

Renewing relevance, prioritizing participation & communicating for credibility

Transparency Maldives Strategic Plan 2013 – 2015



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Table of ContentsTable of Contents 1

I. Foreword	1
II. Country Context	2
1. Who We Are	4
2. Mission	4
3. Vision	4
4. Guiding Principles	4
5. How We Work	5
5.1 Current Programmatic Focus	6
5.1.1 Political Transparency, Accountability And Legal Reform	6
5.1.2 Building Grassroots Demand For Good Governance Through Civic Education And Grassroots Mobilisation	7
5.1.3 Advocacy And Legal Advice Center (Alac)	8
5.1.4 Promoting The Right To Information	8
5.1.5 Advocating For Climate Change Finance Transparency	8
5.1.6 Uncac Self-Assessment	8
5.1.7 National Integrity System (Nis) Assessment Project	9
6. Situation Analysis: Present Context And Future Trends	9
7. Lessons Learned: Operational Principles & Guidelines	9
8. Methodology: Strategic Planning Process	10
Interviews	10
Stakeholder Workshop	11
Questionnaire Responses	11
Overall Summary Of Responses	12
2013-2015 Strategic Planning	13
9. Strategic Priorities And Justification	14
Strategic Priority Area	14
Public Awareness-Raising, Capacity Building & Education	14
Advocacy & Facilitating Social Movements	14
Monitoring, Analysis And Reporting	14
9.1 2013/14 Elections: Promoting Free And Fair Elections Through Minimising Bribery, Patronage And Abuse Of Resources	15
9.2 Addressing The Main Forms Of Corruption, And Increasing Transparency & Accountability In Politics And Governance:	16
1. Creating And/Or Supporting Watchdog And Advocacy Networks To Ensure Greater Public Oversight And Accountability On Key Governance Concerns	16

2. Proactively Addressing State-Related And Spin-Off Private Sector Corruption And Its Impact On Maldivian Society	17
3. Addressing Corruption-Culture Issues Through Education And Awareness-Raising	18
4. Reporting And Dissemination Of Findings On Corruption And Law Enforcement, Including Advising On Public Complaints	18
9.3 Catalysing Reform Of The Judiciary And Parliament:	18
9.4 Facilitating Public Campaigns And Movements On Key Corruption And Governance Issues:	19
10. Proposed Approaches And Organisational Structure	19
11. Assumptions, Risks And Limitations	20

Annex 1 **21**

Transparency Maldives' Board Of Directors	21
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Annex 2 **22**

Organisational Chart	22
----------------------	----

Annex 3 **23**

3-Year Budget	23
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I. FOREWORD

Since inception, with only three staff a little over five years ago, Transparency Maldives (TM) has expanded and diversified, undertaking anti-corruption research and advocacy programs, and consequently widening our network partnership to include several of the key institutions. TM has become a reliable force in combating corruption and promoting good governance in the Maldives. We have also become a credible voice both nationally and internationally for our efforts in leading the systematic observation of the heavily contested 2013 Presidential election, where we employed cutting edge methods and international standards in observing the election, and deployed over 400 observers across the country.

Having established our relevance in the national public sphere and society, at a time when the corruption scale is worsening amid extreme politicization of institutions and polarization of society, we are committed to working with our wide and diverse stakeholder base, despite the many challenges ahead in establishing tangible measures against corruption in the Maldives.

Using Transparency International's best practice guidelines and with extensive stakeholder discussions analysing our priorities, Professor Arjuna Prakrama guided our stakeholder dialogue and supported the development of this strategic plan under severe personal health challenges. We thank Professor Prakrama for his contribution as the consultant for this plan.

We are also grateful to Transparency International for funding this project. We would also like to congratulate and thank, Iham Mohamed, TM's previous Executive Director, for directing the project and Thoriq Hamid for managing and overseeing the successful completion of the project. I also thank all who participated in this deliberative process.

It is hoped that this strategic plan will guide us further and increase our collective strength in the fight against corruption to achieve progressive gains in all aspects of our multi-pronged campaign to save our society from the pernicious effects and resiliency of corruption.

II. COUNTRY CONTEXT

The Republic of Maldives comprises twenty six atolls in the Indian Ocean, broadly united by a shared culture, religion, language and history. Following independence from the British in 1965, the Maldives became a republic in 1968. With a population of just over 328,000 people (in 2012) living in 192 of the 1192 islands, of which one-third lives in the capital Malé, Maldives is the smallest Asian country in terms of land area and population.



The country lays claim to 2500 years of history and tradition, with roots both in India and Sri Lanka. Copper plate edicts have established that Islam was brought to the Maldives in the 12th century, and it has long been a powerful uniting force for the country's population. Since achieving independence the Maldives has had three Constitutions, with the latest in 2008 providing for presidential elections every five years with a maximum of two terms for any single individual. The defining features of the new constitution are the separation of powers, the introduction of a host of new freedoms and rights (freedom of association/ expression/ right to protest) and the introduction of independent institutions such as the Prosecutor General and Anti-Corruption Commission. The current People's Majlis (Parliament) comprises 77 members elected in 2009.

2

Tourism is the mainstay of the Maldivian economy, accounting for 30% of GDP and over two-thirds of foreign exchange receipts. Over 90% of government tax revenue is derived from tourism-related imports and taxes. The country is host to nearly three-quarter of a million tourists annually, who patronize over 90 resorts. The fisheries sector employs 30% of the workforce and provides 15% of GDP. Despite the setback suffered due to the December 2004 tsunami, in 2007 the Maldives enjoyed the highest GDP per capita (\$4600) in South Asia.

Democratization processes in the Maldives over the past five years have had their ups and downs. The last three year period has seen political confrontations and conflicts, which only an exemplary presidential and parliamentary election can resolve. For these and related reasons, the Maldives is at a critical juncture today. In a context where there is only a fledgling civil

society sector, credible and relatively long-standing institutions such as Transparency Maldives (TM) have a crucial role to play.

According to the 2012 Global Corruption Barometer Survey¹ (GCBs) conducted by Transparency International in the Maldives, the country is facing a rise in perceived corruption, with 38% of the 1000 respondents indicating an increase in the past two years, as opposed to only 17% who see a decline in corruption. Corruption is seen as primarily a public sector problem with 62% identifying it as “a very serious problem” while only 3% hold that it is “not a problem at all”. The difference in perception between men and women is not significant. Overall, the data from this survey is supported by similar findings from surveys and assessments conducted in 2011 and before, such as TM’s “Daily Lives and Corruption” public opinion survey 2011.²

More disturbing, however, is the negative assessment and perception of key categories of persons allegedly engaged in corrupt behaviour, according to respondents of the GCBs survey. Parliament/Legislature, Political Parties and the Judiciary, were held to be “extremely corrupt” by over 55% of respondents, while the Police, Military and Media were deemed to be in the same position by around one-third of those who answered the survey.

