

# Annual Report 2015

## Transparency Maldives

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Transparency Maldives (TM), National Contact of Transparency International (TI), is a nonpartisan organization that promotes collaboration, awareness and other initiatives to improve governance and eliminate corruption from the daily lives of people. TM views corruption as a systemic issues and advocates for institutional changes that will punish and prevent corruption.

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## Foreword

Strengthening democratic institutions and Anti-Corruption efforts are complementary. Democracy entails openness and transparency in decisions that are consequential to the public. These values are equally requisite to effectively combat corruption. They were the guiding principles that gave us direction during a hectic and productive year.

To inculcate these values in the minds of the young Transparency Maldives took the initiative in 2015 to launch a wide range of activities focused on providing civic education to young people. In the course of this we encountered several young people who were reflective and forthcoming with regard to a number of important topics, encompassing such broad fields as human rights, gender-equality, and democracy. Though our workshops are finite in reach, the sincerity and intelligence evinced by several of the participants' leaves us hopeful that their impact will be exponential. This is because we are confident that they will carry with them the lessons they learned to in turn educate others.

In 2015 we also experimented with novel methods of promoting inclusive governance. This included the Civil Society Parliament Dialogue Group and the Youth Forums. It has been our experience that a willingness to explore new approaches often shines light on which avenues are worth pursuing and which are not as we attempt to conceptualize and flesh out future programs and activities. Following launching we reflected on the relative merits of such initiatives and ultimately revised some of our methods. Nonetheless we are confident in expressing that these endeavors were a success - not least because of the lessons we learnt and the networks we built.

During the year TM was also proactive in engaging with and conducting research on local institutions to ascertain that they are fulfilling their responsibilities to the public. TM's Parliamentary Floor Crossing survey enquired into the occurrence of parliamentarians changing their political affiliation following election and our second Democracy Survey enquired into the strength of our democratic institutions and the public's perception of their efficacy. Furthermore, as the Maldives' currently lacks specific legislation to combat illicit enrichment, it is incumbent on civil society to step in to address this type of corruption. Hence, in 2015, we commenced our 'Haamakurey!' campaign demanding that Parliamentarians declare their assets and conducted various activities intended to illuminate the importance of asset declaration.

In light of the Maldives' especially vulnerable to Climate Change it is imperative that the considerable amount of funds that flow to the country to mitigate its occurrence are being used for their intended purpose. TM's Climate Finance Governance project collaborates with TI chapters in Kenya, Mexico, Peru and Bangladesh to advocate for greater transparency, accountability and public participation in climate finance governance.

In 2015 we also engaged in international legal instruments intended to monitor and mitigate corruption. We urged the Government to complete its self-assessment regarding their compliance with the United Nations Convention against Corruption; submitted our assessments pertinent to the status of fundamental democratic freedoms in the country to the Universal Periodic Review; and our Advocacy and Legal Assistance Centre legal center continued to provide free legal advice to clients.

Finally, TM upheld our commitment to tolerance and inclusivity by shining light on one of the most neglected areas in national conversations about human rights - the rights of

migrant workers. The central theme of our exhibition entitled 'Others' was the prejudices and struggles confronted by migrant workers. We hope that the visceral and honest portraits of the daily lives of migrant workers that were on display in this gallery would have instilled in visitors a newfound appreciation of the scale of challenges faced by the large community of expatriates that reside in the country.

As readers peruse our annual report for 2015 we hope that it becomes evident that it is the passion for our values of integrity and accountability that has sustained our work during a busy year and that will sustain us in the even busier years ahead.

Mariyam Shiuna  
Executive Director

**Mission**

“Transparency Maldives strives to act as a catalyst for reforms that improve transparency and accountability in all sectors, to raise public awareness of and initiate public discussion on corruption and its detrimental effects on society and development, and to collaborate with individuals, state institutions, businesses, media, civil society organizations, local communities, religious and cultural entities, among others, in the fight against corruption in all its forms.”

