

ABEC



AFRICA BUSINESS ETHICS CONFERENCE

2024

NAIROBI, KENYA

ABRIDGED REPORT



United Nations
Office on Drugs and Crime

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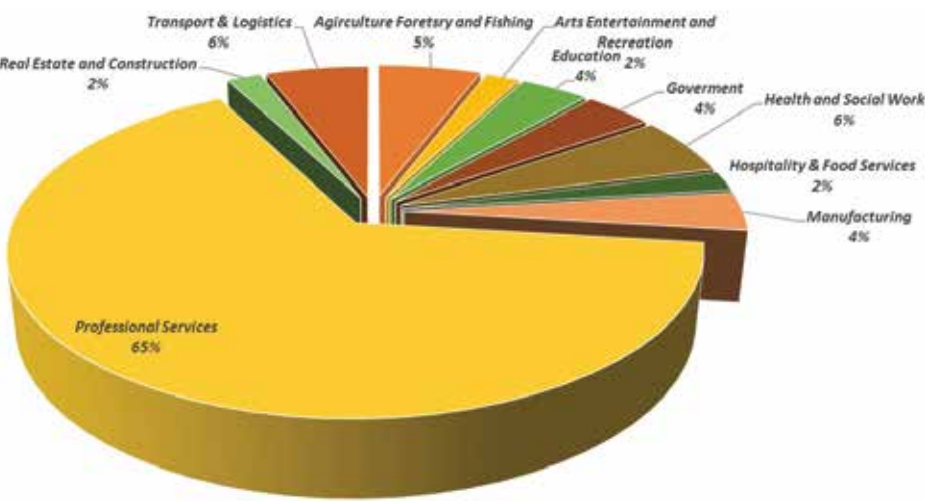
Call to Action

Details the specific actions and responsibilities assigned to stakeholders like the private sector, government agencies, and civil society to promote ethical business practices.

INTRODUCTION

The 5th Annual Africa Business Ethics Conference (ABEC) took place on December 5th, 2024, at the Villa Rosa Kempinski in Nairobi, Kenya, under the theme “**A BRAVE NEW AFRICA: Business Growth in Time of Economic Turbulence**”. Countries represented included Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, South Africa, Botswana, Sweden and Bangladesh and the United States of America (USA). Participants represented diverse sectors, including the private sector, civil society, media, donor organizations, and youth. Of the 185 participants, 142 participants attended the conference physically, and 43 participants who attended virtually via Zoom.

FIGURE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS BY SECTOR



CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

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1 Provide a platform to foster ethical business practices
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2 Facilitate collective action to combat corruption through convening key stakeholders including business leaders, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), policy makers, global experts, and media
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3 Equip Businesses through training, technical assistance and raising awareness on anti-corruption

ABEC 2024

NAIROBI, KENYA



185
Participants



94
Male



91
Female



10
Countries

4
Continents



ABEC 2024

NAIROBI, KENYA

2400 views and 1500 reach on Facebook, and 6900 interactions on LinkedIn.

ABEC 2024 CONFERENCE TOPICS : UNLOCKING NEW FRONTIERS

Ethical leadership and corporate governance: Speakers emphasized the importance of ethical leadership in driving organizational integrity and creating a culture of compliance.

Private sector collective action against corruption: The need for collaboration between businesses, governments, and civil society to effectively combat corruption was a recurring theme.

Compliance, anti-corruption, and due diligence: Discussions focused on strengthening compliance frameworks, leveraging technology for risk assessment and fraud prevention, and integrating due diligence practices in all business phases.

Business ethics in the age of tech automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI): Panelists explored the ethical implications of AI and technology in business, emphasizing data privacy, responsible AI governance, and the need for transparent data policies that promote ethical practices.

Youth empowerment and engagement: The conference highlighted the crucial role of youth in driving ethical business practices and combating corruption, advocating for practical business education and meaningful youth engagement in the private and public sectors.

Research and its role in encouraging business ethics: With the main focus on the importance of research in shaping business ethics, informing policy development, promoting accountability, by identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement was underscored.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS AND CONSENSUS

Collective Action and Collaboration: Participants widely agreed that collective action and collaboration between businesses, governments, media, and civil society are essential to effectively combat corruption.

