Flamingo

Unmask the Corrupt UX Evaluation

10.05.16

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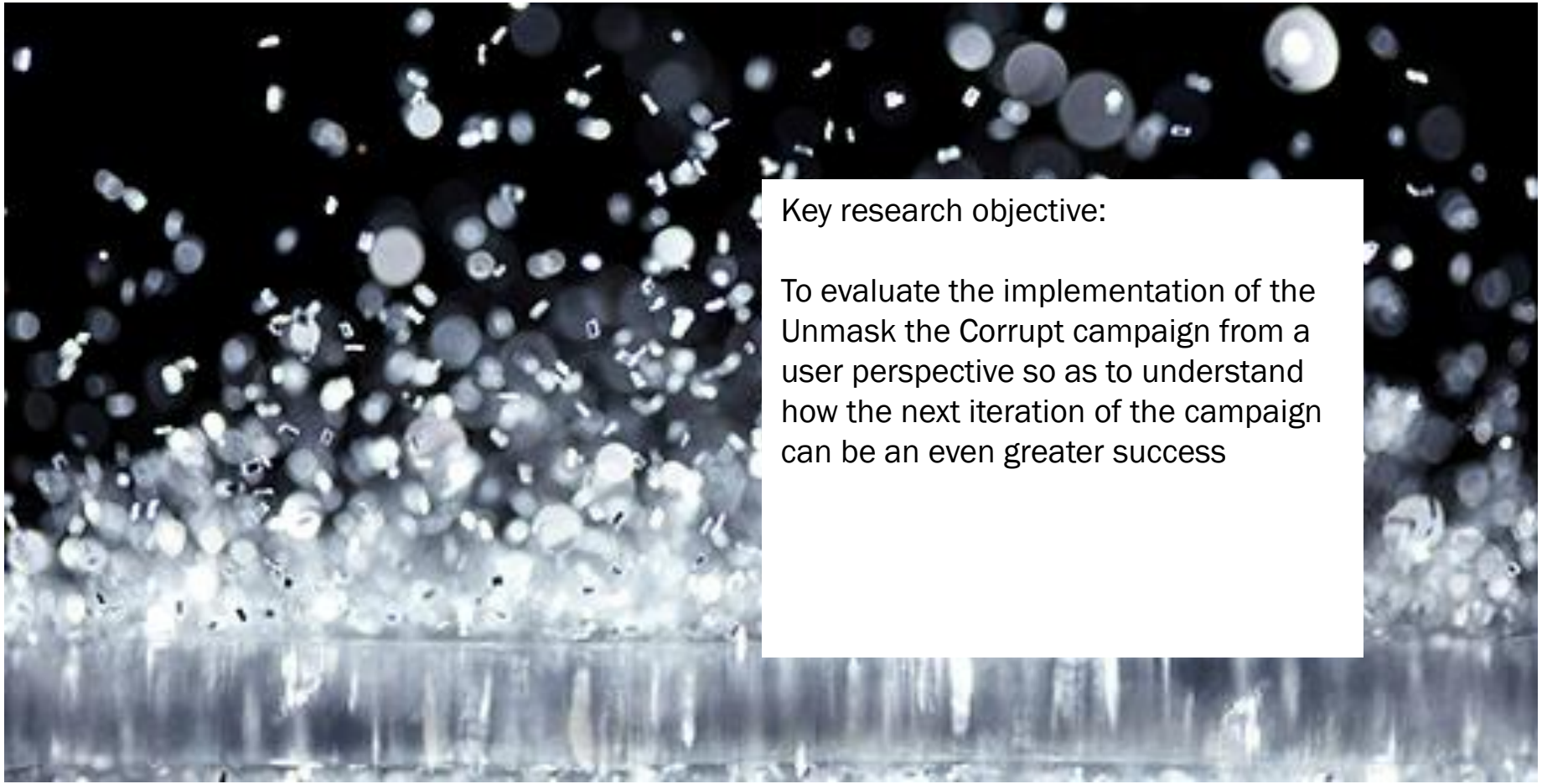
Background & Objectives

Unmask the Corrupt is a three phase global campaign against grand corruption run by Transparency International in 2015/16.

The campaign had global reach with the objective of raising awareness about grand corruption so as to mobilise people everywhere to help stop the corrupt from getting away with it.



Key research objective:

To evaluate the implementation of the Unmask the Corrupt campaign from a user perspective so as to understand how the next iteration of the campaign can be an even greater success

We conducted 32 questionnaires and 12 Skype interviews across 6 markets
We also held two discussion groups in New York & São Paulo

US | Brazil | Lebanon | Tunisia | Panama | Dominican Republic | Egypt | Ukraine

Discussion Groups

Questionnaires & Skype interviews

The Big Picture

Grand corruption a highly resonant issue across markets

- Perceived as a persistent & systemic societal problem that deserves more attention – genuine appetite for discussion & action

- As observed in past research, fuelling this are ongoing frustrations that …

  - The few are able to benefit at the expense of the majority

  - Impunity: perpetrators continue to get away with grand corruption without punishment

The effects of Grand Corruption have potential to drive high engagement with TI's programme

This holds true, even when Grand Corruption itself is not fully understood

People don't always have a clear, nuanced picture of grand corruption but generally seen as 'the baddest bad' in terms of its….

- Scale: the sheer size of the crime / injustice (e.g. the prominence of the figure; the amount of money / assets diverted or)

- Impact: the pervasiveness & extent of harm done (e.g. countries incapacitated by corruption)

Thus, Grand Corruption = worst kind of corruption

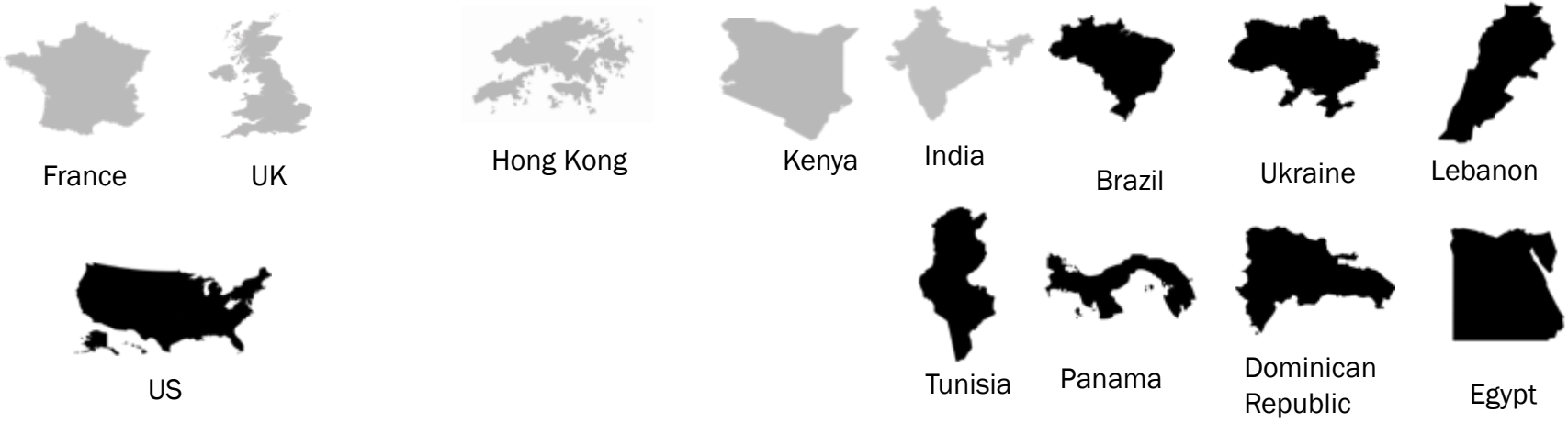
Grand corruption is the cancer which is consuming the world

Depth, Panama

It looks like an unwanted phenomenon in a system but actually corruption *is* the system. It's a system of governance.

Depth, Ukraine

But *relevance* of GC (i.e. its closeness to 'me & my world') differs across geographies



Global North – Less Relevant

Corruption highly motivating and troubling in theory

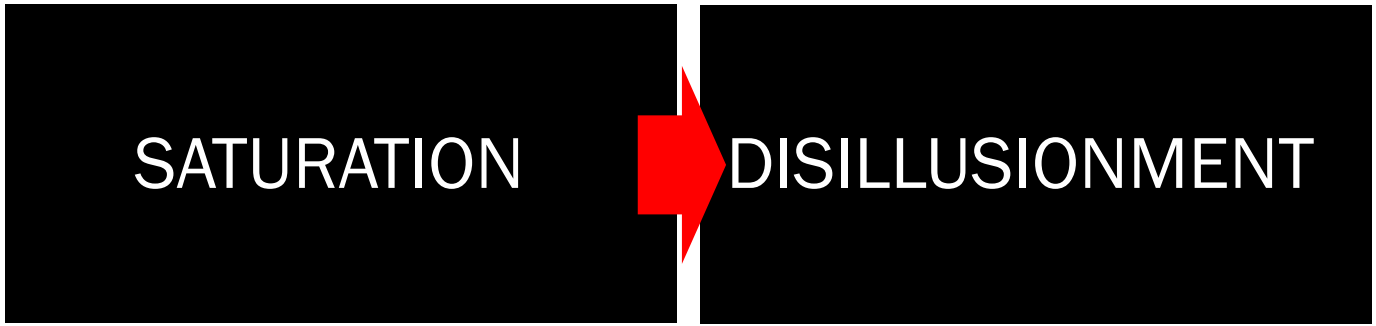
Less of a practical concern

Global South – More Relevant

Corruption highly motivating and troubling in practice

A far more pressing concern

Some parts of the world where corruption is particularly endemic are on a journey from saturation to disillusionment



Difficult to cut-through, but possible

- E.g. in Latin America where corruption has become even more cancerous (e.g. Brazil political instability all way up to President)
- Can still be engaged but need new news & clear action to convince of real impact – a new channel

Very hard to cut-through

- e.g. Post Arab Spring, corruption still feels endemic: strong disillusionment set in and leading to disengagement
- Extreme skepticism makes it very hard to convince that anything can realistically change

But overall, we can think in terms of two distinct audiences for TI who want different things from the organization

Need to grow & sustain awareness

Grand Corruption not top of mind: usually another issue feels more important in here and now

Issue can get traction when headlines are made (e.g. Panama papers) but everyday engagement is lower due to lower relevance

