



ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

National Corruption Perception Survey 2023



National Corruption Perception Survey

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Anti-Corruption Commission
M. Finifaru, 7th Floor,
Majeedhee Magu, 20314
Male', Maldives.
Phone: 301 5200 / 301 5257
Fax: 331 1712
Email: info@acc.gov.mv
Website: www.acc.gov.mv

Cover Page:

Saddam Naseem, Senior Graphics Designer

Book Layout:

Fathimath Nazeefa Saeed, Senior Research Officer

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FOREWORD

The Anti-Corruption Commission of the Maldives has always been keen on exploring ways to strengthen the preventive mechanism of corruption within the operations of the State and society. To achieve this vision, we saw the significance in understanding the current knowledge of the Maldivian population on corruption as a concept and their attitude towards it to build a foundation upon which to reinforce our preventative efforts.

It is through this understanding, we believe that we can develop evidence-based, target-oriented preventive policies, strategies, programs, toolkits, and awareness sessions that could have a deeper, long-lasting impact on the society.

Hence, as mandated by the National Resilience and Recovery Plan and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the National Corruption Perception Survey was pursued as a prioritized work of the Commission. To ensure the validity and reliability of the survey results, the Commission outsourced the task to third-party research institute; Institute for Research & Innovations of Villa College.

The National Corruption Perception Survey is the first of its kind in the country to cover all the administrative regions of the country. The survey did not intend to establish any objective measurements but rather, gather the views and perceptions of the general public regarding corruption and its roots in society.

Thus, this report elucidates the results of the National Corruption Perception Survey. Based on these results, several way-forwards have been identified and detailed, which would be guiding principles in shaping the preventive works of the Commission.

In order to pursue a national-level uproar to this commitment, the Commission intends to collaboratively work with stakeholders and the general public to implement these new preventive measures. The Commission also intends to continue this effort of understanding

public perception to rearrange and adjust the patterns of preventive efforts. Hence, the Commission announces its commitment to assessing the perception of the Maldivian population on corruption every two years commencing from 2023.

Through this survey, the Commission envisions formulating relatable and realistic policies and strategies to strengthen the fight against corruption and pave the way towards a just, integrous society in the Maldives.

Anti-Corruption Commission

March 2023

Executive Summary

Over the years' corruption has made its way through as a global pandemic, dismantling the fabric of society, eroding democracy, crumbling economies and weakening the public trust on state administrations, and has proved to be an extremely challenging task to pluck out its roots from the society.

The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index of 2021 ranks Maldives 85 out of 180 countries surveyed for perceived corruption in the public sector, with a score of 40 out of 100¹ which puts Maldives in the higher bandwidth of perceived corruption.

Anti-corruption measures call for dynamic and effective planning and decision making, which in turn demands timely and reliable data. These data provide the information that is needed to prioritize and guide anti-corruption programs.

This National Corruption Perception Study is the first of its kind to cover all administrative regions (Greater Male Area and 20 Atolls) of the country and includes both urban and rural areas.

This report intends to understand;

- Perception and attitudes toward corruption;
- General perception about development challenges;
- Witness or awareness of any corruption experience;

based on the disaggregated demography of the target population.

This study was conducted targeting individuals above 18 years of age, and the sample population was clustered at the atoll level before collecting the data. With this approach, the entire adult population was subdivided into 21 enumeration blocks (Greater Male' Area and 20 atolls), with appropriate population weight allocated for each sampling

¹ Transparency International, 'Corruption Perceptions Index' (*Transparency International*, 2021) <<https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2021/index/mdv>>

cluster. A sample of 722 was achieved which yielded a margin of error of 3.6% at a 95% confidence interval.

The respondents were 51% male and 49% female. The majority of the respondents accounting to 59% were employed, while 22% were unemployed and 10% were self-employed.

The survey utilized Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) to collect the data.

The general perceptions of respondents on development challenges show that 56% perceived corruption to be the main problem facing the Maldives followed by drug and drug trafficking at 33% and unemployment at 27%.

A staggering 64% of the respondents believed that overall corruption in the Maldives has increased and 28% believed that level of corruption remained the same over the past three years. The majority of this perception came from individuals at the age group 25 to 34 years.

The perception of corruption was highest for the Parliament and SOEs (75% respectively). As for the extent to which corruption has improved or worsened within addressees, over 50% of the sample population believed that corruption in the Maldives has worsened compared to the conditions that were of three years ago. It was believed to have worsened at the Parliament with 67% followed by government ministries and departments, SOEs, courts/tribunals and local councils each at 61%.

The study explored the perceived confidence level of the respondents regarding the State's ability to solve problems facing the Maldives. The results showed that 67% of the total respondents were not confident of the State's aptitude to solve the problems.

When inquired about the effectiveness of ACC in combating corruption, the perceived confidence was almost equal between the opinions 'fairly successful' and 'nothing has been done' as 47% believed that nothing has been done by ACC, 48% believed the Commission was successful in combating corruption over the past years.

The most frequent corruption acts witnessed or were aware of by the respondents were acceptance of money or gifts to vote for a particular candidate or political party which was 65% and the use of personal connections or favors to expedite a public service which accounted to 58% of the respondents. These answers were stronger in the Greater Male' Area and the Southern Region compared to the North and Central Regions.

Seventy-nine percent of the respondents stated that they will report the case if they were requested to pay some extra money or gift to a public official. The most likely institutions they would report this complaint to are the ACC and Police, with both agencies receiving 40% respectively.

Respondents confirmed that personal experience and information from media is the information source they trust most for assessment of the corruption level in the Maldives.

Regarding public entities' roles in combating corruption, ACC is perceived to have the biggest share of combating corruption in the Maldives. Judiciary was ranked second followed by citizens who ranked third, indicating constructive knowledge of the public on the institution's responsibilities and the weight of citizen participation in eliminating corruption in the country.

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Introduction

The fight against corruption began officially in the Maldives with the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Board (ACB) in 1991. However, a modern form of the democratic institution came into force with the enactment of the current constitution of the Maldives in 2008, in which Chapter 6 mandated the government to formulate an independent commission to fight against corruption; namely the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). Thus, as per the constitutional requirement, ACC was established in 2008 as an independent body with the following mandates²:

1. To inquire into and investigate all allegations of corruption; any complaints, information, or suspicion of corruption must be investigated.
2. To recommend further inquiries and investigations by other

investigatory bodies and to recommend prosecution of alleged offences to the Prosecutor General, where warranted.

3. To conduct research on the prevention of corruption and to submit recommendations for improvement to relevant authorities regarding actions to be taken.
4. To promote the values of honesty and integrity in the operations of the State and to promote public awareness of the dangers of corruption.
5. To perform any additional duties or functions specifically provided by law for the prevention of corruption.

ACC has the responsibility to both investigate and prevent corruption-related offences, and hence provide recommendations for government-affiliated offices, institutions, and

²Constitution of the Republic of Maldives 2008, Chapter 6, Article 202

enterprises to implement the necessary changes to combat corruption³, such as strengthening the asset declaration process and reviewing both the procurement and recruitment processes.

The Commission executes its responsibilities within set objectives and goals under the guidance of a five-year Strategic Action Plan (SAP). The current SAP runs from 2020 to 2024. Thus, the current SAP instructs the Commission to publish timely research on corruption trends and implications in the Maldivian context.

This report presents the results of a national survey conducted to gauge public perception of corruption in the Maldives, aimed at strengthening national capacity supporting the implementation of anti-corruption strategies and action plans, in compliance with National Strategic Action Plan (NSAP) and the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) standards. The study aimed to understand

perception and attitudes toward corruption, general perception about developmental challenges in the Maldives, and common experiences of corruption.

³ Anti-Corruption Commission Act, Article 21

Methodology

The instrument of the study was developed based on the key areas identified through published literature and context specific information on corruption practices in the Maldives. Thus, the following 4 categories assisted the study to assess public perception.

1. General information (disaggregated demography of the target population).
2. General perception about development challenges
3. Perception and attitudes toward corruption
4. Witness or awareness of corruption experience

The sampling framework for this survey was the country's total population as per the Population and Household Census of Maldives' (Census 2014), which stood at

338,434 (171,962 males and 166,472 females)⁴.

As per the age-disaggregated statistics from the projected mid-year population of Maldives (National Bureau of Statistics, 2014), approximately 37% of the population is below 18 years. Hence, a ballpark estimation of 63% of the population as 18 years and above, (n=374,775) was used as the sampling frame. The sample size followed with a significance level of 95% ($\alpha=.05$), and a margin of error of 5% ($E=\pm 5\%$), where the minimum sample size is 384. However, a soft sample size of 1000 was targeted to increase the population representation and to reduce the margin of error.

The data collection process was only successful in achieving 722 samples which yielded a margin of error of 3.6% at a 95% confidence interval. Annex 1 will provide the estimated cluster allocation for GMA and each of the 20 atolls for a

⁴ National Bureau of Statistics (2014), Census 2014, available from <http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/nbs/wp->

[content/uploads/2015/10/Census-Summary-Tables1.pdf](http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/nbs/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Census-Summary-Tables1.pdf)

soft sample size of 1,000 and the actual achieved target sample.

Based on the estimations for enumeration blocks, and to ensure national representation, the sample units were selected randomly from a list of phone numbers accumulated and/or generated by the Research team. Computer-assisted random number generation was used to select the units for each designated sampling or enumeration block. At the initial selection, a margin of error for non-active phone numbers was considered.

Though stratifying the sample across socio-economic as well as other relevant factors may be desirable, given the sample sizes and the difficulty in obtaining contact details of the requisite demographic details, it was not practical at the sample selection stage.

The survey was conducted by trained enumerators. The selection of enumerators was based on their prior experience of conducting surveys using either field methods or online/computer-

assisted methods. Gender balance was considered in selecting the interviewers/ enumerators). A total of 30 enumerators worked on this project for four weeks.

Once the questionnaire was finalized and the enumeration team trained, the questionnaire was piloted (pre-tested) for validity and reliability. The pre-test aimed to identify comprehension problems, the appropriateness of response options, and the sensitivities that any questions may arouse. Approximately 20 interviews were conducted with respondents randomly selected for the pre-testing phase.

The debriefing sessions after the pilot helped detect any problem with the questionnaire design leading to the ambiguity of words, misinterpretation of questions, inability to answer a question, sensitive questions, and many other problems associated with the questionnaire as well as the process of administering the survey. It also provided an opportunity to give feedback to the interviewer to ensure that they follow the

proper protocol of data collection procedures to ensure objectivity in data collection.

