

One in three people in Ghana pay bribes to access services, survey says

Corruption disproportionately affects the poor and young

Good morning.

Invited guests, the Afrobarometer Team, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media

On behalf of the Ghana Integrity Initiative, the Local Chapter of transparency International, I want to express my profound gratitude to you for honouring this invitation.

The Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) – Africa, released by Transparency International in partnership with Afrobarometer, as we observe the African Anti-Corruption Day, reveals that more than half of all citizens surveyed in 35 countries think corruption is getting worse in their respective countries. Only less than a quarter perceived that the fight against corruption is getting better.

Patricia Moreira, Managing Director of Transparency International indicates that “Corruption is hindering Africa’s economic, political and social development. It is a major barrier to economic growth, good governance and basic freedoms, like freedom of speech or citizens’ right to hold governments to account.”. She further states that “While governments have a long way to go in regaining citizens’ trust and reducing corruption, these values don’t exist in a vacuum. Foreign bribery and money laundering divert critical resources away from public services, and ordinary citizens suffer most.”

Thus, the theme for the 2019 African Anti-Corruption Day - “**Towards a Common African position on Asset Recovery**” could not have come at any opportune time in Africa’s anti-corruption struggle, than now. The global position on assets recovery is articulated by the SDG 16.4 (significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms of organized crime by 2030) and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. GII, therefore, on this occasion wishes to share with you details of the 2019 GCB - Africa report and more specifically, the Ghana report to initiate public discourse around anti-corruption efforts in Ghana and chart the way forward.

Highlights on Africa

The GCB is the largest and most detailed survey of citizens’ views on bribery and other forms of corruption in Africa, sampling 47,000 citizens in 35 countries; covering their perceptions of corruption and direct experiences of bribery.

The results show that, **more than 1 in 4 people** who accessed public services, such as health care and education, **paid a bribe in the previous year**. This is equivalent to approximately **130 million people** across the region, the report indicated.

The report also highlights that corruption disproportionately affects the most vulnerable, with the **poorest paying bribes twice more than the richest** and young people paying more bribes than adults over 55 years old.

Key Findings

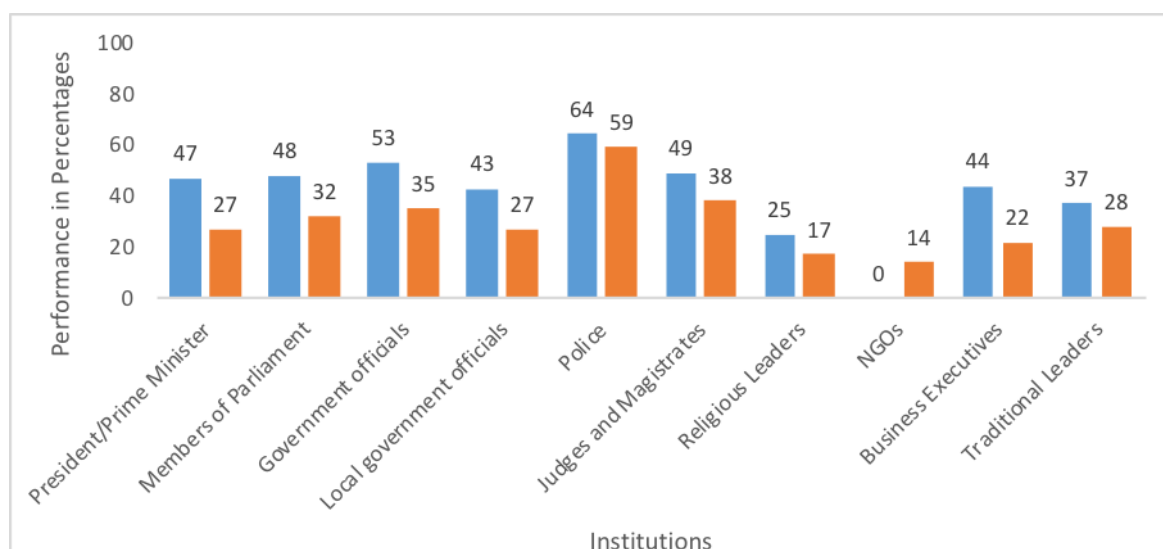
Key findings of the survey include the following;

1. **Corruption is on the rise** –More than half (55 per cent) of all citizens surveyed perceive corruption to be on the rise in Africa between 2016 and 2018. Only 23 per cent of the surveyed respondents indicated that corruption is on the decline.
2. **Many governments are failing to do enough** - Only one in three citizens (34 percent) perceive their government is doing a good job at fighting corruption, while 59 per cent rate their government’s performance as bad.
3. **Concerns about the integrity of public officials remain high** - Among key public institutions, the police are perceived as the most corrupt with 47 per cent of citizens surveyed indicating most or all police across the region are corrupt. But also, almost 4 in 10 citizens think most or all government officials (39 per cent) and parliamentarians (36 per cent) are corrupt. These results are consistent with the last round of findings in 2015, where citizens similarly thought that the police were the most corrupt institution;
4. **Bribery demands are a regular occurrence for many** - More than one in four citizens who accessed public services, such as health care and education, paid a bribe in the previous year. This is equivalent to approximately 130 million people;
5. **People’s experience with bribery varies** - Men are slightly more likely to pay a bribe than women; the poorest people are twice more likely to pay a bribe compared to the richest, while young people aged 18-34 are more likely to pay a bribe than people aged 55 and over;
6. **Despite fears of retaliation, citizens can make a difference** - Two-thirds of citizens fear retaliation if they should report corruption. Yet, despite this, more than half of citizens surveyed (53 per cent) think ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption.