Need to convince through clear action

Global Corruption consistently top of mind: a lived daily reality

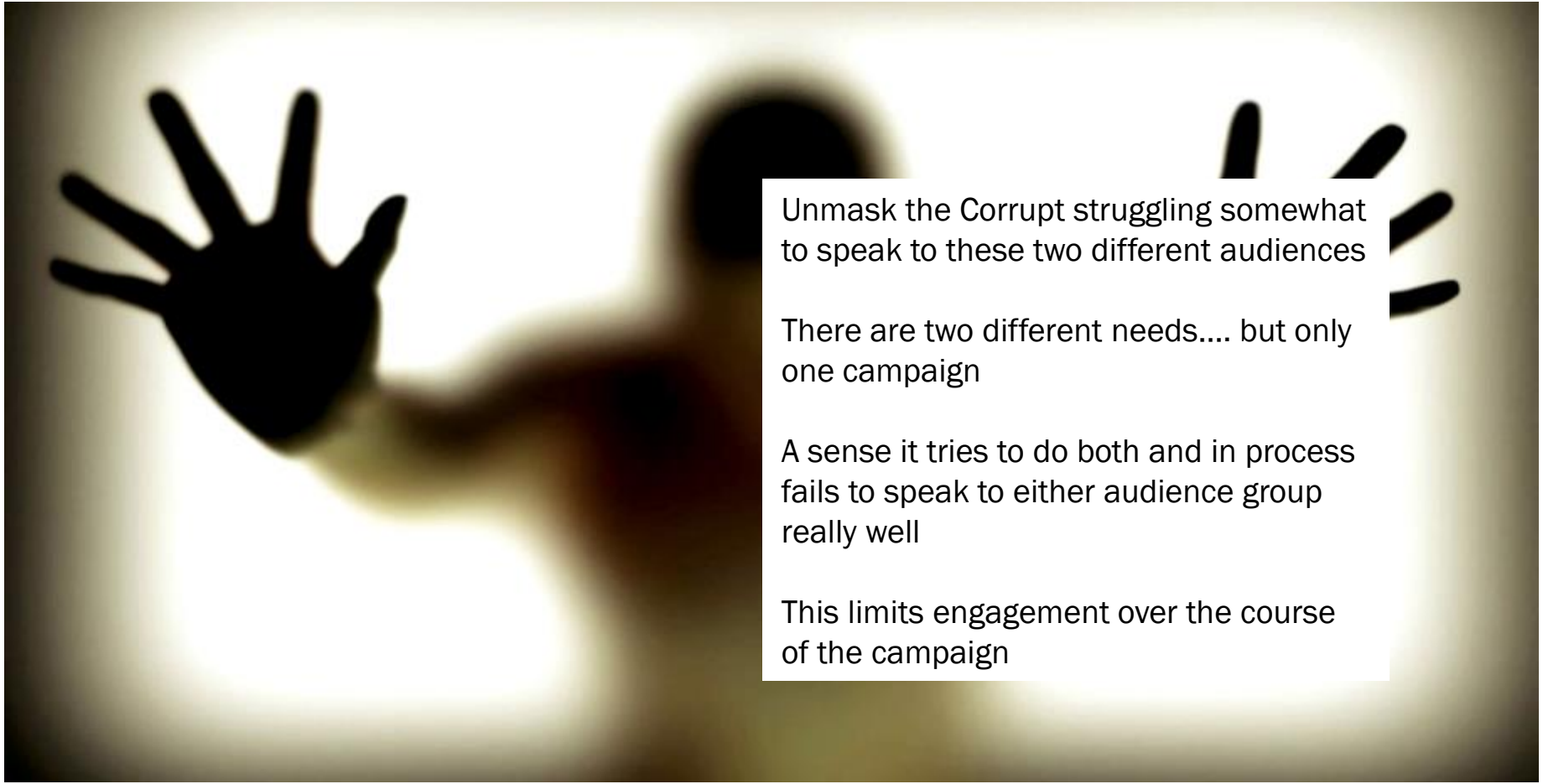
Already engaged & understood as highly relevant (although for some slipping into disillusionment) - need to translate engagement into action

I didn’t know there was corruption happening in Delaware, but now that I do, I’m curious to learn more

Group, US

It never changes, all the ‘old files’ of corruption keep coming back, and the government keeps on choosing the same corrupt agencies

Depth, Tunisia



Unmask the Corrupt struggling somewhat to speak to these two different audiences

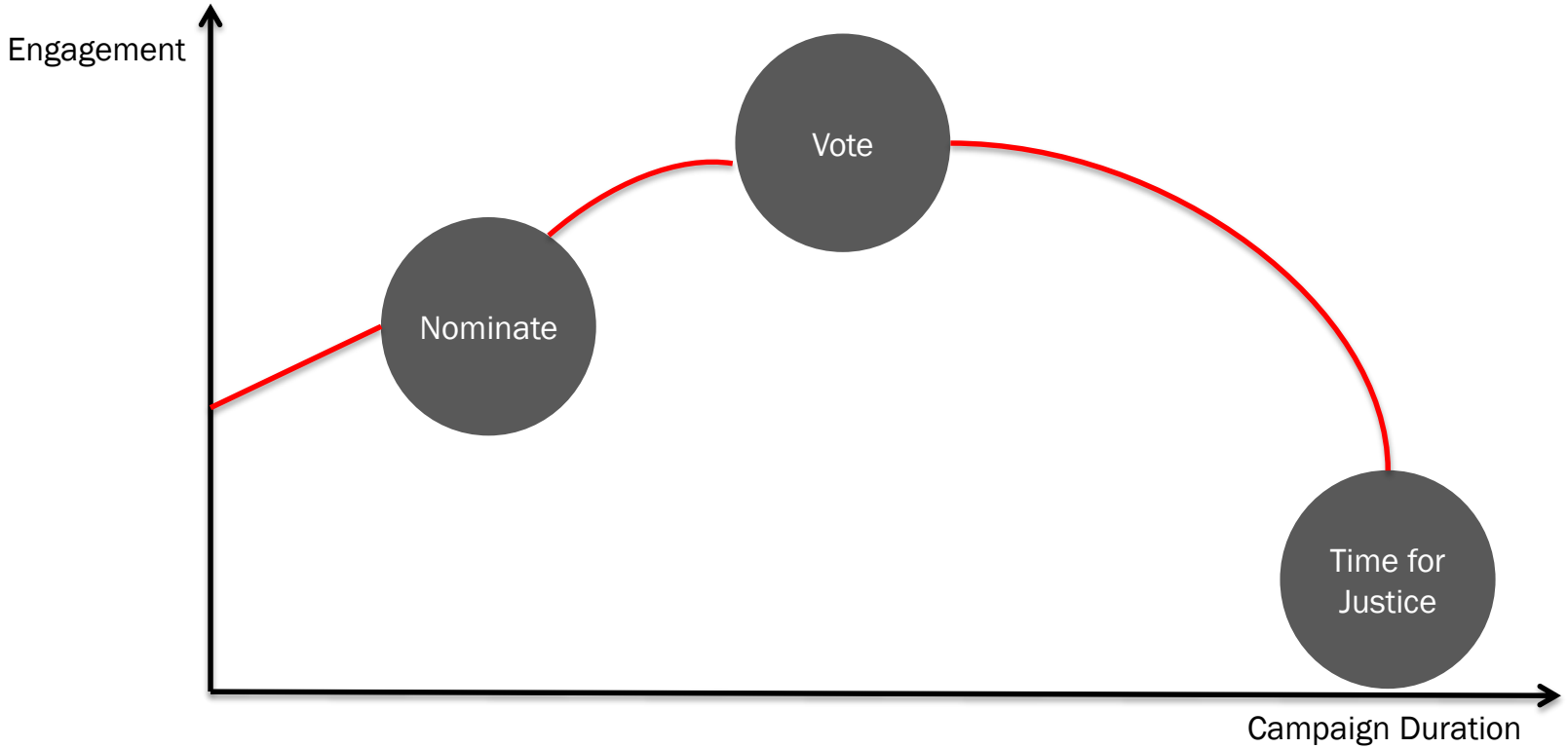
There are two different needs…. but only one campaign

A sense it tries to do both and in process fails to speak to either audience group really well

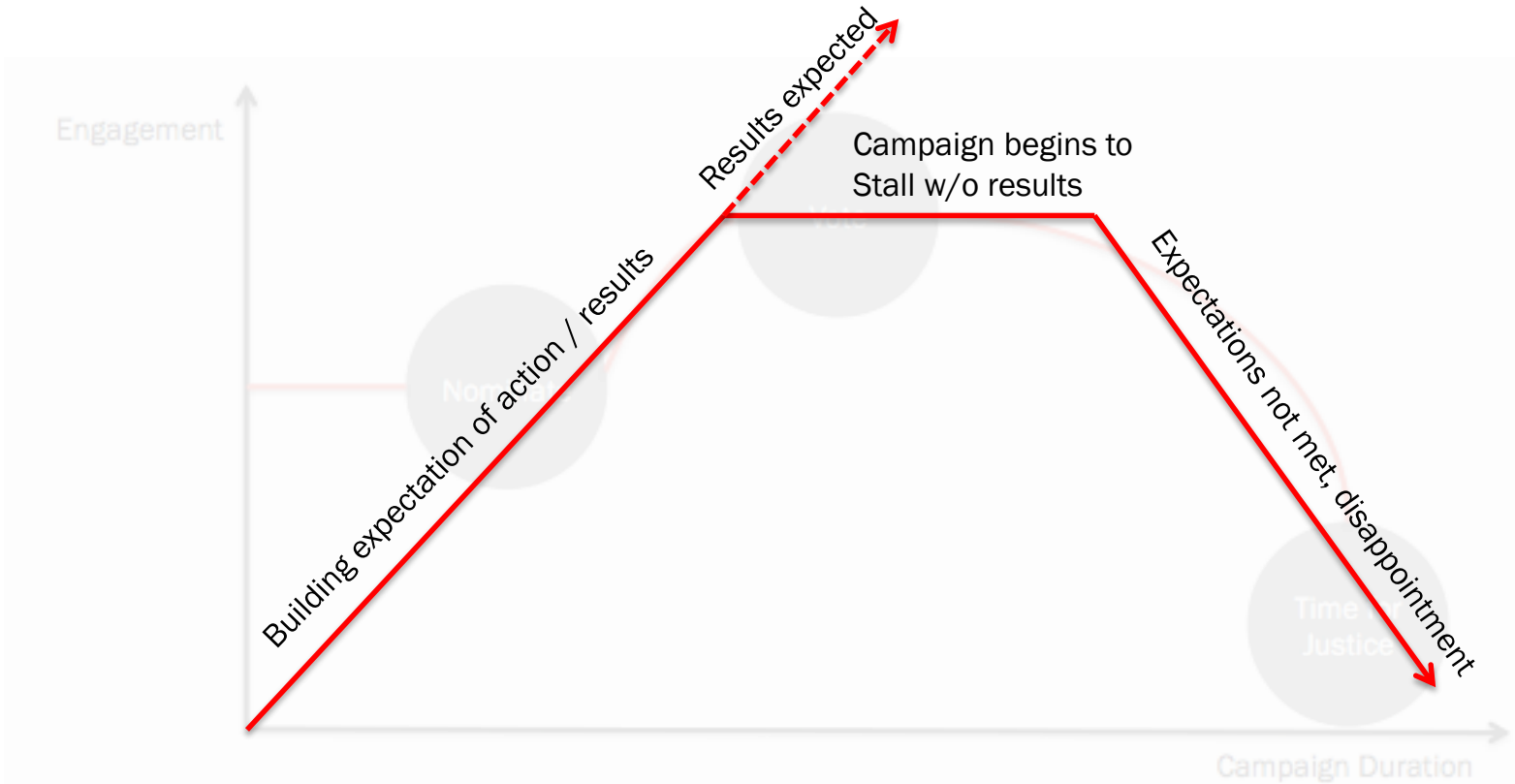
This limits engagement over the course of the campaign