It is encouraging, however, to note that the public is now ready to take a more active role in addressing such behaviour through signing petitions (86%), protesting peacefully (70%) and joining organisations that fight corruption (65%). 85% state that they will refuse to pay bribes, and 89% confirm that they are willing to report acts of corruption.

Significantly, 84% of both men and women strongly agree that ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption, thereby setting the stage for an enhanced role for organisations such as TM.



1 <http://www.transparency.org/research/gcb/overview>

2 <http://transparencymaldives.org/transparency/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/corruption.pdf> (Daily lives and corruption: public opinion in the Maldives report)

1. WHO WE ARE

Transparency Maldives was established in response to a felt public need to address persistent concerns over corruption and to catalyze and facilitate greater transparency and accountability in the Maldives. TM is a non-partisan organization that promotes collaboration, awareness and advocates to strengthen good governance, and eliminate corruption from the daily lives of the Maldivian people. TM is the national contact of Transparency International (TI) in the Maldives. TM received formal registration from the Maldivian Ministry of Home Affairs on 19 July 2007 and began official activities in February 2008.

As an organization TM aims to be a constructive and change-making force in the Maldives by encouraging widespread public discussion on transparency, accountability, and the fight against corruption. TM seeks to engage with stakeholders from all sectors (government, business, politics, civil society, media, religious and cultural groups, local communities, among others) to raise awareness on the long, medium, and short-term detrimental effects of corruption in all its forms on development and society.

Although based in Malé, the country's capital, we view fighting corruption, increasing transparency and accountability, and improving governance as national issues and our activities extend to the other islands. TM has partner CBOs in 19 islands in 8 atolls outside Malé, and our programmes have extended beyond these boundaries as well.

Currently, TM's institutional structure has over 40 individual members, a Board consisting of a Chairperson, General Secretary and Financial Controller, and over 20 full-time staff members. General members, Board members, and staff are expected to adhere to TM's Rules of Procedures, Financial Manual and Conflict of Interest Policy. Membership is open to the general public.

2. 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 organisations, local communities, religious and cultural entities, among others, in the fight against corruption in all its forms.

3. VISION

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

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles are based on agreed TI principles, and have been endorsed by TM's Board of Directors in consultation with key national stakeholders. Collectively these principles will continue to guide TM in its work and approach in the Maldives.

1. As coalition-builders, the organisation will work cooperatively with all individuals and groups, with for-profit and non-profit corporations and organizations, governments, and with international bodies committed to the fight against corruption, subject only to the policies and priorities set by the Board of Directors.

2. The organisation and its members will be open, honest, and accountable in their relationships with everyone they work with, and with each other.
3. The organisation shall be democratic, politically non-partisan and non-sectarian in its work.
4. The organisation will condemn bribery and corruption vigorously wherever it has been reliably identified, although it will not itself seek to expose individual cases of corruption.
5. The positions the organisation takes will always be based on sound, objective and professional analysis and high standards of research.
6. The organisation will only accept funding that does not compromise its ability to address issues freely, thoroughly and objectively.
7. The organisation commits to providing accurate and timely reports of its activities to stakeholders.
8. The organisation will respect and encourage respect for fundamental human rights and freedom.
9. The organisation is committed to building relationships and working with like-minded civil society organizations, locally and internationally.
10. In recruitment policies and governance structure, the organization will strive for balanced and diverse representation, including with respect to gender.

5. HOW WE WORK

Our goal is to promote social justice through awareness-raising among the Maldivian public (who are the rights holders) to facilitate their demands for transparency and accountability from national leaders and public institutions, who are duty bearers to ensure equality and justice for all. We will continue to inform and advocate, to document and disseminate, to dialogue and transform, so that an informed and responsible public is empowered to hold its leaders and institutions accountable to the highest international standards.

TM is guided by its Guiding Principles, Mission and Vision as well as TI's overall policy statements and guidelines. We pursue our mission through a strong emphasis on the rights provided to Maldivians in the 2008 Constitution, as well as international covenants to which the Maldives is a signatory. We strive to ensure pro-poor policies and to mainstream gender equality throughout our programmatic work to ensure that the benefits of our outreach activities are gender sensitive and focus on disadvantaged groups.

We work in partnership with community-based organisations (CBOs) and grassroots advocates based throughout the Maldives who are members of the national Anti-Corruption Network (an informal active network of anti-corruption workers and community groups), with the Maldivian government, and relevant state institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission of the Maldives and international organisations working in governance and anti-corruption.

5.1 CURRENT PROGRAMMATIC FOCUS

This section describes the key on-going work of TM that forms the basis of its role in the Maldives and most of which will be developed and fine-tuned in the next cycle through this strategic plan, thus ensuring continuity with sensitivity to changing national needs.

5.1.1 POLITICAL TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEGAL REFORM

TM recognises that an open and transparent democratic political system is a precondition for an effective fight against corruption. The 2008 Constitution of the Maldives introduced, for the first time, a multi-party political system and a comprehensive bill of rights. TM worked extensively on ensuring free and fair elections through monitoring/observations as well as through legislative advocacy. The nascent democratic environment in the Maldives presents a critical platform for TM to build strong governance institutions and a legislative framework to support it. The following sub-programmes formed the basis of TM's intervention in this area.

a. Political Finance Transparency

In 2006, TI and The Carter Center launched a research pilot project called CRINIS ("ray of light" in Latin) to evaluate the levels of transparency required by legislation and current political financing practices in eight Latin American countries. The study proved an important instrument for identifying country-specific problems and developing strategies to promote increased transparency in the work of political parties, electoral authorities, corporate donors and other key stakeholders. The regional approach also allowed comparisons between countries and sharing of best practices. The success of CRINIS has inspired TI National Chapters in Asia to replicate the project in their countries. In 2011 TM with TI carried out the CRINIS study on political financing transparency. The findings and recommendations of this study, supplemented by consultation with relevant key stakeholders, formed the basis of a reform agenda to address weaknesses in the regulatory framework and practices in political financing, as outlined by the CRINIS report and domestic observation reports of the 2008-10 election cycle.

b. Media Monitoring during election campaigns

The media plays an important role during the campaign process as well as in forming public opinion. Hence, a professional and neutral media is of paramount importance in an election. TM conducted the first ever media monitoring pilot project in the country for the 2011 Local Council elections. Prior to the 2013 Presidential election, TM also published a pre-election assessment (March 2013). The findings of the pre-election assessment identified the impending serious challenges in the electoral environment such as the need to address rampant vote-buying and a more responsible role for the media.

c. Elections Monitoring and Electoral Reform

TM conducted domestic observation for the Maldives' first multi-party presidential, parliamentary and local council elections in October 2008, May 2009, and February 2011 respectively. At least 19 partner NGOs participated in the domestic observation effort in the three elections. TM produced a comprehensive report on the domestic observation efforts that included a detailed set of recommendations. The report forms the basis of the advocacy efforts of TM regarding electoral matters.