All collected data were collected via Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI), and entered into a computer-based database with the facility to convert to .xls or .sav format for subsequent exporting to SPSS.

All measures to safeguard and ensure ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle was maintained throughout the research. This included ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups), and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities.

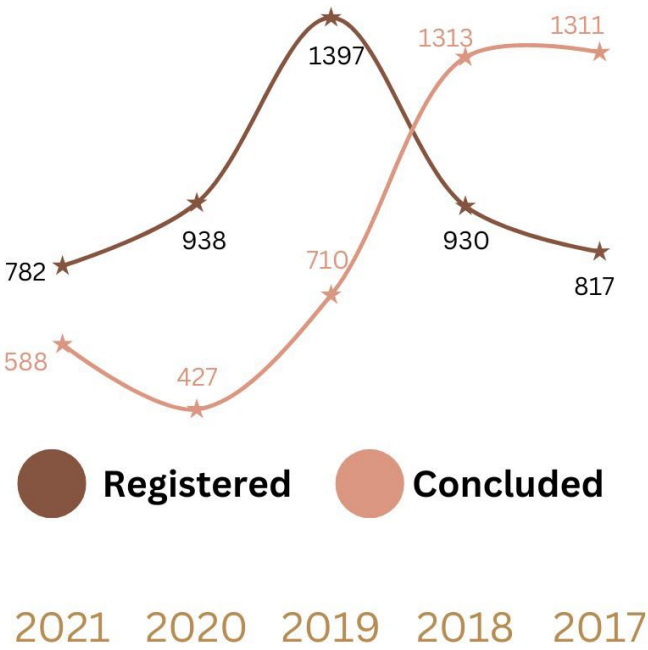
Comparison of Registered & Concluded Cases

A total of 4866 complaints were registered over the five-year period from 2017 to 2021.

There was a steady increase from 2017 to 2018 followed by a sharp increase in complaints registered in 2019, which may have been due to the fact that 2018 was a Presidential Election year that resulted in a change in government.

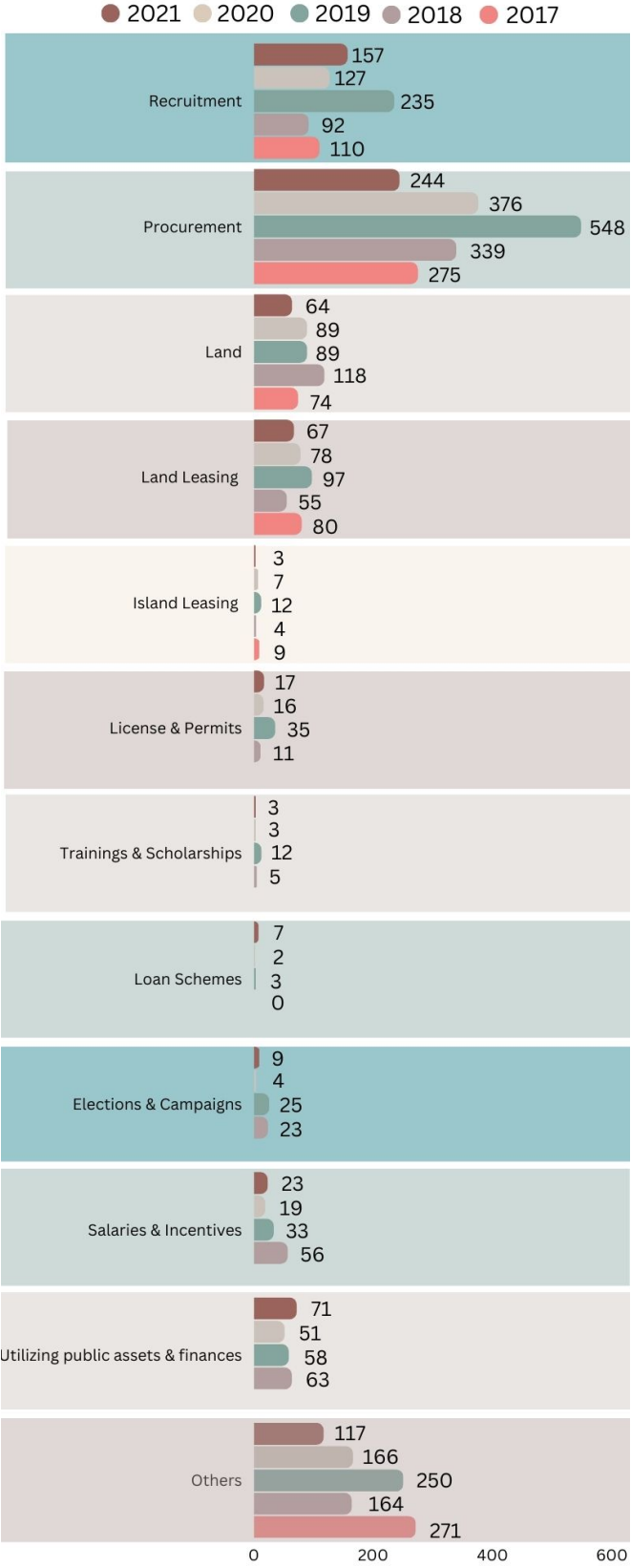
The Commission concluded investigation of 4,349 cases from 2017 to 2021. It should be noted that concluded cases for each year do not only consist of the cases registered in that particular year and would include all pending cases in the Commission.

REGISTERED & CONCLUDED CASES AT THE COMMISSION



Comparison of Complaints Registered, by Type

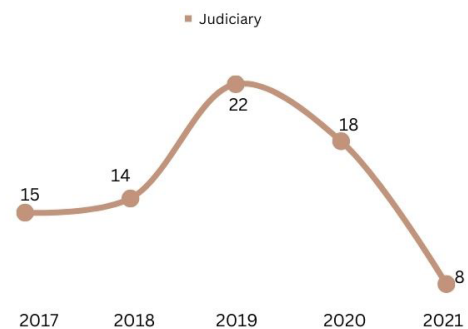
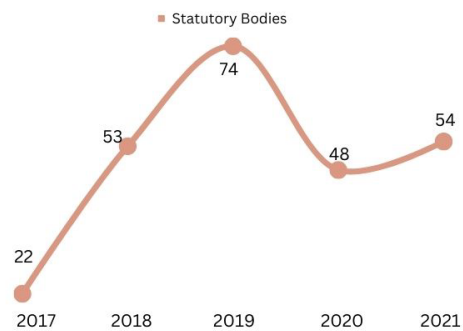
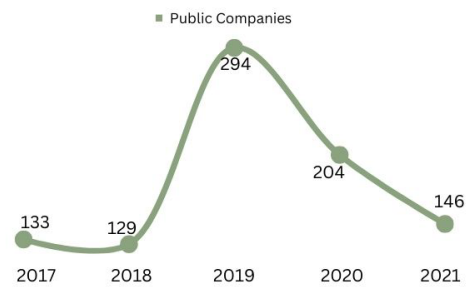
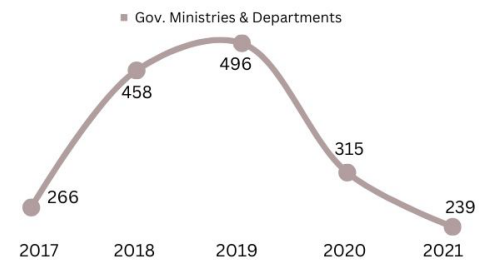
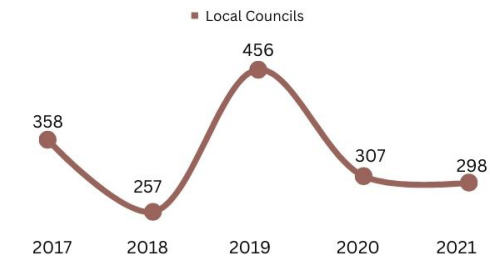
A total of 4866 cases were registered in the Commission from 2017 to 2021. The most frequently registered type of cases belongs to *Procurement*, followed by *Recruitment*. Meanwhile, the year 2019 records the highest number of registered cases in the Commission totaling up to 1397 cases, and the lowest record is in the year 2017 with a total of 271 cases. Prior to the year 2018, several types including *License & Permits*, *Trainings & Scholarships*, *Loan Schemes*, *Elections & Campaigns*, *Salary & Incentives* and *Utilizing Public Assets and Finances* were not categorized as types of cases. Since they were not categorized, they were all recorded under the category *Others*. The staggering number of cases recorded in 2019 could be speculated as a result of the year 2018 being a Presidential Election year.



Comparison of Complaints, by Addressee

Addressees are considered as the recipient institutions of the cases registered. Over the span of 2017 to 2021, *Government Ministries and Departments* were the recipients of the majority of the cases. A close second is *Local Councils* with a total of 1676 cases. Third is *Public Companies* which are the State-Owned Enterprises or SOEs which totals 906 cases in the observed 5-year span. Comparatively, the figures for *Statutory Bodies* and *Judiciary* remain low with two figure amounts.

All addressees observed a similar pattern of a sharp decline after the year 2019. The most probable cause for this impact could be the COVID-19 related lockdown that ensued in 2020.

