corruption
watch

THE IMPACT OF CORRUPTION

INSIGHTS FROM A PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES SURVEY

30 YEARS of DEMOCRACY

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FOREWORD

By Melusi Ncala

The story of corruption is best told by those who experience it – and in the context of the work that we do as Corruption Watch, that group comprises the ordinary people of South African society with whom we interact through our activities, projects, and campaigns.

And what better time is there than the present to hear these sentiments, as the country gears up for its seventh national and provincial polls? The stakes could not be greater.

The importance of these elections is reflected in the ongoing occurrences of grand corruption and the extremely high perceptions of graft. As we draw the curtain on the sixth administration, the scandals have been as sensational than those of the administrations preceding it. The indications were quite evident early on that perhaps the status quo remains.

Who can forget about the PPE (personal protective equipment)procurement heist in which businesses that had no legitimacy in the health sector scored tenders worth tens of millions of rands? Some of these were established well after the outbreak of Covid, and because of the ties that directors of these entities had with the ruling party, there was no due diligence and they were awarded lucrative tenders. At times, suppliers did not even bother to fulfil the order and where they did, prices were grossly inflated and sometimes health facilities were shortchanged.

While that was ongoing, companies working in cahoots with officials in the Department of Labour were siphoning funds from the temporary employer-employee relief fund and the Unemployment Insurance Fund. Perpetrators were so brazen in their thievery that they gamed the system by using information from ghost employees. Here too, tens of millions of rands were lost.

Later, President Cyril Ramaphosa would find himself in a mammoth criminal scandal when undeclared foreign currency was found to be kept at his Phala Phala farm. Questions were asked about the unlawfulness of burying hundreds of thousands of dollars in home furniture, the use of state resources to address a business problem, and the involvement of a head of state in private business affairs.

Mere weeks before the elections, the parliamentary speaker was charged with acts of bribery and money laundering and Parliament is querying the cancellation of the South African Airlines and Takatso Consortium deal by the minister of Public Enterprises, given the veil of secrecy and lack of accountability by the political head.

These are but a few of the corruption incidents that we have been exposed to in the last five years.

Meanwhile, petty acts of corruption still typify the struggle of an ordinary South African who seeks to obtain a driver's license, receive medicine from their local clinic and hospital, register a child at a school, and seek the protection of the police. In all these areas and others, the poor are asked to pay bribes to access basic services. Thirty years into this democratic dispensation, inequality, unemployment, and poverty are still rife and the government pays lip service to fundamental economic questions and its promises of dealing with the scourge of crime and corruption.

But as we have often heard, South Africans are a resilient people. Morality, ethics, and good governance appeal to us and hence many speak out against wrongdoing despite the threat of violence and death. Despite a lack of resources, skills, and capacity, many people are holding the fort in various public sector institutions, fighting a good fight. Various communities and social justice organisations coordinate, organise, and rally behind common causes in the attempt to rebuild their communities and support the vulnerable and marginalised in their midst.

In reading the findings of this survey, I recognise that in their candour, the participants of this study illustrate how profoundly corruption has impacted every facet of their lives. These include, but are not limited to, the provision of land and housing, education, basic amenities, and safety and security for mainly women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and children. Their responses illuminate the progress, or lack thereof, in addressing systemic issues of corruption and the gaps we need to fill to overcome growing public distrust of institutions and public representatives, inadequate protection of whistle-blowers, and incomprehension of anti-corruption legislation and mechanisms.

Above all, there must be accountability on every level, regardless of status and proximity to power.

These findings give all of us the motivation to reflect on our situation and make a concerted effort towards attaining the ideals of a value-oriented, principled, and democratic South Africa.

Acknowledgement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The research conducted on perceptions of corruption within South Africa highlights significant respondent concerns, and a marked lack of confidence in the efficacy and ability of law enforcement agencies in tackling the scourge of corruption. Notable findings subsequently revealed that approximately two-thirds of respondents' harbour scepticism towards South African law enforcement agencies, signalling a perceived deficiency in their capacity to combat corruption effectively.

Nearly half of the respondents have little confidence and a third have no confidence in the adequacy of existing anti-corruption laws and policies, indicating doubts about the robustness of the legal framework. Over half of the respondents acknowledge having a limited understanding of anti-corruption laws, which highlights a potential gap in public awareness and education.

Additionally, half of the respondents believe that institutions prioritise issues affecting the affluent and influential, neglecting the concerns of ordinary citizens, thus reflecting perceptions of inequality and exclusivity. Of particular interest is that respondents exhibit greater trust in media, religious and spiritual entities, as well as legal, investigative, and accounting firms, viewing these organisations as potentially more reliable in addressing corruption issues. Respondents had less trust in elected and appointed officials.

The majority of respondents express agreement that whistle-blowers remain vulnerable to victimisation and violence, emphasising widespread apprehension regarding their safety and protection. Notably, the perception that whistle-blower information is compromised by officials within the public sector underscores potential challenges in maintaining confidentiality and safeguarding individuals disclosing corruption within government institutions.

Additionally, the study reveals a significant consensus among respondents, with 81% expressing the view that the government's efforts to combat corruption in the provision of basic services are inadequate. This consensus underscores a prevailing perception of inefficiency and insufficiency in governmental anti-corruption endeavours.

This ostensibly punitive sentiment reflects a clear demand for stricter consequences for corrupt behaviour by government officials. This also underscore the pressing need for government to address corruption in basic service provision, as it directly impacts citizens' daily lives and well-being. Strengthening penalties for corruption, particularly when it violates fundamental rights and dignity, could serve as a deterrent and enhance the accountability framework.

Furthermore, the notable percentage of respondents (46%) who expressed strong confidence in media investigations as being effective democratic mechanisms for combating corruption, highlights its crucial role in exposing and addressing corruption in South Africa. The lack of transparency in political party funding emerges as one of the most concerning factors for democracy among respondents. This underscores the importance of addressing transparency issues related to financial support for political parties in pursuit of anti-corruption efforts.

Respondents also voiced concerns regarding politicians and high-ranking officials engaging in business activities while in public office. This raises apprehensions about potential conflicts of interest and corruption risks associated with public officials' involvement in private enterprises. Restricting officials' engagement in business activities during their tenure and streamlining government processes are also identified as essential steps to bolster anti-corruption efforts. The majority of respondents also advocate for enhancing the safety of whistleblowers as a critical measure to improve anti-corruption practices.

In summation, this report highlights the significant concerns regarding law enforcement efficacy, deficiencies in anti-corruption measures, and a prevailing lack of confidence in governmental efforts, which underscores the urgent need for reforms to address corruption and enhance accountability.

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AND BACKGROUND
OBJECTIVES

This research study aims to highlight the perceptions, characteristics, and prevalence of corrupt practices within both the public and private sectors in South Africa, offering valuable insights into this prevalent phenomenon. Corruption continues to have a profound impact on individual citizens, communities, and economic systems. Its adverse effects encompass compromised public services, systemic injustice, environmental degradation, public health crises, and various other detrimental outcomes.

Furthermore, corruption poses a significant threat to sustainable economic growth,ethical standards, and the equitable administration of justice. It contributes to societal instability and undermines the rule of law, eroding the foundations of democratic institutions and values. The multifaceted impact of corruption spans economic, political, moral, psychological, humanitarian, ecological, and security-related spheres.

The study's primary focus has been to gauge the overall perceptions of corruption in South Africa, as well to touch on citizens' direct experiences with corruption on various levels of government.

Survey Background Information

01 Examining individuals' interactions with officials or intermediaries and their potential correlation with corrupt practices.

02 Investigating individuals' involvement in activities associated with corruption, such as bribery or misappropriation of funds.

03 Documenting incidents where individuals have offered gifts or favours in exchange for preferential treatment or illicit advantages.

04 Identifying the nature and scope of gifts or additional payments exchanged in corruption-related transactions.

05 Analysing the frequency and efficacy of reporting corruption incidents, including the factors influencing individuals' decisions to disclose corrupt activities to relevant authorities.

Perceptions of Corruption

01 Assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in combating corruption within societal frameworks.

02 Evaluating public trust and confidence levels in the efficacy of current legislative measures and policies aimed at tackling corruption

03 Investigating the extent of public awareness and understanding regarding anti-corruption laws and regulations.

04 Exploring societal perceptions and beliefs concerning criminal activities and the effectiveness of institutions dedicated to fighting corruption.

05 Examining the degree of trust placed in various organisations intentions and capabilities to address instances of corruption.

06 Analysing public awareness and comprehension of the roles and responsibilities of institutions mandated to combat corruption.

07 Identifying and understanding the demographic groups most adversely affected by instances of corruption.

08 Gauging public perceptions regarding the effectiveness of democratic mechanisms in curbing instances of corruption.

09 Assessing the perceived threats posed by corruption to the fundamental principles and functioning of democratic systems.

RESEARCH
METHODOLOGY

The data collection process involved a quantitative, tablet-assisted personal interview (TAPI) methodology, leveraging face-to-face interactions to create rapport between interviewers and respondents, thereby enhancing the integrity of the collected data. This approach facilitates more nuanced answers from respondents, there by minimising potential misinterpretations.

01 The client was responsible for developing the quantitative questionnaire ensuring alignment with research objectives and capturing relevant insights effectively.

02 Highly qualified and experienced interviewers received comprehensive project-specific training and briefings prior to undertaking fieldwork, ensuring consistency and reliability in data collection processes.

03 The questionnaire predominantly featured closed-ended or pre-coded questions, limiting open-ended inquiries to no more than 5% of the total, thereby optimising data analysis efficiency.

04 Moreover, to streamline the interview process, it was stipulated that each interview session would not exceed a duration of 10 minutes, inclusive of introductory procedures.

05 A systematic quality assurance measure was implemented through telephonic back-checks, accounting for 20% of completed interviews, to validate data accuracy and integrity.

CORRUPTION IS KILLING US

STOP CORRUPTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

OUR PEOPLE SLEEP HUNGRY

The TAPI method of interviewing was considered to be the most suitable for the following reasons:

01 The questionnaire is pre-programmed, where the software used applies relevant skips and quality checks automatically. Hence, potential interviewer mistakes are minimised.

02 Interviewers cannot miss questions or ask the wrong questions (sequential rules apply).

03 Mathematical calculations are carried out within the programme.

04 There is no need for capturing, resulting in speedier data processing.

05 It allows for Internet GPRS connectivity (it is possible to work offline).

06 Plus 94 Research has developed voice-recording software in which interviews are randomly audio-recorded during fieldwork.

07 Data processing department accesses the data and can edit and reject questionnaires while fieldwork is still in progress.

Research Sample

The technical sample comprised a minimum of 1,500 respondents, achieving a margin of error of 2.5% at a 95% confidence level. Over a two-month period, interviews were conducted across all provinces to meet the client's sampling specifications. Plus 94 Research ensured that the sample size and demographic profile of respondents in each region accurately mirrored the provincial population key demographics.

Utilising metro and non-metro areas as explicit stratification variables, Plus 94 ensured comprehensive coverage of each province and maximised precision within each stratum. By employing the latest enumerator area (EA) sampling frame, the sample size and demographic profile of respondents aged 20 years and older in each region closely matched the provincial population. All respondents were permanent residents of South Africa, with key demographic variables including urban/rural residence, gender, race, educational attainment, and income level.