TM conducted an electoral assessment prior to the 2008 Presidential Election in July

2008. The assessment provided information TM needed to plan its voter education and advocacy efforts. In addition, the assessment provided a baseline of the level of public trust, the main electoral issues as well as the issues that the voters are most concerned of.

d. Monitoring public resource usage by candidates during the election period

Monitoring of and controlling the abuse of State resources is a key recommendation of the CRINIS report. Though there are allegations of abuse of state resources for a party or a candidates' gain, no comprehensive research has been conducted on this issue.

e. Legislative Reform and Monitoring Parliament Performance

TM has conducted a project titled Parliament Watch in 2010. The project aims at monitoring parliamentary activities and organising the information in a form that is easily accessible to the public. A report titled Parliament Watch: An Evaluation of the Maldivian Parliament was published in 2011 with recommendations to the Parliament. A website with daily updates on Parliamentary activities in an easily accessible format was developed by TM which citizens used to access parliamentary records on their MPs, voting records, attendance records etc. The website supported separate pages for campaigns by civil society advocates on various legislative issues, but since it overlapped with the work of a partner organisation (the Maldives Democracy Network), this website is no longer prioritized, and instead more upstream legal reform related to elections will become a key focus.

The first Right to Information (RTI) legislation was proposed in Parliament in 2008 but was rejected and subsequently was made into a government regulation in 2008. In early 2009 an RTI section was created at the Home Ministry, mandated with the provision of information to the public as well as RTI training. The government presented the regulation with additional changes to the Parliament in November 2009 as an Access to Information bill. The bill is with the Social Committee for further deliberations. The bill is expected to become part of national legislation in 2013. TM's work on this bill has two objectives: one is to create the political will to expand on the provisions in the bill to ensure that the end product is based on international best practices, and the second is to create a political demand within the public to push for the expedition of the process within the parliament.

The Anti-Corruption Bill is currently being drafted by the Anti-Corruption Commission. TM aims to ensure that the drafted bill reflects international best practices and is formulated through a stakeholder reviewing process. TM also aims to ensure that there is a public demand for such a bill and that the bill is prioritised among the 200 or so pending legislations within the parliament.

5.1.2 BUILDING GRASSROOTS DEMAND FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE THROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION AND GRASSROOTS MOBILISATION

From 2008 onwards TM has been conducting civic and voter education programs in 8 atolls outside Male. Civic education program includes general civics, voter education, and training the newly elected local government officials, as well as training female candidates to run for the 2011 Local Council elections. The participants of these trainings and the CBOs they belong to form the loose coalition of anti-corruption volunteers who have worked with TM since 2008.

In 2013 TM started a project in partnership with IFES, and this initiative will bridge short-term election-related awareness-raising with broader civic education and community mobilization, in the interest of democratic values.

5.1.3 ADVOCACY AND LEGAL ADVICE CENTER (ALAC)

TMs Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) based in Male, with frequent travelling offices outside the capital, aims to assist victims of corruption by providing legal advice both proactively and reactively. The cases lodged at the ALAC will form the basis of evidence used to advocate for institutional and legislative reforms.

Overall, ALAC aims to mobilise communities at regional and grassroots level and motivate them to stand against corruption. ALAC aims to undertake this by providing the public an avenue to raise their concerns, to explore the possibilities of finding redress, and to build capacity, particularly of youth and other stakeholders, to promote anti-corruption measures with an overarching aspiration of creating a culture of non-tolerance and non-acceptance of corrupt practices.

5.1.4 PROMOTING THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION

TM recognises that the Right to Information (RTI) is fundamental to fighting and preventing corruption as it provides the basis for demanding and measuring accountability and transparency. The RTI program, one of the key foundations of our work, comprises both advocacy and service provision. This program aims to promote transparency and accountability through strengthening the national access to information architecture. The project seeks to establish the necessary linkages between public institutions and beneficiaries through a sustainable strategy of building local level knowledge and expertise on RTI through instituting an RTI desk in the host organisations and by using media, especially radio and mobile smart phone/SMS technology, as a tool for gathering information on and promoting usage of the RTI regime.

5.1.5 ADVOCATING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE FINANCE TRANSPARENCY

Maldives is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and a substantial amount of public funds and donor money are being invested in mitigation and adaptation projects. TM's aim is to ensure that the finance is used efficiently and addresses the needs of vulnerable communities, and that the taxpayers in donor countries are assured that the money is not mismanaged. This is done through: (1) A national risk map and assessment of the key national entities responsible for climate finance for mitigation and adaption projects, (2) The development and maintenance of national climate governance networks involving local climate governance stakeholders, and (3) A climate finance governance e-learning tool and supplementary capacity building actions for local stakeholders to better understand and participate in national policy development, monitoring, various national advocacy actions and strategies to promote improved transparency, accountability and integrity of climate finance institutions and operations in each national context. The program is a joint program with TI-Secretariat, TI-Kenya, TI- Bangladesh, TI- Mexico, TI- Dominican Republic and TI-Peru.

5.1.6 UNCAC³ SELF-ASSESSMENT

TM has participated in local committee work, including participating in regular meetings in order to assist and comment on the UNCAC process. TM will also provide a shadow report on UNCAC.

³ United Nations Convention Against Corruption. Please see <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/> for the Convention text and background materials.

5.1.7 NATIONAL INTEGRITY SYSTEM (NIS) ASSESSMENT PROJECT

Research that would feed into assessing the national integrity system in the Maldives is ongoing, and is due for completion in December 2013. These findings will also provide data for the further refinement of TM's strategic interventions, and also complement regular research conducted by TI/TM such as the Global Corruption Barometer study.

6. SITUATION ANALYSIS: PRESENT CONTEXT AND FUTURE TRENDS

The 2008 Presidential elections inaugurated a new multi-party democratic regime in the Maldives. However, institutional and cultural traditions have not always been up to the task of nurturing and developing the democratic process. A vibrant culture that actively supports openness and transparency in governance, as well as inculcates accountability of the State apparatus to its citizenry is still to fully materialize in the Maldives. In this context, TM has a dual role: to act as a watchdog against corruption and malgovernance of all kinds, and to raise public awareness and address widespread apathy.