How users are currently experiencing the campaign

The campaign harnesses & builds high engagement through Phases 1 & 2 but this peters out into low engagement and ultimately disillusionment in Phase 3



The campaign builds expectations of actions & results (justice) through phases 1 & 2 but phase 3 doesn't deliver on the promise, meaning the campaign ultimately disappoints



I had followed the process but when it came to it with Part 3 I really expected to be able to do something bigger and more relevant than this

Questionnaire, Dominican Republic

Part 1 and 2 got me excited and I thought the 3rd part was going to be my favourite and most important because that's where it was going to get really serious. But then I don't really know what happened

Depth, Tunisia

Let’s take a closer look at what happens at each phase in turn ….

Nominating & voting phases make the most out of the initial engagement around GC

Create a real sense of build up …

– Dials up momentum through successive phases

– Seen as dramatic ‘setting-up’ for action

And creates broad appeal across audiences

– Inclusive & participant-led

– Gives people a voice in the face of disempowerment

– Sense of grass-roots activation & drive for change

At outset, campaign feeds off appetite for GC to be more publicly addressed, admonished & acted against

This is fantastic, it's great that we get to actually tell the rest of the world what's going on here. It gives us the chance to show everyone we care – not all Panamanians are corrupt!

Depth, Panama

… And the language / tone of voice serve to heighten this further

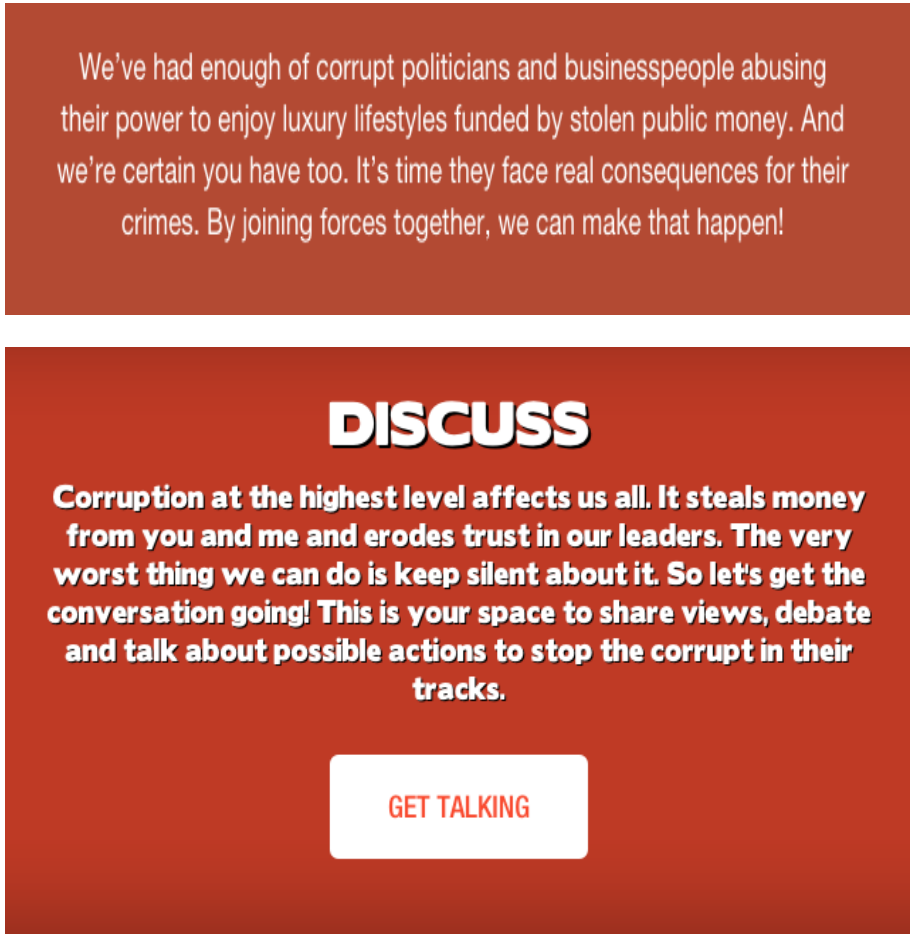
Campaign is fuelled by and amplifies sense of *shared injustice* – motivating & persuasive for users

It's both a cry of protest…
– Impassioned & fervent language

…and a rallying cry
– A powerful and empowering call to action

A sense that we cannot wait for change – we must make change happen ourselves. We're wresting control from the corrupt in control

This is an inspiring call to action!



Some can find this a bit over the top, but are willing to go along (for the promise of action & results at the other end)

Acceptance that TI needs to shout to be heard amidst the noise

In the Global North ….

– Impresses the urgency & extent of problem

In Global South …..

– Re-ignites the discussion & re-engages a potentially disillusioned audience

But an underlying hesitation here: people don't appreciate shouting when there's little new to say

The aesthetic walks a similarly fine line

It clearly seeks to criminalise & vilify those implicated

- Grainy B&W photos feel like ‘mug shots’/ ‘wanted posters’

- Bold red, white & black colours are condemning – leave no doubt of culpability

Users give some leeway on this as they TI’s intentions are good – recognise some ‘scare tactics’ may be necessary to gain cut-through

Reinforces urgency & puts a clear, dramatic spotlight on an issue that often lurks in the shadows

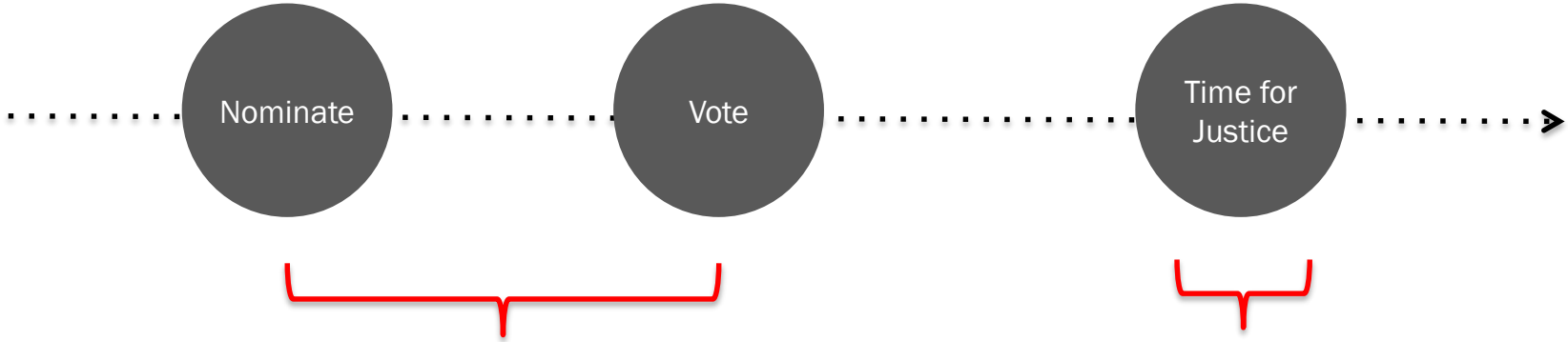
It’s impressive and memorable. It sends a strong message. You need to show this is a big problem with a severe fall-out

Depth, Ukraine

The colours are a bit severe, kind of death, murder colours. It’s a severe image, but I guess it’s a serious issue

Depth, Egypt

Overall, 1st & 2nd phases serve to dramatise the problem of Grand Corruption
Creates high expectations that 3rd phase will provide a clear resolution through concrete action & results