Figure 1 : Distribution of Respondents

(n=1500)
The greater share of respondents resides in the Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, the two most populace provinces, Figure 2 .
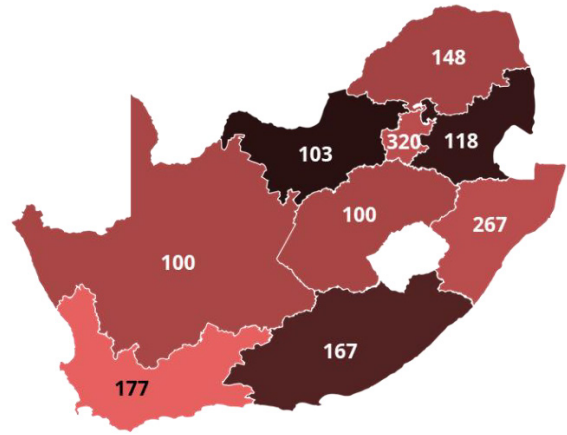
Figure 2 : Provincial distribution of respondents.
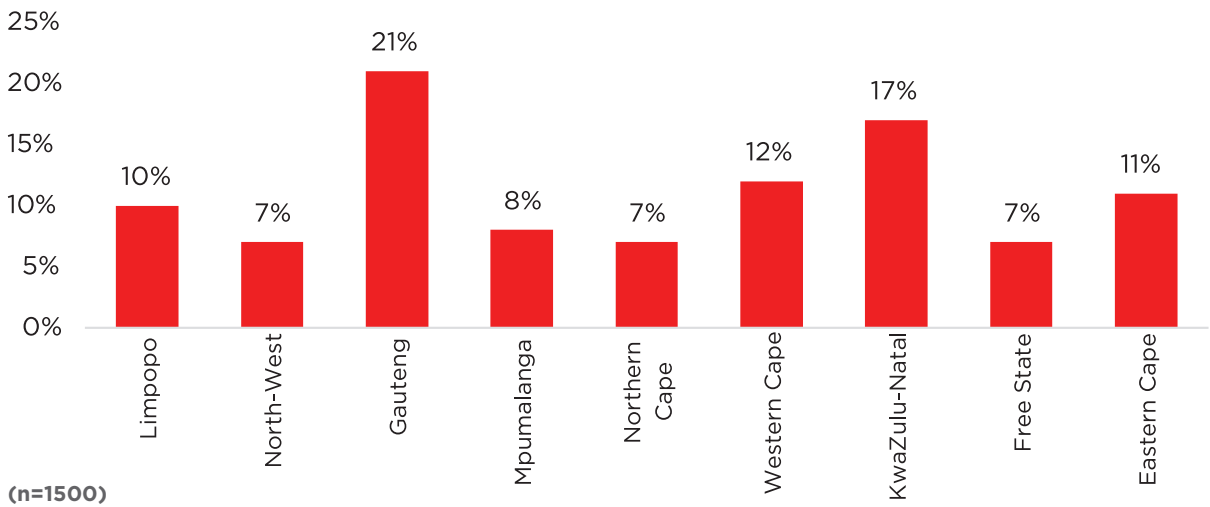
(n=1500)

Gender, Race and Age

More than half (51%) of respondents identified as male.
Figure 3 : Gender

48% Female

51% Male
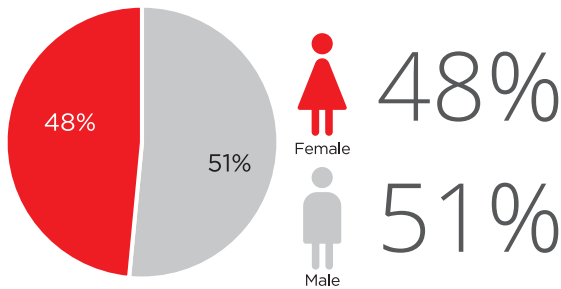
(n=1500)

Seven out of ten were of African descent, 15% identified as Coloured, 10% as White, 4% as Asian and 8% as "Other".

Figure 4 : Race Group

(n=1500)

13
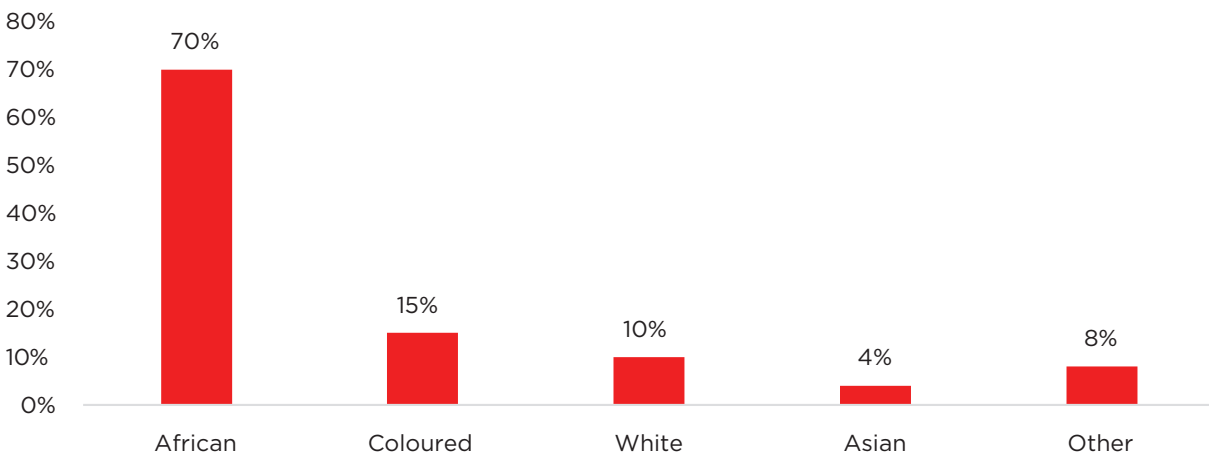
The larger share of respondents was aged 35 to 40 years of age (45%), 38% were 16 to 35 years of age, and 17% were aged 50 and older, Figure 5 .

Figure 5 : Age
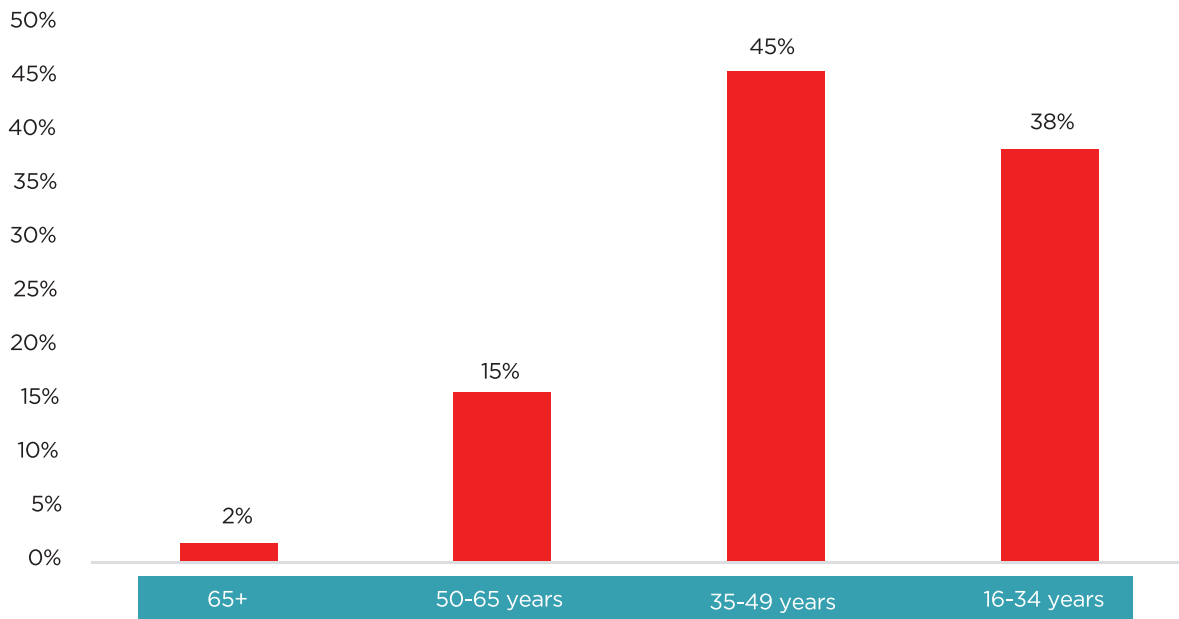
Income and Employment

Figure 6 shows that 32% of respondents reporting earning R6,000 or less, 21% earned between R6,000 and R11,999. A quarter (25%) indicated earnings falling within the range of R12,000 to R29,999, with 18% reporting incomes of R30,000 or higher.

Figure 6 : Monthly Income
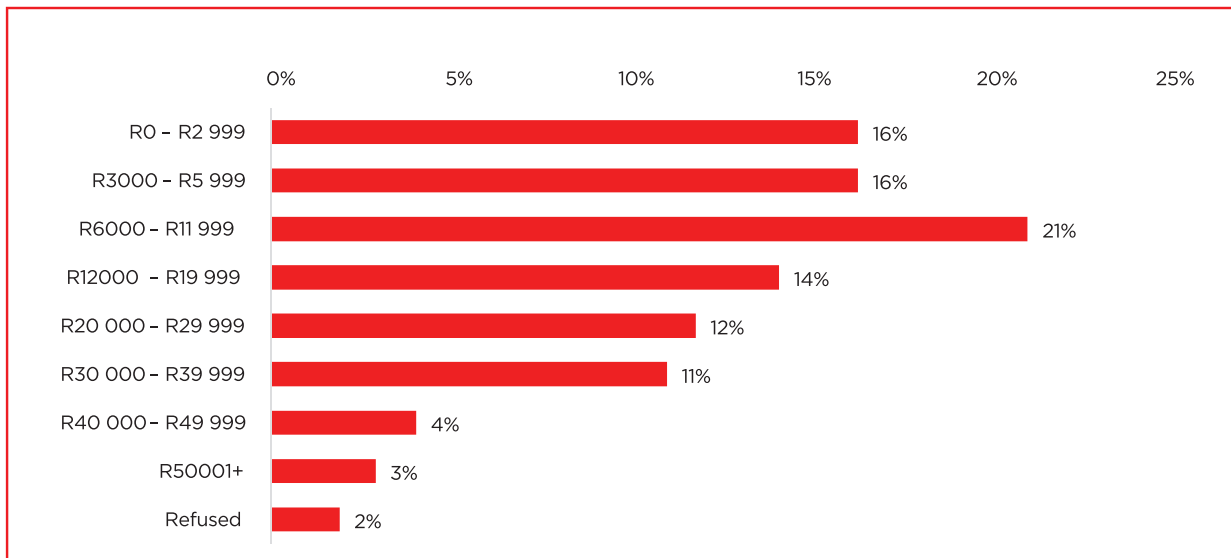
(n=1500)

The largest share of respondents (58%) was engaged in full-time employment, 19% identified as self-employed and 8% reported working part-time, Figure 7 . Ten percent of respondents were unemployed, while smaller percentages identified as students, etired individuals, or housewives/househusbands.

Figure 7 : Employment Status.

Works full-time	58%
Self-employed	19%
Unemployed	10%
Works part-time	8%
Student	3%
Housewife/househusband	1%
Retired	2%
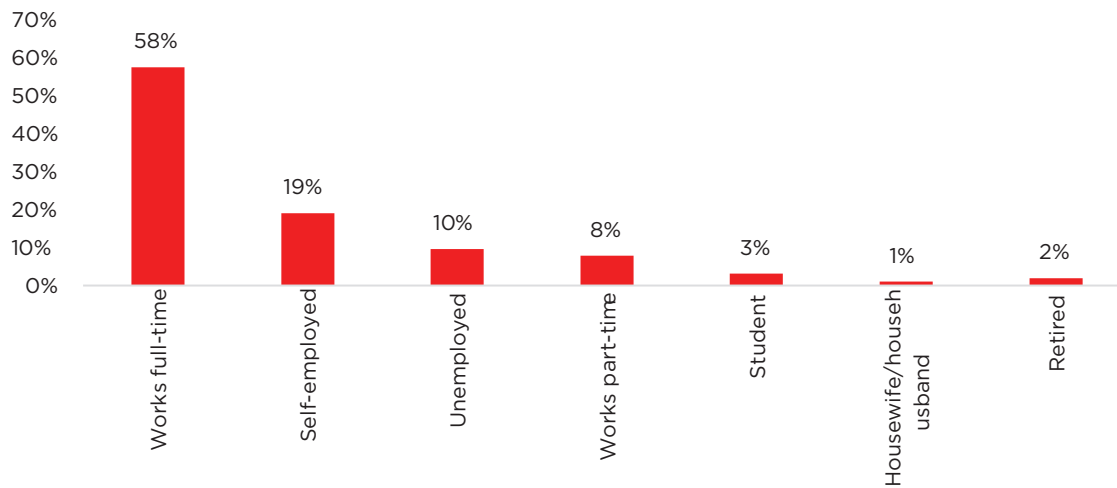
(n=1500)

Seven out of 10 respondents had paid employment as a primary source of income and 10% derived income from alternative sources. A smaller percentage of respondents received their monthly income from social grants (9%), allowances (8%), personal savings (8%), and donations or gifts (8%).

