop institutional corruption prevention policies, develop, implement and review Anti-Corruption Action Plans, liaise with the Anti-Corruption Bureau in reviewing work procedures and systems, organize training on integrity and ethics for IC and other members of staff, develop and publicize client charters and ensure adherence to service standards, receive, consider and provide redress on all complaints emanating from within and outside the organization relating to ethical issues and maladministration and to recommend administrative action to management on issues of maladministration and unethical conduct (Memo Ref.15/02/15).

The enforcement of the Institutional Integrity Committee has re-emerged with the 2020 government as a mechanism to combat the deep-rooted corruption in the country's public sector. These Institutional Integrity Committees have been mandated to carry out developmental functions -- develop and implement corruption prevention tools, capacity building functions; organizing sensitization to staff and key stakeholders on corruption and fraud issues and enforcement functions; monitoring procurement processes within the institution on quarterly basis (ACB, 2021). With technical support from the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), almost all IICs have undergone orientation to equip them with the necessary skills on how they discharge

their duties.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau has been working in collaboration with other institutions such as the Office of the Director of Public Officers Declaration and the Financial Intelligence Authority so that IICs discharge their mandate (OECD, 2008). Funding for these Institutional Integrity Committees is to be allocated from each MDA, 1% from their annual Other Recurrent Transactions (ORT) budgets as mandated by the Secretary to the Treasury in 2014. However, unethical behaviour, particularly corruption, prevails in the public bureaucracy despite the various anti-corruption initiatives. This raises questions relating to the factors that contribute to the persistence of corruption in the public bureaucracy.

## Methodology

The research methodology, which was adopted for this study, was qualitative. This involved a systematic analysis of content, identification of patterns and themes and collating the empirical evidence relating to ethics and factors that militate against the IICs in their fight against unethical behaviour, particularly corruption. A systematic review of literature attempts to collate all empirical evidence to answer a specific research question. It uses explicit, systematic methods that are selected with a view to minimising bias and thus, providing more reliable findings from which conclusion can be drawn and decisions made (Cochrane, 2003). According to Mulrow (1994), a systematic review of literature is appropriate in identifying, appraising and synthesizing research-based evidence and presenting it in accessible format. This methodology was supplemented by purposively selected informants among the integrity institutions specifically the IICs and ACB.

## Findings and Discussion

### The Opportunities and Challenges facing the Institutional Integrity Committees (IICs) in Malawi

The study established several opportunities offered by the IIC and ACB relating to aspects such as anti-corruption legislation and institutional policies, nurturing Civil Society initiatives, capacity development and increases of public institution's budget and promotion of effective leadership and political will to fight corruption. However, there are major barriers to IICs' effective delivery of their mandate of combating unethical behaviour, particularly corruption. These include political interference, ineffective leadership, legal constraints, inadequate capacity, and ineffective coordination and citizen engagement. These factors are discussed below:-

#### *Opportunities*

The establishment of Institutional Integrity Committees in government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) is a major initiative by the ACB in efforts to effectively fight unethical behaviour, particularly corruption. These IICs provide an opportunity to, among other things, strengthen anti-corruption legislation and institutional policies, develop private sector

initiatives against corruption, and to nurture Civil Society initiatives against corruption. There are opportunities to increase attention towards capacity development in public institutions to fight unethical behaviour within their institutions. There is also a great potential to institutionalize a percentage of public institution's budget for programmes aimed at fighting unethical behaviour by among others promoting leadership by example through unwavering political will to fight corruption, and through improved, efficient and equitable provision of civil services.

A number of civic education activities are implemented by the ACB since its establishment. These have contributed to the raising of awareness about the evils of corruption, and encouraging local people to report, resist and reject corruption. For example, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) which was launched by the ACB in 2008 has underlined the zero tolerance policy and accountability from duty bearers (NACS, 2008). The activities carried out include placing bill boards in strategic places in urban areas, running radio programmes, conducting workshops and setting up anti-corruption clubs in schools and universities. In addition, the availability of institutions and infrastructure for strengthening professionalism, ethics, integrity and accountability through training and development is a major opportunity. These include the Malawi School of Government (MSG, the University of Malawi's (UNIMA), Department of Management and Leadership Studies and Mzuzu University, among others.

Despite the existing opportunities explained above, there are factors, dilemmas, and controversies which tend to militate against the fight against unethical behaviour, particularly corruption in the civil service. The underlying common challenges identified during the study included the following :- failure to enforce existing laws, policies and regulations due to politicization of the civil service; inadequate political will; laxity of senior leadership and management in the civil service in enforcing professionalisms, ethics and integrity; lack of knowledge of code of conduct, professionalism and ethics; lack of lack of personal integrity; lack of discipline; greed and ambition to get rich; low salaries and poor working conditions and socio-cultural and relationship issues and peer pressure as the least in the causes. However, for the purposes of this analysis, these factors are synthesised into political interference, legal constraints, ineffective leadership, capacity constraints; poor coordination and weak civic engagement. These are discussed in the section below.

