

Session Notes

Session: Closing plenary – Governance (June 8, 2:30pm)

Session Reporter: Tan Hong Li

Moderator: Torplus (Nick) Yomnak, Founder & Advisor, HAND Social Enterprise

Speakers:

- Thomas Thomas, CEO, ASEAN CSR Network
- Girish Menon, CEO, ActionAid UK
- Milind Antani, Head & Social Sector Practice, Nishith Desai Associates
- Bandid Nijathaworn, President & CEO, Thai Institute of Directors

Key Takeaways:

- Ground-up citizen-led initiatives are crucial to building a sustained anti-corruption culture.
- Collaboration – Regulations and culture are mutually reinforcing, underlying the need for public-private partnership in combating corruption.
- The social sector plays a key role in convening dialogues and fostering an inclusive anti-corruption ecosystem.
- Sound governance is at the core of every public-private-sector success. Corruption increases the costs of doing business, breeds distrust and erodes social fabric. It is hindering efforts to create meaningful and lasting social impact, thereby posing formidable threats to the achievement of sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
- Engage with governments, corporations, media, and the youth to gain insights into how to provide an improved infrastructure to tackle social issues. Engage with stakeholders or people with interest and involve them in the process and challenge those with the power to deliver, to do something.

Girish Menon

- A focus on governance is important, since if all countries can deliver on promises, there is accountability that money is well used and that there are no leakages in the system.
- Governments must ensure that there are fair equitable resources where it is used.
- Public services are fundamental, and transparency is also vital, as it is important for all to know how much resources are coming by using an active budget monitoring.
- Building evidences in terms of community voices or outcomes of the projects is important.
- Partnerships and management – citizens, society, and media have a critical role.

Bandid Nijathaworn

- Most powerful unity for businesses is to engage them in their work through 3 channels: by educating and providing know-how on corporate governance; ensuring how their works are consistent with good corporate governance; and through good knowledge building alongside highlighting issues on corporate governance practices.
- Companies need to adopt and practice clean business. This was the rationale that started Thai Institute of Directors' project.
- In this region of the world bribery continues to be a big challenge. And the issues in Thailand

are that corruption is become more systemic. Thus, there needs to be more engagement between the government and corporations to stifle out corruption.

- One of the ways to encourage clean business is to set up incentives. One of these is a collective pension, where a platform is set up for companies to declare and commit to clean business in order to become a member of this coalition.
- Governance needs to commit to three things: board policy on clean business; putting down processes and internal controls; and implement them.

Milind Antani

- Ethics and law plays a major role in governance. Compliance plays an even larger role.