Figure 8 : Sources of Income

Social grants	9%
Allowance	8%
Paid work	70%
Donations/...	8%
Savings	8%
Pension	2%
None	2%
Other	10%
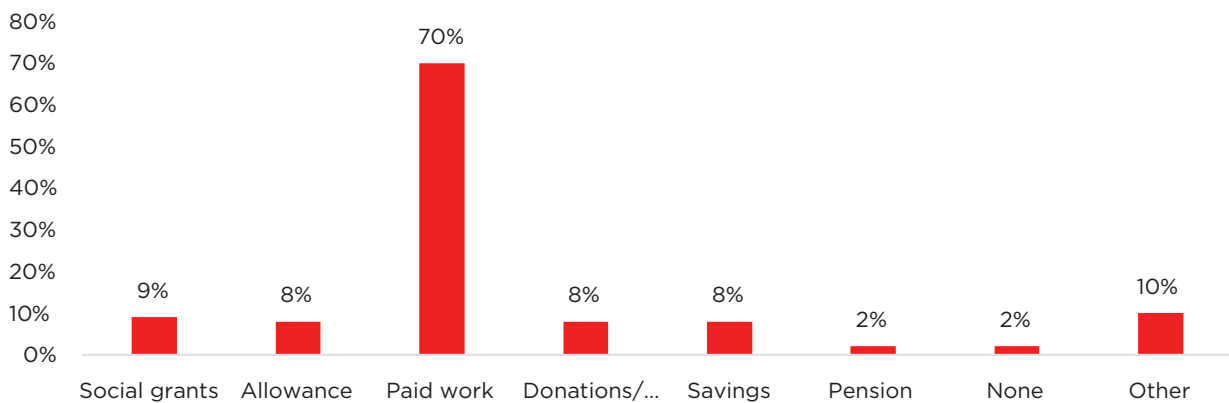
(n=1500)

Of the 10% or 150 respondents who reported alternative sources of income, 71% were self-employed, 15% employed and smaller shares were involved in training or students depending on NSFAS, etc., see Table 1 .

Table 1 : Alternative income sources

Other Income options (n=150)	Percentage
Training	7%
Student fund/allowance	3%
Own business/self-employed	71%
Employed	15%
NSFAS	4%
Art	3%
Refused	1%
Internet marketing	1%
Commission	1%
Rental agreement	1%
MQA	1%

Law Enforcement

A significant majority of respondents, comprising nearly two-thirds, expressed scepticism regarding the adequacy of South African law enforcement agencies in effectively combating corruption, while the remaining 35% held differing opinions.

Figure 9 : Sufficient law enforcement.

(n=1500)
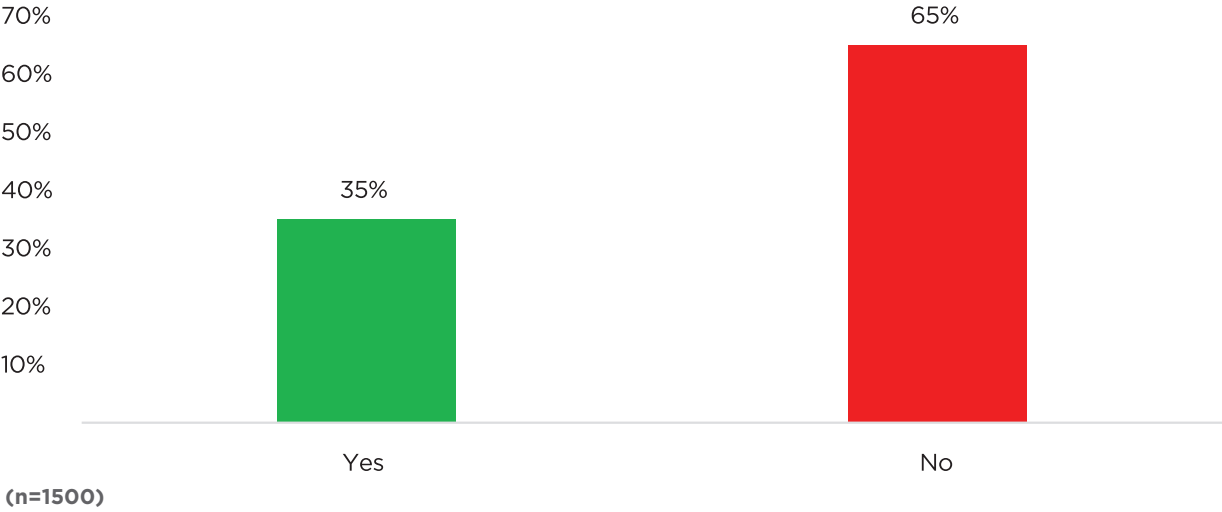
Regarding confidence in the adequacy of anti-corruption legislation and policies, nearly half of respondents (49%) exhibited low levels of confidence, with a third expressing no confidence at all, while only a fifth (20%) expressed confidence in the country's anti-corruption legal framework and policies.

Figure 10 : Adequate Laws and Policies

(n=1500)

17
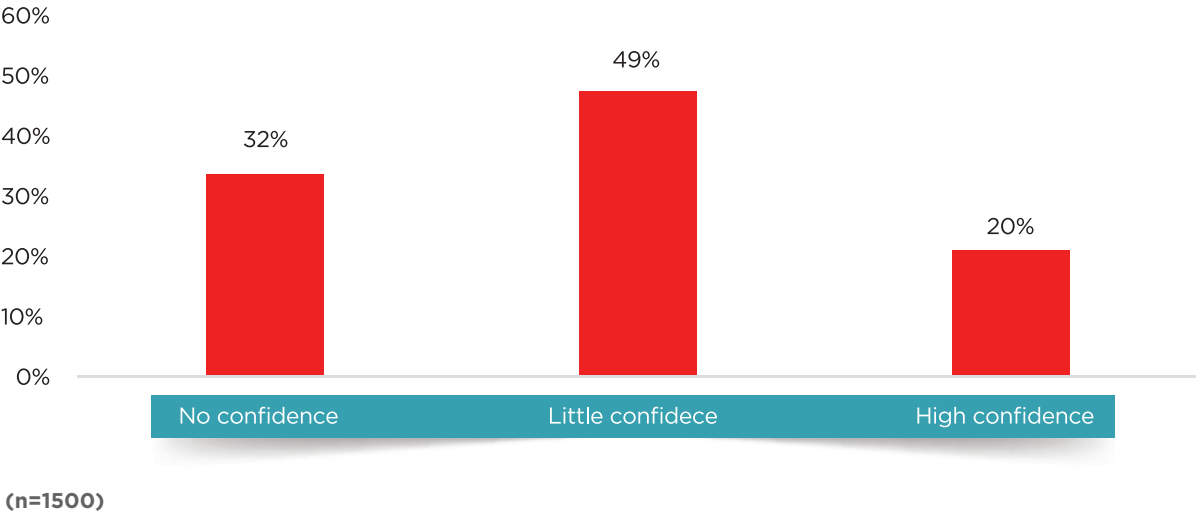
Knowledge of Laws and Agencies

A notable majority of respondents (54%) indicated a limited understanding of anti-corruption legislation within the South African context, with 27% reported a proficient understanding of such laws. A higher proportion of women than men reported no knowledge (21%) or limited knowledge (57%) of anti-corruption laws. More men (32%) when compared to women (23%) had a good understanding of anti-corruption laws.

Figure 11 : Knowledge of anti-corruption laws by gender

Man ■ Woman ■ All
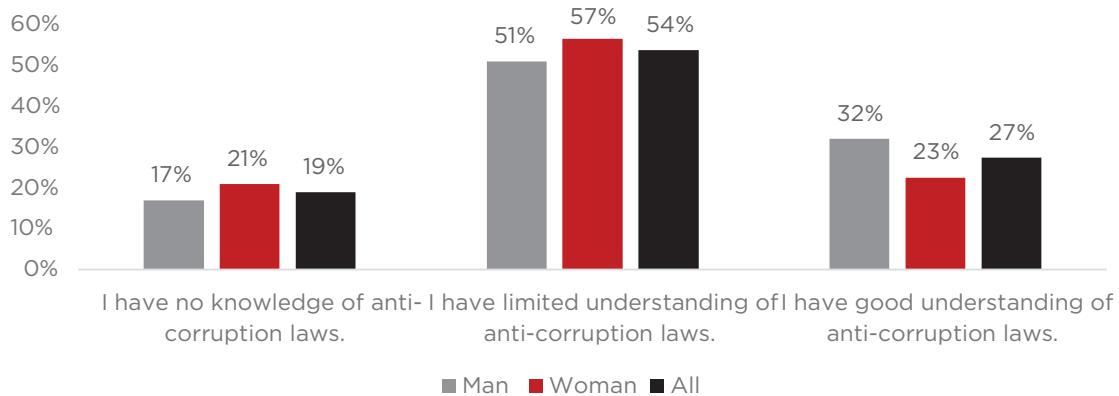
(n=1500; Men=766; Women=723)

A substantial proportion of rural (36%) and suburban (34%) respondents reported a proficient understanding of anti-corruption laws. On average, most respondents indicated a limited understanding of anti-corruption laws.

Figure 12 : Knowledge of anti-corruption laws by location

■ Suburban ■ Township ■ Inner city ■ Rural
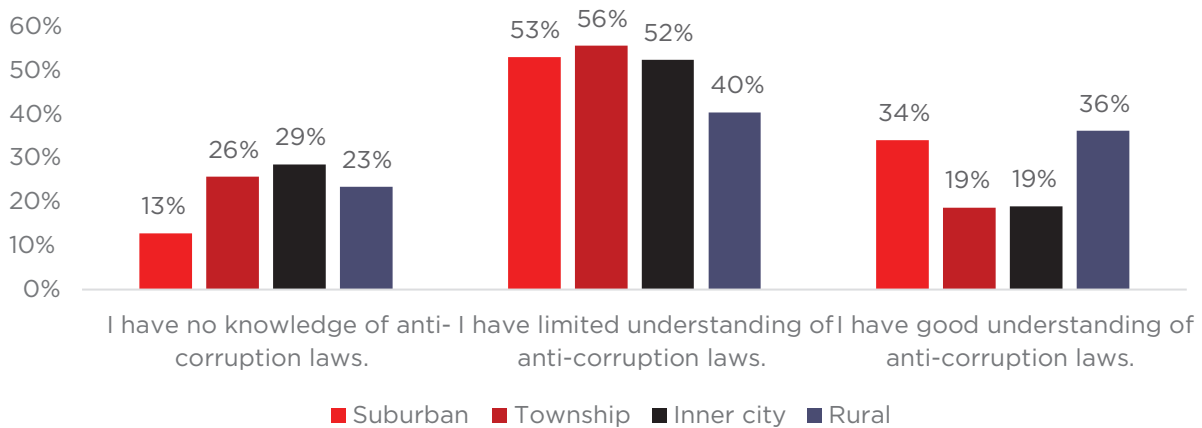
(n=1500; Suburban=791; Township=599; Inner city=63; Rural=47)

Half opined that establishments primarily prioritise issues concerning affluent individuals, neglecting the interests of ordinary South African citizens. A quarter (26%) attributed this prioritisation to hardworking yet politically marginalised individuals.

Another quarter (24%) attributed it to a lack of effective leadership within these institutions.

Figure 13 : Belief in Institutions by gender

The institutions are run by hardworking and well-meaning persons, but there is too much political interference.

28%

23%

26%

The institutions are only preoccupied by matters affecting the rich and powerful, and ordinary people are neglected.

48%

52%

50%

The institutions do not know what to do and there is no leadership.