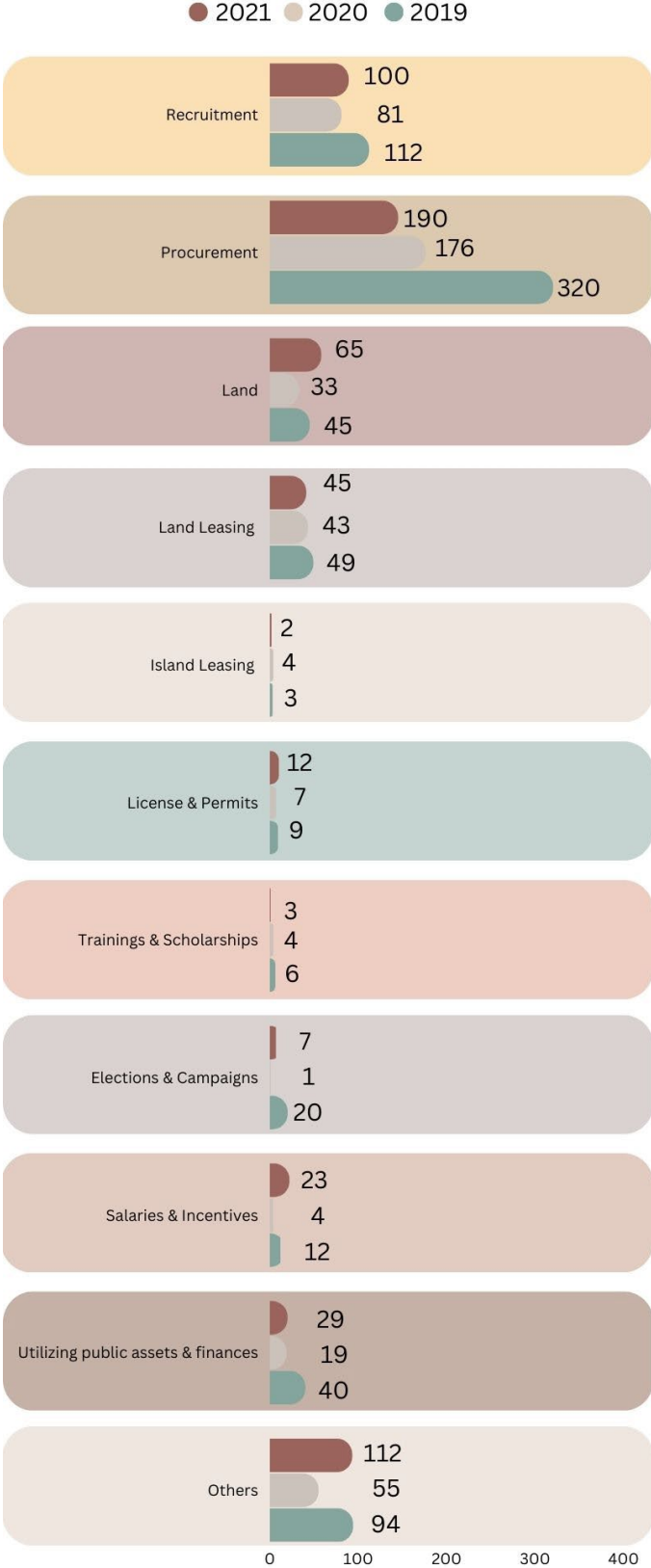


Cases Concluded, by Type

The Commission concluded a total of 4,349 cases between the years 2017 and 2021. However, comparable data with regard to concluded cases by type could be extracted from 2019 onwards, and thus, the data for the concluded cases, by type of case is taken from these three years.

Most number of cases concluded were of *Procurement*, followed by *Recruitment* in type. This is in alignment with the case registration pattern. Thus, 686 cases relating to different issues of *Procurement* were concluded during the time frame.

From these three years, most number of cases were concluded in the year 2019 which totals to 710 cases followed by 588 cases in 2018.



Perception of Corruption:

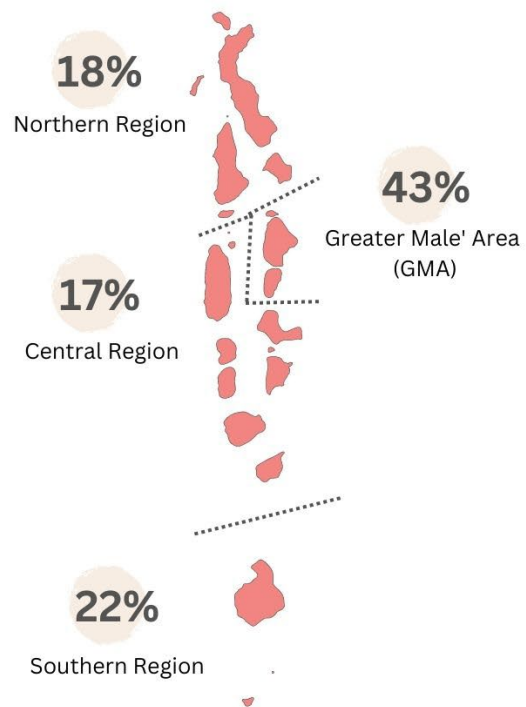
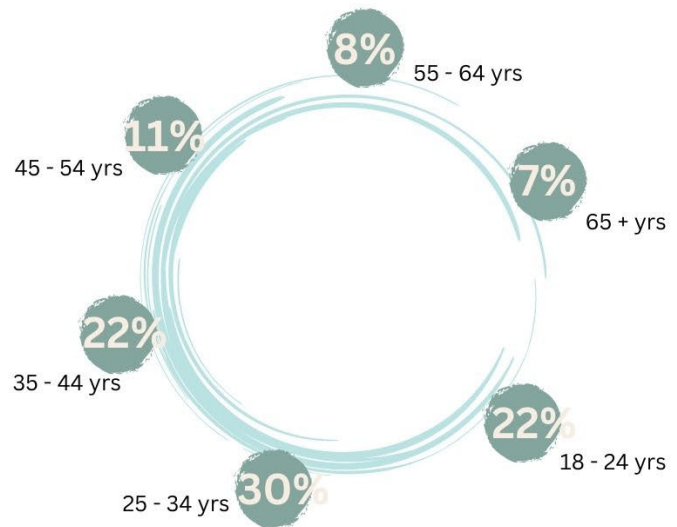
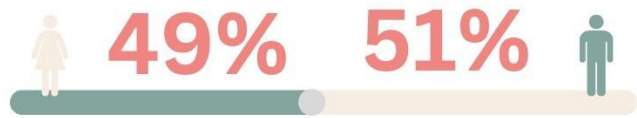
The Maldivian Context

Demographics

The survey recruited a total of 722 participants out of which 51% (n=370) were males and 49% (n=352) were females. These participants represented 21 atolls and the Greater Male' Area (GMA) and were of six different age groups.

Most of the respondents were from 35-to-44-year age group and 25-to-34-year age group. The age group 25-to-44 years also makes up the bulk of the Maldivian population and thus, this distribution is reflected in the survey as well. Similarly, contributors above the age of 65 is the lowest as this age group is reflectively lower in the Maldivian population.

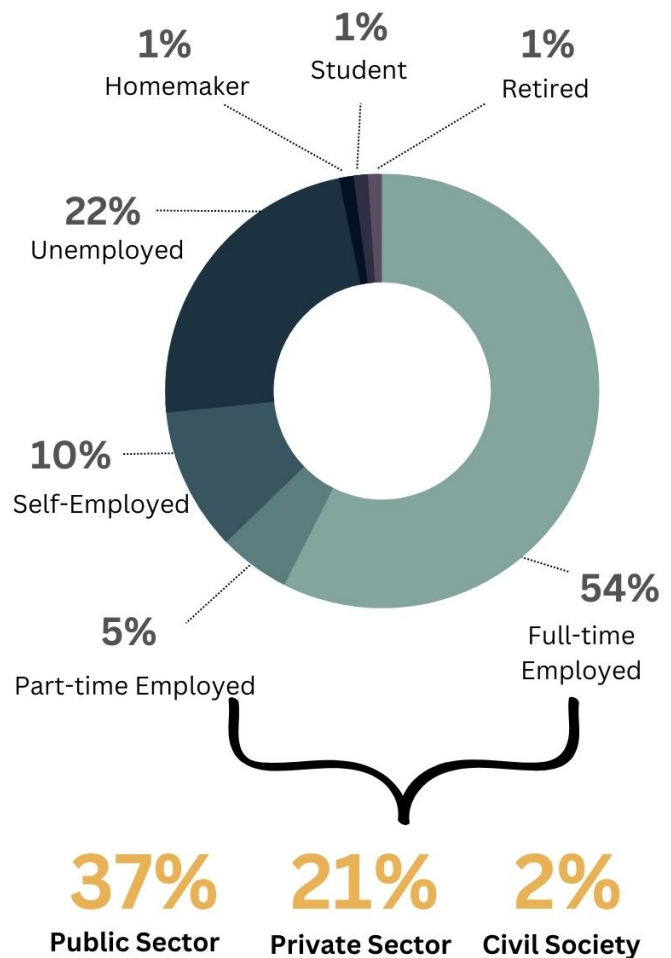
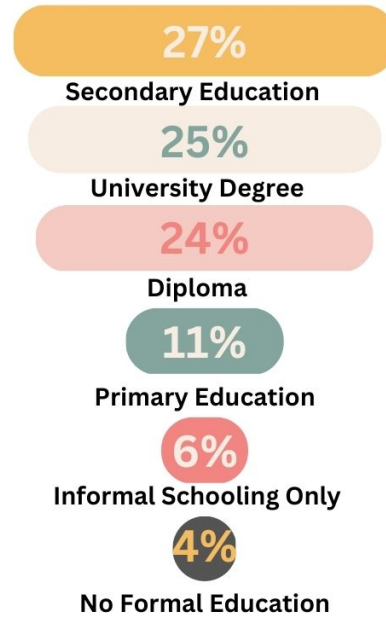
The samples were stratified into 4 regions: GMA, Northern, Central and Southern regions. GMA accounts for 43% of the total population followed by Southern Region (22%), Northern Region (18%) and Central Region (17%).



Education & Employment

Out of the 722 respondents, majority has gone through some form of formal education. 27% have completed secondary education, 25% hold a university degree, and 24% completed some university, vocational certificate, or diploma. Six percent have stated that they had completed informal schooling only, and 4% had no formal education.

Over 50 percent of the respondents were employed full-time and part-time. While 22% of the respondents were unemployed, 10% of the respondents reported that they were self-employed. Of the respondents who were full-time and part-time employed, 37% work in public sector, and 21% in private sector.