It is now well-understood that young processes of political democracy bring with them conflicts and controversy in the short-term. This, in turn, may promote even greater apathy or cynicism among sections of the population, especially in traditional societies which are geographically fragmented. The challenge facing the Maldives today is to leverage democratic reforms, bringing the wider public on board through education, create awareness and capacity development, so that accountability and transparency can become demand-driven.

The danger of politically volatile situations is that even basic good governance and anti-corruption norms often become narrowly politicized and are manipulated by rival groups seeking power and control. TM must, therefore, stand above the fray, ensuring its credibility and impartiality, if it is to catalyse meaningful and sustainable change.

In this context, the 2013/14 elections are both a challenge and an opportunity, which need to be seized by TM through ensuring that a safe and enabling environment is maintained. In this sense, TM has the daunting task of balancing its core mandate to address corruption, with the urgent agenda of supporting the democratic process at this crucial juncture in the history of the Maldives, insofar as this does not compromise TM's effectiveness in relation to its main areas of expertise and impact. The 2013/15 Strategic Plan of TM attempts to do precisely this, with the support of all of its partners across the country.

7. LESSONS LEARNED: OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES & GUIDELINES

Detailed discussions with stakeholders clearly foregrounded the following principles, which stem from lessons learned by TM in its five years of in-country operation. The focus on key principles removes tendency to find fault or be critical unconstructively, which was never the mandate of the strategic planning process. Instead, the identification of key principles seeks to move forward, learn from past experience, and recognise both TM's strengths and weaknesses.

- a. Emphasis on continuity in change: new programs and initiatives should consolidate current and past work, and be selected on the basis of needs as well as TM's comparative advantage.

- b. Addressing both urgent and longer-term concerns simultaneously to the extent feasible: skewed emphasis on short-term gains or a longer-term agenda will reduce effectiveness and alienate groups whose priorities are neglected as a result.
- c. Seeking a balance between core corruption issues and broader governance problems: the present Maldivian conjuncture requires a dual approach that has to integrate both TM's core business of anti-corruption and broader governance initiatives, within TM's traditional areas of expertise and impact.
- d. Developing more effective communication at all levels: an effective and comprehensive communication strategy is required to ensure that credibility is reinforced and public awareness is raised.
- e. Focus on enhanced public participation and awareness: it is not enough for TM to work on improving accountability and reducing corruption. This process should be community-led and by an informed and empowered public.
- f. Ensuring that a safe, enabling overall environment for citizens and institutions is maintained throughout, since it is a sine qua non for both good governance and anti-corruption work.

8. METHODOLOGY: STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Initial discussions within TM, including with the Board and advisers from TI HQ, as well as an examination of overarching TI guidelines, resulted in agreement on a multi-pronged process for establishing and validating strategic priorities for TM for the next three-year cycle. The process followed was a combination of individual and collective interviews of key partners, a stakeholder workshop, analysis of questionnaire responses and detailed discussions with staff and the Board. Out of respect for the diversity and representative nature of the different groups and processes involved, the following analysis traces outcomes of the different component elements separately before tying them together.

Interviews

Seven interviews were conducted with key institutional partners, counterparts and national opinion-makers in order to complement the more collective processes of ownership and validation. Interviewers were afforded confidentiality in order to generate open and nuanced responses, but it can be stated that collectively they covered opposition political parties, key donors, government advisors, major national institutional counterparts, NGO leaders, and religious perspectives.

Key common elements of the interviews include the need to enhance credibility⁴ and national public awareness work of TM. Greater use and partnership with the public media was highlighted as a priority, as was institutional strengthening and capacity building at all relevant levels of government and civil society. Election-related work continues to be a major focus in the next two years, and according to the respondents, provides the basic environment within which longer-term work needs to be situated.

Interviewees advised that greater collaboration with like-minded institutions and more timely

⁴ Evidence that "credibility" is a complex and difficult dynamic state is seen that both pro- and anti-government interlocutors felt that TM needed to enhance its impartiality. Nationwide public awareness-raising with sustained education and media support appears to be the key to resolving this predicament.

and consistent responses were imperative to ensure increased impact of TMs' work. The creation of public cultural and intellectual platforms was identified as necessary to further the anti-corruption and good governance agenda.

Stakeholder Workshop

The Stakeholder Workshop held on 03rd January 2013 comprised a representative cross-section of TM partners and counterparts operating under Chatham House rules. At the end of a half-day of discussion, participants agreed that future TM priorities should include knowledge-sharing, advocacy and capacity development strategies to address governance, anti-corruption and national integrity issues. For all substantive areas, there was a consensus that the focus should be increasing public awareness through a combination of activities such as training, education, more effective communication, better use of mass media, and even a naming-shaming process as appropriate.

It was felt that Elections should be an area of special and continued focus, based on TM's comparative advantage since 2008, and that this initiative should include voter rights advocacy and education, awareness-raising and monitoring on campaign financing and electoral abuse. Similarly, the judiciary was identified as a key area of intervention, as was ensuring the integrity and accountability of other public officers through legislation reform, enhanced implementation, establishment of procedures for asset recovery, and procurement. Anti-corruption work would also involve legislative reform and enhanced implementation, including continuation of Parliament Watch and better liaison with technical agencies. Local governance was also identified as a substantive area for public awareness and advocacy work. Overall, the creation and dissemination of benchmarks and best practice was seen as the most useful strategy.

Questionnaire Responses

The most important contributions that TM should make in the next three years as identified by the 31 questionnaire respondents, is related to the areas of (a) public awareness-raising (61%), which includes facilitating an anti-corruption movement and working on education curricula, (b) reform of the judiciary and law enforcement system (29%), (c) increasing transparency and accountability within the political and government systems (29%), including addressing abuse and mismanagement of state resources, (d) reduction of election-related bribery and patronage systems (22%), and (e) advocating for policy reform and improving systemic responsiveness (22%), including for new legislation and implementation regimes where necessary.

These priorities tie in well with what respondents see as the key changes over the next three years that will impact on TM's anti-corruption work. Overwhelming among these are the forthcoming elections, which 52% of respondents identified as the most significant development with the potential to influence TM's future work. While 26% felt that there would be a positive change in public awareness and demand for anti-corruption interventions, 15% suggested that anti-corruption work will itself become politicized. Taken together the changes identified point to a unique opportunity for TM, but with attendant risks to credibility, relevance and impartiality that need to be pro-actively mitigated.