23%

25%

24%

| 0% | 10% | 20% | 30% | 40% | 50% | 60% |

Man   Woman   All
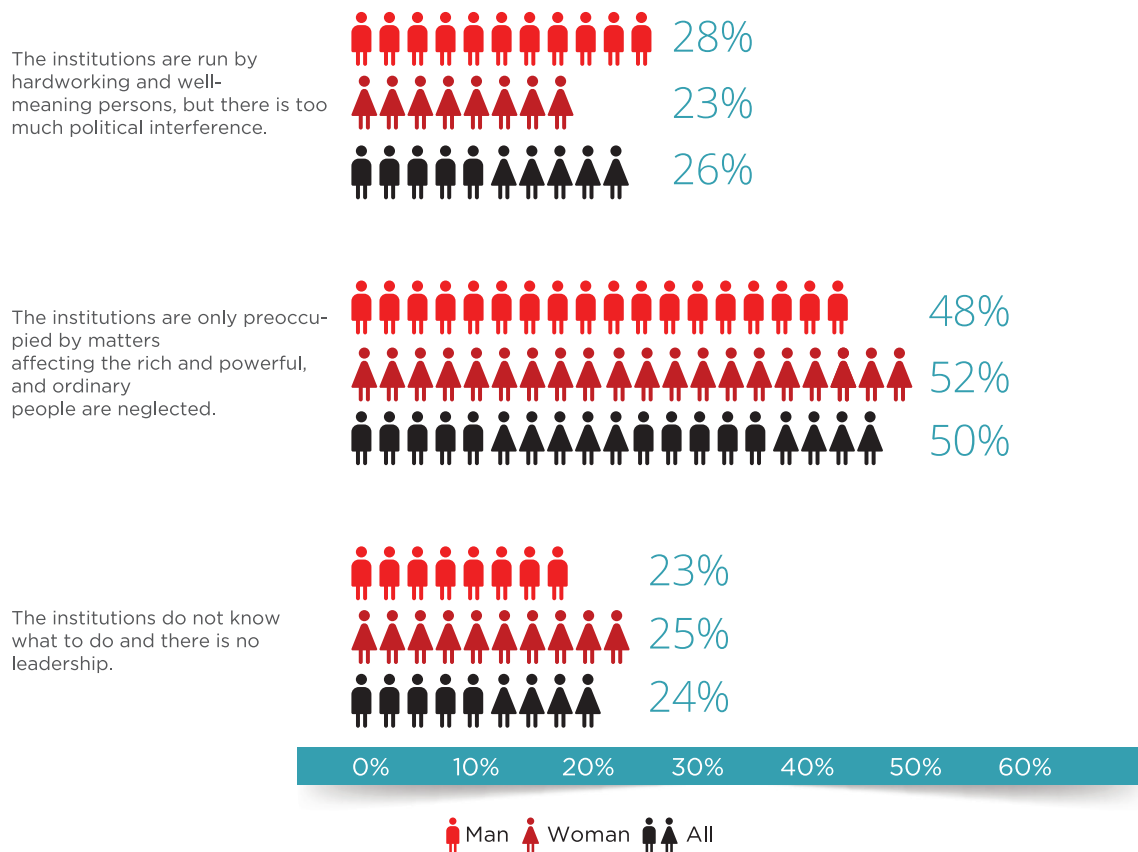
(n=1500; Men=766; Women=723)

In general, most respondents irrespective of gender or location opined that establishments primarily prioritise issues concerning affluent individuals, neglecting the interests of ordinary South African citizens.

Figure 14 : Belief in Institutions by location

The institutions are run by hardworking and well-meaning persons, but there is too much political interference
- Suburban: 25%
- Township: 26%
- Inner city: 32%
- Rural: 30%

The institutions are only preoccupied by matters affecting the rich and powerful, and ordinary people are neglected.
- Suburban: 47%
- Township: 53%
- Inner city: 49%
- Rural: 51%

The institutions do not know what to do and there is no leadership.
- Suburban: 28%
- Township: 21%
- Inner city: 19%
- Rural: 19%

Legend: Suburban, Township, Inner city, Rural

(n=1500; Suburban=791; Township=599; Inner city=63; Rural=47)

Law Enforcement

Six out of 10 respondents, who are confident about the country's adequate law and policies to address corruption, also have a good understanding of anti-corruption laws. Most respondents who were not confident in the country's adequate laws andpolicies had limited (47%) or no (35%) knowledge of anti-corruption laws, while approximately two-thirds (67%) of those with little confidence that the country has adequate laws and policies also have a limited understanding of anti-corruption laws.

Figure 15 : Adequate laws and policies by knowledge of anti-corruption laws

- I have no knowledge of anti-corruption laws.
- I have limited understanding of anti-corruption laws.
- I have good understanding of anti-corruption laws.

Not confident (n=472): 35%, 47%, 18%
Little confident (n=736): 13%, 67%, 20%
Very confident (n=292): 9%, 31%, 60%
All (n=1500): 19%, 54%, 27%
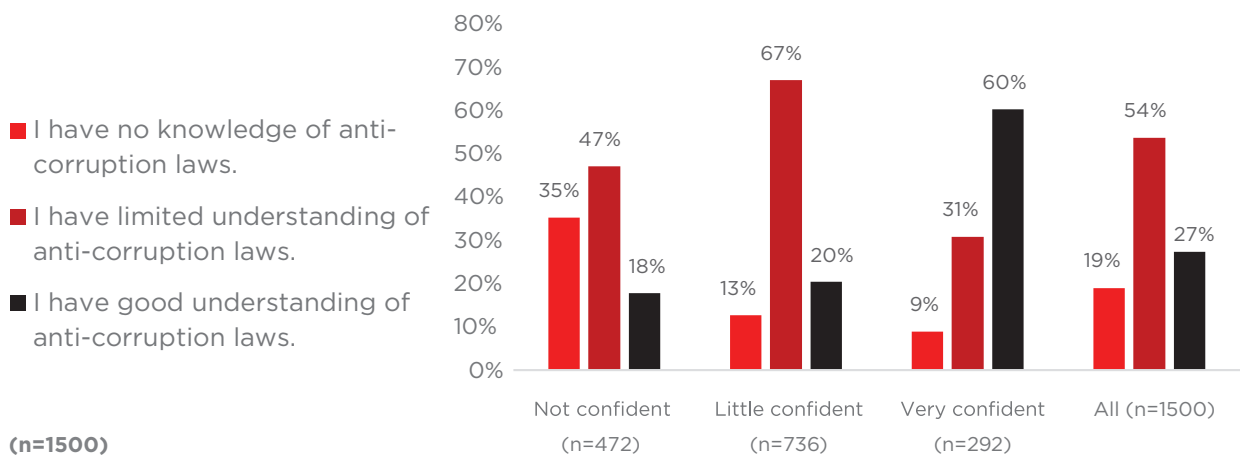
(n=1500)

Addressing Corruption

Respondents had less trust in elected and appointed officials. On average they gave higher ratings for Strongly Untrustful and Untrustful to organizations such as Chapter 9 and 10 institutions, the NPS, SAPS, the judiciary, Parliament and the Presidency. All these institutions had lower than average mean scores.

Most respondents were neutral towards Civil Society Organisations. Respondents expressed greater trust in media outlets, religious and spiritual institutions, as well as legal and investigative firms to effectively address corruption concerns affecting ordinary citizens. These organisations attained the highest mean scores out of a possible five.

Figure 16 : Trust in organisations to address corruption issues

	Strongly untrustful	Untrustful	Neutral	Trustful	Strongly trustful	Mean Scores (100)
Chapter 9 institutions	17%	22%	30%	20%	11%	46
Chapter 10 institutions	18%	24%	31%	19%	8%	44
National Prosecuting Authority (NPA)	19%	21%	30%	20%	10%	45
SAPS, IPD and Hawks	29%	20%	23%	18%	11%	41
Judiciary	18%	18%	31%	21%	12%	48
Parliament	26%	20%	26%	17%	10%	41
Presidency	27%	18%	27%	17%	10%	41
Civil society organisations	19%	16%	31%	23%	12%	48
Media	12%	13%	27%	23%	25%	59
Religious and Spiritual bodies	13%	12%	31%	26%	18%	56
Legal, investigative and accounting companies	14%	16%	32%	23%	14%	51

(n=1500)

Perceptions on Whistle-blowing and Protection

Respondents agreed/strongly agreed that whistle-blowers are still being victimised and killed (67%), that there are too many instances where whistle-blower information was compromised by officials in the public sector (64%), and that whistle-blowing channels in place allow for confidential, psychological support and the resolution of complaints(50%). Many respondents are aware that whistle-blowers need psychological support but more disagreed that officials protect the lives and livelihoods of whistle-blowers.

Figure 17 : Perceptions on Whistle-blower Protection

Mean Scores (100)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
There are too many instances where whistle-blower information is compromised by officials in the public sector.	6%	6%	24%	30%	34%	70
Whistle-blowers are still being victimised and killed even though South Africa has pieces of laws that are meant to protect whistle-blowers.	5%	7%	21%	31%	36%	71
Officials go beyond the call of duty to protect the lives and livelihoods of whistle-blowers.	24%	17%	23%	21%	14%	64
The whistle-blowing channels in place allow for confidential, psychological support and the resolution of complaints.	12%	11%	28%	29%	21%	59

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

(n=1500)

The perceptions of men and women concerning the statements on whistle-blowers protection are similar, Figure 18 . Slightly higher proportions of men strongly agreed/ agreed with the statements than women, while slightly higher proportions of women tended to remain neutral.

Figure 18 : Perceptions on Whistle-blower Protection by gender

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

(n=1500; Men=766; Women=723)

PROTECT
WHISTLE-BLOWERS
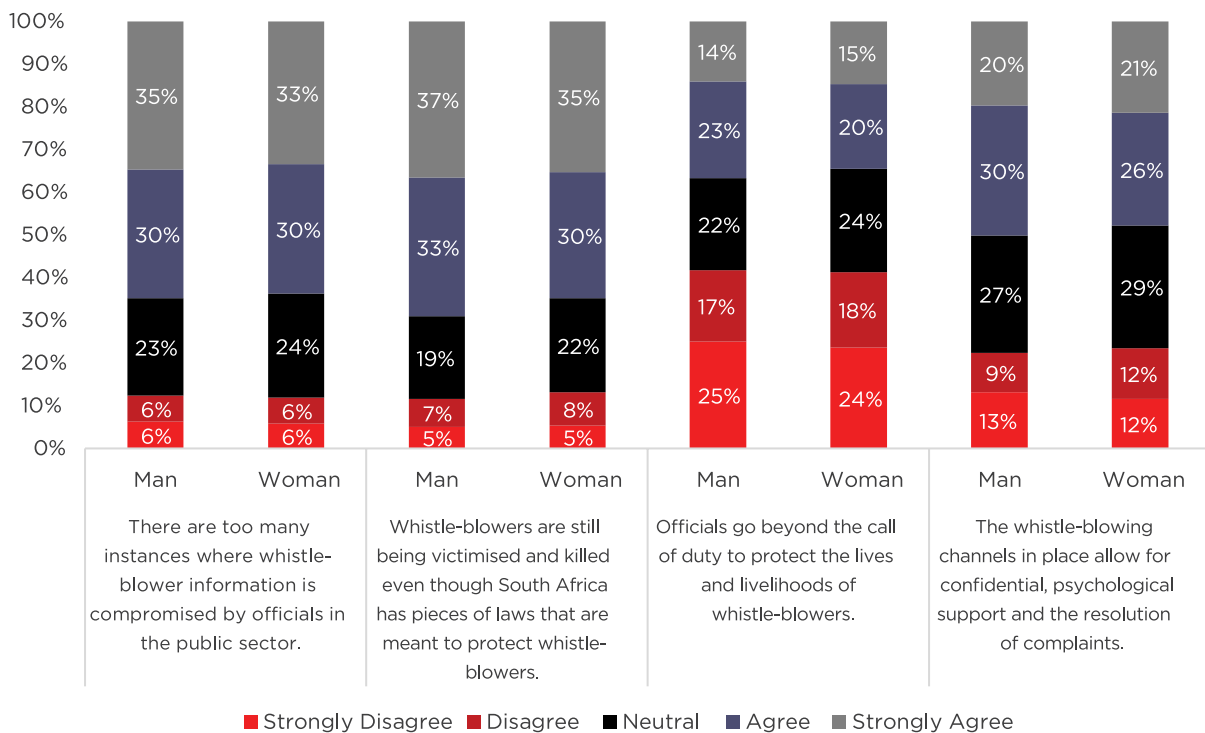
Awareness of Institution Mandate

Over 40% of respondents demonstrated an understanding of the mandates of the South African Police Service (SAPS), Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID), and Hawks regarding their roles in addressing corruption, Figure 19 . In comparison, awareness levels regarding Parliament and the Judiciary's mandates in addressing corruption were lower, with 35% and 33% of respondents respectively possessing complete awareness. Most respondents are aware that these institutions have a mandate in addressing corruption.

Figure 19 : Awareness of Institution Mandate in Addressing Corruption

Institution	Completely unaware	Somewhat unaware	Slightly aware	Completely aware	Mean Scores (100)
Chapter 9 institutions (Public Protector; SA Human Rights Commission)	17%	24%	36%	23%	55
National Prosecuting Authority (NPA)	15%	25%	35%	25%	56
South African Police Service (SAPS) including the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) and Hawks.	11%	16%	31%	42%	68
Parliament	16%	19%	30%	35%	62
Judiciary	16%	19%	32%	33%	60

■ Completely unaware ■ Somewhat unaware ■ Slightly aware ■ Completely aware

(n=1500)

Groups Affected by Corruption

Over half of all respondents strongly concurred that corruption exerts pervasive effects across all facets of society, as indicated by robust mean scores exceeding 7.0 attributed to these assertions. The demographics most significantly impacted by corruption include unemployed youth, with 75% of respondents acknowledging their vulnerability, followed closely by women and children (70%), individuals residing in rural areas (69%), and people living with disabilities (68%), Figure 20 . These findings are underscored by notably high mean scores of 8.5, 8.2, 8.2, and 8.1 respectively for each demographic group.