General Perception on Development Challenges

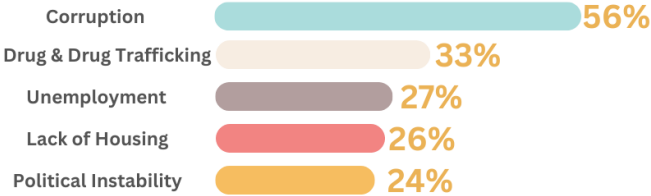
To understand the public perception on the most persistent issues in the country, the respondents were asked to state the five problems which they believed were the biggest problems present in the Maldives today. The order of issues perceived by the public are:

1. Corruption
2. Drug and drug trafficking
3. Unemployment
4. Lack of housing
5. Political instability.

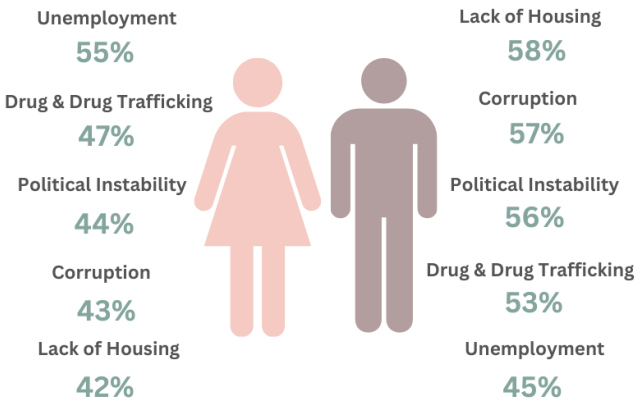
The youngest age group (18-24yrs) considers unemployment and lack of housing as their biggest concerns, which is followed by corruption and political instability. They consider the issue of drugs and drug trafficking as a less concerning issue.

The respondents of age group 25-34 are the only age group who consider corruption as the main challenge to the Maldivian society. However, their concern on this issue is also equivalent to their concern on political

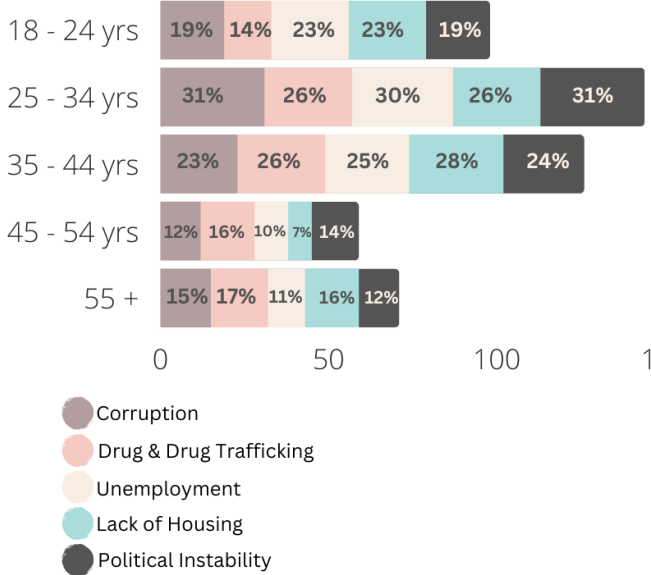
PERCEPTION OF THE BIGGEST FIVE PROBLEMS IN MALDIVES



PERCEPTION OF THE BIGGEST FIVE PROBLEMS IN MALDIVES, BY GENDER



PERCEPTION OF THE BIGGEST FIVE PROBLEMS IN MALDIVES, BY AGE GROUP



instability. Meanwhile, they are also highly concerned with unemployment followed by drug trafficking and lack of housing.

The age group 35-44 considers lack of housing as the biggest challenge that has befallen to the Maldivian society, followed by the issue of drug trafficking, unemployment, political instability, and corruption respectively.

The age group 45-55 believed the biggest problems that were persistent in the Maldivian society were drug and drug trafficking and political instability, followed by unemployment, corruption, and lack of housing.

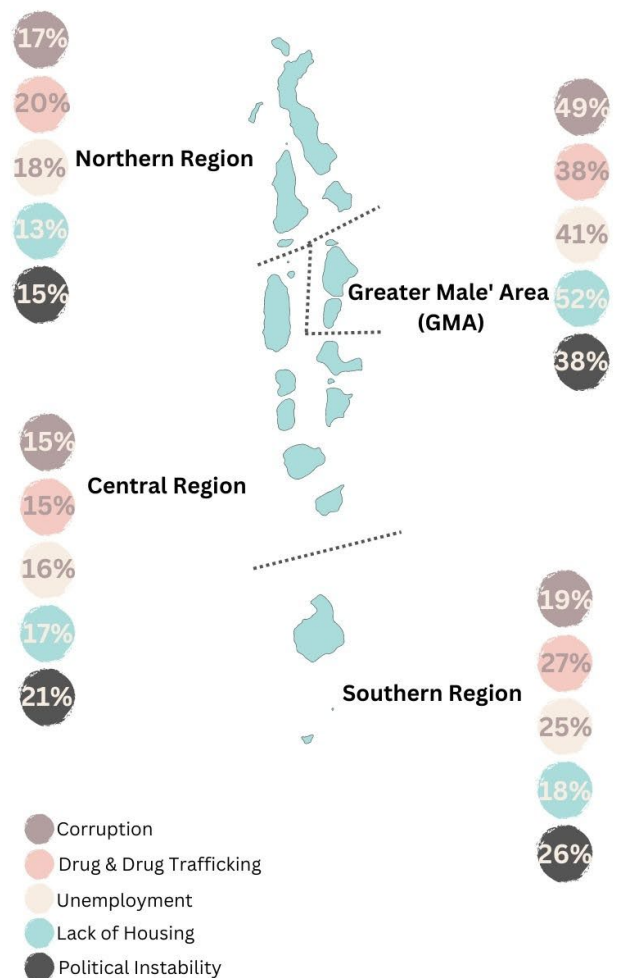
Respondents who were above the age of 55 perceived drug and drug trafficking as the biggest problem in the society. This was followed by housing, corruption, political instability, and unemployment.

Hence, given the responses, it can be deduced that the youth are more concerned with the issue of corruption than those above the age of 45. However, unemployment, drug and drug trafficking, and lack of housing are noted as the most

persistent and concerning issues among all age groups.

When these perceived problems were analyzed based on the region of the respondents, individuals from the GMA found housing as the biggest problem followed by the issue of corruption.

PERCEPTION OF THE BIGGEST FIVE PROBLEMS IN MALDIVES, BY REGION

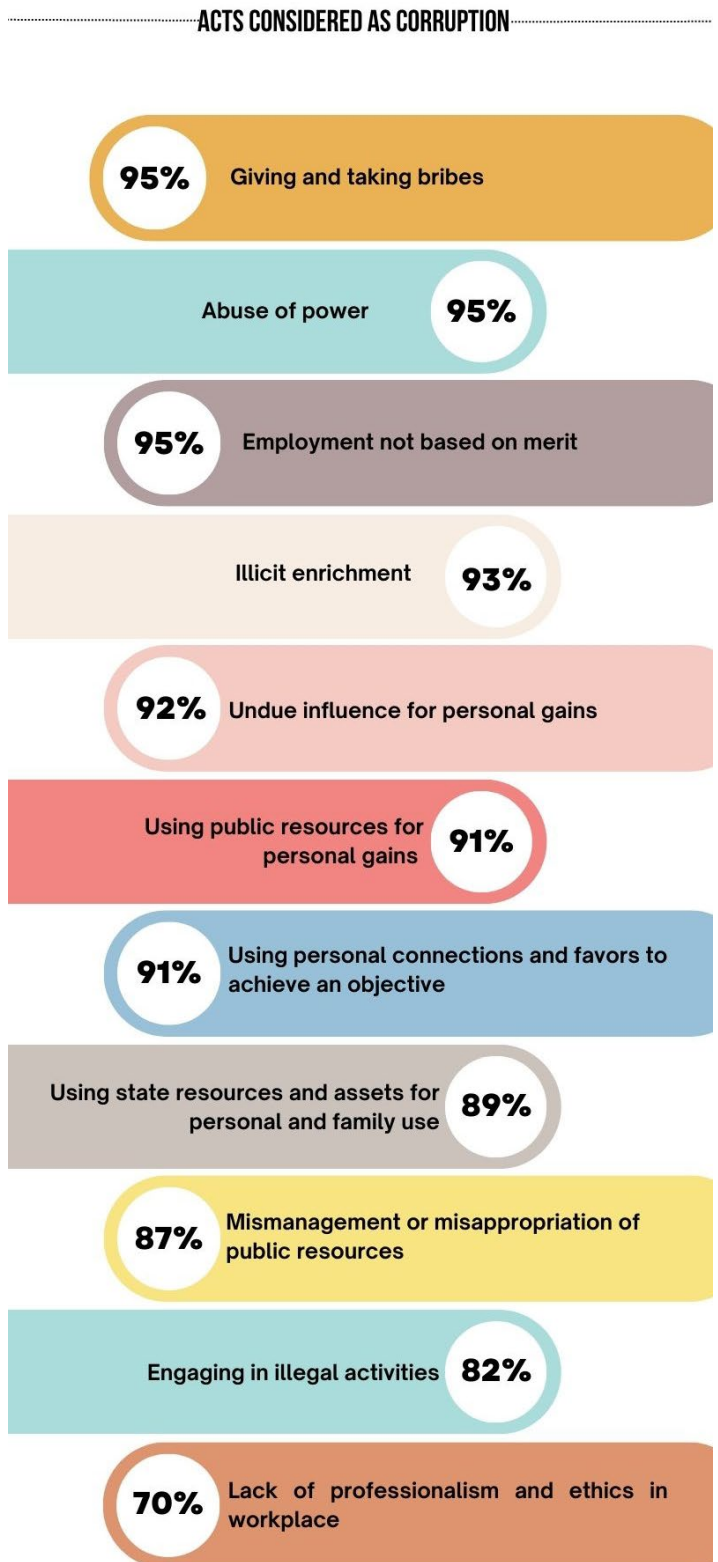


It is noted that GMA is the only region that finds the issue of corruption being as significant, where they believe the issue is twice graver than other regions. Third is the issue of unemployment while concern for drug and drug trafficking and political instability is tied.

The Northern Region is more concerned with drug and drug trafficking, and unemployment, while the Central and the Southern Regions are more concerned with political instability. Furthermore, the Southern Region also highlighted drug and drug trafficking and unemployment as persistent issues in society.

Acts of Corruption

To measure the respondents' knowledge on corruption, the study presented 11 statements and requested to classify them as acts of corruption or not. The results confirmed that there is considerable awareness among the respondents on the acts of corruption. The most identified act of corruption was abuse of power,



employment not based on merit and offering and accepting of bribes.

Significant number of respondents also considered mismanagement or misappropriation of public resources, engaging in illegal activities, and lack of professionalism and ethics in workplace as corruption.

However, as individual acts, these cannot be specified as acts of corruption, unless a certain component of corruption is embedded within the act. Currently the Maldivian legislature identifies the following as acts of corruption under the Penal Code (9/2014).