### *Political Interference*

The battle against unethical behaviour, particularly corruption and abuse of state resources is complicated by political influence. Institutional Integrity Committees are faced with political and donor influence in promoting ethical competence (MNISAR, 2013). The patron-client relationship and official hierarchy characterizing the public bureaucracy interferes with the operations of the IICs (Anders, 2021). Donor influence acts as a double-edged sword in the sense that the pressure exercised by the international development partners motivates law enforcement efforts to establish the Institutional Integrity Committees. On the contrary, the influence inhibits the effectiveness of the IICs due to their withholding of the financial and technical support (Chingaibe, 2017). The weaknesses of the IICs emanates from the monopoly of power and strong patronage networks. Kainja (2016) argues that the root cause of corruption



is the centralized political structure which lacks clear demarcation between the ruling party and the Executive branch of Government. Thus, politicians manipulate the state apparatus, including the IICs and the ACB, for their own particular ends. The patrons create opportunities for favouritism in appointments, award of contracts, self-enrichment and aggrandisement and nepotism. The terms such as 'neopatrimonialism' or 'patrimonialism' are used in referring to political authority characterized by patronage or rule based on personal prestige and clientelism (Leonard & Straus, 2003). By being vulnerable to removal from their posts upon political consideration, most civil servants tend to serve in public institutions including IICs in a manner that affords more rights and support to politicians, particularly in the ruling party.

### *Legal Constraints*

The dilemma facing the fight against corruption by IICs and the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), emanates from legal and policy framework constraints as well as the laxity in their enforcement (GoM, 2012). For example, in most Ministry Headquarters (IICs) are not operational as their composition in terms of number is unclear in the policies. The ratio of women representation versus men in the Ministry's Institutional Integrity Committee is queried due to few women in director positions with a few more that are heads of section at the Ministry (MOA, 2021).

Furthermore, the Corrupt Practices Act of 1995 gives the president of the country the appointing power of the Director of ACB and also gives power to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) without whose consent corruption cases cannot be taken to court. As a result, the ACB lacks full independence to deal with high-level corruption cases effectively. The ACB Legal Officer remarked: "There is weak enforcement and selective application of anti-corruption laws as they only target small fishes." The ACB leans on government directives and as long as the president has the powers to appoint the director of the ACB and cases go through the office of DPP to be prosecuted, the ACB will not be independent and effective. Although the existing legal and policy which includes the Constitution, laws and regulations, code of conduct and ethics tend to be adequate to fight against corruption, in practice, they do not serve as a powerful deterrent of corrupt practices. The legal and policy environment is not sufficiently conducive to the effective punishment of offenders and the fight against corruption as public officials indulge in corrupt practices without fear of sanctions. In short, there is lack of strict enforcement and sanctions which impede the effective fight against unethical behaviour in the civil service.

### *Ineffective Leadership*

The type of people running the government is more crucial than the social system and structure in the promotion of ethical behaviour. The lack of professionalism, prevalence of unethical behaviour and corruption are partly due to weak leadership and management in enforcing the existing legal, policy and institutional frameworks. The major controversy is about the extent to which the leadership is exemplary and acts as role models that enhance any form of unethical behaviour. The perception is that ACB is only serious in prosecuting petty corruption cases and leaves out serious ones and that it tends to favour the rich and penalise the poor. The existing measures for strengthening ethical behaviour in Malawi's civil service are ineffective

due to the weak efforts by senior management to enforce ethical behaviour. This is evident in poor supervision, negligence, complacency and laxity in enforcing the existing measures, and failure to effect penalties and punishments to offenders.

According to GoM (2012), there are serious leadership and management skills gaps in the civil service which have led to erosion of ethical values, morality and accountability at all levels. The situation is attributed to inadequate preparation of civil servants to fight corruption and promote ethical behaviour partly due to the stalling of induction programmes over the years and treatment of training in ethics and accountability as a luxury and discreet event. Furthermore, the lack of financial capacity in most training and education institutions and the absence of training plans result in irregular, irrelevant and unsystematic development and delivery of training programmes on matters relating to corruption, ethics, accountability and professionalism.

#### *Institutional and Individual Capacity constraints*

Another dilemma that negatively affects the performance of the IICs is capacity constraint in terms of quantity and quality of human and financial resources. These elements are explained below:-

*Inadequate skills and competence:* The operations of Institutional Integrity Committees (IICs) are limited by lack of sufficiently trained staff since the orientation on the IICs by the Anti-Corruption Bureau was only given to directors at the Ministry Headquarters level. The committees at the lower level of the Ministries do not have in-depth understanding of how these committees are supposed to work (MOA, 2021). In most public institutions, including the civil service, there is lack of competence to develop corruption prevention tools and reporting mechanisms. As such, most institutions have not yet started receiving and handling suspected corruption complaints. There is also controversy relating to contributions made by training and management development programmes towards the fight of corruption and enhancement of ethical behaviour in the civil service. Cooper (2001:301) argues that training is a most powerful means for capacity development, behaviour modification and legitimization and claims to ethical behaviour. The shortage of personnel in terms of quantity and quality also negatively affects IICs' capacity in complaints handling and investigations; coordination between the IICs and Management as well as among IIC members; and heavy work overload by members result into limited concentration on integrity activities. The IICs are considered a toothless bulldog that do not bite because they lack adequate people with the required technical skills in areas of investigation and prosecution of corruption cases.