**Vision**

“A Maldives in which the State, politics, business, civil society, and the daily lives of all people are free from corruption, which in turn will ensure transparent and accountable governance, leading to greater equality and social justice for all”

## **1. Civic Education**

### *1.1 Civic Participation Workshops*

Building on the Democracy Workshops conducted in 2014, in 2015 TM conducted Civic Participation Workshops focusing on fundamentals of democracy, human rights and were designed to get the participants to be community oriented and engaged in civic activities.

The workshops were conducted in AA. Mathiveri, N. kudafari, Gn. Fuvahmulah, Th. Vilufushi, Dh. Kudahuvadhoo and Sh. Bilehfahi. In Male', the workshops were held in Kalaafaanu School, Iskandhar School, Ahmadhiyya School and Galolhu Madharusaa. A total of 219 students (113 male, 106 female) participated in these workshops. The workshops were conducted in collaboration with the Human Rights Clubs in each of the schools and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in AA.Mathiveri.

### *1.2 Democracy Camps*

In 2015, TM conducted two 5-day camps for young persons between the ages of 14 to 16, from across Maldives in partnership with IFES. The two Democracy Camps were held in in K.Girifushi, the training facility of Maldives National Defense Force (MNDF), from 6th - 12th June with 29 participants (9 female, 20 male) participating in the first camp. The second camp was held from 29 August - 4th September with 44 participants (28 female, 16 male).

The Camp's sessions focused on four main themes; democratic values, building blocks of democracy, political parties and elections. The Camp was designed to impart a conceptual understanding of democracy, democratic values, separation of powers and the role of civil society, media and political parties in a democracy through sessions, role play and group activities.

Several resource persons visited the participants of the Democracy Camp from International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Maldivian Red Crescent (MRC). Participants also had the opportunity to interact with inspirational individuals from the environmental sector, journalism and politics. As part of the camp field visits were arranged to the Parliament and the Museum.

Some of the success stories of the Democracy Camps include the Good Riddance Project, which was started by participants of Democracy camp as part of their follow-up community project, required to undertake as a follow up of the camp.

## **2. Trainings and capacity building initiatives**

### *2.1 Gender Responsive Journalism Training*

TM conducted a training for Maldives National University students studying for Diploma in Journalism. The training focused on the concept of gender, gender equality and looked at the status of women in terms of access to health, education, employment and political participation. The training also focused on the role of journalists and media in influencing public perception about women in public life.

### *2.2 Civic Education Training for Teachers*

TM developed a training on civic education for students enrolled in the Diploma in Teaching program at Mandhu College. The training covered themes such as concepts of civic knowledge, citizenship, globalization, teaching approaches and methods for implementing successful civic education programs. TM presented the final training manual to Mandhu College to conduct the civic education teacher training for over 300+ teaching students enrolled in teaching Diploma programs in Mandhu College.





*Three day Youth Integrity Camp organized by Transparency Maldives*

### **3. Capacity building young people to become agents of change**

#### *3.1 Youth Integrity Camp*

Under the Youth Integrity Project, TM held a 3 day Youth Integrity Camp for youth aged 16 - 24. The camp included sessions on corruption, democracy, right to information, advocacy, governance and public policy and was attended by 27 young people from K.Male'.

The camp concluded with all 27 participants signing a symbolic pledge to uphold and promote integrity. The 27 participants of the camp also formed a Youth Integrity Network with the aim to promote integrity, empower youth and fight corruption in their community.

#### *3.2 Youth Integrity Workshops*

Youth Integrity Workshops were conducted in HDh. Kulhudhuffushi and Addu City for a total of 28 participants. Maldives National University students in the HDh and Addu City Campus attended the workshops. The one- day workshops included sessions on corruption, civil society, right to information and youth civic participation.

#### *3.3 Youth Forums and stakeholder meeting*

TM conducted youth forums under the themes 'Youth Civic Participation' and 'Youth in Politics'. The 2 forums were open to youth aged 16 - 24 and were attended by 21 participants in total.

The Youth Civic Participation forum focused on discussing status of youth in policymaking, barriers to youth participation in civic life and participants shared experiences and ideas on how to address issues and empower youth in civic participation.