- Accepting and offering bribery (a.510),
- Influencing Official Conduct / Illegal communication (a.511),
- Perform an act that is not lawfully authorized / Failure to perform a mandatory duty as required by law (a.512),
- Abuse of function (a.513),
- Illicit enrichment (a.515),
- Embezzlement of public fund and property (a.516),

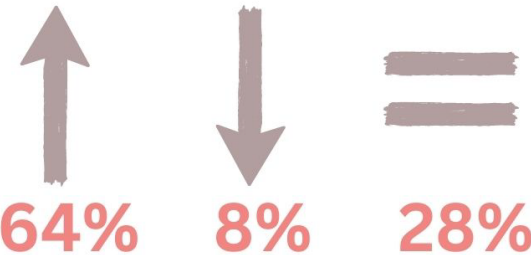
- Actions that preclude and impair an advantage to the State (a.517), and Article 74 (12) under Elections (General) Act (11/2008).

Observing the answer trend to this question, it is safe to assume that the public is generally aware on acts of corruption.

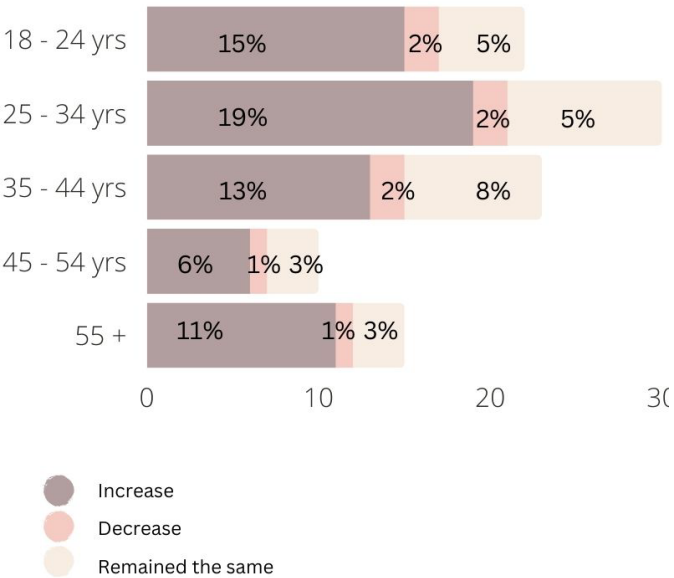
Perceived Level of Corruption in the Maldives

Most of the respondents believed that overall corruption in the Maldives has increased compared to the past three years. 28 percent of the respondents believed that level of corruption remained the same. Only 8 percent of the respondents indicated that the level of corruption decreased.

PERCEIVED LEVEL OF CORRUPTION IN THE PAST THREE YEARS



PERCEIVED LEVEL OF CORRUPTION IN THE PAST THREE YEARS, BY AGE-GROUP

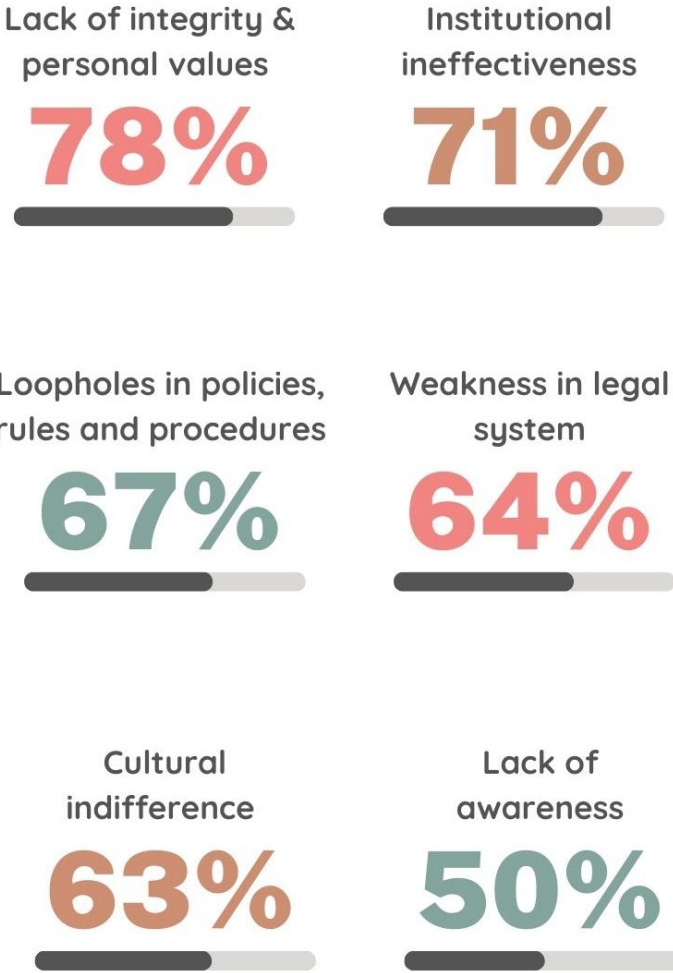


Perceived Factors Contributing to Corruption

Majority of the respondents perceived 'lack of integrity and personal values' as the main contributing factor to corruption. Meanwhile, it should be noted that 'institutional ineffectiveness' and 'loopholes in policies, rules and procedures' which could be associated with each other carried a larger percentage. It can be deduced that institutional ineffectiveness is due to loopholes in policies, rules, and procedures and vice versa.

Respondents did not strongly believe that lack of awareness was the reason for corruption being persistent in society, which is the lowest noted contributing factor (i.e. 50%).

MAIN CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO CORRUPTION



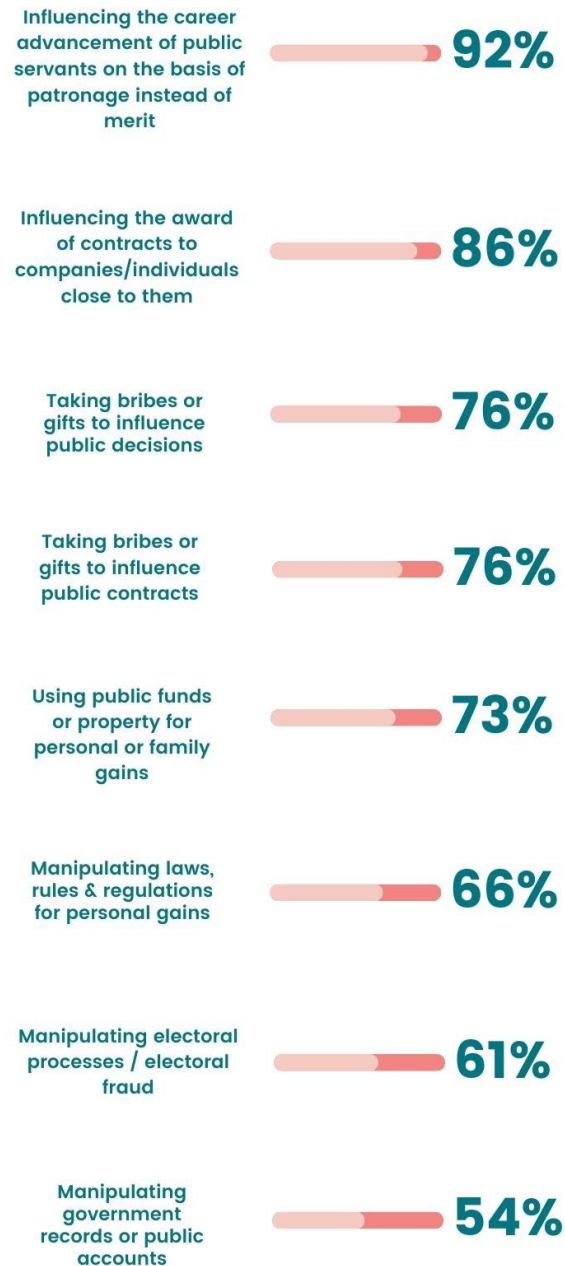
Perceived Frequency of Corrupt Practices

Amongst Elected Representatives/Politicians

The respondents believed that politicians and elected public officials were most likely to influence the career advancement of public servants based on patronage instead of merit and to award contracts to companies/individuals close to them. In addition, takings bribes/gifts to influence public contracts and public decisions and using funds or property for personal or family gains were perceived as significantly frequent among elected representatives/politicians.

The perceived act that politicians and elected public officials least engaged in, as per the respondents, were to manipulate government records or public accounts, which was believed to be of 54%.

PERCEIVED FREQUENCY OF CORRUPT PRACTICES AMONG ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES & POLITICIANS



Public officials/civil servants

Public officials are perceived to be prioritizing personal connections in providing public services. Undue influence in awarding of government contracts as well as undue influence in hiring, firing, and promoting of public servants were considered to be quite frequent among public officials/civil servants. The practice of requesting money/gifts for public services was perceived to be less frequent among public officials.