Knowledge Sharing and Best Practices: There was emphasis on the importance of establishing platforms to foster knowledge sharing and collaboration between stakeholders from both the supply and demand side (private and public).

Research and Advocacy: Participants emphasized the critical need for a comprehensive anti-corruption strategy encompassing an agenda, an advocacy plan for its implementation, and the integral role of research to inform policy changes, promote awareness, and strengthen anti-corruption frameworks through evidence-based advocacy and dissemination of findings.

Ethical Leadership and Corporate Governance: The session underscored the importance of ethical leadership and robust corporate governance in fostering a culture of integrity and accountability within organizations this should include;

- Prioritizing ethical behavior and set a strong example, organizations should develop and implement comprehensive codes of ethics and anti-corruption policies.

- Promoting transparency and accountability at all levels of management.



Fatma Elmaawy,

Convener and Founder

Africa Business Ethics Conference

"As we leave today, may we carry forward the lessons learned and take actionable steps to promote transparency, accountability and sustainability in our respective spheres of influence."

Compliance and Enforcement: The session underscored the need for strong compliance mechanisms and effective enforcement to deter and address unethical behavior. This includes firstly, strengthening internal compliance systems with clear procedures for reporting and investigation, leveraging on technology to enhance compliance monitoring and risk assessment. Plus secondly encourage open reporting and appropriate disciplinary actions are taken.



Technology and Innovation: Participants recognized the transformative potential of technology and innovation in promoting ethical business practices and combating corruption. Key actions include establishing ethical AI governance guidelines, ensuring data privacy, addressing potential biases in AI systems, and investing in robust tech systems to protect business assets.

Youth Empowerment and Engagement: The session agreed on the crucial role played the youth in shaping a more ethical and transparent business environment. Priority actions included integrating ethics and integrity education into school and university curricula, actively involving young people in discussions and initiatives related to business ethics and anti-corruption efforts, and establishing a culture of recognizing persons of integrity that youth can model after.

Capacity Building and Training: The session highlighted the importance of capacity building and ongoing training to equip individuals and organizations with the knowledge and skills to promote ethical business practices and combat corruption. which also supported initiatives that build capacity within organizations and communities to address ethical challenges and promote good governance.

RESULTS OF THE PRE-CONFERENCE SURVEY VIA MENTIMETER

What can help the private sector to do better in instilling business ethics?

The following proposals reflect the views of participants on what the private can do to instill business ethics;

- 1 Emphasis on Action & Accountability through Implementation, Enforcement & Compliance Actions:** The most dominant action proposed was the call for direct action – implementing policies, enforcing compliance, taking audits seriously, saying no to bribery, and generally walking the talk which was proposed by 31% of the participants that filled the mentimeter survey.
- 2 Importance of Voice through Advocacy, Awareness & Speaking Out:** Constituted the second largest category (22.4%). There's a clear trend towards needing external communication and potentially naming and shaming or calling out unethical behavior.
- 3 Strength in Numbers:** Collaboration and collective action represent a significant trend (15.5%). Respondents saw value in partnerships, industry collaboration, and using associations to fight corruption, indicating that these challenges are often seen as requiring a united front.
- 4 Ethical Culture as a Foundation:** Building an ethical culture and strong leadership (10.3%) was recognized as a crucial underlying factor for sustainable ethical practices.

"By addressing corruption, we empower businesses, create a level playing field, and unlock opportunities for Africa's youth and economic growth."

Francesco Totti,

Team Lead

Africa Anti-Corruption Hub (UNODC)



"Time is neutral. Anything you invest in today in terms of business ethics and integrity will become your history and the foundation for the future."

Lola Adekanye,

Deputy Regional Director for Africa

&

Country Director for Nigeria

CIPE



- 5 Supporting Mechanisms:** Training/Education, Policy/Standards, and Recognition/Rewards appeared as important supporting mechanisms (roughly 7%, and 3% respectively), but less frequently mentioned than direct action, advocacy, or Collaboration

CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

The conference concluded with a set of resolutions aimed at guiding future actions and promoting ethical business practices across Africa:

- i. Unite and take initiative for sustainable change through collective action and leadership.
- ii. Align the fight against corruption with business needs to foster growth and sustainability.
- iii. Engage the youth in the fight against corruption by leveraging technology and fostering an ethically driven ecosystem.
- iv. Standardize anti-corruption laws across Africa to strengthen the continent's collective fight against corruption.
- v. Enhance collaboration between public and private sectors to create effective solutions for tackling corruption.
- vi. Promote ethical AI governance and due diligence across businesses, emphasizing regulatory frameworks and internal governance structures.
- vii. Reward and recognize businesses upholding ethical practices to encourage integrity as a standard.