Dramatizes the problem

Drives engagement

Creates high expectation

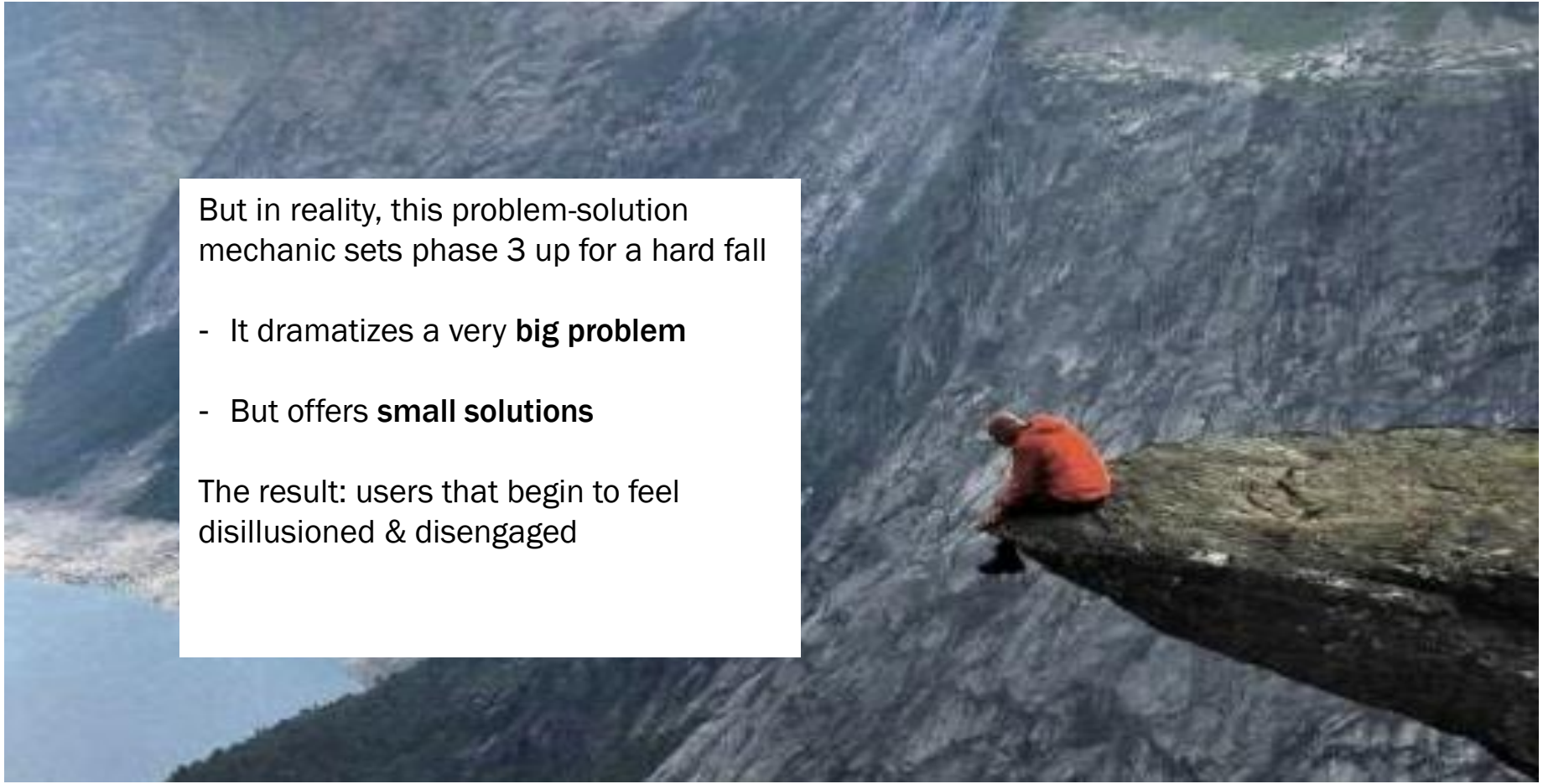
Poses a clear ‘so what?’

The promise of a solution

Suggests climax of engagement

Results-driven action (ideally quickly)

Poses a strong ‘now what?’



But in reality, this problem-solution mechanic sets phase 3 up for a hard fall

- It dramatizes a very **big problem**

- But offers **small solutions**

The result: users that begin to feel disillusioned & disengaged

This sinks in as the gap widens between audience's expectations & what the campaign delivers

From first two phases, audience have come to expect ….	**But in TFJ phase, they are actually met with ….**
Concrete action *by* TI (not others' successes reported second-hand by TI)	Vague / ambiguous calls to action – no clear sense of what TI is actually doing
Some immediate results (to match pace of past 2 phases)	Few immediate results – and none that TI can obviously call their own
Achievable short & long-term goals with clear milestones along the way	Over-ambitious long-term goals & little clear roadmap of how to achieve this
Some ongoing sense of agency building on user's initial involvement	Switches from participant-led to TI-led – 'what's my role from now on?'

In the two cases where ‘justice’ appears to have already been brought, problems persist

FIFA

- TI’s report feels incidental rather than instrumental in replacing Blatter with Infantino
- Appears like TI is taking credit for change brought about by others – riding wave of others’ successes
- And TI not even necessarily linked to UTC - may easily assume the two are completely separate
- Call for continued participation but no goal in sight

What happened

Thank you for participating and asking the FIFA President candidates to endorse independent oversight to win back trust and #CleanUpSports.

Gianni Infantino, the UEFA general secretary, has been elected as the new president of FIFA, succeeding the banned Sepp Blatter. Infantino has said that a priority will be to restore the image of FIFA and win back respect. Before the election, the FIFA Congress adopted a set of reforms to make FIFA more transparent, professional and accountable, which means that the new president will face much closer scrutiny than Blatter. However, these reforms only set the broad framework for change. Now the process of implementing real and meaningful change begins.

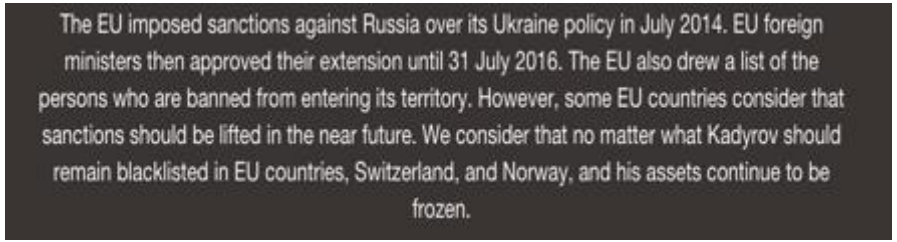
On 23 February Transparency International published the Global Corruption Report: Sport. It looks in detail at the corruption risks in sport and makes a series of in-depth recommendations on how to #cleanupsports. This is our benchmark for all the advocacy we do in sport, including football. If you want to know more click here. There are more than 60 articles by leading experts. Check to see if your country or favourite sport is in the spotlight.

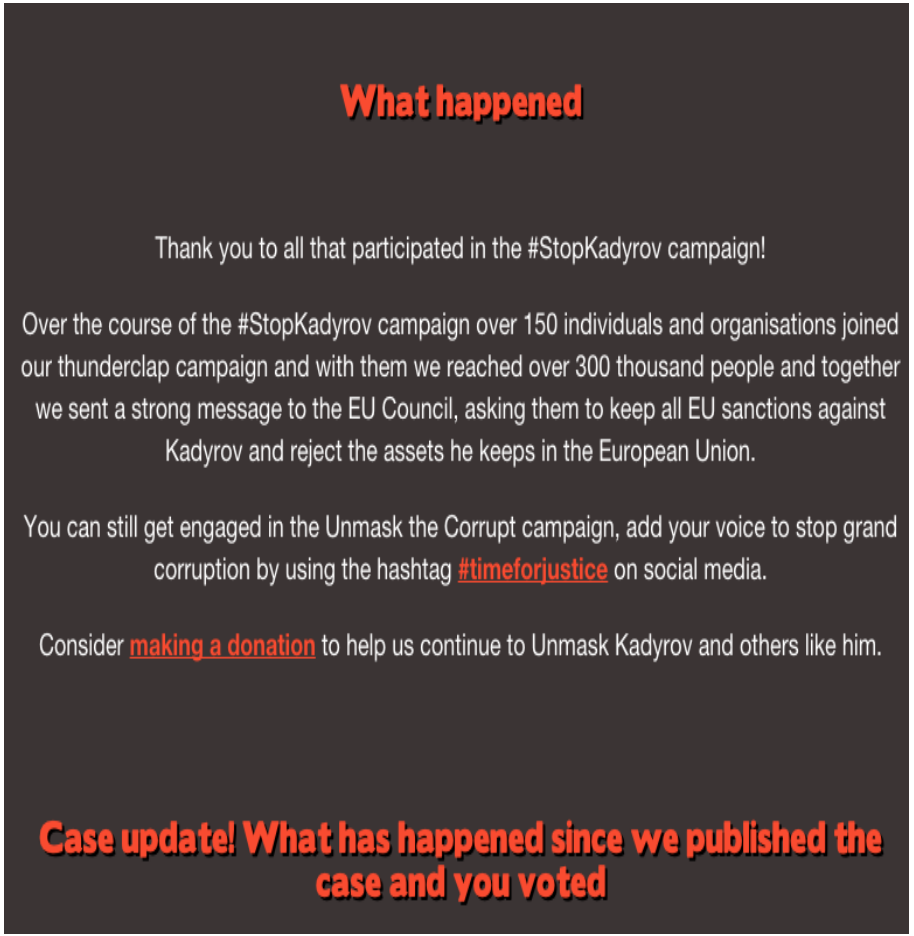
We need your continued participation to ensure that FIFA is more transparent and accountable – we will keep you posted on how you can take action.

Continue to add your voice to #CleanUpSports and #timeforjustice by talking about corruption in sports and grand corruption on your social networks. You can also participate in the discussion on FIFA and let us know what you think.

Likewise in the case of the Akhmad Kadyrov Foundation, impact of campaign seems obscure

- Explains what TI asked of the EU council
- ‘300 thousand people’ easily read as 300 people (especially when this only received 194 votes in the first place)
- But doesn’t give any outcome and in fact, leaves audience with enduring problem – EU countries still considering lifting sanctions?



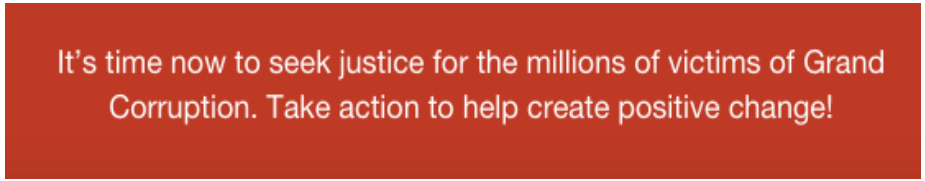


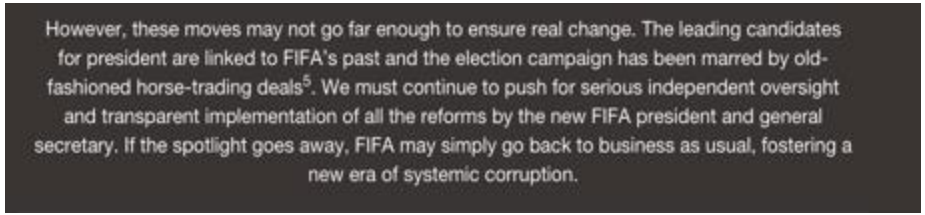
Overall, build-up of vague language leaves users unconvinced real change will follow

For example…

- “Take action now”
- “Bring sanctions”
- “Add your voice and stop grand corruption”
- “We sent a strong message to the EU council”
- “We must continue to push…”
- “Vote the corrupt out”

In all these cases, users are left with the questions ‘yes but how?’





Be specific about the end action, what we are being called to do and why. Am I voting someone out of power? Am I taking down a government? What am I getting myself into?”