Figure 20 : Groups affected by corruption

Group	Bottom 1-4	Middle 5-7	Top 8-10	Mean Scores (100)
People living with disabilities	13%	19%	68%	81
Women and children	11%	19%	70%	82
Unemployed youth	8%	17%	75%	85
The elderly	11%	23%	66%	80
Established business persons	19%	28%	53%	72
People living in rural communities	10%	21%	69%	82
Informal traders	13%	26%	61%	77
Township dwellers	13%	25%	62%	78
Other	28%	17%	55%	67

■ Bottom 1-4　■ Middle 5-7　■ Top 8-10
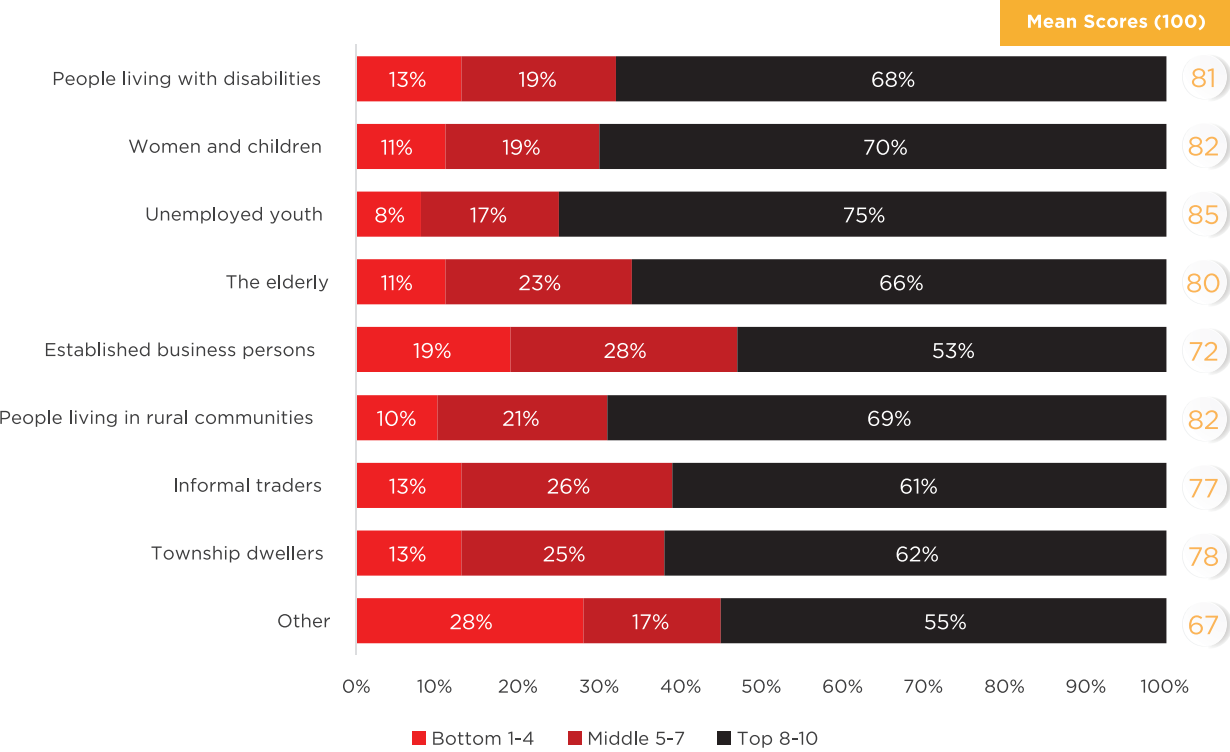
(n=1500)

Areas Affected by Corruption

Four out of five respondents (81%) believe that government is not doing enough to address corruption in the provision of basic services. On average, more than 60% of respondents agree/strongly agree that corruption mostly affects the provision of housing and land at (73%), safety and protection of communities (69%), providing quality education (68), access to quality healthcare (67%), the administering of justice by courts (64%), and food security (62%), Figure 21 . The strong mean scores (greater than 70) attributed to all these statements is evident of respondents' perception that corruption is all-pervasive.

Figure 21 : Areas affected by corruption

Mean Scores (100)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
The provision of housing and land.	5%	4%	18%	33%	40%	75
Access to quality healthcare.	4%	6%	23%	29%	38%	73
Food security.	5%	6%	27%	25%	37%	71
Providing quality education to poor and vulnerable groups.	4%	4%	23%	29%	39%	73
Safety and protection in communities.	5%	5%	21%	28%	41%	74
The administering of justice by courts and other legal authority	6%	6%	24%	29%	35%	70

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

(n=1500)

The perceptions of men and women concerning the areas affected by corruption is similar. On average slightly more women than men strongly agreed with the all the statement, while slightly more men than women agreed with all the statements, Figure 22 .

Figure 22 : Areas affected by corruption from a gender perspective

	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Strongly Agree	40%	41%	37%	40%	36%	39%	38%	41%	39%	43%	33%	37%
Agree	33%	34%	29%	29%	27%	24%	29%	29%	31%	24%	30%	29%
Neutral	19%	17%	22%	22%	27%	27%	24%	22%	19%	23%	24%	24%
Disagree	3%	4%	7%	6%	5%	6%	4%	5%	5%	5%	7%	4%
Strongly Disagree	5%	4%	5%	3%	6%	4%	5%	4%	5%	5%	7%	6%

The provision of housing and land. | Access to quality healthcare. | Food security. | Providing quality education to poor and vulnerable groups. | Safety and protection in communities. | The administering of justice by courts and other legal authority.

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

(n=1500)

26

Corruption and Human Rights

A significant majority of respondents (81%) do not believe that enough is being done to address corruption by government in the provision of basic services.

Figure 23 : Addressing corruption.
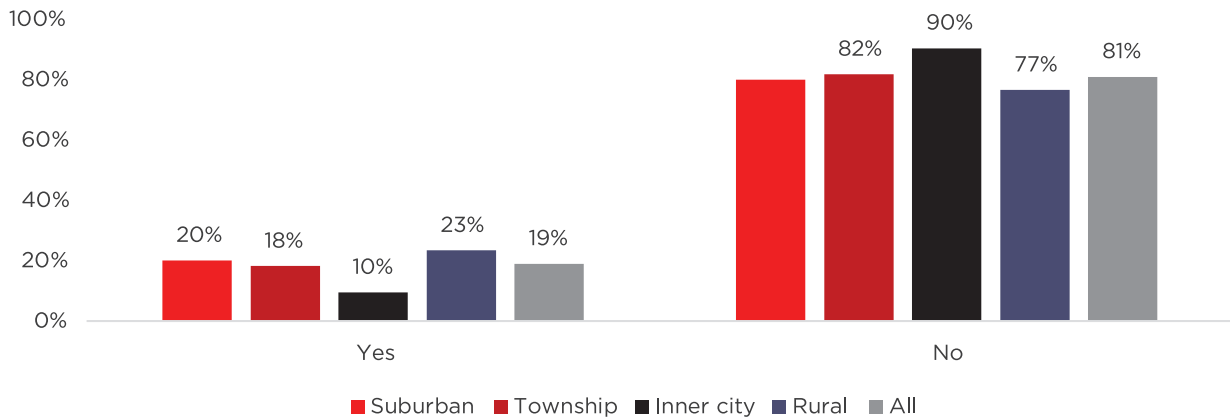
(n=1500; Suburban=791; Township=599; Inner city=63; Rural=47)

Close to seventy percent (69%) of respondents agree/strongly agree that where corruption is found to have impeded a person's rights and dignity, the crime should be treated as serious, with severe penalties beyond prison suspensions and fees imposed, 66% agree/strongly agree that corruption should be viewed as a violation of people's basic rights in all sectors of society and be reflected as thus in our laws and policies, and 62% agree/strongly agree that corruption impedes fundamental human rights and dignity.

Figure 24 : Perceptions of Corruption on People's Daily Lives
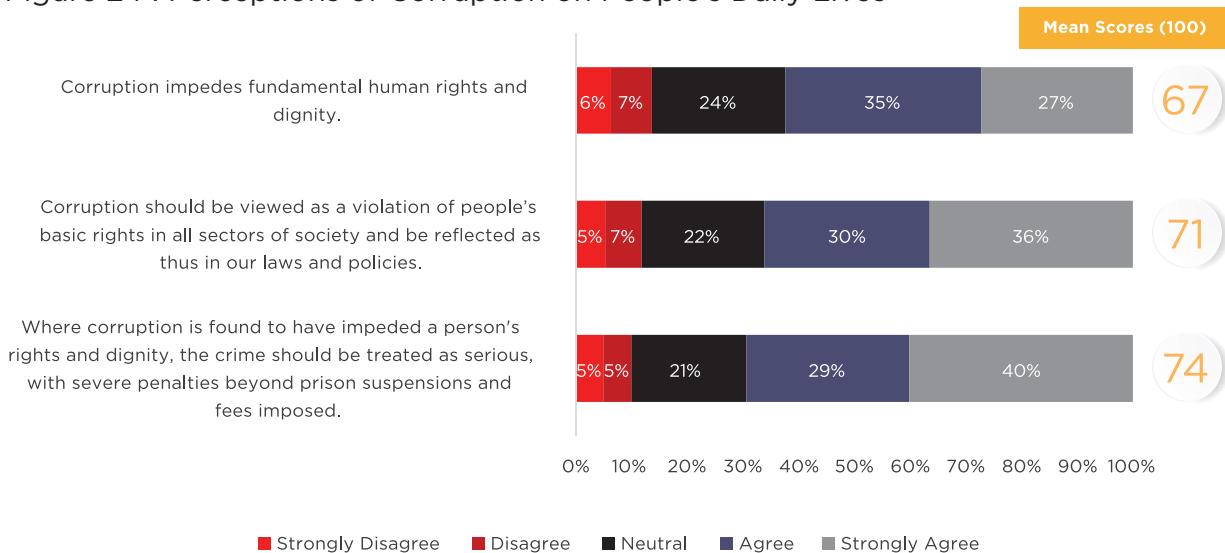
(n=1500)

Effectiveness of Democratic Mechanisms

A little more than a third of respondent strongly agree with the statements below. On average, 39% gave these ratings a middle (5-7) score, hence the average ratings of 6.0 to 6.8, Figure 25 . Close to half of respondents (46%) strongly agreed that media investigations leading to the exposure of corrupt activities are the most effective democratic mechanisms in the fight against corruption.

Figure 25 : Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Democratic Mechanisms

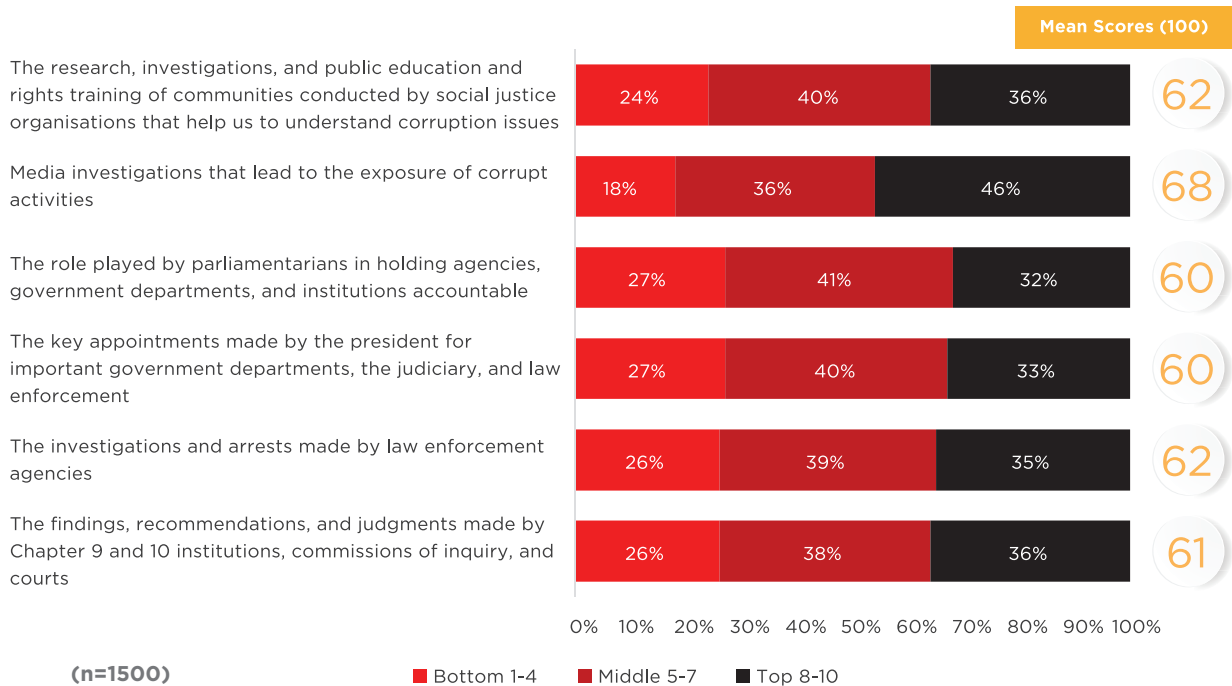|	Bottom 1-4	Middle 5-7	Top 8-10	Mean Scores (100)
The research, investigations, and public education and rights training of communities conducted by social justice organisations that help us to understand corruption issues	24%	40%	36%	62
Media investigations that lead to the exposure of corrupt activities	18%	36%	46%	68
The role played by parliamentarians in holding agencies, government departments, and institutions accountable	27%	41%	32%	60
The key appointments made by the president for important government departments, the judiciary, and law enforcement	27%	40%	33%	60
The investigations and arrests made by law enforcement agencies	26%	39%	35%	62
The findings, recommendations, and judgments made by Chapter 9 and 10 institutions, commissions of inquiry, and courts	26%	38%	36%	61