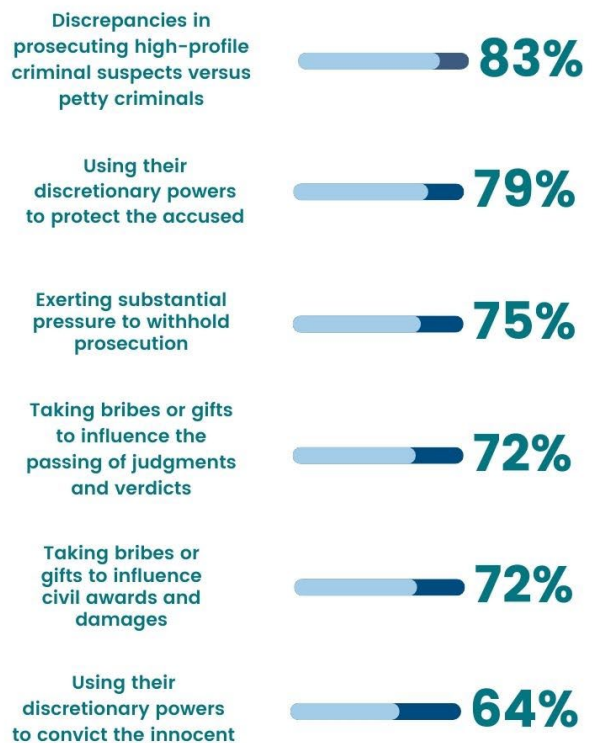
PERCEIVED FREQUENCY OF CORRUPT PRACTICES AMONG PUBLIC OFFICIALS



Law Enforcement & Judiciary

Majority of respondents considered law enforcement officers' conduct to have discrepancies, in prosecuting high-profile criminal suspects versus petty criminals and the use of their discretionary powers to protect the accused. Meanwhile, they also believed individuals working in this sector do exert substantial pressure to withhold prosecution, and they are believed to take bribes to influence verdicts. Though the

PERCEIVED FREQUENCY OF CORRUPT PRACTICES AMONG LAW ENFORCEMENT & JUDICIAL OFFICERS

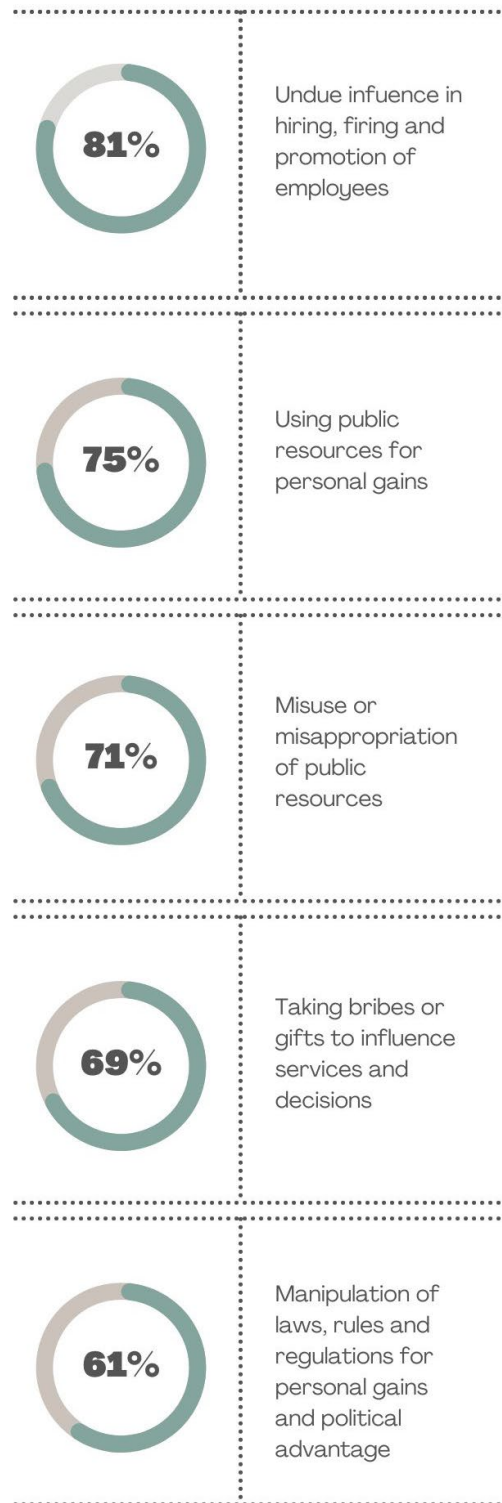


respondents perceived the judiciary and law enforcement to use discretionary powers to convict the innocent, this was not as strongly perceived as the other indicators.

Statutory bodies

Undue influence in hiring, firing and promotions of employees was perceived to be the most frequent within statutory bodies amongst the respondents, followed using public resources for personal gains. Manipulating laws, rules and regulations for personal gain and political advantage were perceived to be least frequent among statutory bodies.

PERCEIVED FREQUENCY OF CORRUPT PRACTICES IN STATUTORY BODIES



State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs)

Similar to the statutory bodies, it was highly perceived that in SOEs, undue influence in hiring, firing and promotions of employees happened frequently, and bribery was accepted to win over contract. The respondents perceived that manipulating laws, rules and regulations for personal gain and political advantage happened lesser in number compared to the use of public resources for personal gains and misuse or misappropriation of public resources and taking bribes to influence services.

PERCEIVED FREQUENCY OF CORRUPT PRACTICES IN STATE-OWED ENTERPRISES

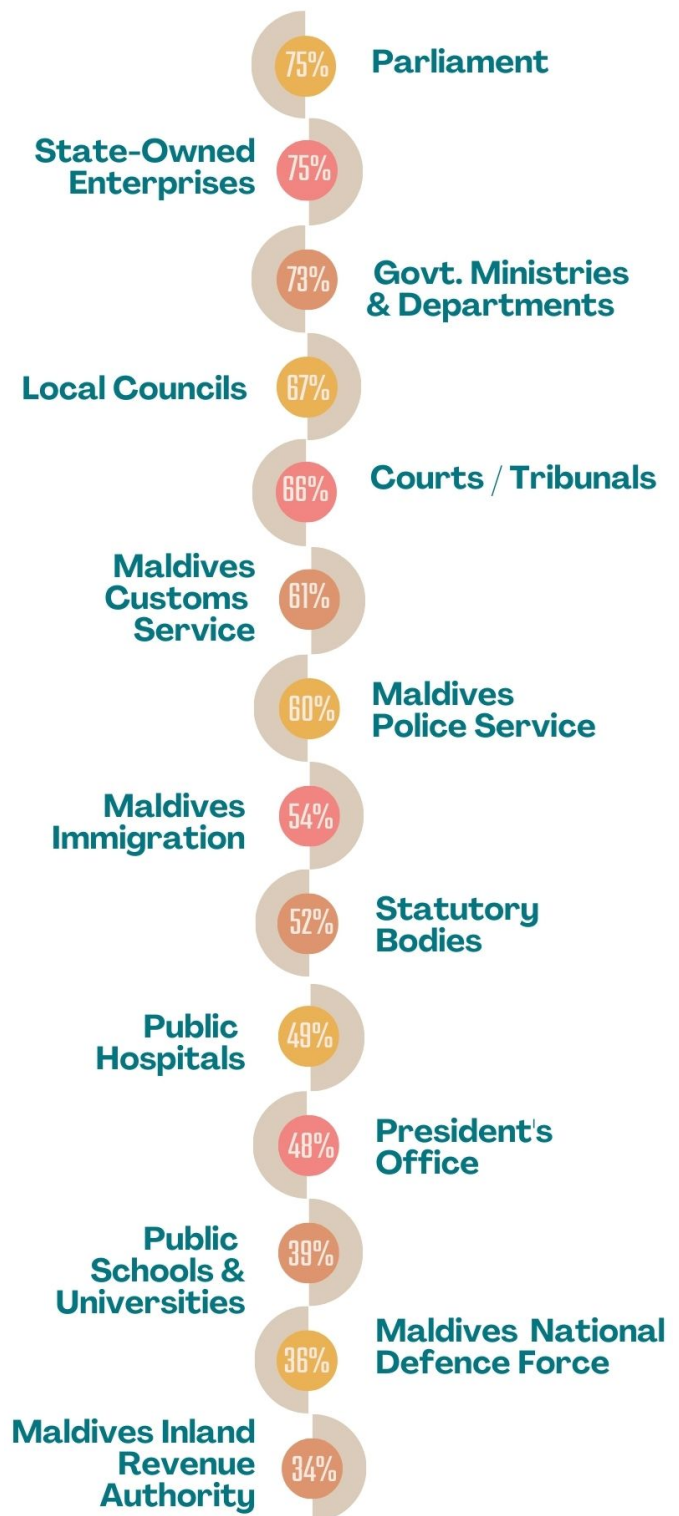


Corruption within Public Institutions

More than 70% the respondents considered that Parliament, SOE's and government ministries and departments to be the three major addressees that continue to perpetuate corruption in the Maldives, while approximately 67% respondents also put local councils, and courts/tribunals as having a high level of corruption.

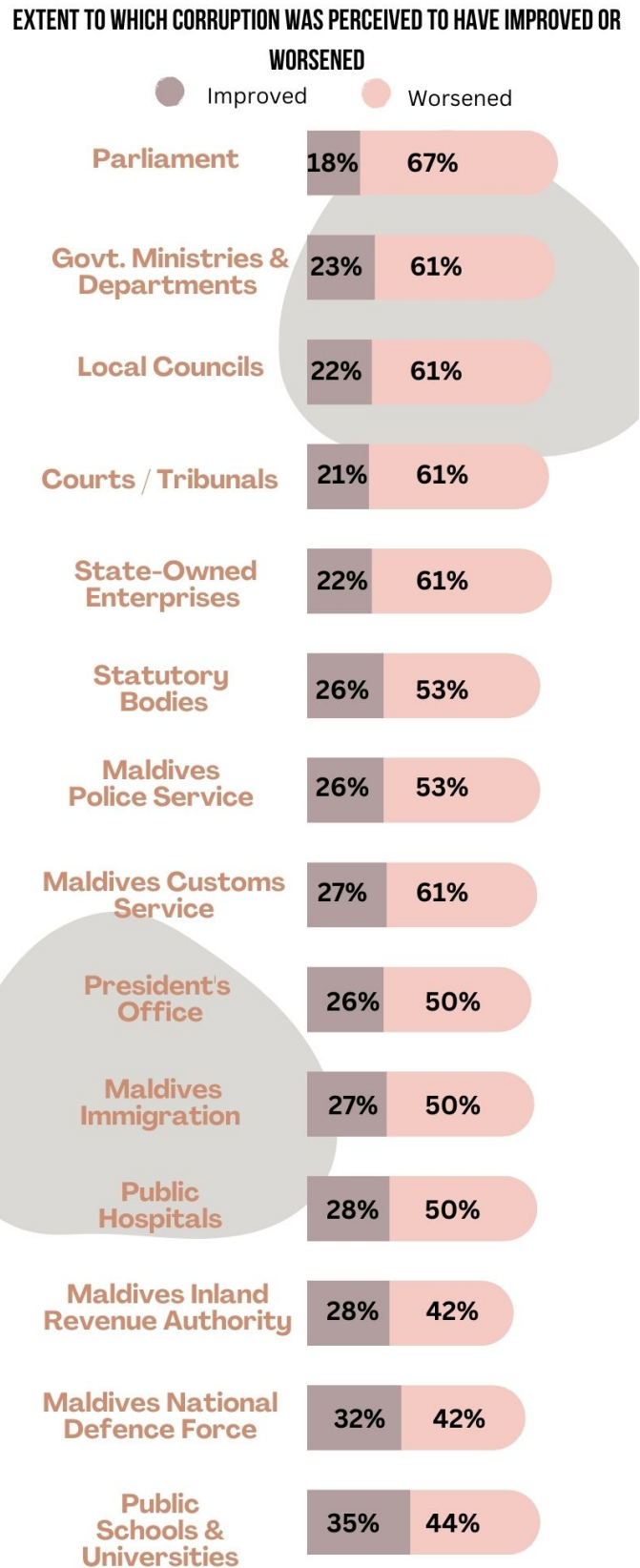
The difference between these institutions indicates the deep disparity of respondents' perception regarding SOEs, Parliament, government ministries and departments, compared to institutions like MNDF and Maldives Inland Revenue Authority (MIRA).

