

***A Joint USINDO Film Screening & Discussion
with Partnerships for International Strategies in Asia***

Kita vs. Korupsi



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Introduction

The film "*Kita vs. Korupsi*" (Us vs. Corruption) premiered last year in Jakarta and received widespread media coverage. Produced by Transparency International Indonesia (TII), Management Systems International's Strengthening Integrity and Accountability Program (SIAP-1), and Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), "*Kita vs. Korupsi*" resonated with Indonesian citizens, officials, government workers, and police officers. The film shows corruption, as it occurs every day in Indonesia, and educates the audience about how to overcome it.

Following the USINDO-sponsored screening in DC, the speakers spoke about how corruption is depicted in the film and about how Indonesia's corruption problems can be solved.

Context

Before screening the film, panelist Dave Timberman of Management Systems International (MSI) provided some context on the filmmaking process, the purpose of the film, and a brief synopsis of the film's four segments. He explained how the general public, using crowd sourcing, had suggested the film's corruption-related topics. Then, a panel of judges selected the final topics. Different directors directed the film's four segments, each about eighteen minutes long, and they tried to target a distinct audience: Indonesia's urban youth.

USINDO screened two segments at the event. The first was "*Aku Padamu*" (Me to You). It depicts a young couple who wants to marry without their families' knowledge. Unfortunately, they can't marry without a *kartu keluarga* or family identification card. A marriage license broker offers a shortcut. But the couple doesn't know whether to take the offer or not. The second segment, "*Psssttt...Jangan Bilang Siapa-Siapa*" (Ssshhh...Don't Tell Anyone), is about three Indonesian high school students who expose—but also participate in—corruption.

Discussion

Question & Answer Session: Dave Timberman

Q: I'm from Indonesia's older generation. Does this form of corruption [referring to the scene where students are buying their grades from a teacher] presently occur?

In my experience buying and selling grades, as well as remissions on textbooks, is normal.

Q: To what extent have young adults responded to this film?

I have worked in civic education before. And with this type of program, I'm usually skeptical. What's the impact? Is it changing values? If so, to what effect? At least right now, there is no evidence that the film is changing anything. But it has been well received, and it has been screened around Indonesia. The film also is available on YouTube where it has been

viewed 50,000 times. One purpose of the film—and the reason why Transparency International and the KPK were involved—is to appeal to the urban youth and to urban professionals. Their support for the KPK is very important.

But is the film having an impact? It's too early to tell. However, if the film is not linked to actual anti-corruption efforts, such as people reporting corruption or not participating in it, it's hard to determine the film's effect.

Q: Indonesia is one of the world's highest consumers of tobacco. In the first short film, featuring the couple, I thought the girlfriend was going to throw away her boyfriend's cigarette. But she started smoking it instead. Why was that scene left in the film? It's not something the government wants to encourage.

Due the backlash against tobacco consumption, some schools did not want to screen this short. KPK wasn't responsible for the scene, and the organization considered cutting it. Yet the director wanted to keep the scene. Artistic independence is important.

Q: In the first segment, the assumption is that a person knows right from wrong. Based on my experience in Indonesia, that is not the case since corruption is business as usual. Is there anything about punishment as a deterrent to corruption in the other segments?

The short answer is no, but I can talk more about that. Many anti-corruption organizations focus on the punishments. But in the film, the fear of punishment is downplayed. Instead, the segments show how people come to accept corruption as a normal activity. Corruption surrounds the actors, as it does most Indonesians, and the actors' value systems, therefore, become skewed. It becomes normal for the teachers to accept bribes. Most important, the film shows corruption's human cost.

Q: Is there a difference between small-scale, everyday corruption and corruption at official levels?

Corruption doesn't always involve officials. When Indonesians pay extra fees for school and books, it's corruption—even if no upper-level officials are involved.

Audience member: According to the U.S. Corrupt Practices Law, there are different types of corruption. Extra payments for a marriage license, as shown in the first film, are different from other, more serious types of corruption. At private schools and universities, corruption is a more complicated issue for U.S. law.

Q: Have you shared the film with other Southeast Asian countries? Or has it only been shown in Indonesia?

So far, the film has not been shown in other countries. However, Management Systems International (MSI) and I have worked on anti-corruption programs in other Asian nations, including the Philippines. And the film is available on MSI's website and on YouTube. While

most of the viewers are Indonesians, more and more non-Indonesians are watching the film, according to our statistics.

Q: The film focuses on Jakarta's lifestyle and slang. How has the film been received outside of Java? Secondly, I felt that the film ended without a clear example of what to do about corruption.

Regarding your second point, I agree that the film does not tell someone what to do about corruption. But at least, it makes someone think about corruption. That's important. Regarding your first question, the film has been shown in 16 cities in Indonesia—and not only cities in Java. The film has been shown in universities and schools, ministry offices, and on national television. As for the public's response, it's too early to tell.

Q: What steps, if any, are being taken by the Indonesian government to crack down on lower-level corruption?

Addressing lower-level corruption requires bureaucratic, financial, and procurement reforms. But low-level corruption also can involve high-level officials, so there isn't a complete disconnect between low-level corruption and high-level corruption. If bureaucratic reform occurs, I believe decision making and management will be more transparent.

Q: Was the goal of the film to change cultural norms about corruption? What other ways—through sports, celebrities, etc.—have you tried to change people's attitudes towards corruption?

The main objective of the film was to make the KPK and its work "cool." KPK employees are the "good guys."

Also, the film tries to appeal to two demographics: those in Muslim social organizations, such as Nahdlatul Ulama, and those using social media. Both groups can spread the film's message to the wider public.

Concluding remarks: Gerald Hyman, Hills Center on Governance

Some good parts about this film must be emphasized. First, the film shows the bribers being punished. Usually, people criticize the bribe taker, not the bribe giver. But both are responsible. Second, the film shows that social movements start small. So the question arises: how can small-scale corruption be eradicated? Jakarta can't stop bribery at a far-off marriage license office. That is done on a local level. Local officials must follow the KPK's example. If that does not happen, the national government won't stop local-level corruption. Finally, in one scene, an official takes a bribe, so he can support his family. Indonesian officials are under-paid. If they don't take bribes, they can't survive. Corruption isn't simply an international problem. Rather it's a wage problem. Indonesia's public service is underpaid, Mr. Hyman concluded.