(n=1500)   ■ Bottom 1-4   ■ Middle 5-7   ■ Top 8-10

Factors Threatening Democracy

More than half of respondents consider all the factors below as very threatening to democracy, hence the high mean scores of 7.4 and above. A lack of transparency in political party funding is considered the most threatening factor (58%) followed by politicians and high-ran king officials doing business whilst in public office (58%), Figure 26 . This is evident in the high means scores assigned to these statements of 7.6 and 7.5, respectively.

Figure 26 : Perceptions on Factors Threatening Democracy

	Bottom 1-4	Middle 5-7	Top 8-10	Mean Scores (100)
Politicians and high-ranking officials doing business whilst in public office	13%	29%	58%	75
Law enforcement agencies being selective in holding persons and businesses accountable	12%	32%	55%	74
The victimisation of human rights defenders like activists, journalists, whistle-blowers, and judges	13%	33%	54%	74
A lack of transparency in political party funding	12%	30%	58%	76

■ Bottom 1-4   ■ Middle 5-7   ■ Top 8-10

(n=1500)

Improving Anti-corruption Practices

More than half of respondents (57%) agree/strongly agreed that improving the safety of whistle-blowers by having a state-run whistle blower institution to provide protection etc. and prohibiting officials from doing business while in office (53%). Thestreamlining of government processes (52%) are measures that will improve anti- corruption practices in South Africa. The moderate mean scores of 3.5 and 3.6 assigned to these measure are due to the substantial share of respondents (30% on average) who gave these statements a neutral rating.

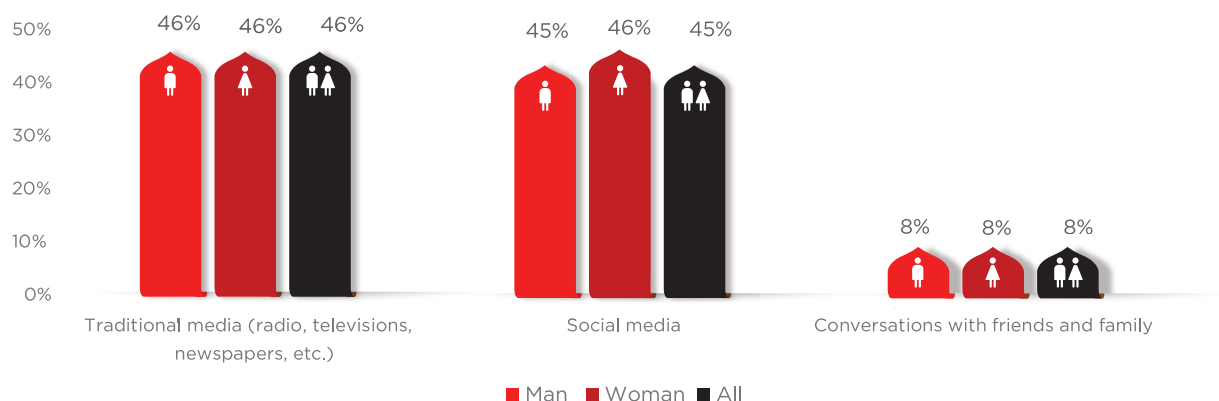Figure 27 : Measures that May Improve Anti-corruption Practices in South Africa

Mean Scores (100)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean Score
The direct electing of individuals into parliament, the presidency, the judiciary, and other critical institutions.	7%	10%	33%	29%	20%	61
Prohibiting elected officials and high-ranking public servants from conducting business whilst in office.	7%	11%	29%	29%	24%	63
The streamlining of government processes by reducing red tape (i.e., lengthy government processes and too many rules).	8%	11%	30%	30%	22%	62
Improving the safety of whistle-blowers by having a state-run whistle-blower institution to provide protection, legal, financial, and psychological support to all persons who…	7%	9%	27%	31%	26%	65

■ Strongly disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly agree

(n=1500)

Information on Corruption

On average, 46% of respondents indicated that they get their information on corruption from traditional media (radio, television, newspaper, etc.), 45% from social media, and only 8% from conversations with friends and family, Figure 28 .

Figure 28 : Information on Corruption by Gender

	Man	Woman	All
Traditional media (radio, televisions, newspapers, etc.)	46%	46%	46%
Social media	45%	46%	45%
Conversations with friends and family	8%	8%	8%

■ Man   ■ Woman   ■ All

(n=1500; Suburban=791; Township=599; Inner city=63; Rural=47)

Most inner city respondents (68%) indicated that they get their information on corruption from traditional media (radio, television, newspaper, etc.), 50% of suburban respondents reported getting their information from social media, and while smaller proportions of respondents in general get their information from conversations with friends and family.

Figure 29 : Information on Corruption by Location

Traditional media (radio, televisions, newspapers, etc.): Suburban 44%, Township 47%, Inner city 68%, Rural 49%

Social media: Suburban 50%, Township 42%, Inner city 24%, Rural 43%

Conversations with friends and family: Suburban 6%, Township 11%, Inner city 8%, Rural 9%

■ Suburban ■ Township ■ Inner city ■ Rural
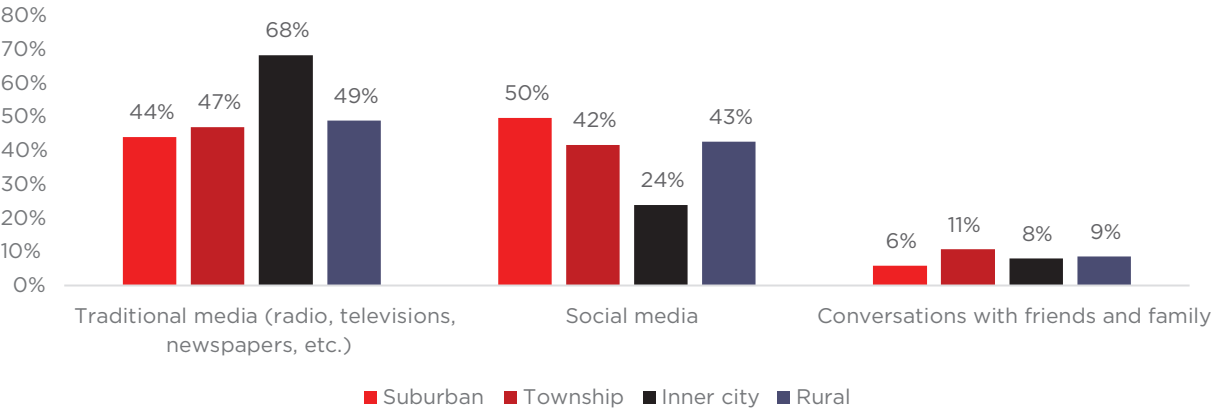
(n=1500; Men=766; Women=723)

## Contact with Officials or Intermediaries within the Last Five Years

The highest share of respondents had contact with officials in the medical profession – doctors (46%) and nurses (46%). Four out of 10 had contact with police officers (41%) and teachers (38%) in the last five years. Fewer had contact with car licence officers (30%), traffic management officials (26%), and elected representatives from local and provincial governments (19%). Approximately one out of 10 had contact with judges or magistrates at court (12%) and prosecutors (10%).
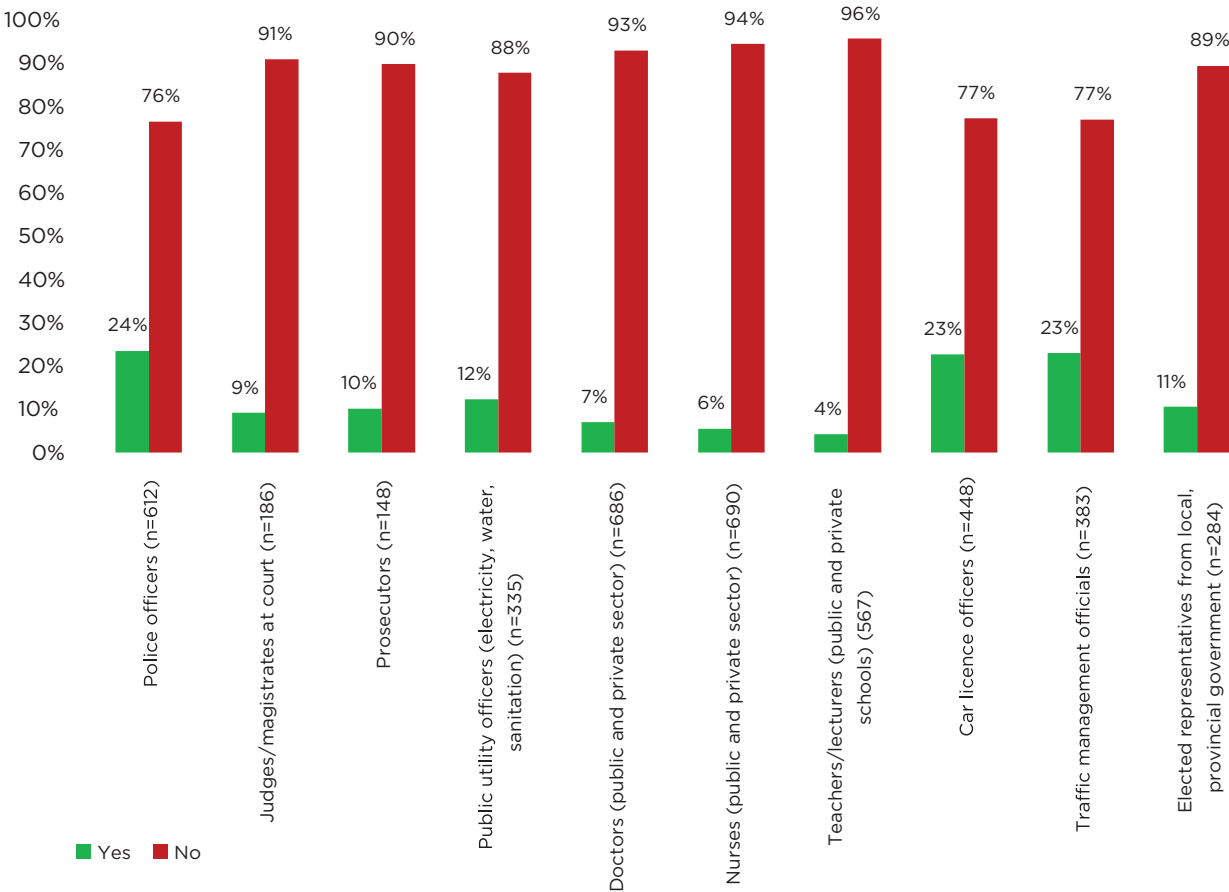
Figure 30 : Contact with Officials in the Last Five Years
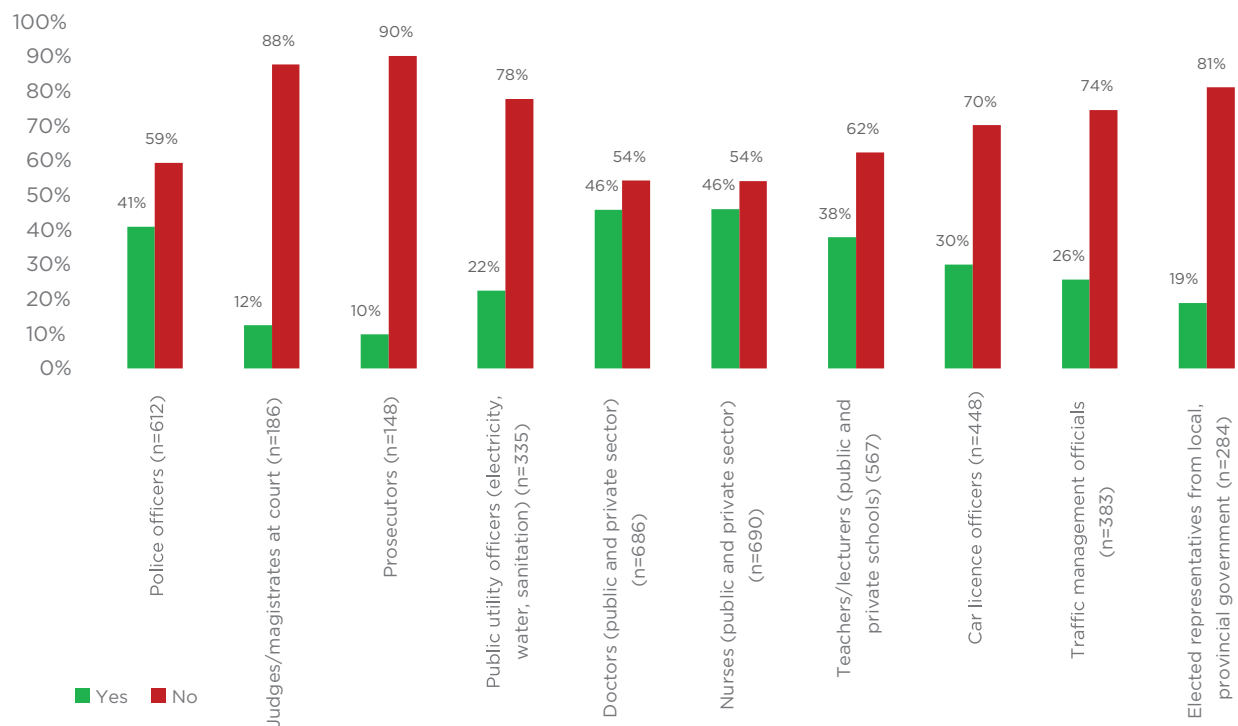
Provision of Gifts or Favours