PERCEIVED LEVEL OF CORRUPTION WITHIN INSTITUTIONS



Extent to which Corruption was Perceived to Have Improved or Worsened

Majority of the respondents believed that corruption had worsened over the past three years. This opinion is stronger with relation to the Parliament, government ministries and departments, SOEs, courts/tribunals and local councils. Situation of corruption is perceived to have improved in public schools and universities and at the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).

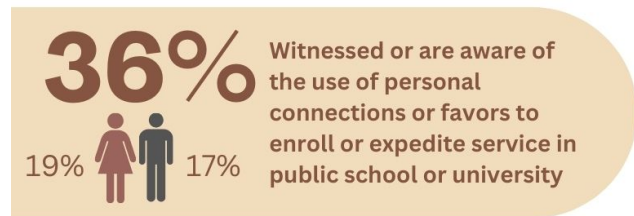
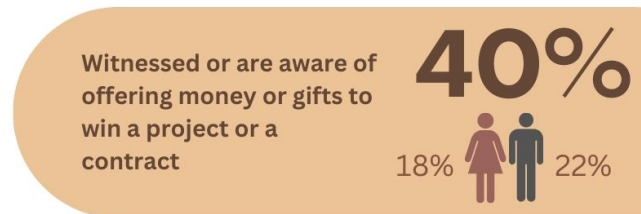


Witness or Awareness of Corruption Experience

Respondents were questioned to understand the awareness on the acts of corruption, and if they had witnessed someone engaging in these acts. Their responses indicate that they had witnessed people accepting money and gifts given as an incentive to vote for a particular candidate, and they were well aware that people use personal connections or favors to expedite public services.

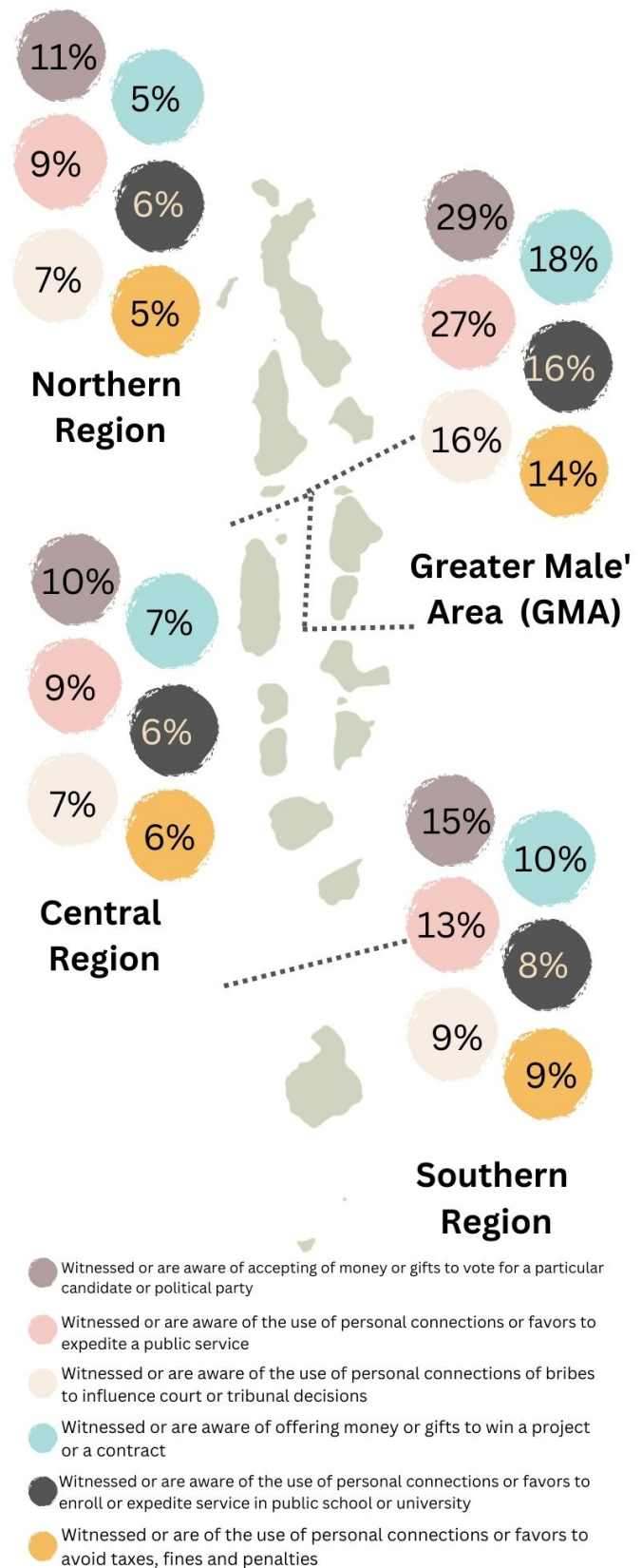
More males witnessed or were aware of most corrupt acts read out to them apart from using personal connections or bribes to influence court or tribunal decisions and using personal connections or favors to enroll or expedite a service in public school or university. In these two scenarios, it was females who mostly reported having witnessed the situation.

EXPERIENCES OF CORRUPTION



In this regard, more respondents from GMA and South Region indicated having witnessed or being aware of these corrupt acts done/experienced by someone they know.

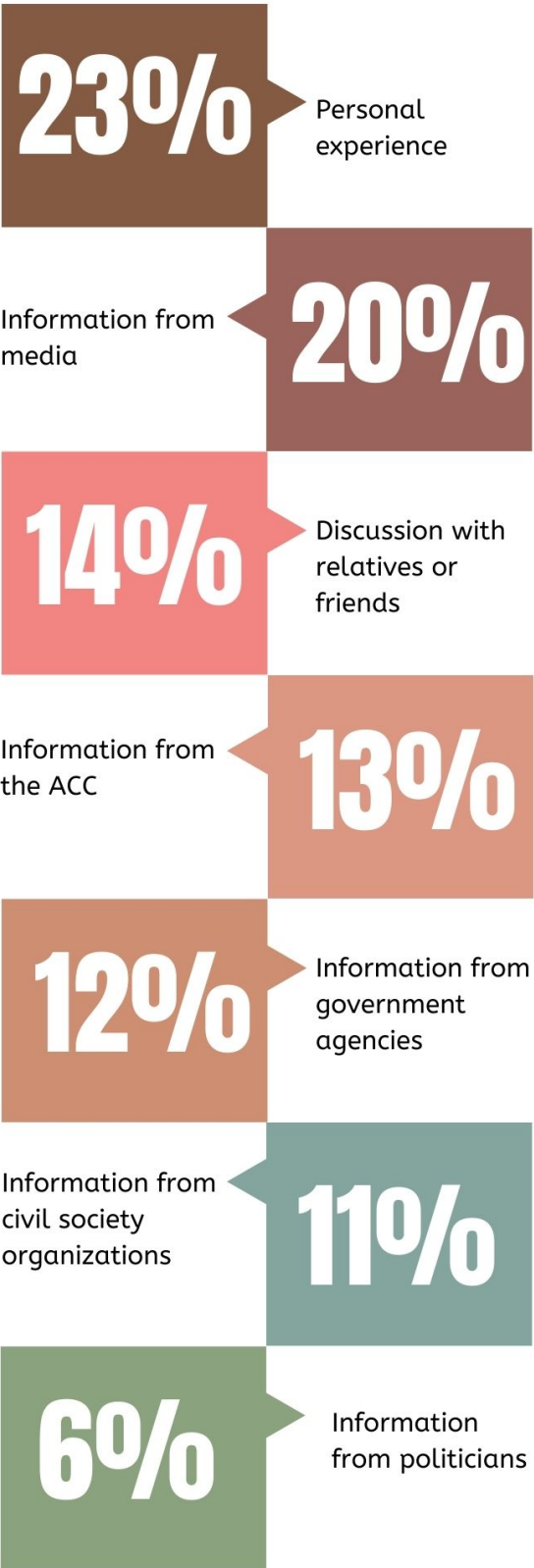
Similarly, respondents from the GMA and Southern Region reported more on having witnessed acts of corruption compared to the Northern and the Central Regions.



Information & Reporting

Trusted source for information regarding corruption

Respondents were asked to state which information source they trust as the main basis of information disseminators in relation to corruption and when rating the level of corruption in the Maldives, and the results indicated that the respondents would trust their personal experience rather than any institution or other sources. These are media, friends, the Anti-Corruption Commission, government agencies, civil society organizations, and information from politicians.



Reporting Corruption Cases

In a situation where they are approached to offer a bribe to a public official, 79% of the respondents stated that they would report the case to an authority.

When asked about the institution for reporting complaints of corruption, the majority of respondents indicated a preference for reporting to the ACC and the Police, with the next popular choice being the supervisor or manager of the institution where the public official worked. A smaller number of respondents expressed the option of publicizing their concerns on social media, while some mentioned the intention to report to the island council. A few respondents also indicated a preference for approaching journalists with their complaints.