The Youth in Politics forum gave participants an insight into how young people can engage in civic and political life. Member of the Parliament for Kendhoo Constituency, Ali Hussain gave a talk on his experiences as a MP and how he engaged in politics from a young age. The participants discussed integrity and political life with MP Ali Hussain.

The Youth Wing President of Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) also conducted a session on how the youth wing operates in MDP and opportunities for growth and learning for young people in political parties.

A youth stakeholder meeting was conducted with 21 stakeholders from Ministry of Youth and Sports, youth wings of political parties, UNICEF, Maldives Girl Guide Association, Scout Association of Maldives, Youth Integrity Network and other youth organizations.

The stakeholder meeting was conducted to discuss youth participation in policymaking, barriers for youth participation and the Youth Bill drafted by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

### *3.4 Capacity building for Youth Integrity Network (YIN)*

The YIN formed following the Youth Integrity Camp. TM took a mentorship role of supporting and capacity building YIN. As such capacity building sessions were conducted for YIN, covering fundraising, project management, communications and advocacy, and conflict resolution. 34 participants attended over the course of 4 sessions. On average 8 - 10 members of the YIN attended each session.

The capacity building sessions were designed to equip YIN with practical and critical thinking skills to establish themselves as agents against corruption, and a spirited representation of youth in the civil society.

## **4. Surveys and assessments**

### *4.1 Democracy Survey*

TM conducted a nationwide random survey to gauge public perception of democratic values, practices and institutions. This was the second democracy survey to be conducted in Maldives in 2015. The first Maldives democracy survey Maldives at the Crossroads, was conducted in 2013 and provided important benchmark data on democracy in the Maldives and points to significant democratic deficits within Maldivian political culture. The follow-up survey, *A Troubled Future for Democracy: The results of the 2015 Maldives Democracy Survey* were published in October 2015.

To disseminate the survey findings, roundtable discussions were conducted with women leaders, youth leaders, political parties and institutional leaders. A public forum was also conducted in partnership with International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the Maldives National University (MNU).

### *4.2 Floor crossing Survey*

TM conducted a random public perception survey on parliamentary floor crossing in 2015, making it the first such survey conducted in the Maldives. This survey was undertaken to provide insight into why the public lacks confidence in the parliament, and to broaden stakeholder understanding of floor crossing through discussion of international best practices and case studies of defection laws and practice in other countries.

Survey findings were disseminated in the symposium on parliamentary best practices held in 2015 with stakeholders from the government, independent institutions, political parties and civil society.



*Panel Discussion on Transparency and Accountability at the Symposium on Parliamentary Best Practices organized by Transparency Maldives*

## **5. Parliament accountability and asset declaration**

Asset declaration was one of the main focus areas of TM in 2015. Following the publication of the 2014 position paper on the gaps and weaknesses in the current asset declaration system in the Maldives, in 2015 TM focused on various efforts to increase public awareness on asset declaration. These efforts include a session on anti-corruption and asset declaration conducted in 15 islands targeting 248 participants from civil society and local councils, a session on illicit enrichment and asset declaration conducted for 60 Bachelor of Business students at Maldives National University, a session on asset declaration conducted to 27 participants of the Youth Integrity Camp, a session on lobbying for social change and parliamentary processes for 18 participants at an advocacy workshop on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) organized by the Society for Health Education (SHE), and a session on illicit enrichment and asset declaration for 17 students at MNU Hithadhoo Campus. Two advocacy videos on asset declaration was also produced and shown on all four major TV channels. Additionally, TM's messages on asset declaration as a tool against corruption and the importance of criminalizing illicit enrichment was mentioned in a press statement issued by Maldivian Democracy Party following the corrupt practices of a parliamentarian.

## 6. Climate Governance

The Climate Finance Integrity Program (CFIP) is a project that TM, along with the national chapters of Transparency International in Kenya, Mexico, Peru and Bangladesh has been undertaking since 2013.