*Shortage of financial resources:* Another dilemma which contributes to the weak institutional capacity in the Institutional Integrity Committees (IICs) relates to the lack of adequate financial resources. It was noted during interviews with senior civil servants that although IICs were developed action plans to fight corruption, very few Anti-corruption activities were actually implemented due to shortage of financial resources. It was also established that the requirement that 1% of the monthly funding which is to be allocated to the Institutional Integrity Committee operations was not adhered to. Therefore, the absence of

a system to ensure that 1% of the funding is utilized on anti-corruption initiatives results into low funding which undermines the functionality of IICs.

The shortage of finances constrains the IICs' ability to regularly meet and discuss issues regarding the implementation of the action plan as per requirement of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS). It was also noted during interviews with senior public officials that civil service Controlling Officers and management teams were not adequately motivated to support IIC initiatives. Scholars such as Hope (2000) and Agere (1992:52) argue that there is a correlation between, on the one hand, adequate remuneration and in the incidence of corruption and seeking extra sources of complementary income. According to Agere (1992:52), adequate remuneration of public employees contributes significantly to motivation, boosting of morale and improved performance and deterring corrupt practices by civil servants.

#### *Poor coordination and weak civic engagement*

The failure to fight corruption in the civil service effectively is attributed to poor coordination among the stakeholders and weak civic engagement (Phiri, 2018). For example, the integrity committees are unable to deliver their mandate of combating corruption owing to disjointed efforts, absence of regular meetings, lack of external monitoring and evaluation activities. Although members of the public have a role in the fight against corruption through the demands for better or improved services from duty bearers, citizen engagement is weak. The majority of respondents agreed that there is low awareness among citizens regarding anti-corruption mechanisms including, how and where to report corrupt practices and existing policies, procedures on corruption. In short, ineffective coordination of the multiple interests of stakeholders and weak citizen involvement are major challenges facing the fight against unethical behaviour, particularly corruption.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Despite the adoption of several anti-corruption mechanisms, including the establishment of IICs, corrupt practices persist in most public bureaucracies, particularly in Malawi's civil service. The effectiveness of the IICs in Malawi's Civil Service is undermined by several factors. These include weak enforcement of policy and legal frameworks, ineffective leadership, weak institutional and individual capacity which is compounded by inadequate physical, human and financial resources. There are also administrative inefficiencies, characterized by ineffective coordination of the multiple interests and weak civic engagement.

Therefore, there is a need for a multi-pronged strategy directed towards combating corruption effectively. The strategy should emphasize strict compliance and enforcement of anti-corruption enforcement of policy and legal framework. The ACB should monitor adherence to anti-corruption laws, rules and procedures and regulations including the code of conduct and mete out appropriate punishment and sanctions for the errant civil servants.

It important that ethical political and bureaucratic leadership should be nurtured in the civil service. Therefore ethical values should be inculcated in all civil servants through

effective induction, training and management development programmes. Leaders at all levels should act as role models and strengthen public accountability. The policy makers and implementers should pay attention to the institutional and individual capacity development by, among others things, providing adequate physical, material, equipment and human resources to support IICs in the civil service. The training and education institutions such as the Malawi School of Government (MSG), University of Malawi's Department of Management and Leadership Studies and watchdog bodies that offer leadership, administration and management programmes should be supported technically and financially for effective capacity building programmes in relevant aspects of integrity, ethics, accountability and professionalism.

The reward system has an impact on ethical behaviour in the sense that poor rewards provide fertile ground for corrupt practices as some civil servants indulge in corrupt practices to seek extra income to supplement their meagre salaries. There is need to improve the reward system packages for civil servants, especially for the least paid to make it less desirable for them to engage in unethical behaviour. The pay structure should reward honest efforts based on feedback and clear performance standards. Thus, adequate remuneration of civil servants contributes significantly to boosting of ethical behaviour and integrity, morale and motivation for improved performance.

The active involvement of the citizens in the fight against unethical behaviour should also be promoted by, among other things, giving guarantees of anonymity and easy access hotlines to encourage the reporting of corruption incidents. Therefore, there is need to promote feedback and reporting mechanisms such as hotlines, suggestion boxes and citizen forums to encourage active involvement citizens, among other stakeholders, in the fight against corruption in the civil service.

In summary, there is a need for pragmatic approaches which place a premium on effective legal and institutional frameworks, leadership, capacity development and active citizen involvement in the fight against corruption. The major ways which should be adopted in order to reduce unethical behaviour, particularly corruption, are imposition of stiffer sanctions and enforcement; improvement in staff pay and living conditions at posts; promotion of greater awareness of civil service and anti-corruption procedures; emphasizing training and development; and improving the management systems including supervision of staff and implementation of a performance management and appraisal system; and citizen involvement in the fight against unethical behaviour.

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