



global witness

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT ANONYMOUS COMPANIES?

A TEDx CHECKLIST

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MARCH 2014

TED

1 GET EDUCATED.

Knowledge is power. If the issue is new to you, or you'd like to learn more, we suggest you have a look at one of the campaign products we've developed. We understand that the topic can be intimidating, especially to those of us who avoided law classes in school, but we promise that the basic dynamics aren't hard to wrap your mind around, and once you do, you'll be outraged.

- Charmian Gooch's TED Prize talk is obviously a great place to start.
- If you're short on time, we've put together an infographic which explains why anonymous companies are such a problem.
- Definitely worth watching is Global Witness' short animation 'The Grin!'
- For more detail on anonymous companies, there is:
 - A short briefing called 'Poverty, Corruption and Anonymous Companies.'
 - A spoof leaflet, '[An Idiot's Guide to Anonymous Companies](http://bit.ly/1ikHxaX)' which explains how easy it is to use anonymous companies to hide your identity. <http://bit.ly/1ikHxaX>
 - An FAQ about anonymous companies.
 - A set of examples of anonymous companies that have been used by drug cartels, corrupt politicians and sanctions busters.
 - Keep informed as to what's happening around the world via our [Facebook page](#). The EU is currently discussing whether or not to require all European companies to have to reveal who's behind them. Legislation has been proposed in the US that would increase transparency of companies. And the G20 will be considering this issue later this year too. <https://www.facebook.com/EndAnonymousCompanies>

All of these are available from www.globalwitness.org/ted. And if you just can't get enough, there's a list of further reading in the section at the end of this document.

2 SPREAD THE WORD.

Momentum is starting to build on this issue; it's time to ignite public opinion and create a truly global movement. To begin with you can:

- **Like the Facebook page.**
The [Facebook page](#) will be a hub with updates on the campaign, great content you can share, and importantly, when the time is right, calls to action. Show your support for the campaign to end anonymous companies by liking the Facebook page and get your friends to like it, too. <https://www.facebook.com/EndAnonymousCompanies>

- **Show your support on Twitter.**
Tweet your support using #anonymouscompanies. Here's a sample tweet:

I stand with @charmian & @global_witness to end #AnonymousCompanies. Learn more & join me here: <http://new.globalwitness.org/#TEDwish>

For updates on how the Global Witness' campaign against anonymous companies is going, follow Charmian Gooch (@charmian) and Global Witness (@global_witness). For a bit more detail follow Robert Palmer (@robertnpalmer), who heads up Global Witness' campaign against anonymous companies.

- **Write to your local newspaper.**

The opinion section of the newspaper is the most widely read and your elected officials regularly monitor both the letters to the editor and the opinion pieces to see what is important to constituents. Bring attention to the problem of anonymous companies by submitting letters to the editor, opinion pieces (op-eds) and blogs.

We'd love it if you sent any material you get published to us at ted@globalwitness.org or tweet us [@global_witness](https://twitter.com/global_witness).

- **Persuade influential voices to support Charmian's wish to end anonymous companies.**

Laws don't change on their own. As well as igniting public opinion, we need to persuade the politicians who have the power to make the right decisions.

So it's important that those with the power to end anonymous companies hear from the TED community. There's a variety of ways that you can get involved, from writing to influential politicians within your country who can have an impact on this issue to starting a petition within your country calling for anonymous companies to be outlawed. We can help link you up with local organisations working on this issue to provide more context and guidance. Email us at ted@globalwitness.org.

3 BRING THIS ISSUE TO LIGHT LOCALLY.

Charmian wants to inspire a new era of openness. But in order to do this, we need to spread the word about the damage that anonymous companies do in local contexts all over the world.

Here are some suggestions about how to raise awareness of the issue in your community/at your TEDx event:

- Show Charmian's TED Prize wish talk and 'The Grin' animation.
- Bring the subject of anonymous companies to your event in your own unique way. Email us at ted@globalwitness.org for suggestions of local speakers.
- Facilitate a discussion about the issue afterwards—whether among a large group or in breakouts—and pledge to take action together.
- Work with TED to translate Charmian's TED Prize talk into your own language.

4 SHARE STORIES FROM YOUR COMMUNITY.

The story of anonymous companies and their effect on real people's lives remains largely untold.

It's time that we exposed the very real and tragic human costs of these kinds of dishonest dealing. Share examples from your community of how anonymous companies are harming people, not to mention the credibility of local business. Your stories and experiences can help to spread the message. The more evidence we can bring together, the better, as it will help build momentum and outrage.

We will be working with the TED community to create a first-of-its kind, online tool to collate and present all of these stories. In the meantime, email us at ted@globalwitness.org.

5 CONVENE THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

Transparency is good for businesses and consumers. We all want to know whom we're buying from and whom we're doing business with.

- Reach out to businesses in your community to explain the problem of anonymous companies and get their support for Charmian's wish.
- If you own or work in a company – big or small, publicly listed or privately held – we need you to join the global campaign, take part in the conversation, and support this wish. Like the facebook page or email us at ted@globalwitness.org. You could also tweet your support, for example: *We proudly and publicly stand by our business and @charmian's wish to end #AnonymousCompanies. Learn more : [insert URL]*

6 FURTHER READING.

If you're interested in reading more, here's a longer list of materials, from a variety of organizations that Global Witness has worked with to end anonymous companies:

- Global Witness website: www.globalwitness.org.
- A spoof website from the ONE campaign called stash-the-cash.com
- A **great interactive website from CBC Canada** that allows you to imagine that you're someone rich with money to hide money from the taxman using anonymous companies. <http://bit.ly/1ghXzNx>
- A **blog** from Global Witness' Rosie Sharpe exploring how the palace compound of former Ukrainian President Yanukovich was part owned by anonymous European companies. <http://bit.ly/1cEKkM4>
- An article from Reuters 'Shell Games' series that exposes how more than 2,000 companies are registered at one small house in suburban Cheyenne, Wyoming: **Little House of Secrets on the Great Plains**. <http://reut.rs/1gw7PCG>
- A *New York Times* **op-ed** by a former law enforcement officer 'Delaware Den of Thieves'. <http://nyti.ms/1gw7U9o>
- Global Financial Integrity's Money Laundering Explained **mashup** of clips from different films. <http://bit.ly/1gw7XSP>
- There's NPR's **piece** on 'how to set up an offshore company'. <http://n.pr/PzWonJ>
- The **Tax Justice Network's John Christiansen talking about financial secrecy**. <http://bit.ly/PzWs7d>
- A **briefing document from the Open Society Foundations**, on how anonymous companies aid terrorism, crime and corruption. <http://osf.to/1o08PoB>
- An **in-depth report from the World Bank and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime** on anonymous companies. <http://bit.ly/1ilFMah>

This is an evolving checklist and we'd really like feedback to make it better, please email us at ted@globalwitness.org with any comments.