"Together, we can create a future where businesses thrive, communities prosper and our continent takes its rightful place as a beacon of integrity and progress at the global stage; so Africa, let's move forward."

Ms. Jacqueline Mugo EBS

CEO & Executive Director
Federation of Kenya Employers

We have a supplier portal where you actually go in and upload your documentation which will be reviewed and categorized thereafter someone will talk to you. In the process of trying to improve this program we are trying to cut human interactions as much as possible in all our processes

Nicholas Mulila,

Chief Corporate Security Officer,
Safaricom PLC



"Ethical practices must be at the heart of business strategies to build trust with stakeholders, including partners investors, and communities."

Patricia Arua,

Director
State Department
for
Investment Promotion

CALL TO ACTION

The second plenary session provided a comprehensive roadmap for promoting ethical business practices and combating corruption in Africa, with responsibilities assigned to various stakeholders noting that;

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	PRIORITY ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	i. Leaders should prioritize ethical behavior and set a strong example for others to follow by being ethical leaders and enforcing codes of conduct. ii. Organizations should develop and implement comprehensive codes of ethics, anti-corruption policies, and guidelines. Periodic ethics training should be inculcated in businesses as a standard practice. iii. Transparency and accountability should be promoted at all levels.	Board members. CEOs, Senior management & small business owners & entrepreneurs
PRIVATE SECTOR COLLECTIVE ACTION AGAINST CORRUPTION		
	i. Strengthen platforms such as ABEC to foster knowledge sharing and collaboration between stakeholders both from the supply and demand side (private and public) & establish others. The same platforms can be utilized to facilitate the sharing and exchange of knowledge, skills and information on best practices between organizations and stakeholders to promote ethical business conduct. ii. Develop an anti-corruption agenda and an advocacy plan for its implementation.	Private sector associations/CSOs, Think Tanks and other relevant government agencies. Coalition of like-minded organizations like WBN, TI-K, UNGC and UNDOC & other associations.
COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT		
	i. Strengthen internal compliance Systems & Procedures through training, monitoring & mentoring have elaborate enforcement mechanisms. ii. Leverage on technology to enhance compliance monitoring and risk assessment. iii. Encourage internal open reporting of unethical behavior through the use of technology and ensure that appropriate disciplinary actions are taken as outlined in the organization Code of conduct & policies. iv. Promote open reporting: Encourage organizations to openly report unethical conduct to prevent repeat offenders and create a culture of transparency that penalizes corrupt practices & rewards compliance.	CEOs, Senior management & small business owners & entrepreneurs. CEOs, Senior management & small business owners & entrepreneurs, ICT Authority, Private tech businesses Audit, HR department; FKE, PSO/Associations EACC and Office of the Ombudsman

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION	PRIORITY ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	i. Establish ethical AI governance guidelines for the development and use of AI and other emerging technologies to combat unethical practices and promote. ii. Ensure and prioritize data privacy and implement robust data protection measures to safeguard sensitive information. iii. Address potential biases in AI systems and promote diversity and inclusion in technology development to mitigate biases and discrimination. iv. Investment in robust tech systems to protect business asset.	ICT authority in partnership with private sector associations/BMOs; Tech hubs/tanks; small business owners & entrepreneurs. PSO/association; Office of Data protection commission, small business owners & entrepreneurs. ICT authority in partnership with private sector associations/BMOs. Board members. CEOs, Senior management ; small business owners & entrepreneurs.



"Corruption cannot be fully eradicated but integrity can be built even amidst it."