The information on this slide only pertains to those respondents who had contact with the respective officials within the last five years. Slightly less than a quarter (24%) reported giving a gift or a favour to police officers, car licence officers (23%), and traffic management officials (23%). Approximately one in 10 gave gifts or favours to prosecutors (12%), elected government representatives (11%), prosecutors (10%) and judges or magistrates at court (9%).
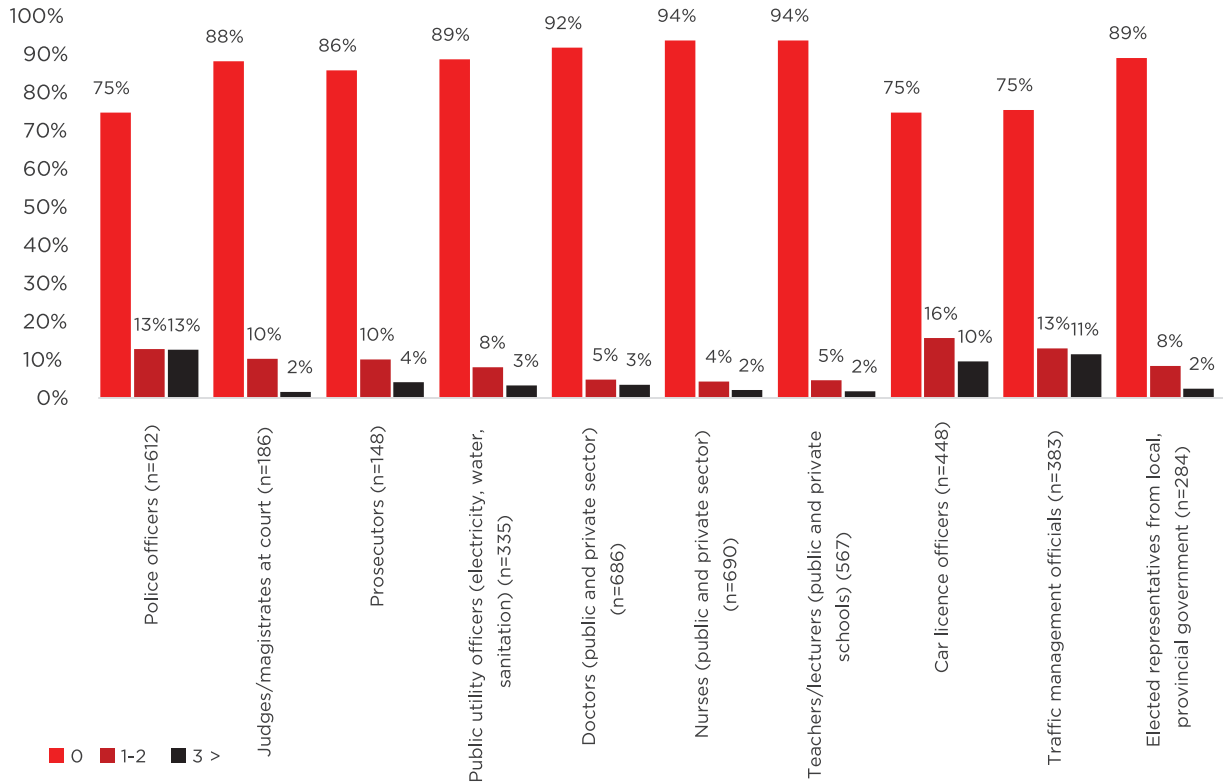
Figure 31 : Gifts Given to Officials

Category	Yes	No
Police officers (n=612)	24%	76%
Judges/magistrates at court (n=186)	9%	91%
Prosecutors (n=148)	10%	90%
Public utility officers (electricity, water, sanitation) (n=335)	12%	88%
Doctors (public and private sector) (n=686)	7%	93%
Nurses (public and private sector) (n=690)	6%	94%
Teachers/lecturers (public and private schools) (567)	4%	96%
Car licence officers (n=448)	23%	77%
Traffic management officials (n=383)	23%	77%
Elected representatives from local, provincial government (n=284)	11%	89%

■ Yes ■ No

Occasions when Gifts were Given

The information on this slide only pertains to those respondents who had contact with the respective officials within the last five years and corresponds to the information in the previous slide. On average more than three quarters (over 75%) of respondents who had contact with officials did not give any gifts or favours.
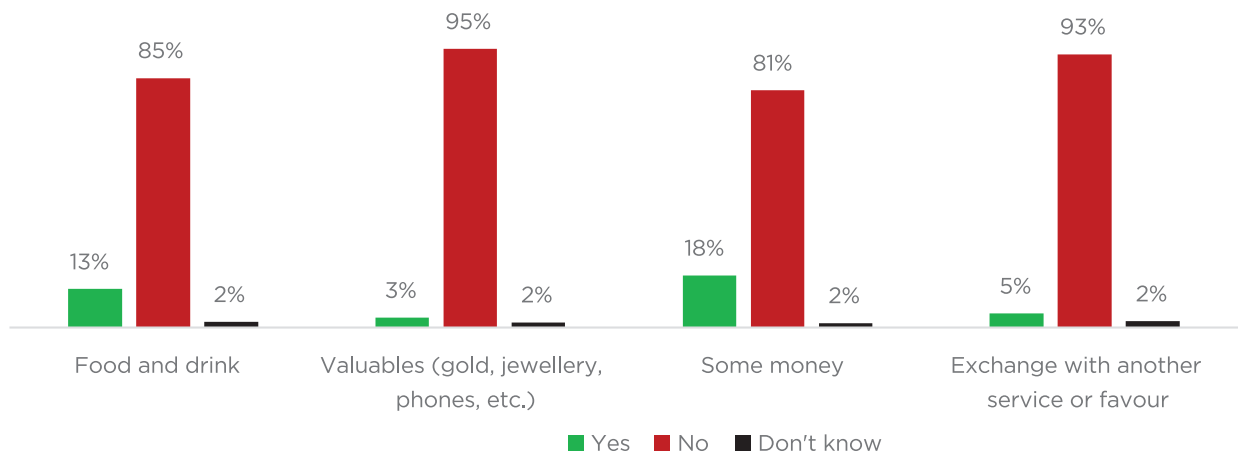
Figure 32 : The Number of Times Gifts were Given to Officials

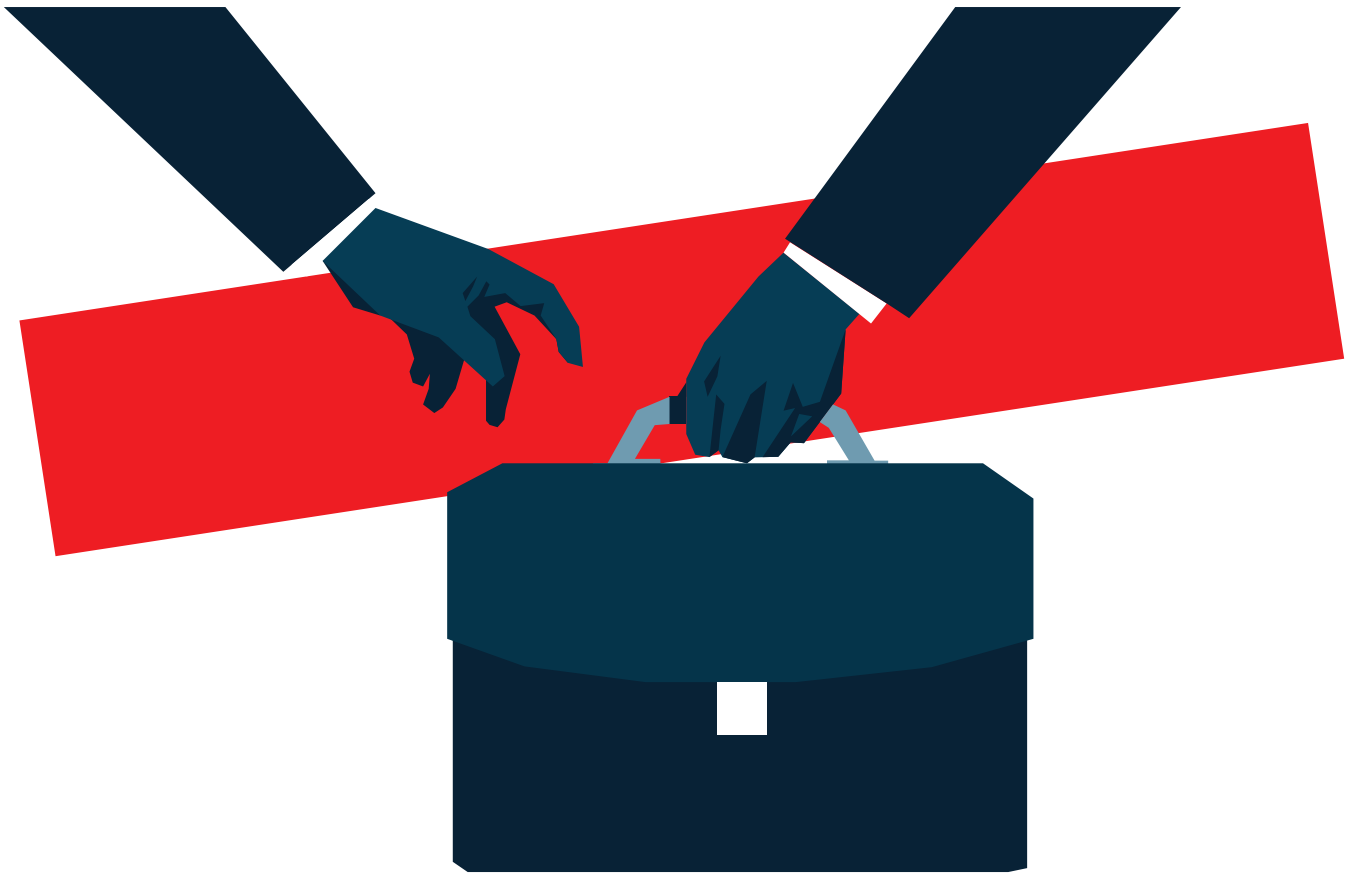|	0	1-2	3 >
Police officers (n=612)	75%	13%	13%
Judges/magistrates at court (n=186)	88%	10%	2%
Prosecutors (n=148)	86%	10%	4%
Public utility officers (electricity, water, sanitation) (n=335)	89%	8%	3%
Doctors (public and private sector) (n=686)	92%	5%	3%
Nurses (public and private sector) (n=690)	94%	4%	2%
Teachers/lecturers (public and private schools) (567)	94%	5%	2%
Car licence officers (n=448)	75%	16%	10%
Traffic management officials (n=383)	75%	13%	11%
Elected representatives from local, provincial government (n=284)	89%	8%	2%

Type of Gifts or Favours Given

Respondents who made extra payments or gave a gift, did so by giving some money (18%), food and drink (13%), or provided another service of favour (5%) or gave valuables (3%).