Among the key challenges highlighted by respondents, public awareness and attitudes rank highest, with 79% of respondents who answered this question singling this out. Political

corruption and instability, including election-related issues, lack of political will of Parliament and in-fighting, was also identified by 79% of respondents, while 45% held that rule of law and regulatory framework inadequacies hampered anti-corruption work significantly. Apathy, corruption and lack of capacity in the judicial and administrative system was picked as a crucial obstacle by 58% of participants in the survey. Among other issues focused on was the absence of a vibrant civil society and NGO culture, delays and impediments to implementation, and especially prosecution of wrongdoers, as well as the need to link economic inequality / poverty and corruption.

Overall Summary of Responses

Hence, it appears clear that the three groups of responses are closely correlated both in terms of assessment of challenges and identification of priorities. Since the questionnaire responses are the most detailed and quantitatively analyzable, they are used to present a near-comprehensive account of the combined perspectives on the strategic future role and responsibilities of TM, and is presented in the Figure below.

As can be seen in the following Figure, stakeholder responses clearly prioritize a focus on greater public awareness-raising and nationwide visibility. This national outreach component needs to be complemented, according to TM's partners, by sustained efforts to hold the three branches of government accountable, and to provide support for capacity development to facilitate this process. In this regard, particular attention needs to be paid to electoral transparency and reform of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies.

2013-2015 STRATEGIC PLANNING

PREDICTED FUTURE DETERMINERS

Key Changes Anticipated

1. Elections (52%)
2. Demand for Anti-Corruption interventions & public awareness-raising (26%)
3. Politicization of Anti-Corruption work (15%)
4. Mitigating risks to TM's credibility, impartiality, and adapting to changing context



Main Challenges

1. Changing public awareness and attitudes (79%)
2. Political corruption and instability, including election-related issues (79%)
3. Apathy, corruption, lack of capacity in Judiciary (58%)
4. Rule of law, regulatory framework (45%)
5. Absence of vibrant civil society and transparent NGO culture
6. Delays in implementation and prosecution of wrongdoers
7. Lack of linkages between inequality and corruption

CONTRIBUTION NEEDED FROM TM

Priority Contribution Needed

1. Public awareness-raising, including anti-corruption movement and education curricula change (52%)
2. Reform of Judiciary and Law Enforcement systems (29%)
3. Increasing transparency and accountability in politics and governance, minimizing abuse of state resources (29%)
4. Reduction of election-related bribery and patronage (22%)
5. Advocating for policy reform and systemic responsiveness, including new regulations and implementation processes as required (22%)



9. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND JUSTIFICATION

Though the strategic priorities and specific interventions are arranged around five thematic areas, it is recognised that there are clear synergies and overlaps among them. In fact, these broad strategic interventions have been prioritized because they combine TM's comparative advantage and proven success with the Maldives' most crucial needs, and because taken together they mutually reinforce each other well. There will always be greater needs and expectations than TM can realistically meet, given resource and capacity constraints, so difficult choices have to be made in order to accomplish the greatest impact and add the most value.

	Strategic Priority Area	Public Awareness-Raising, Capacity Building & Education	Advocacy & Facilitating Social Movements	Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting
01	1. 2013/14 Elections: promoting free and fair elections through advocating for greater accountability and transparency	2. Voter Education throughout the country 3. Supporting the EC and other relevant institutions to minimise election-related abuse	4. Advocacy for Electoral reform 5. Supporting local organisations to strengthen civil society oversight of election processes	6. Supporting Media Monitoring 7. Monitoring abuse of public resources 8. Reporting on vote-buying and related issues
02	9. Addressing the main forms of corruption, and increasing transparency & accountability in politics and governance	10. Introducing anti-corruption culture 11. School curricula reform 12. Addressing the culture of impunity and politicization of prosecution 13. Strengthening ACC	14. Creating Network of A-C Champions 15. Facilitating National A-C Movement 16. Forming Youth Integrity Network 17. Advocating for relevant reforms (e.g. public sector procurement)	18. Monitoring corruption in public and private institutions 19. Advising on public complaints on corruption and fraud 20. Reporting on enforcement of existing legislation and regulations
03	21. Catalysing reform of the Judiciary and Parliament	22. Creating zero-tolerance public culture for abuse of authority 23. Educating judiciary and other relevant stakeholders	24. Advocating for local government reform 25. Advocating for judicial integrity and parliamentary accountability	26. Monitoring & Reporting on abuse, and on the progress of successful reform efforts 27. Identifying international best practice
04	28. Facilitating public campaigns and movements on key corruption and governance issues	29. Developing local and national capacity, and providing initial support for campaigns, movements to address key issues	30. Facilitating demand-based social movements 31. Advocating for their acceptance, as relevant	32. Creating effective communication strategy to support campaigns and movements 33. Providing reports to support their work

It is important to note that the following specific examples within the respective strategic priority areas are precisely that – examples – which are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. In fact, once the strategy is endorsed in principle, detailed discussions will take place with relevant stakeholders and partners to flesh out these priorities and some examples provided here may even be replaced by others, and certainly other specific initiatives will be added to this list.

A second key principle has been the need to build on and deepen existing programmes and initiatives. This strategic plan mainly serves to better connect and synergize among the existing and new work undertaken by TM. Thus, election-related initiatives (9.1) will reinforce more general anti-corruption measures in 9.2, while 9.2 (3) engages with longer-term, even generational corruption-related issues confronting Maldivian society. Strategic Priority Area 9.3 addresses systemic problems within the State's enforcement framework, which are crucial to ending impunity and the public apathy that it inevitably engenders. 9.4 is both an approach and a substantive strategy, which is needed to galvanize public engagement and leadership of anti-corruption initiatives.

It is also understood that the priority interventions are not slated for completion during this three-year cycle. It is sufficient that they will be areas of sustained engagement, some involving more visibility and resource allocation than others, which will continue into the future as well.

9.1 2013/14 Elections: promoting free and fair elections through minimising bribery, patronage and abuse of resources

TM's work on elections has been widely acknowledged by the public and key stakeholders as crucial in the past and in the current context. TM's initiative with NDI and its project undertaken with IFES will be the lynchpins in this strategic priority area.

(a) Conducting voter education and awareness-raising programs during the 2013/14 elections period

TM and partner NGOs believe that educating voters is a crucial component of a free and fair election. Voter education is also important to instill the values of civic responsibility and prevent electoral violations such as vote buying. Efforts at reaching a larger proportion of the population will be made through radio, TV, newspapers and billboards which will be utilized in the voter education program. The network of partner NGOs will help with the voter education program at the island/community level.

