

Transformational leaders and quality people

There is a close relation between systemic corruption, transformation and failed moral leadership in developing countries.

Systemic corruption is an inevitable outcome of vacuums of power and destabilisation during transformation processes in developing countries where moral and strategic leadership fails (Coetzee), as is the case in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Role models of transformational leadership in business, education, spiritual and community work are extremely important to the hopeless and vulnerable. These people can be misled by populist demagogues to fill the vacuums of power with radical, intolerant and immoral leadership that can destabilise a country within the context of extreme challenges such as poverty, gross inequality and unemployment.

Role models should be visionary and moral to provide hope and credibility to the painful transformation process. However, not only moral leaders are required for transformation, but also committed leaders who have the political will to transform corrupt and unjust systems towards good governance.

POSITIVE, DURABLE CHANGE

Because politicians in a corrupt country are seldom moral, they must experience political benefits (in the form of political support) for taking the risk of changing systems that will impact on their power base (voters' support), in order to secure their commitment and to create political will for transformation. These benefits and support are needed to create what Meadows called "positive recurring loops" for long lasting change and development.

For example, politicians would abolish a



Johan Coetzee

patronage system when the national consensus is that such appointments decrease inefficiency. Appointing people based on merit will increase efficiency and that

could provide positive feedback.

Long lasting and/or "deep"/qualitative learning (the new buzzword for durable change) is needed to unlearn practices that create opportunities for corruption, such as centralising authority, abuse of power, secrecy, monopolies, unchallenged discretion and limited accountability.

Quality (competent and ethical) people in society could provide the ability to create new structures for relationships and corrective behaviour, i.e. trust, streamlined processes and strategies for broader public participation in policy formulation.

Such people could initiate and design innovative strategies for the benefit of society. An example is the recently established Enterprise Namibia (EN) on which next week's article will focus.

References Coetzee

J.J. (2012). *Systemic corruption and corrective change management strategies: A study of the co-producers of systemic corruption and its negative impact on socio-economic development*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. University of Stellenbosch.

Meadows, D.H. 2009. *Whole Earth. Places to Intervene in a System*. Published during 1997.

jcoetzee@nust.na

Republicain 29 Sept. 2017