

**Using Information and Media to Strengthen Public and Private Accountability:  
The Role of Investigative Reporting  
Corruption in the Philippines**

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- The Philippines ranks among the top 10 most corrupt countries (1996 TI poll)
- The public suffers from corruption: inadequate public services; breakdown of law & order; expensive goods & services
- Government efforts are not sufficient & anti-corruption bodies lack teeth & are often subject to pressure
- Government seldom takes action unless there is media and public attention

Investigative Reporting Techniques

- In-depth, long-term research & reporting
- Documentary research & the use of public & private records
- Extensive interviewing
- Crime-solving techniques (e.g. undercover reporting)

Investigative reporting makes an impact by ....

- Reversing policy
- Causing the resignation/firing of erring officials
- Focusing attention previously neglected issues & areas
- Enriching public debate

Most often, investigative reporting involves investigating wrongdoing by individuals or institutions.

- Who is responsible for the wrongdoing?
- How was it done?
- What are the consequences?
- What can be done about it?

Robbed: An investigation of corruption in Philippine education

- Payoffs eat up 20 to 65% of textbook funds. Because of corruption, textbook: pupil ratio is only 1:6.
- Under-deliveries range from 30 to 60% of the total contract. The ratio of school desks is 1 for every 5 pupils
- Overpricing of education supplies reaches as much as 1000%

Benefits of Investigative Reporting:

- Investigative reporting helps raise the standards of journalism by forcing journalists to hone research and reporting skills.
  - Investigative reporting helps sell newspapers and news programmes.
  - Investigative reporting widens the scope of journalistic freedom and opens new avenues of access to information.
  - Investigative reporting enhances the capacity of the media to play a watchdog role.
  - Investigative reporting makes people angry. Outrage makes change possible.
  - The current crisis creates fresh opportunities for investigative reporting.
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- Traditional media audiences are demanding more.
  - New audiences are being created by democratization & crisis.
  - There is a global constituency for more transparency & information access.

Building an environment conducive to investigative reporting by...

- Supporting the publication or airing of investigative reports.
- Conducting seminars to sharpen skills and widen perspectives.
- Producing books & manuals on investigative reporting

Building a conducive environment by...

- Making officials and institutions accustomed to an inquisitive press.
- Creating an audience for investigative reports.