You have to give me more to do. Don’t you want me to do more than hashtag? Otherwise it feels like pajama activism.

Group, US

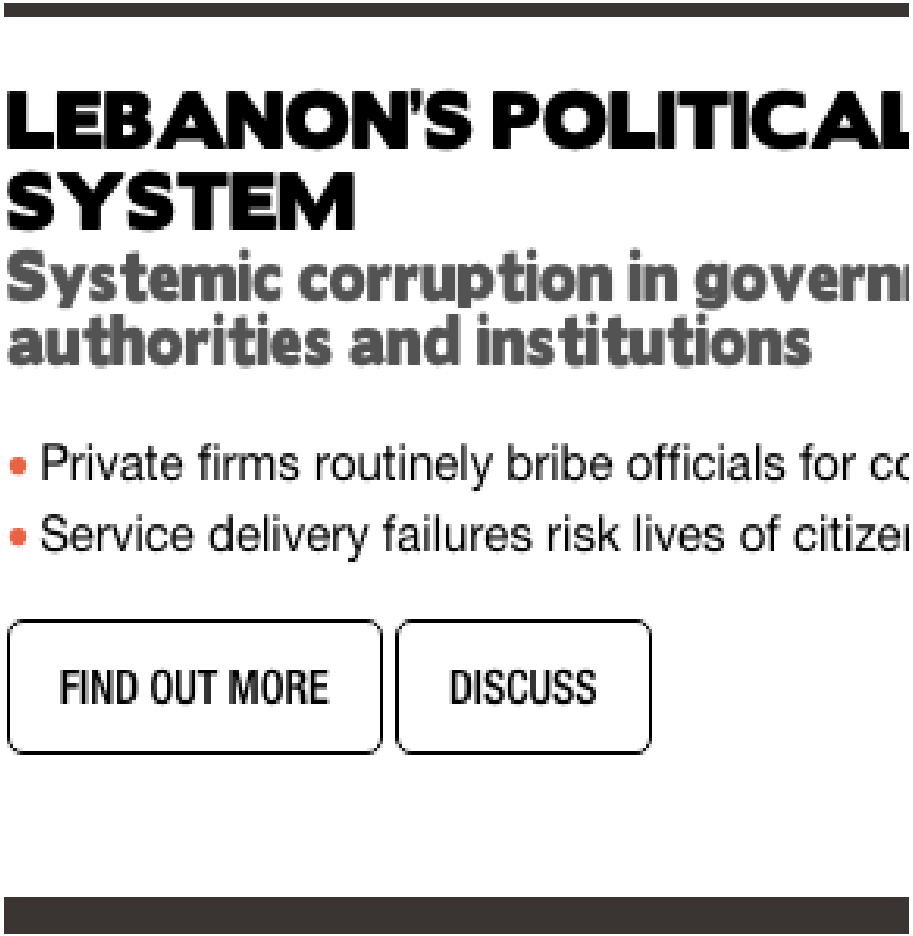
At the heart of this is the problem that the expectation itself can feel unrealistic

A sense that TI has bitten off more than it can chew

- It's set itself too big a task – 'going after' 9 cases simultaneously with the hope of bringing them all to justice

- Some of these 'cases' feel not only insurmountable but also potentially destructive – e.g. how can TI bring low the political system of Lebanon? What's the potential fall-out from this?

This can leave a bitter taste in users' mouths: they've had their expectations and hopes raised only to be left feeling all the more powerless and resigned in the face of Grand Corruption



It comes at the campaign with a very one sided approach. OK expose the corrupt, but you need to have a consideration for what happens after Hosni Mubarak. Yes he's corrupt but also the lesser of two evils for many of us

Depth, Egypt

Do they really want to take down Hosni Mubarak and FIFA at once? That feels very ambitious.

Group, US

From then on the campaign begins to stall and struggle …

In the absence of clear & concrete action brought about by TI itself there is …

A shift in engagement ….

- Disillusionment & cynicism sets in
- Momentum is lost without immediate results

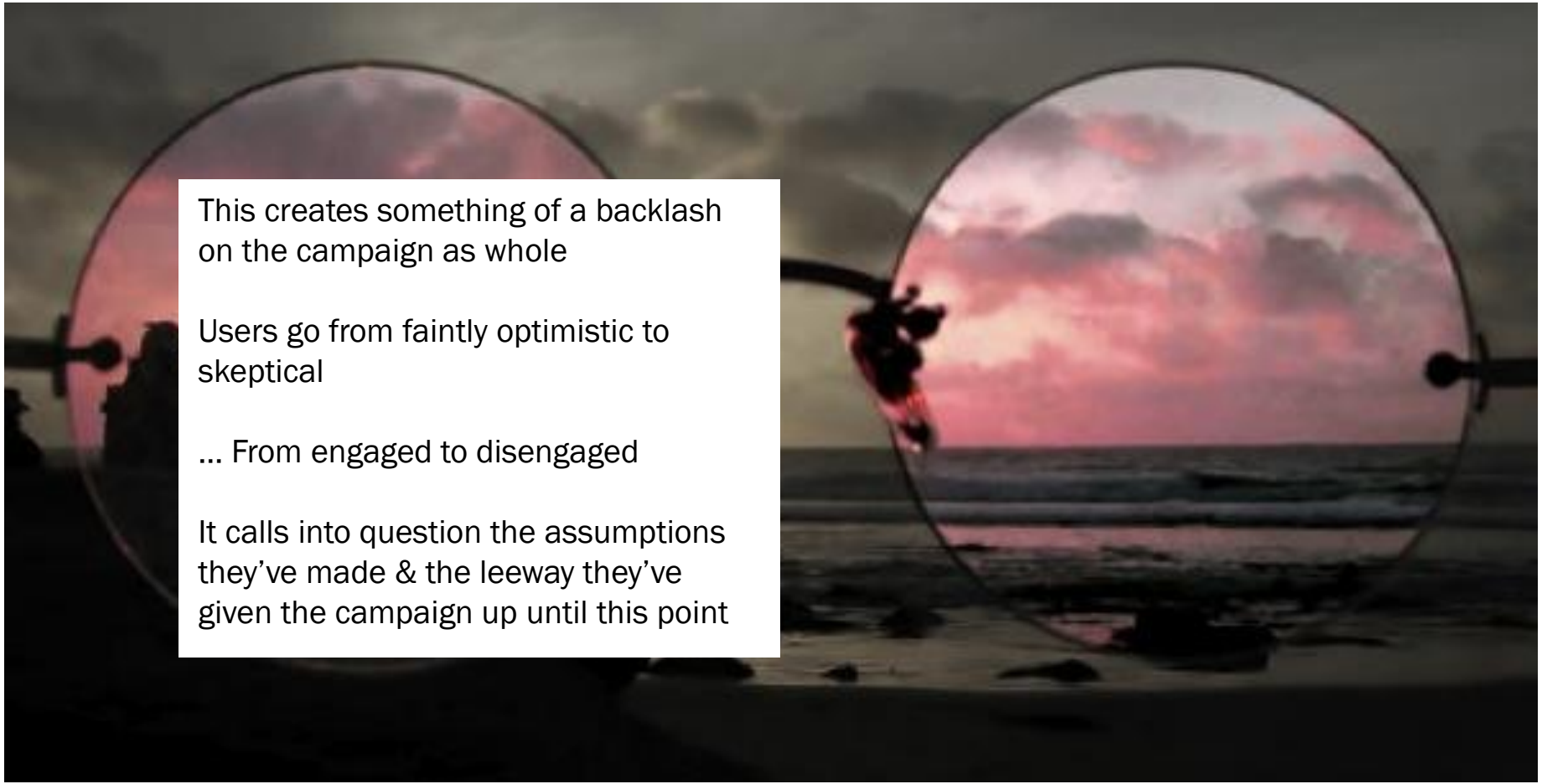
A shift in atmosphere / tonality…

- Becomes top-down rather than bottom-up
- A loss of individual agency to affect real change

The first two phases set stage for Phase 3 to be the climactic main-event - instead it seems just peter out

It just feels like these campaigns are done for the sake of it. If you're going to do a big exercise like this, you need to see it through well from start to finish, not trail off into nothing

Depth, Egypt



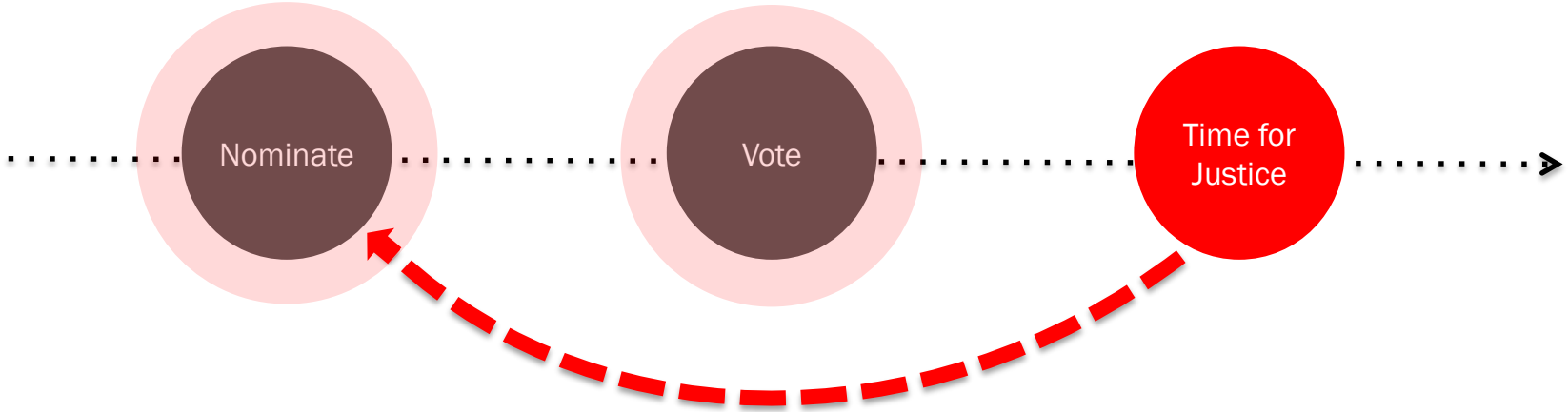
This creates something of a backlash on the campaign as whole

Users go from faintly optimistic to skeptical

… From engaged to disengaged

It calls into question the assumptions they've made & the leeway they've given the campaign up until this point

And so, the user experience circles back on itself and begins to reappraise and re-colour what's come before



Any initial doubts / hesitations justified

Disillusionment & skepticism can set in

Legitimacy of campaign called into question

Credibility of organisation undermined

Campaign becomes 'a lot of hot air'

The whole user experience is subsequently re-interpreted in the wake of this disappointment

From.....