Figure 33 : Type of Gifts as Extra Payment

	Food and drink	Valuables (gold, jewellery, phones, etc.)	Some money	Exchange with another service or favour
Yes	13%	3%	18%	5%
No	85%	95%	81%	93%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	2%

A very small share (5%) of respondents, Figure 34 , reported the occasion when they were under duress to make an extra payment or gift.

Figure 34 : Reporting extra payments

5%   2%

94%

(n=1500)

Yes
No
Don't know
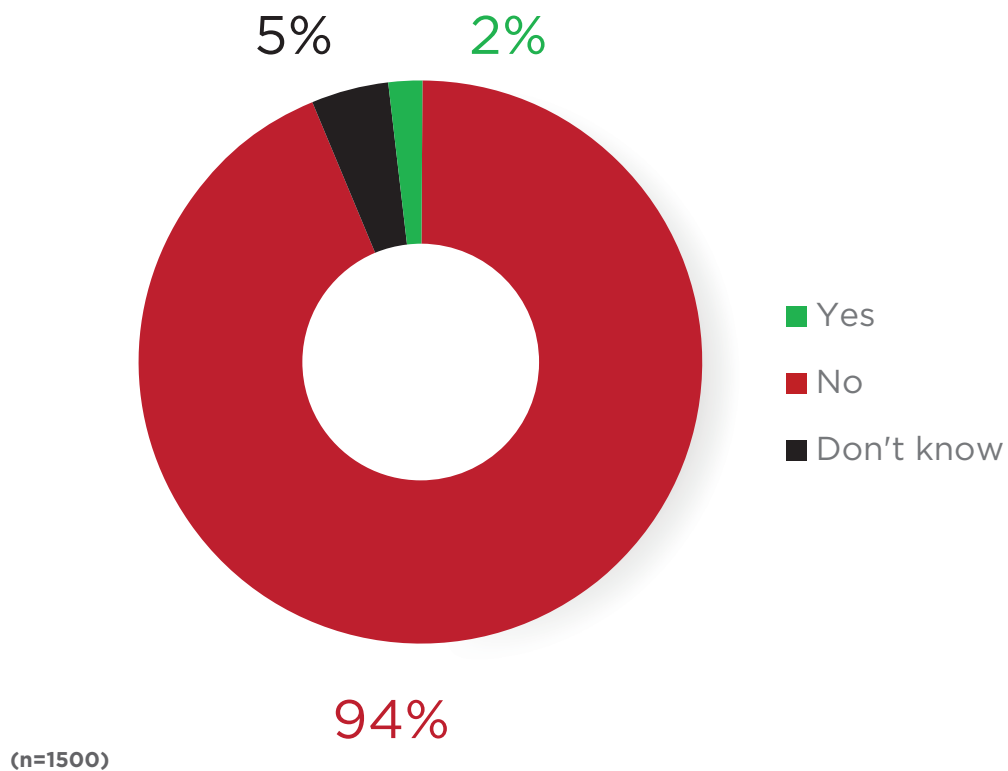
CONCLUSION

The findings of this survey underscore widespread concerns among responderts regarding the efficacy of South African law enforcement agencies in combatting corruption, alongside perceptions of insufficient governmental action in addressing corruption within basic service provision. Confidence in the adequacy of existing anti-corruption legislation and policies is notably low among respondents. Moreover there exists a significant deficit in public understanding of South Africa's anti-corruption laws, coupled with a prevailing belief that institutional focus primarily caters to the interests of the affluent, leaving ordinary citizens neglected.

Respondents exhibit a notable lack of trust in various institutions, including Chapter 9 and 10 bodies, Parliament, the Presidency, and law enforcement agencies. Conversely, respondents seem to place more trust in media outlets, religious and spiritual organisations, as well as legal, investigative, and accounting firms to tackle corruption issues affecting the general public. Markedly, media investigations have been identified by respondents as being the most effective democratic mechanism in combating corruption.

Concerns persist regarding the protection of whistle-blowers, with instances of victimization and compromised information by public sector officials still prevalent. There is a recognized need for heightened public awareness regarding the mandates of key anti-corruption institutions such as SAPS, IPID, Hawks, Parliament, and the Judiciary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the seemingly insurmountable endeavour to combat corruption and foster integrity in South Africa, it is imperative to implement multidimensional strategies that have the potential to address various aspects of corruption prevention and mitigation. This comprehensive approach necessitates concerted efforts by relevant stakeholders. By harnessing the collective strength of the below recommendations, the said stakeholders, including organisations such as Corruption Watch, can effectively tackle corruption from multiple angles, fostering a national culture of transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct across all sectors of South African society. It's important to note that the effectiveness of the below recommendations may vary based on circumstantial factors, stakeholder dynamics, and implementation strategies in the broader South African context, and thus, careful consideration and adaptation to specific circumstances are advised for optimal outcomes.

Education and awareness

Develop and execute comprehensive awareness campaigns utilising diverse media channels to educate the public on the detrimental ramifications of corruption, fostering widespread understanding and vigilance. Advocate for the integration of anti-corruption education into formal school curricula to instil ethical principles and awareness from an early developmental stage, nurturing a culture of integrity.

Harness the expansive reach of social media platforms to disseminate information regarding corrupt practices, fostering open dialogue, and facilitating community engagement in anti-corruption initiatives.

Support and actively engage with grassroots movements advocating for transparency and accountability, amplifying their voices and initiatives through strategic partnerships and collaborative efforts.

Strengthening Legal Frameworks

Advocate for the implementation and fortification of legislation safeguarding whistle-blowers who expose corruption, ensuring their protection, anonymity, and access to appropriate support mechanisms. Advocate for the rigorous enforcement and enhancement of existing anti-corruption laws, advocating for stringent penalties for offenders to deter illicit activities effectively. Promote the establishment and maintenance of an independent judiciary to uphold the principles of fairness and impartiality in legal proceedings, safeguarding against undue influence and corruption.

Ethics and Values

Provide comprehensive training programs for public officials focusing on ethical conduct and the severe consequences of engaging in corrupt practices, promoting a culture of integrity and accountability within governmental bodies.

Recognise and promote individuals and organisations exemplifying high ethical standards, celebrating their contributions to fostering a corruption-free environment and serving as positive role models for others.

Financial Transparency

Provide comprehensive training programs for public officials responsible for financial management and procurement, ensuring the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct.

Support improvement of systems to enhance accessibility to financial data, promoting transparency and accountability, and empowering citizens to scrutinize governmental decisions.

Inclusive Decision Making

Actively involve citizens in decision-making processes at all levels of governance, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability among the populace while mitigating the risk of corruption through increased transparency and citizen oversight.

Advocate for the promotion of diversity in political and corporate leadership, advocating for inclusive representation to mitigate the concentration of power and reduce susceptibility to corrupt influences.

Communication and Public Relations

Establish transparent and accessible communication channels with the public, leveraging regular updates, press conferences, and social media platforms to disseminate government information effectively and foster public trust.

Develop clear and concise messaging strategies that showcase government achievements, initiatives, and future plans, ensuring alignment with public priorities and enhancing engagement with stakeholders.

Transparency and Accountability

Institute open data policies to enhance accessibility to government data, promoting transparency and accountability while empowering citizens to scrutinise governmental actions and decisions.

Strengthen accountability mechanisms for public officials through the implementation of robust anti-corruption measures, ensuring swift and effective consequences for misconduct to uphold public trust and integrity.
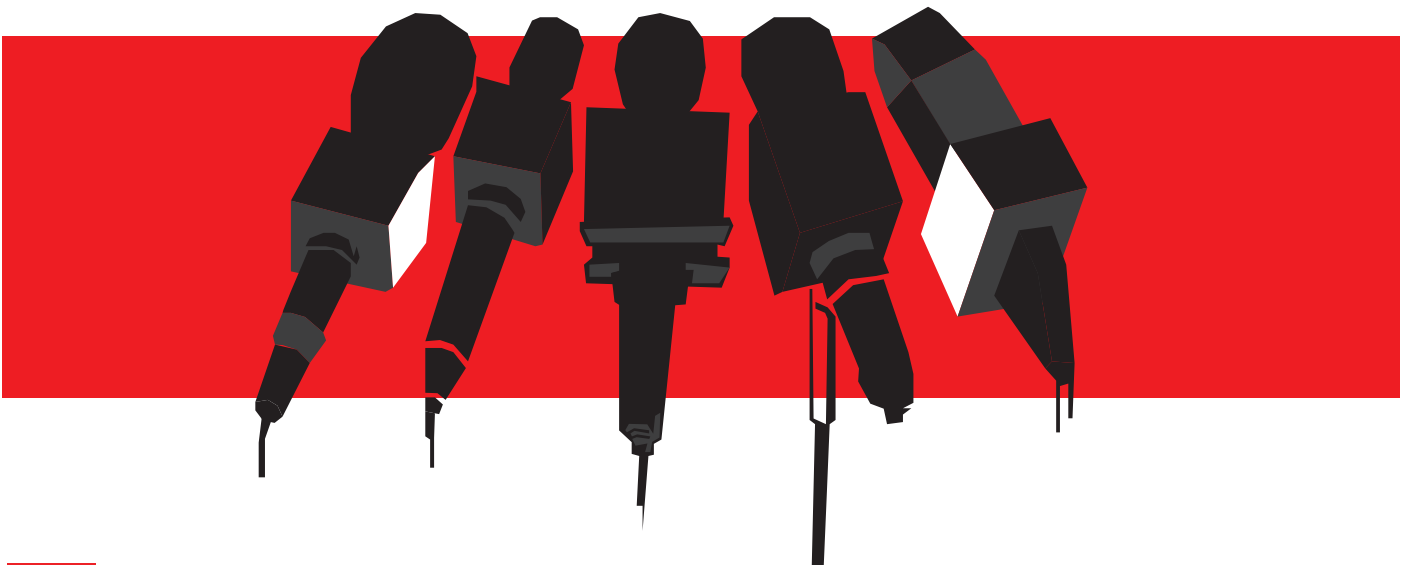
Citizen Engagement

Foster citizen participation in decision-making processes through interactive forums such as town hall meetings, public consultations, and feedback mechanisms, ensuring inclusivity and responsiveness to diverse perspectives.

Prioritise prompt action on citizen feedback, demonstrating a genuine commitment to addressing public concerns and enhancing the efficacy of government initiatives through continuous dialogue and responsiveness.

Facilitate the establishment of community watchdog groups tasked with vigilantly monitoring and reporting on local government activities, empowering citizens to actively participate in ensuring transparency and accountability.

Create accessible platforms for citizens to provide feedback on public services, fostering transparency and accountability while deterring corrupt practices through increased oversight and scrutiny.

Service Delivery and Efficiency

Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery to meet citizens needs promptly and comprehensively, optimising resource allocation and operational processes to enhance service quality and responsiveness.

Embrace digital innovations to modernise government operations, streamline bureaucratic processes, and improve accessibility and efficiency in service delivery, thereby enhancing citizen satisfaction and engagement.

Promoting Economic Development

Implement proactive policies aimed at stimulating economic growth and fostering job creation, signaling a dedication to enhancing citizens' socio-economic wellbeing and prosperity.

Invest strategically in infrastructure projects that contribute to overall societal advancement and economic development, prioritising initiatives that address critical needs and promote sustainable growth and development.

Social and Environmental Responsibility

Integrate sustainable and environmentally friendly policies into governmental practices, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to long-term ecological stewardship and societal wellbeing.

Develop and promote social welfare programs tailored to address the needs of vulnerable populations, ensuring inclusivity and equity in societal progress and fostering a compassionate and resilient society.

INVOICE OVERDUE

STOP CORRUPTION

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