(b) Supporting the EC and other relevant institutions to minimise election-related abuse
This continues ongoing support, including capacity development, of the EC and its partners in the run-up to the 2013/14 elections. Additional directions need to be determined once this strategic plan is firmly in place.

(c) Advocating for electoral reform by building on the CRINIS Report, Pre-Election Assessment and other TM research documents

This initiative aims to use the findings of CRINIS and related TM work, such as the Pre-Election Assessment and to advocate for overdue changes in the electoral regime as well as to conduct similar monitoring activities for the second round of democratic elections in 2013/14. Through our election monitoring work, TM has identified

loopholes in the legal framework that compromise the integrity of the elections. TM will work with all relevant authorities to amend the legislations in the run-up to the next election cycle in 2013/14, including through lobbying with Parliament, the Executive and the electoral authorities in strengthening the relevant legal framework. TM will conduct public forums/conferences that disseminate the CRINIS document and will advocate at these venues for changes in the Political Party Bill.

(d) Supporting civil society oversight, at the local level, of election processes
TM will continue and broaden current initiatives that support civil society oversight of electoral processes, through capacity building, information dissemination and guidance as required.

(e) Monitoring abuse of public resources and other irregularities during the election campaign

TM plans to conduct a program to monitor abuse of public resources, with a focus on the electoral campaign period. This will be undertaken with the active support of local communities who will be provided with training and resources, since it is clear that the best deterrent of such abuse is an educated and empowered voter response of zero tolerance. In addition, TM will support the monitoring of other election-related abuse such as vote-buying which is a critical feature of current Maldivian politics.

(f) Supporting Media Monitoring during the 2013/14 election campaign

TM had planned to conduct an expanded media monitoring program for the 2013/14 elections to promote accountability in the media sector, but it will now mainly support existing and new programmes of other partners. This is to ensure that the media plays a constructive, impartial and productive role in strengthening the country's democratic process. This may also include training and capacity development of media personnel and relevant watchdog institutions, as well as establishment of a Code of Conduct for coverage and addressing public complaints. In this context TM's recently published Pre-Election Assessment report will prove an invaluable reference point for further action.

9.2 Addressing the main forms of corruption, and increasing transparency & accountability in politics and governance:

The consensus of those who contributed to the planning discussion and from the respondents to the questionnaire was that anti-corruption work, which is the core business of TM, should be re-emphasized in the current cycle. In the immediate past it had taken second place to governance concerns, but according to stakeholders both these areas required equal focus. In the three-year period under review, TM will support and advocate for a transparent political system through the following sub-programs.

1. Creating and/or supporting watchdog and advocacy Networks to ensure greater public oversight and accountability on key governance concerns

a) Creating a Network of Anti-Corruption Champions (NACC) in state institutions and private sector organizations who act upon their own initiatives to fight corruption, support whistle blowers and promote governance within the State and business sector

TM will train and organize a network of anti-corruption advocates within state organizations and the private sector and will help organise a Network of Anti-Corruption Champions to create a critical mass and support public advocacy.

(b) Creating a Youth Integrity Network (YIN) targeting secondary school children and university students aged between 16-25, to promote discourse on integrity and good governance

Approximately 50% of the Maldivian population is below the age of 21. This can be viewed as an opportunity to inculcate, in this stratum, the value base necessary to create the demand for governance and integrity in public life. TM aims to train youth aged between 16-25, and to form a Youth Integrity Network for civic education activities. For younger, primary-school-aged students TM has and will continue to produce introductory reading materials such as the Anti-Corruption A-Z book produced in 2008. Civic education, which will complement the work done in relation to the 2013/14 elections, will seek to strengthen youth awareness and support anti-corruption initiatives.

(c) Strengthening TM's existing Anti-Corruption Network of Community-Based Organizations

We aim to create synergies between TM's networks to generate knowledge and public debate on governance, anti-corruption and integrity. We will organize an annual conference/meeting of the NACC/YIN/ACN. We will also organise arrangements for the ACC to mentor and work with the YIN to conduct lectures, film viewings, and other public events targeted at white collar workers and university students.

2. Proactively addressing State-related and spin-off private sector corruption and its impact on Maldivian society

(a) Advocating for appropriate legislative reform and new Bills

Further to the Anti-Corruption bill, TM also aims to create grassroots demand to expedite the process of the Criminal Code, Evidence Bill, Anti Money Laundering Bill and the Extradition bill closely related to the anti-corruption agenda.

(b) Addressing Public sector procurement issues

Public sector procurement is considered by TM as an area that is in need of substantial reform. This is essential in order to promote integrity and transparency, especially in the context of the newly formed local governments. One of TM's main aims of this program will be to work on creating evidence-based knowledge on understanding forms of corruption in the public procurement system and to advocate for necessary reforms. On the basis of this knowledge and understanding of issues in this sector, TM aims to advocate for a national Procurement Act.

(c) Addressing recruitment fraud and trafficking in persons

Approximately 100,000 foreign workers currently work in the Maldives primarily in the construction sector. Such workers, both legal and illegal, face conditions indicative of forced labour and fraudulent recruitment practices. In 2011 Maldives dropped to tier 2 on the US Government's Trafficking of Persons Report. TM aims to work on this

issue by producing evidence-based knowledge on the extent and depth of recruitment fraud. The ALAC and the RTI desk will play an extensive role in gathering data for this programme.

3. Addressing corruption-culture issues through education and awareness-raising

- Supporting curricular reform and the introduction of education modules that address the culture of impunity and public apathy relating to corruption.
- Strengthening the ACC in its work to reduce corruption and create a strong climate for public support for anti-corruption measures.
- Identifying champions and positive role models for wide dissemination, which will link this initiative to supporting Networks [see 9.2 (1) above].
- Monitoring corruption in support of 9.2 (2) above, and 9.1d in relation to election processes.

4. Reporting and dissemination of findings on corruption and law enforcement, including advising on public complaints

TM will support the monitoring of progress in the fight against corruption at all levels, including through reporting on enforcement of regulations. It will advise on public complaints as requested and appropriate.

9.3 Catalysing reform of the Judiciary and Parliament:

(a) Strengthening Local Government accountability systems

Currently TM provides trainers to conduct trainings for local councils, organized by local CBOs and other stakeholders in the country. The overall aim of the project is to increase openness and transparency in the local government apparatus of the Maldives by empowering CBOs to monitor local government authorities and eliminate potential areas of corruption and abuse. The objective is to assist community efforts to help create a local government that operates in a more responsive, accountable, participatory, effective and democratic manner.