Maldives being one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, receives a huge amount of money for climate change adaptation and mitigation projects. The overall aim of the CFIP project is to promote transparency, accountability, and integrity in the governance of climate finance policy globally and nationally. In doing so, CFIP hopes to contribute to more effective, efficient and equitable climate finance, which meets adaptation and mitigation objectives, greater climate policy legitimacy, and better achievement of related poverty reduction and development goals.

In 2015, CFIP undertook a research to review 'An Assessment of Climate Finance Governance in Maldives' that was done in 2013; a leaflet and a position paper both in Dhivehi and English was produced to carry out advocacy around the assessment. In June, CFIP conducted CBO consultations on the role of Civil Society in Climate Policy Influencing, and did the TI-S e-learning course with a youth group of 15 young adults. The Project Coordinator attended the project partner meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya.

In September, the new phase of the project began and continued with the dissemination of the assessment and the advocacy materials. In December, the project team attended the kickoff and planning meeting held in Paris, France. Additionally, the Senior Project Coordinator attended COP21 held in Paris, France.

## **7. International instruments**

### *7.1 UNCAC*

In 2014, TM pushed for the completion of the Government's self-assessment looking at Maldives' compliance of United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). In March 2015, TM was invited by the government to meet the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) team that visited the Maldives to review the implementation of UNCAC. The team consisted of experts from the peer reviewing countries of Palau and Cape Verde. TM briefed the UNODC review team about the major gaps in compliance of the UNCAC provisions, including the weaknesses and loopholes in anti-corruption policies and legislations.

### *7.2 UPR*

In 2014, TM made a submission to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), highlighting the status of freedom of association and expression, status of migrant workers and electoral issues that needs to be addressed. In 2015, TM continued lobbying with foreign governments and international organizations, ahead of the 22 session of the Working Group on the UPR, to raise the highlighted key human rights issues with the Government of Maldives.

## **8. Free legal Assistance**

The Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) is one of many such centers established in over 40 countries by Transparency International Chapters.

In 2015, ALAC provided legal advice to 48 clients including from local councils and NGOs to members of the general public. A majority of the cases received were regarding the differences in interpreting laws by Local Councils and the Local Government Authority on jurisdiction and land issues. In addition to this, ALAC provided free legal advice to 240 people through mobile legal camps organized in Kulhudhuffushi, Addu City, Fuvahmulah, L. Fonadhoo and L. Gan. ALAC was also a civil society representative at the UNCAC review meeting.

## 9. TM events



### 9.1. *OTHERS: Exhibition Highlighting the Lives of the Migrant Workers*

On 30th June, TM launched a 6-day exhibition at the National Art Gallery titled “OTHERS - Exhibition highlighting the lives of the migrant workers”. The purpose of the exhibition was to reflect and provoke thoughts on a number of issues faced by migrant workers in the Maldives. Opened on the same day to mark the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, the exhibition featured art pieces of 10 renowned local artists, and was attended by over 900 members of the general public.

A feature documentary was aired on August 2015 on VTV that looked into the issues faced by migrant workers in detail and gave a detailed walkthrough of the exhibition.



## 10. Knowledge transfer and exchanges

### Workshops/Conference

- 2015 EU Development Days, high-level panel organized by the EU Parliament, Brussels.
- South Asia Political Finance Regional Conference organized by IDEA and Election Commission of India, New Delhi.
- National Workshop for South Asia Human Rights Mechanism, Colombo, organized by Forum-Asia, Sri Lanka
- IFES Islam and Democracy Workshop, Sri Lanka
- Kickoff meeting for climate finance program, France
- ACA Strengthening Initiative Kick Off Meeting, Bangladesh
- COP21, France
- UNDP roundtable discussion on civic space, Thailand

### TI Meetings

- TI- AMM, Malaysia
- Transparency Advisory Group Meeting, Bangladesh
- Sub-Regional Consultation on Migrant Workers by Solidarity Centre and Forum Asia, Sri Lanka.
- BMUB Project Partner Meeting (CFIP), Kenya.