Corruption in Ghana

In Ghana, the focus areas of the survey included bribery rates, changes in the levels of corruption, participation of ordinary people in the fight against corruption, corruption by institutions and whether government is doing a good or bad job in fighting corruption?

Figure 1: Perceived corruption among institutions (%)



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Respondents were asked: How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? (% who say "most of them" or "all of them")

Figure 1 above assesses citizens' perception of corruption by institutions. Ghana Police Service is perceived to be the most corrupt institution (Fifty-nine (59) percent of the respondent say most or all of the police are corrupt), followed by Judges and Magistrates (38 percent), Government Officials (35 percent) Parliament and Members of Parliament are cited as the fourth most corrupt institution in Ghana (32 percent say most or all are corrupt).

Getting citizens to report corrupt persons to the appropriate authorities has been very difficult in spite of the passage of laws that guarantee protection and rewards proactive reporting. Laws including the Whistleblower's Act, 2006, Act 720, and the Witness Protection Act, 2018, Act 974, are yet to yield dividends for ordinary people who voluntarily report corruption. The reason assigned to their unwillingness to report is the mistrust of Public Officials ability to act.

However, sixty (60) percent of the citizens surveyed said the government is doing a good job with the fight against corruption, while thirty (30) percent thought the government is not doing well. It is worthy of mention also that 60 percent of respondents believe ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption. This is consistent with the rationale of the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) which assigns the role of rejecting, denouncing, and reporting corruption, as well as, making it a high risk and low gain activity.

From the picture painted above, the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) recommends the following;

- The state must intensify its efforts towards the fight against corruption by adequately resourcing the key anti-corruption institutions to discharge their mandates. There must be an enforceable monitoring framework in place to ensure that these institutions live up to expectation.
- The OSP should fast track investigations and prosecutions of the many corruption cases pending and also make the public aware, per section 3(3) of the Act establishing the office as the level of confidence of the citizenry in the office is gradually waning;
- All state institutions, particularly those with oversight responsibilities and power to enforce compliance, should put in place measures to promote efficient service delivery at the approved charges for such public services, in order to address the persistent issues of bribery within the public sector
- The e-procurement and other measures recently launched by Public Procurement Authority (PPA) must lead to a drastic reduction in cases of corruption in procurement procedures to ensure that value for money is obtained in all public procurement to save the nation valuable resources needed for development;
- The state should increase its efforts towards educating citizens on the Whistleblower's Act 2006 (Act 720) and the recently passed Witness Protection law to encourage the culture of corruption reporting in Ghana;
- The state should wean itself of the growing phenomenon of attacks on media personalities to allow the media to effectively hold policy makers to account and provide the space and platform for Civil Society to hold their duty bearer accountable;
- In line with chapter 20 of the United Nation Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and the requirement under the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, Ghana must take steps to criminalise Illicit Enrichment and enforce same to

ensure the prevention of illegal acquisition of wealth not only by public officials but also by private individuals.

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GII commends the state for passing the companies Act, which provides a clear Beneficial Ownership Regime. Notwithstanding, we wish to encourage the government to operationalise it by establishing the public register that names and provides details of owners of shell companies to address the challenge of stolen assets.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I wish to state that in as much as GII commends government and state institutions for their efforts and the strides made in the fight against corruption, we equally encourage government and all stakeholders including citizens to continue to practicalize the implementation of the NACAP by promoting efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector and in other frameworks including the implementation of the Right to Information law, in order to promote transparency and accountability of governance while increasing citizens' trust in government and public institutions.

Additionally, as we observe Africa Anti-Corruption Day, we call on private business leaders and boards of companies, including multinational companies, operating in Africa to act with the highest level of integrity in the conduct of their businesses by observing all international anti-corruption standards.

Thank you

About the GCB

The *Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) – Africa* survey was implemented by Afrobarometer in 34 countries, as part of its Round 7 surveys, in collaboration with Transparency International. A separate survey for the Democratic Republic of Congo was commissioned by Transparency International and conducted by Omega Research.

The surveys were conducted face-to-face using computer-assisted personal interviewing with 47,105 adults aged 18+ living in 35 countries in Africa. The fieldwork was conducted between September 2016 and September 2018, and the surveys were sampled and weighted to be nationally representative. The overall results for Africa are equivalent to an average of the countries surveyed.

The total number of bribe payers was calculated based on the percentage of respondents in each of the 35 surveyed countries who had paid a bribe at least once to any of the five public services in the last 12 months, and was extrapolated using available UN population estimates of adults aged 18+.

About Transparency International

Transparency International is the global civil society organisation leading the fight against corruption for the last 25 years. Join our efforts at [transparency.org](https://www.transparency.org).

About Ghana Integrity initiative

Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), is the Local Chapter of Transparency International (TI), GII was launched in December 1999 as a non-partisan, non-profit civil empowerment organization focused on the delivery of essential themes necessary for the creation of a National Integrity System – www.tighana.org

Methodology

1. The methodology is attached as About the Survey
2. Also, the Ghana report has been reduced to infographics and attached as Africa 2019