(b) Advocating for judicial integrity, including through education

Judicial integrity has been identified as a sine qua non for anti-corruption work to be meaningful in the Maldives, but it remains a sensitive area that demands a nuanced and multi-pronged approach. Though there are strong accusations and movements against corruption in the judiciary, there is little evidence-based research on the nature and forms of corruption in the judiciary. TM aims to work on creating evidence-based knowledge on understanding forms of corruption in the judiciary and to advocate for necessary reforms. In addition to the collection and analysis of evidence, a parallel process of educating the judiciary itself and its key partner stakeholders will help create the most conducive environment for fostering such integrity.

(c) Parliamentary accountability

This initiative will build on current work with MPs and the individual and institutional level, and, inter alia, seeks to nurture champions who will promote and support relevant legislature, including adopting international best practice and global norms. While

this may not be an area that requires constant focus, TM and its partners believe that an exemplary parliament is a crucial element of a successful and sustainable anti-corruption campaign.

(d) Public advocacy for increased intolerance against abuse of authority

This process of creating greater public action against abuse of authority will be combined with 9.1 during the election period but will continue beyond this by dissemination of international best practice and through periodic campaigns undertaken as part of 9.4 further demonstrating consolidation and synergy among TM's main foci.

9.4 Facilitating public campaigns and movements on key corruption and governance issues: Developing local and national capacity, and providing initial support for campaigns and movements to address key issues

It is increasingly recognised by TM and its partners that for the longer time sustainability of governance and anti-corruption initiatives, as well as for their relatively short-term success given the resource and access constraints, it is necessary that these initiatives are anchored in national and local movements as relevant. The achievements of TM should, therefore, be the collective and collaborative achievements of Maldivian communities and coalitions.

Developing an effective communication strategy to support these campaigns and movements, and providing documentation to support their work

To achieve the above, a comprehensive communication strategy will be developed with the civic and electoral education programmes interlinked to establish and nurture social movements and organisations at the community, sub-national and national levels. This will be supported through instituting monitoring and reporting mechanisms that will draw on the work of the other three strategic priority areas, and help link them together more synergistically.

These two programmes will in turn create the space for demand-based social movements as and when they are required.

10. PROPOSED APPROACHES AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Given that TM's staff and even the Board are relatively young and dynamic, there is a need to complement this emphasis on youth with experience and maturity. The partner discussions proposed that credibility can be enhanced through short-term deployment of a senior international staff member seconded from TI, especially during the key election years of 2013/14. It was also suggested that headhunting of Maldivian professionals should be undertaken to strengthen staff resources during this period.

In addition, there is an identified need to strengthen internal management systems. TM is a relatively young organisation that has been operating under high-pressure situations in the Maldives since its formation. This strategic plan provided a key moment to re-think and develop internal management systems as well as external partnership arrangements based on lessons learned and future challenges. The following areas have been prioritised:

- Appropriate staff development programs
- Establishment of staff procedures and strengthening of human resources

- Enhanced financial management, budgeting and planning
- Identifying and agreeing on processes and guidelines for Board governance
- Capacity development in project management
- Developing an effective and responsive multi-tiered communication strategy

11. ASSUMPTIONS, RISKS AND LIMITATIONS

The proposed strategic plan is predicated on basic democratic structures and processes being maintained in the Maldives. A political crisis could derail the anti-corruption agenda and challenge public awareness work. The forthcoming election will deprioritize other governance activities and may lead to narrow politicisation of all avenues of public life, thereby restricting TM's ability to be effective. At the same time, TM and its partners have a key opportunity to drive the reform agenda and facilitate the public demand for credible elections and judicial accountability.

In addition, the rapidly changing dynamic of Maldivian political and social space makes predictions and assumptions risky and unreliable. Hence, unforeseen changes and transformations in the overall national context may affect the validity of parts of the rationale and justification for this strategic plan. However, every attempt has been made to triangulate the available evidence and stakeholder perceptions, as well as to accommodate a broad spectrum of future trajectories, thereby ensuring relevance and validity. Course correction, if necessary, can and will take place through a mid-term review of this strategic plan.

Annex 1

TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES' BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Transparency Maldives is governed by a six-member Board of Directors, in keeping with Transparency International guidelines. The Board is responsible for the vision and overall direction of TM, and is elected by the membership at its AGM.

Mohammad Rasheed Bari

A civil engineer by profession, Mr. Bari, TM's Chairman, has been a member of the organisation since 2008. He counts twenty years of international expertise in the fields of project management, building, water and sanitation engineering. He owns and runs a number of business and consulting firms in the Maldives, but finds the time for honorary social development work as well.

Aminath Eenas

Ms. Eenas has a Masters in Criminology from Manchester University and a BA in Social Work from Curtin. She currently serves as a UNICEF consultant, and has worked for 15 years on core child rights and protection concerns in the Maldives. She has taught counselling and has developed course materials in social work education.

Fathimath Sujatha Haleem

Ms. Haleem received both her BCom and MBA from Bangalore, India, where she specialised in finance and marketing. She is presently a Project Manager with the Maldives Pensions Administration. She is a certified management trainer and contributes her expertise to social service organisations in the Maldives.

Hazrath Rasheed Hussain

A lawyer by profession, Ms. Hussain has worked with UNDP and UNICEF in the Maldives. She now serves in the telecommunication sector, and has additional experience undertaking consulting assignments with non-profit organisations. Ms. Hussain's LLB is from the University of Tasmania in 2009.