- Determined
- Impassioned
- Assertive
- Motivating
- Sincere
- Doer

To....

- Naïve
- Emotionally clouded
- Aggressive
- Disempowering
- Insincere
- Talker

And so the campaign becomes vulnerable to accusations of gamification

Language / tone of voice goes from…	**To…..**
Rallying	Inflammatory
Persuasive	Polemical
Authentic	Trite / untrustworthy

And the aesthetics go from ….	**To ….**
Dramatic	Sensationalist
Clear & simple	‘Game-show’
Promise of illuminating those in shadows	Casts shadow over TI / feels ominous / opaque

Looking at it now it just feels very quite unapproachable and aggressive. I guess it could look like they ‘mean business’ but for me, it’s more like that kind of organisation that if you don’t agree with them, they don’t want to hear about it

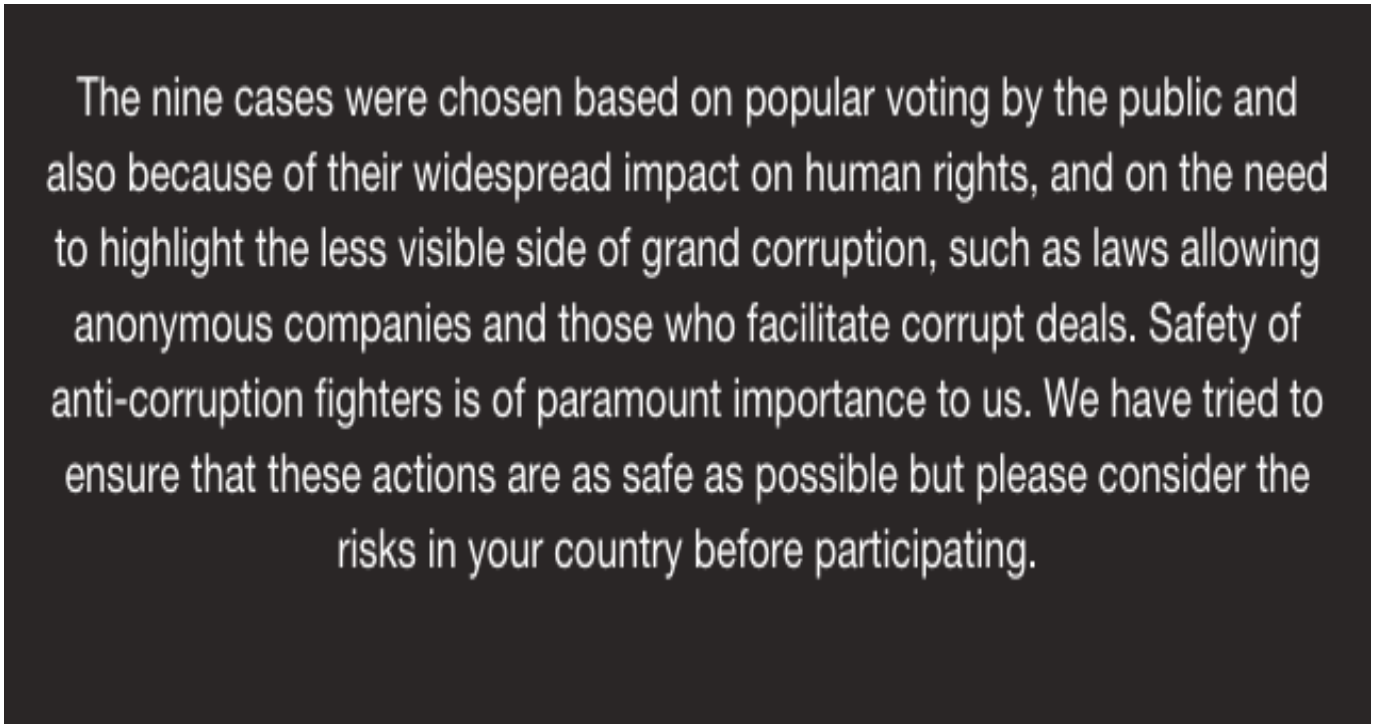
Depth, Egypt

In this game-show-like campaign, nominating / voting becomes tokenistic

Seen to take a serious cause and turn it into a caricature / gimmick to gain superficial attention

Asks people to nominate / vote but decision already a fait accompli

Mechanic of campaign becomes trivial rather than meaningful



Why would we even bother to vote if they just make the decision for us?

It all just looks like click-bait now – it's just a game that trivializes how adversely corruption can affect people's lives

Group, US

In this light, the campaign can come across as ‘overly ideological’ & agenda-driven

Campaign begins to look like it’s driven by a vigilante agenda rather than sticking to the clear, undeniable facts

- Case studies highlight least compelling narratives
- Appears to be propose an indiscriminate ‘wealth is bad’ position (E.g. highlighting Yanukovych’s ‘multimillion-dollar villa’, Dos Santos as ‘richest woman in Africa’)
- Using inflammatory slang like ‘cronies’ undermines seriousness and campaign’s credibility

This over-dramatizing has a negative impact on credibility, seriousness of campaign is called into question–real problems don’t need to be exaggerated

VIKTOR YANUKOVYCH
Former President of Ukraine

- Lived in multimillion-dollar villa
- Millions in state assets ended up in private hands
- Fled to Russia before charged with embezzlement

FIND OUT MORE | DISCUSS

ISABEL DOS SANTOS
Daughter of Angola’s President

- Richest woman in Africa, worth US$3.4 billion
- Angola has the world’s highest child mortality according to Unicef

FIND OUT MORE | DISCUSS

RICARDO MARTINELLI AND CRONIES
Former President of Panama and his close allies

- Allegedly diverted US$100 million from citizens
- Violated basic human rights of children

FIND OUT MORE | DISCUSS

I think on the surface – the actual website – is a good idea. But it's only good for introductory purposes. There needs to be more depth behind this façade. It doesn't strike at the heart of the real issue. The point is not the Yanukovych lives in a big villa! This is clearly intended for the West where they don't really understand what's happened here

Depth, Ukraine

It seems like it's creating an atmosphere of fear-mongering and comes across as illegitimate. When it's so polemical it's hard to engage because you can tell there's such an agenda behind it.

Group, US

This lack of credibility is exacerbated by the fact that it's not clear who this campaign is coming from

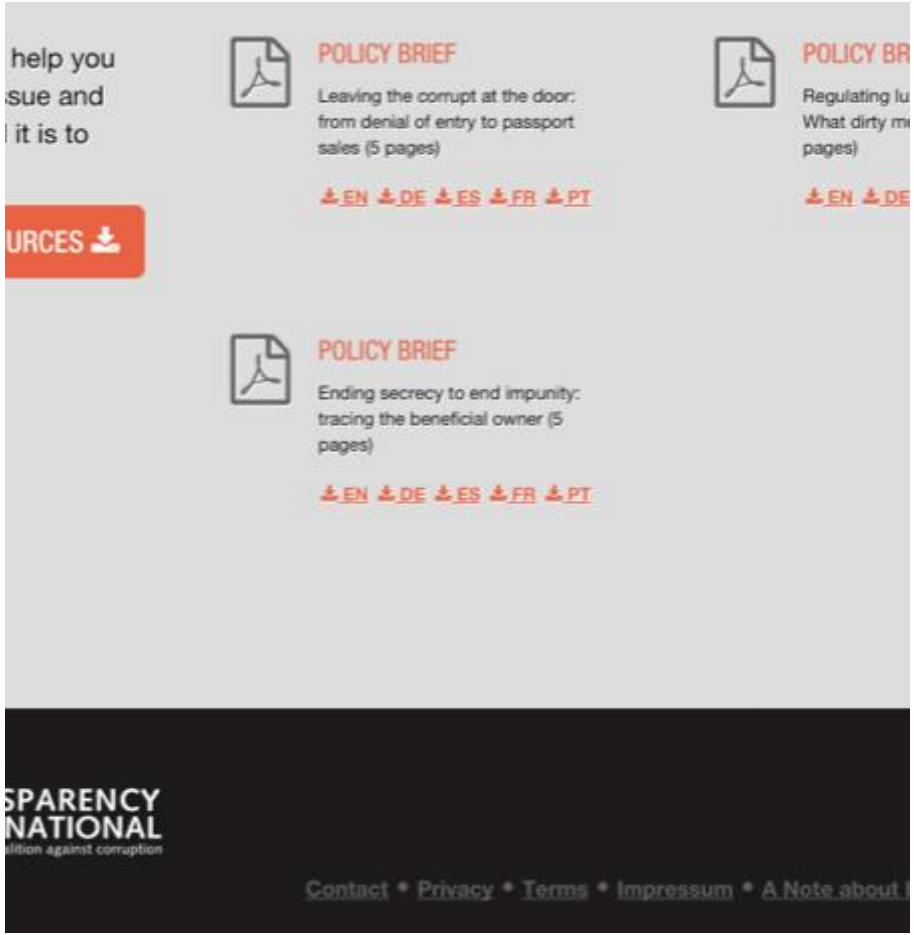
The link between TI & UTC is practically non-existent

- The logo at the bottom of the page missed
- No 'about us' page to give credibility / reassurance

Leaves audience with inherent suspicions …
- Why would a transparency campaign not clearly and openly declare itself?

- In absence of any clear link to TI, assume it's a small, agenda-driven & biased organisation, probably incapable of affecting real change

Risk when link between UTC & TI is made that there is potential for blow-back on TI's reputation



There's no identity behind it. It feels like a bunch of guys in a basement somewhere put this together. They'd need more transparency and more legitimacy in what they do

Depth, Ukraine

"For an organization that's all about Transparency, the link between TI and UTC is incredibly opaque."