### Trainings

- UNHABITAT Youth Fund Beneficiary project management training, Mauritius
- M&E training by Commonwealth Foundation, UK
- Two-week leadership program by International Academy for Leadership, Germany
- Fundraising workshop by International Consultant

## 11. Public advocacy

In 2015, TM published 5 research publications, 5 position papers, 7 governance papers and 8 press statements. TM appeared in 17 TV appearances, 3 radio shows, 1 live public forum, 1 feature program on TM's Migrant Worker Exhibition and held 4 Press Conferences on Asset Declaration, Democracy Survey, Floor Crossing and Criminalizing Illicit Enrichment. 55 articles were written specifically on TM's work.

### Publications

Civic Forum: A Path to Community Engagement [goo.gl/NvWtFJ](http://goo.gl/NvWtFJ)

Assessment of Women's Development Committees in the Maldives [goo.gl/vrZmUX](http://goo.gl/vrZmUX)

Baseline research on Floor Crossing in the Maldives [goo.gl/qU2Piw](http://goo.gl/qU2Piw)

Review of Climate Finance Governance in Maldives: New Edition 2015 [goo.gl/eSmBgQ](http://goo.gl/eSmBgQ)

Publication of 2015 Democracy Survey [goo.gl/IEYByF](http://goo.gl/IEYByF)

### Governance Papers

Parliament Update: Year 2014 in Review [goo.gl/le481U](http://goo.gl/le481U)

Parliament Update: Political developments surrounding the work of the Parliament [goo.gl/u04HII](http://goo.gl/u04HII)

Parliament Update: Opening of the Parliament [goo.gl/2B7Zj1](http://goo.gl/2B7Zj1)

Parliament Update: Key Bills and Amendments [goo.gl/xoBXxp](http://goo.gl/xoBXxp)

Judiciary Update: The Maldivian Court System [goo.gl/k4kBMJ](http://goo.gl/k4kBMJ)

Judiciary Update: Politically Motivated trials? [goo.gl/hqOtKL](http://goo.gl/hqOtKL)

Judiciary Update: Issues in Maldivian Judiciary [goo.gl/T8sVKP](http://goo.gl/T8sVKP)

### Position Papers

Strengthening the interaction between civil society and parliament: [goo.gl/uhYw6g](http://goo.gl/uhYw6g)

Climate Finance Governance in the Maldives: Pressing Issues [goo.gl/rwfngM](http://goo.gl/rwfngM)

Challenges to interpreting and implementing the RTI act [goo.gl/4AoZse](http://goo.gl/4AoZse)

Youth, Opportunities and corruption in the Maldives: A situational analysis [goo.gl/wlXWVs](http://goo.gl/wlXWVs)

Criminalizing illicit enrichment to curb grand corruption [goo.gl/0Z56hw](http://goo.gl/0Z56hw)

### Press Statements

Transparency Maldives appeals to all state actors to follow due legal process and to engage in dialogue to resolve political disputes [goo.gl/xNkkDe](http://goo.gl/xNkkDe)

Transparency Maldives notes with concern the legal process under which the trial of former President Nasheed took place [goo.gl/xkYNqw](http://goo.gl/xkYNqw)

TM calls on the Executive to refrain from arbitrarily providing any form of gratuities and privileges to state officials [goo.gl/XhIHnC](https://goo.gl/XhIHnC)

Transparency Maldives calls on Heads of Independent Institutions to safeguard from undue influence in order to uphold the value of integrity [goo.gl/ITOHzd](https://goo.gl/ITOHzd)

TM calls on the State to initiate reforms to address the declining human rights situation [goo.gl/dbPCYG](https://goo.gl/dbPCYG)

Transparency Maldives notes with concern the amendments to the Employment Act passed by the Parliament that excludes migrant workers from Ramadan bonus [goo.gl/qliz5B](https://goo.gl/qliz5B)

Transparency International and Maldives deeply concerned about State of Emergency [goo.gl/M0GT3I](https://goo.gl/M0GT3I)

Extraordinary measures need to be undertaken to tackle the scale of grand corruption in the Maldives [goo.gl/5aJkl6](https://goo.gl/5aJkl6)



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