Soji Olusoji Apmpa,
CEO,

The Integrity Organization Ltd



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND ENGAGEMENT	PRIORITY ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	i. Integrate ethics and integrity education into school & university curricula to instill ethical values in young people prepare future generations for ethical business conduct. ii. Actively involve young people by engaging them in discussions and initiatives related to business ethics and anti-corruption efforts such as ABEC. iii. Establish a culture of recognizing persons of integrity that youth can model after by e.g. holding an integrity award.	MoE-Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development; research and academia, Schools association, Youth network. Private sector associations/CSOs, Think Tanks, universities & youth associations and other relevant government agencies. Coalition of like-minded organizations like WBN, TIK, UNGC and UNDOC & other associations.

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“BY ADDRESSING CORRUPTION, WE EMPOWER BUSINESSES, CREATE A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD, AND UNLOCK OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFRICA’S YOUTH AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.”

Lawrence Jenga,

Head of Corporate Communications
and Marketing
Kenya Association of Manufacturers

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WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT, WE ARE THE CONTINENT OF THE FUTURE, AND THAT FUTURE IS NOW AS AFRICANS

Shafi Manafa,

Federation of Uganda Employers

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RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY	PRIORITY ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION	i. Conducting research to gather data and insights on ethical business practices and the impact of corruption such as the Corruption Risk Mapping, TI CPI Index. ii. Use research findings to advocate for and implement evidence based-policy changes and stronger anti-corruption frameworks. iii. Disseminate research findings and best practices to raise awareness and promote ethical business conduct.	Coalition of like-minded organizations like WBN, TIK, UNGC and UNDOC & other associations. Media- print, electronic and social platforms led by private sector associations like KEPSA, FKEs, KNCI, KAM, KFC, Think Tan.
KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND BEST PRACTICES	i. Invest in training programs on ethics, compliance, and anti-corruption measures for employees at all levels. ii. Develop and provide access to resources and tools that support ethical decision-making and promote a culture of integrity such as Tool kits iii. Support initiatives that build capacity within organizations and communities to address ethical challenges and promote good governance.	Training institutions and universities, CSOs, professional bodies Board and CEOs, BMOs Donors & Corporates

CONCLUSION

ABEC 2024 successfully fostered dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among diverse stakeholders, contributing to the advancement of ethical business practices and the fight against corruption in Africa. The conference effectively addressed critical issues, provided valuable insights, and generated actionable resolutions. The emphasis on youth engagement, technological application, and collective action demonstrated a forward-looking approach to tackling ethical challenges in Africa's evolving business landscape. ABEC continues to play a crucial role in shaping a future where businesses thrive, communities prosper, and Africa takes its rightful place as a beacon of integrity and progress on the global stage.

"The time is now. Together, we can build the Africa we want-defined by trust, fairness, and shared prosperity."