Group, US

Overall, this can leave users confused and slipping into disengagement

A campaign that raised expectations of action & results, seems to have just highlighted instances of grand corruption

In Global South …
- At best, raises international profile of grand corruption
- At worst, an unhelpful reminder and even gamification of their lived reality

In the Global North…
- At best, temporarily engaging and informative
- At worst, feels over the top, fails to resonate and heightens a feeling of irrelevance to ‘me & my world’

In both cases it dramatises a profound problem but seems to stop short of offering any credible solutions

4

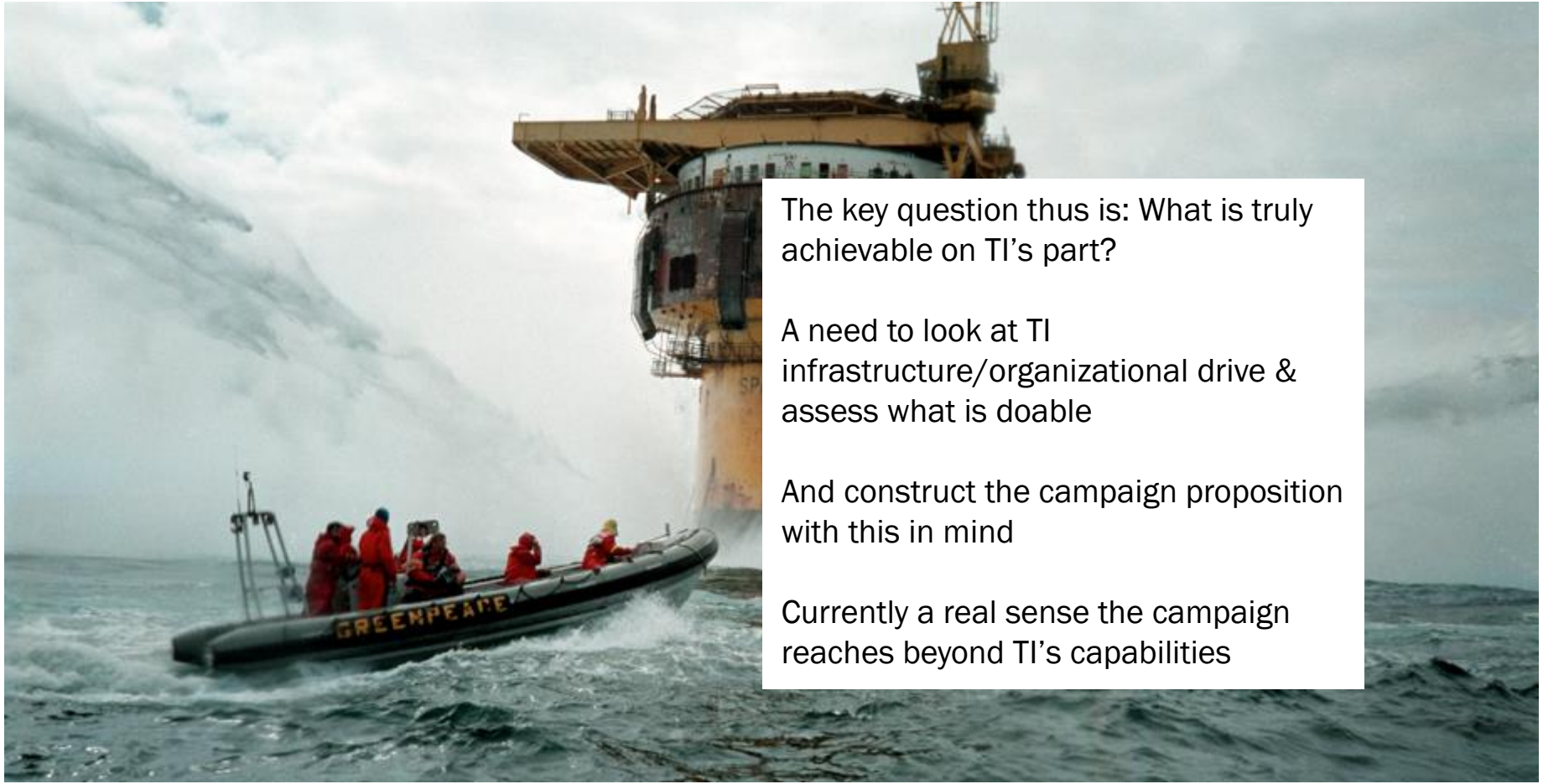
In summary: Campaign suffers due to a gap in:

- expectation the campaign creates

- And what the campaign ultimately delivers

Over time this discrepancy will lead to user disengagement

To drive stable, long-term engagement, a need to bring the two into line



The key question thus is: What is truly achievable on TI's part?

A need to look at TI infrastructure/organizational drive & assess what is doable

And construct the campaign proposition with this in mind

Currently a real sense the campaign reaches beyond TI's capabilities

Achievability differs whether you're going after soft or hard action…

- Towards the left of the spectrum is easier to deliver
- Success here doesn't require tangible changes to society/justice for the corrupt
- The further to the right the campaign positions itself the greater the challenge in being perceived as a success
- For TI this is doubly so because it has no past success in this area it can point to as down payments on the future

The further toward ‘hard action’ campaign aims the harder TI must work for credibility

- TI is not Greenpeace or Sea Shepherd – it has no large scalps to its name
- So credibility need to be earned if TI wants to play in the hard action space
- Not enough to report on issue – that is ‘soft action’

The key questions are:

- **Does TI *want* to be more like Greenpeace/Sea Shepherd**
- **Does TI have the capacity, personalities to be more like Greenpeace/Sea Shepherd?**

A need to be clear about how goals will be achieved

What is the roadmap?
- Clarity on what will be achieved from the start, outlining both long and short term goals

What is the destination?
- What's the aim for each case (they can be different aims, again keeping in mind what is *achievable* – no need to imply every culprit will 'face justice')

How are we going to get there?
- Lay out, action by action, what *TI is doing* & what *users can do* to fight corruption. Bolster this with updates of what is happening more widely, but be clear about what TI is/will do and be loud about milestones

What could a more ‘hard action’ approach look like from TI?

- About steady pressure and demonstrating this works through evidence of progress
- Prioritize – start with most voted case, work way down list (a domino effect rather than everything happening simultaneously)
- Always be purpose-led (e.g. petition → outcome?) and share the plan / thinking behind it
- Focus on individual engagement / involvement by making it clear what “I” can do (and what you can do for me)
- Consider publicity building acts that generate noise/engagement (without annoying people!)

Ultimately credibility in hard action comes from action & clear wins, not just talk

Real long-term engagement requires:

- Ability to talk about and substantiate what TI has actually achieved
- Publicity around what is happening on cases to maintain engagement, make audience feel their voice has achieved something
- Hero big (and small!) wins in fight against corruption so people have a reason to believe

Irrespective of future direction of campaign credibility is key for long-term health of UTC – It is credibility that is currently most lacking

It would be great to continue the campaign at a national level in each country. We need more presence of organisations like this that educate and enlighten. It needs to be part of the culture for future generations... Participation is key.

Depth, Panama

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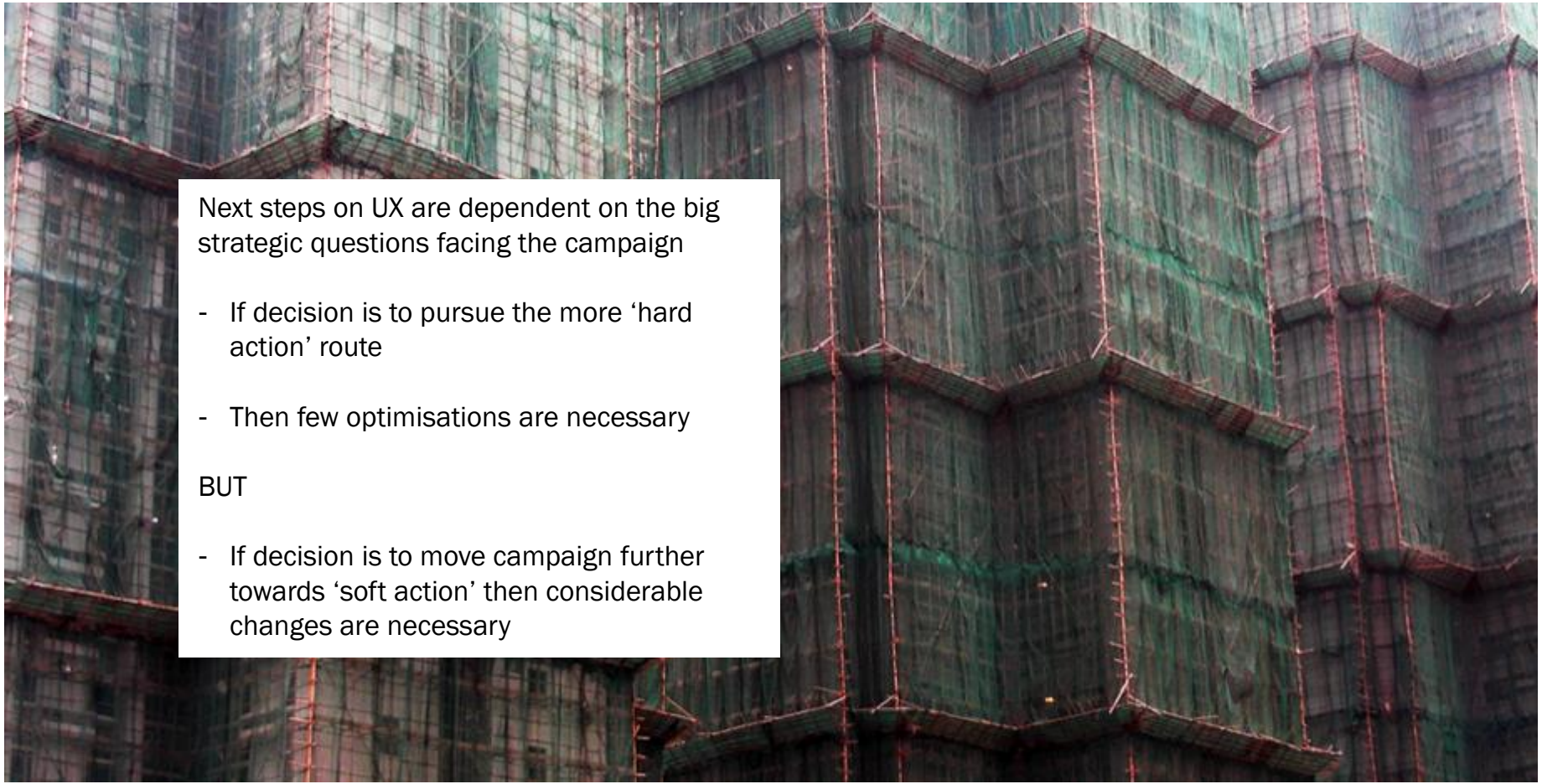