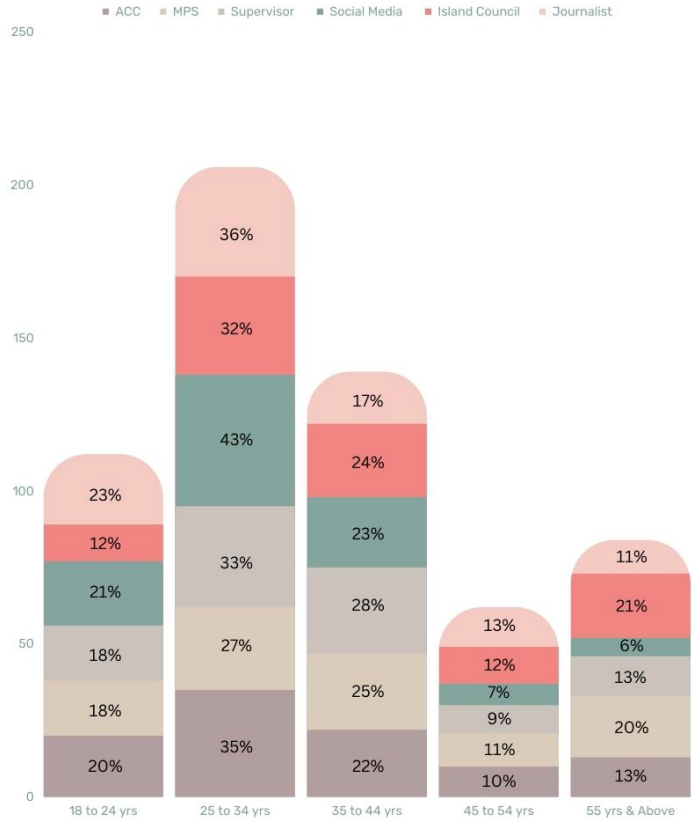
There is no significant difference between the number of males and females who opted to report to Police and supervisor/manager of the public official who requested for a bribe. However, more males indicated that they would report to ACC than females.







REPORTING COMPLAINTS OF CORRUPTION



Respondents in the age group 25-34 years had stated that they would report to ACC while their counterparts in the remaining age groups opted to report to Police and to the supervisor of the public official who requested for a bribe. This indicates that the upcoming generation is slightly more aware on the subject of reporting corruption than their older counterparts.

REPORTING COMPLAINTS OF CORRUPTION, BY AGE-GROUP



-  **Anti-Corruption Commission**
-  **Maldives Police Service**
-  **Supervisor of the individual who requested for bribe**
-  **Social Media**
-  **Island Council**
-  **Journalist**

Level of conviction and confidence in the State and ACC

Respondents' opinion on the effectiveness of the Commission is slightly positive as 53% stated that they believed the Commission was successful in combating corruption in the Maldives.

However, confidence in the State in solving problems is reported to be very low with 67 percent believing that they do not confide in the State to solve problems of the State. Significant gender disparity on this perception is not observed, indicating that it is the collective opinion of the public.

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF ACC IN COMBATING CORRUPTION

53%

SUCCESSFUL



47%

NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE



CONFIDENCE IN THE STATE TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

CONFIDENT

NOT-CONFIDENT

33%

67%

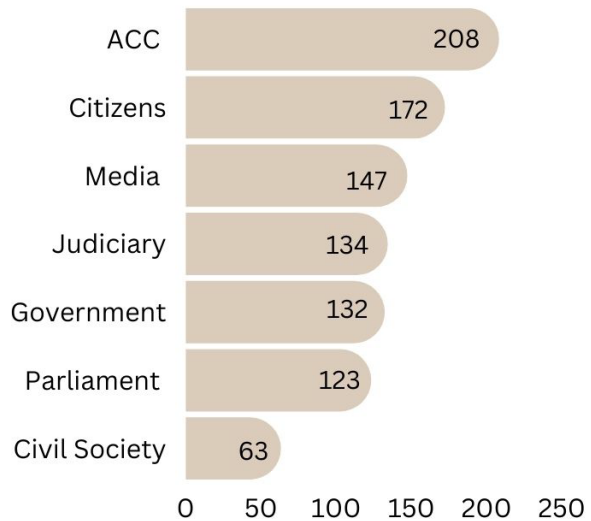


Conviction on entities role in combating corruption and priority for actions to combat corruption

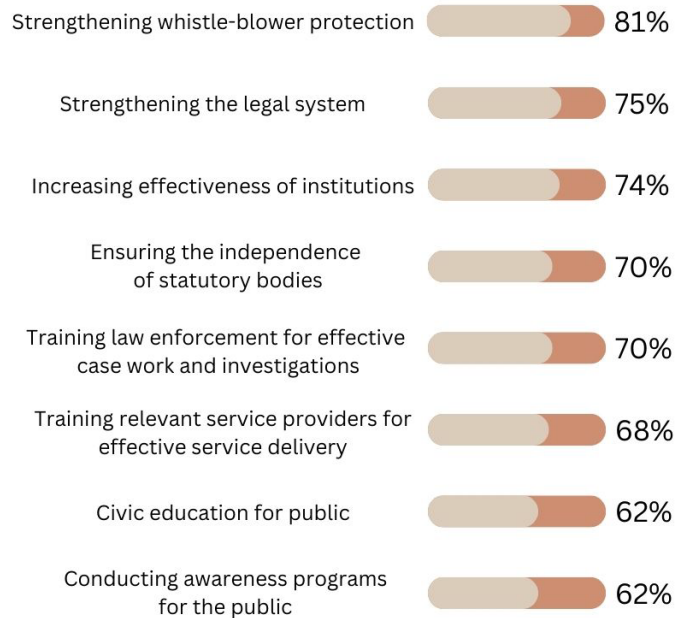
Respondents believed ACC should be the leading institution to combat corruption followed by citizens. This reinforces the notion that ACC needs comprehensive support and participation from the public to eliminate corruption from all levels of the State.

Furthermore, public perception indicates that enhancing whistle-blower protection is crucial and requires prompt action as a strategy to combat the systemic corruption prevalent in society. Additionally, prioritizing a more robust legal system, bolstering institutional effectiveness, ensuring the complete independence of statutory bodies, and providing training for law enforcement to conduct effective investigations are identified as significant factors requiring urgent attention.

PERCEIVED ORDER OF IMPORTANCE IN THEIR ROLES TO COMBAT CORRUPTION



PERCEIVED PRIORITY OF ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN TO COMBAT CORRUPTION



Recommendation

1. Conduct further research and analysis to identify the most frequent and prevalent forms and causes of corruption:

It is highly recommended, that the Commission conduct longitudinal surveys, preferably on a yearly basis, to allow comparison of corruption levels over time. Keeping the same questions allows for better comparability of key indicators. This will assist the Commission to study and compare any changes. Additionally, it would be helpful to conduct further research and analysis to identify patterns and trends in corrupt behavior to better understand the specific forms and causes of corruption in the Maldives. This could include analysis of data on corruption cases and investigations, as well as focus groups to gather more detailed insights from the public and stakeholders.

2. Strengthen the legal system and increase the effectiveness of institutions by implementing measures such as training for legal professionals, and improving processes and procedures:

The findings of the National Corruption Perception Survey show that more than 70% of respondents believed that strengthening the legal system and increasing the effectiveness of institutions were important actions to take to address corruption.

To address corruption in the Maldives, it will be important to improve the capacity and effectiveness of the legal system and institutions responsible for preventing and combating corruption. This could include measures such as conducting trainings for legal professionals to help them better understand and enforce anti-corruption laws and regulations, as well as improving processes and procedures to ensure that they are effective and transparent.

3. Increasing transparency and accountability in the system:

Increasing transparency and accountability can help to reduce opportunities for corruption and ensure that those who engage in corrupt behavior are held accountable for their actions. Almost 70% of respondents lack confidence in the State when asked about its ability to solve the problems prevalent in the country, while only around 30% expressed confidence that the State would solve these problems and these findings emphasize the need to work

towards building mechanisms that promote transparency in order to increase public faith and trust in the system.

4. Engage with the public and stakeholders to gather additional insights and input on the causes and effects of corruption, and to identify potential solutions:

To effectively address corruption in the Maldives, it is crucial to create a platform where the public and other stakeholders can contribute. This could include consultations with civil society organizations, community groups, and other stakeholders to gather their perspectives and ideas for addressing corruption. Engaging with these groups can help to build a shared understanding of the issue and create a sense of ownership and responsibility for addressing it. The findings show that 79% of respondents would report a case if they were asked to pay extra money or a gift to a public official. This suggests that there is a strong willingness among the public to speak out against corruption and to hold public officials accountable for their actions. By engaging with the public and stakeholders, it may be possible to build on this will and identify additional ways to address corruption in the country.

5. Creating awareness on relevant laws & regulations in place to curb corruption:

A key measure in curbing corruption is to conduct regular awareness sessions targeting public officials and the public on corruption. These sessions should inform the audience of the systematic measures in a regulation in place to fight corruption, and how these avenues can be used as a tool to combat corruption. This could include increased awareness on the Whistleblower Protection Act and the Right to Information Act, and how these mechanisms could be utilized. Ultimately, such awareness initiatives play a pivotal role in instilling accountability measures, ensuring that the fight against corruption is a collective and informed endeavor.

Annex 1

Estimated cluster allocation for GMA and each of the 20 atolls for a soft sample size of 1,000 and the actual achieved target sample

#	PPS GMA and 20 Atolls (PSUs)	Selected Target Pop Distribution 18+	Population distribution (based on Census %)	Soft Sample Distribution per Sample Island Selected	Target	Achieved Target
1	Greater Male' Area	86,685	43	430		362
2	North Thiladhunmathi (HA)	8,669	4	40		29
3	South Thiladhunmathi (HDh)	12,405	4	40		33
4	North Miladhunmadulu (Sh)	8,101	3	30		21
5	South Miladhunmadulu (N)	7,024	3	30		21
6	North Maalhosmadulu (R)	9,958	4	40		19
7	South Maalhosmadulu (B)	5,948	3	30		15
8	Faadhippolhu (Lh)	5,296	2	20		5
9	Male' Atoll (K)	8,151	4	40		19
10	North Ari Atoll (AA)	3,956	2	20		13
11	South Ari Atoll (ADh)	5,457	3	30		23
12	Felidhu Atoll (V)	1,073	1	10		5
13	Mulakatholhu (M)	3,152	1	10		8
14	North Nilandhe Atoll (F)	2,760	1	10		7
15	South Nilandhe Atoll (Dh)	3,554	2	20		11
16	Kolhumadulu (Th)	5,964	3	30		15
17	Hadhdhunmathi (L)	9,774	4	40		23
18	North Huvadhu Atoll (GA)	5,584	2	20		18
19	South Huvadhu Atoll (GDh)	7,763	3	30		26
20	Fuvahmulah (Gn)	5,349	2	20		7

Anti-Corruption Commission | M.Finifaru, 7th Floor | Male, Maldives
Phone: +960 301 5200, +960 301 5257