Stephen Kimenya,
Global Compact Network Kenya

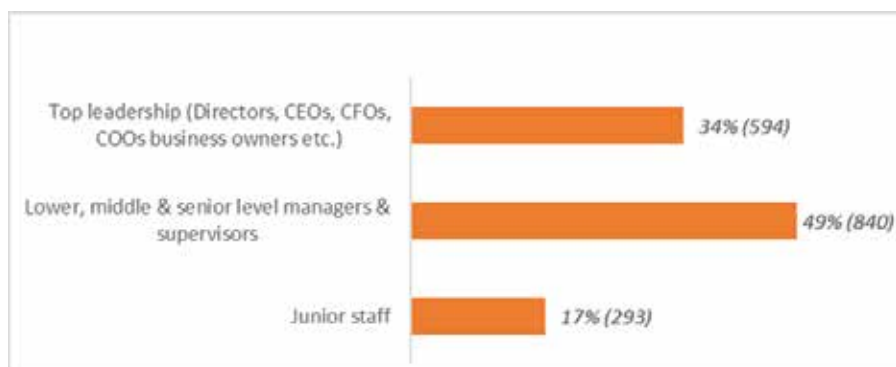








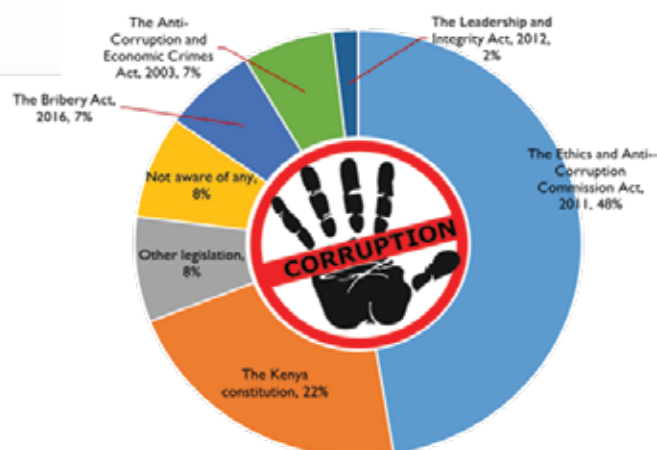
STATISTICS FROM CORRUPTION RISK MAPPING AND ANTI-BRIBERY ASSESSMENT 2022-23 REPORT BY CIPE



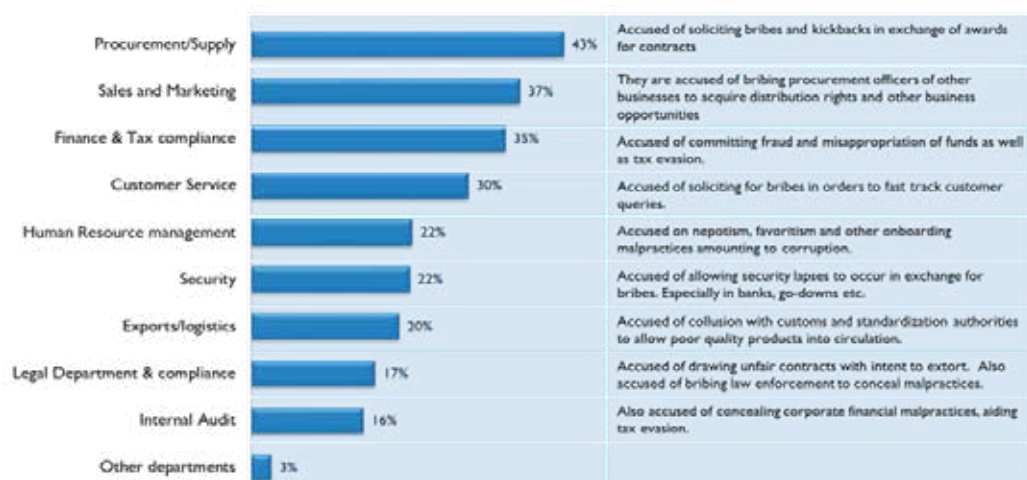
i. Who is responsible for corruption



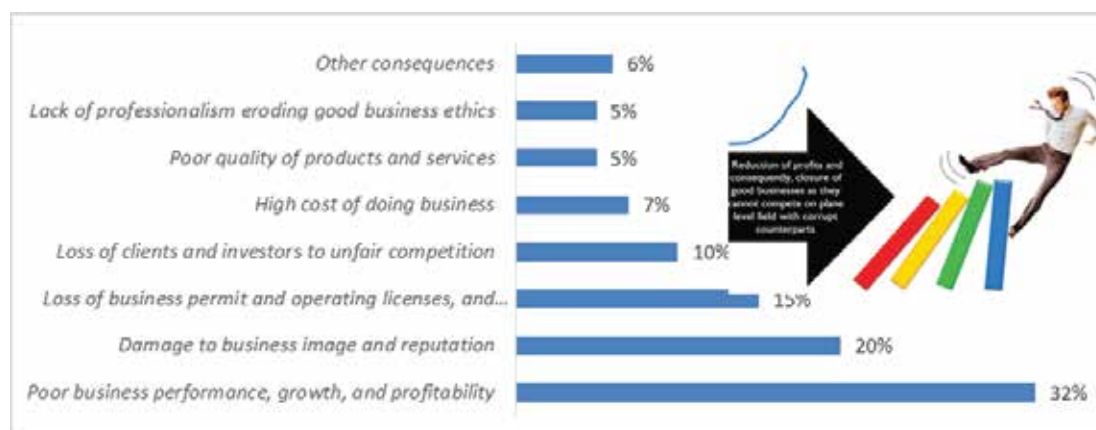
ii. Corruption risk by business size



iii. Respondents views on effective legislation in preventing and fighting corruption.



iv. Areas of business operations prone to corruption in the private sector



v. Consequences of corruption to private sector businesses

ABEC

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