Next steps on UX are dependent on the big strategic questions facing the campaign

- If decision is to pursue the more ‘hard action’ route

- Then few optimisations are necessary

BUT

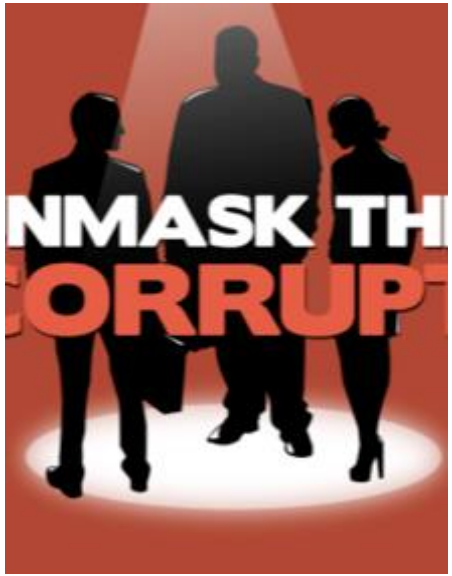
- If decision is to move campaign further towards ‘soft action’ then considerable changes are necessary

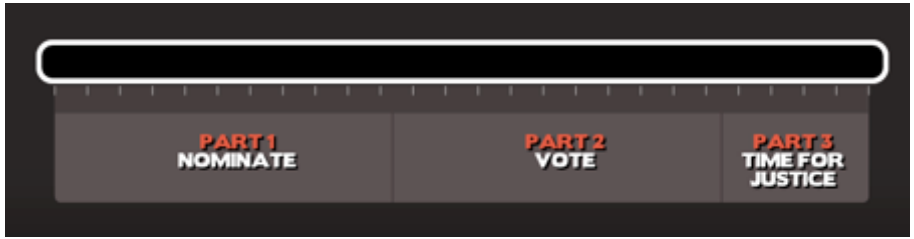
To root campaign more in the ‘soft action’ space, a range of changes to the UX is necessary

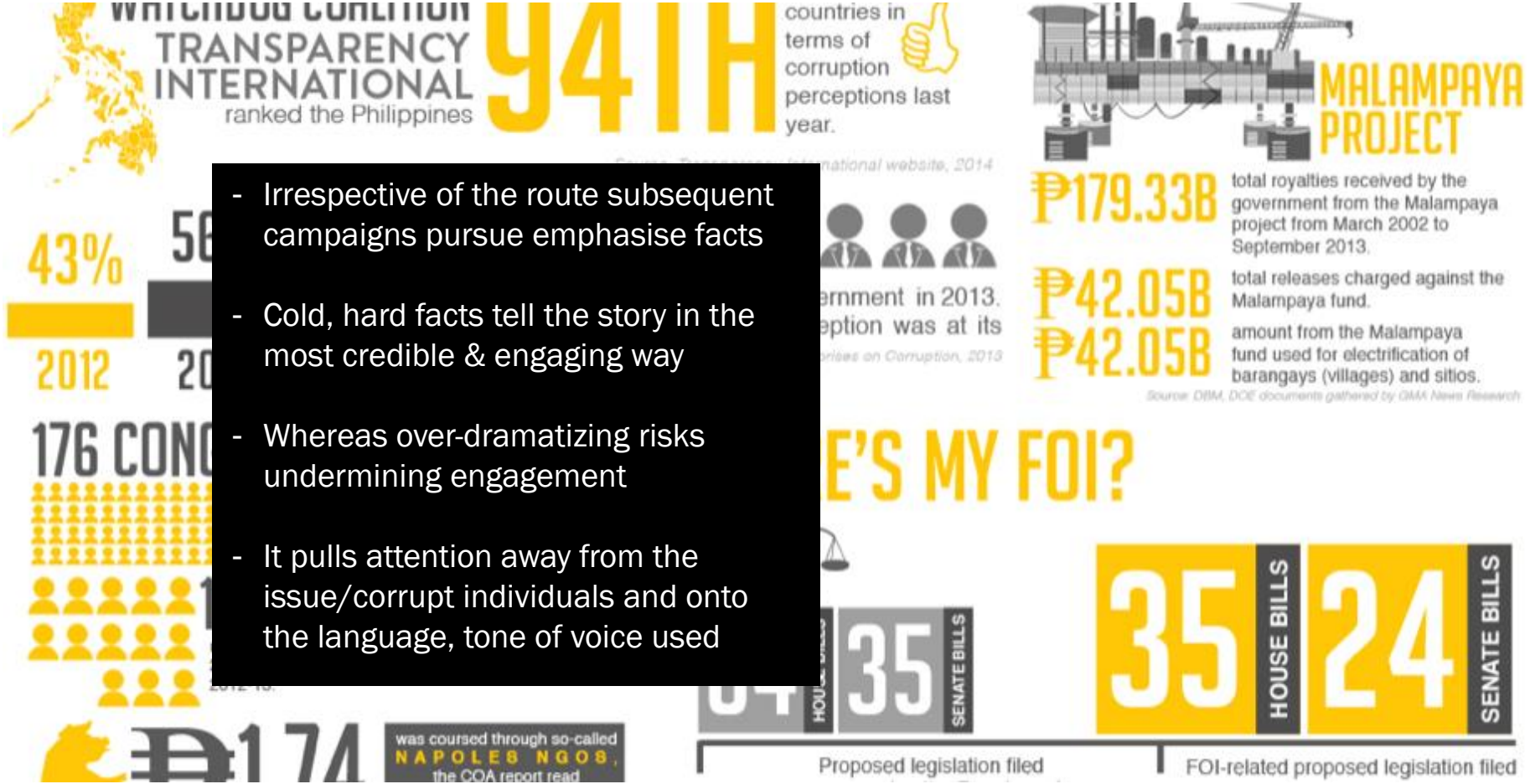
- Objective, authoritative language, not polemical
- Emphasise specific, concrete examples to build credibility
- Focus onto solutions, rather than just blowing heat on problem - frame each case within what is achievable, not what is “wrong”
- Incorporate translations & reputable local sources to cue sense of being more connected to local realities
- Ultimately about drawing more from the ‘think-tank’ world TI is familiar with

Current aesthetic feels very out of sync with a campaign living in the soft action space

- Cartoonish aesthetic of current site is highly emotional and charged
- Sense of ‘gamification’ and vilification would need to be scaled back to something more sober and objective
- Conversely, if future campaigns aim to live in ‘hard action’ space this aesthetic can work….
- But this aesthetic combined with lacklustre phase 3 = considerable disengagement which will ultimately lead to rejection of the campaign itself
- Relationship with TI as an organisation should be made explicit - logo should be more visible and ‘about us’ accessible







- Irrespective of the route subsequent campaigns pursue emphasise facts
- Cold, hard facts tell the story in the most credible & engaging way
- Whereas over-dramatizing risks undermining engagement
- It pulls attention away from the issue/corrupt individuals and onto the language, tone of voice used

“Had I known this campaign was run by an international organization, I might have taken it more seriously. Frankly I’m a bit surprised.”

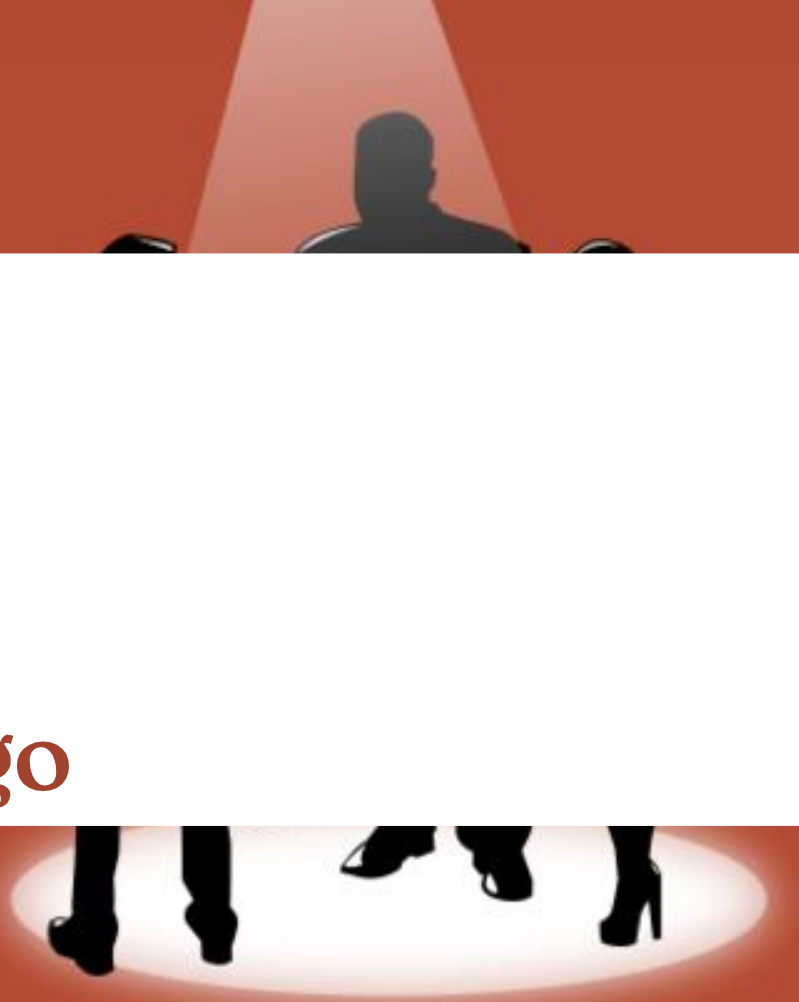
“An ‘About Us’ page would really help, then I would have a better sense of where this came from.”

Group, USA

- Currently difficult to understand who exactly is behind campaign
- But well delivered campaign would inject credibility and energy into TI brand
- But that means signposting more clearly who is responsible for it
- Doesn’t have to mean campaign uses same visual identity/tone as TI, but logo needs to be visible

Finally past research generated clear guidelines & guardrails which were validated by this research

DO'S	DON'TS
DO focus on the effects of corruption	DON'T simplify corruption down to a moral good/bad argument
DO use evidence, reason, be rational and reasonable	DON'T give up the rational high-ground via using over-emotive language
DO call out wrongdoing where it occurs but be careful who you blame	DON'T apply blame for the behaviour of individuals to an entire business or sector
DO frame situation in terms of what is achievable, not just what is wrong	DON'T be preachy or worthy - it comes across as naive and sententious

Thank You

Flamingo