Mohamed Shihab

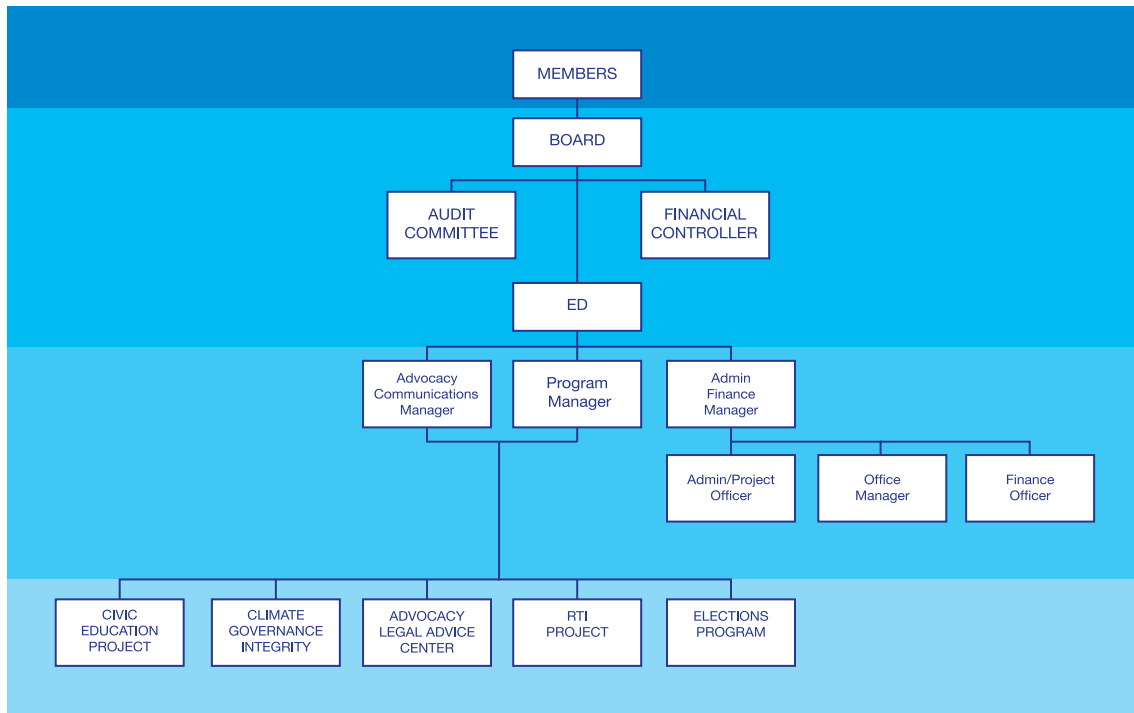
Mr. Shihab is an educationist with a long history of engagement with service NGOs in the Maldives. He currently serves as the General Secretary of TM, and is also the Treasurer of the Maldives Red Crescent Society. He has also been an executive board member of the Maldives Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Care Society.

Hussain Siraj

Attorney Siraj (LLB, Middlesex) counts eight years of civil litigation, regulatory practice and legal service in the Maldives. He has lectured at both Law Faculties of the Maldives College of Higher Education, and in 2009 served as Vice Chairman of the Maldives Election Commission. He is currently a consultant for ILO.

Annex 2

Organisational chart



Annex 3

3-Year Budget

Code	Line Items	Unit	2013		Subtotal	2014		Subtotal	2015		Subtotal	Budget
			Type	Unit No.		Cost (US\$)	Type		Unit No.	Cost (US\$)		
1	Strategic Priority Area #1: Promoting free and fair elections through advocating for greater accountability and transparency											
1.1	Public Awareness-Raising, Capacity Building & Education	lump sum			5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	15,000.00	40,000.00
1.2	Advocacy & Facilitating Social Movements	lump sum			5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	15,000.00	40,000.00
1.3	Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting	lump sum			10,000.00	10,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	50,000.00
1.4	Operations support and oversight (Admin, Finance and Management)	month	4		300.00	1,200.00	12	500.00	6,000.00	12	500.00	13,200.00
Subtotal Strategic Priority Area #1					21,200.00		66,000.00		56,000.00		143,200.00	
2	Strategic Priority Area #2: Addressing the main forms of corruption, and increasing transparency and accountability in politics and governance											
2.1	Public Awareness-Raising, Capacity Building & Education	lump sum			5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	15,000.00	40,000.00
2.2	Advocacy & Facilitating Social Movements	lump sum			5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	15,000.00	40,000.00
2.3	Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting	lump sum			10,000.00	10,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	50,000.00
2.4	Operations support and oversight (Admin, Finance and Management)	month	4		300.00	1,200.00	12	500.00	6,000.00	12	500.00	13,200.00
Subtotal Strategic Priority Area #2					21,200.00		66,000.00		56,000.00		143,200.00	
3	Strategic Priority Area #3: Catalysing reform of the Judiciary and Parliament											
3.1	Public Awareness-Raising, Capacity Building & Education	lump sum			5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	15,000.00	40,000.00
3.2	Advocacy & Facilitating Social Movements	lump sum			5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	15,000.00	40,000.00
3.3	Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting	lump sum			10,000.00	10,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	50,000.00
3.4	Operations support and oversight (Admin, Finance and Management)	month	4		300.00	1,200.00	12	500.00	6,000.00	12	500.00	13,200.00
Subtotal Strategic Priority Area #3					21,200.00		66,000.00		56,000.00		143,200.00	
4	Strategic Priority Area #4: Facilitating public campaigns and movements on key corruption and governance issues											
4.1	Public Awareness-Raising, Capacity Building & Education	lump sum			5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	15,000.00	40,000.00
4.2	Advocacy & Facilitating Social Movements	lump sum			5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	15,000.00	40,000.00
4.3	Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting	lump sum			10,000.00	10,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	20,000.00	lump sum	20,000.00	50,000.00
4.4	Operations support and oversight (Admin, Finance and Management)	month	4		300.00	1,200.00	12	500.00	6,000.00	12	500.00	13,200.00
Subtotal Strategic Priority Area #4					21,200.00		66,000.00		56,000.00		143,200.00	
5	Supporting Costs for Operations and Facilities											
5.1	Office Rent	month	4		2,000.00	8,000.00	12	3,000.00	36,000.00	12	3,000.00	80,000.00
5.2	Utilities	month	4		500.00	2,000.00	12	3,000.00	36,000.00	12	3,000.00	74,000.00
5.3	Communication	month	4		600.00	2,400.00	12	3,000.00	36,000.00	12	3,000.00	74,400.00
5.4	Office Supplies	month	4		250.00	1,000.00	12	3,000.00	36,000.00	12	3,000.00	73,000.00
5.5	Office Maintenance (Cleaning, etc.)	month	4		300.00	1,200.00	12	3,000.00	36,000.00	12	3,000.00	73,200.00
5.6	Repairs and Maintenance (Computers/Equipments, etc.)	month	4		150.00	600.00	12	3,000.00	36,000.00	12	3,000.00	72,600.00
5.7	Office Insurance	year	0		-	-	1	600.00	600.00	1	600.00	1,200.00
5.8	Webhosting renewal	year	0		-	-	1	150.00	150.00	1	150.00	300.00
5.9	Local Transportation	year	1		25.00	25.00	1	150.00	150.00	1	150.00	325.00
5.10	Bank charges	month	4		50.00	200.00	12	100.00	1,200.00	12	100.00	2,600.00
5.11	Staff Development (Meetings/Trainings/Workshops)	lump sum			2,500.00	2,500.00	lump sum	5,000.00	5,000.00	lump sum	5,000.00	12,500.00
5.12	Miscellaneous				1,000.00	1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00		1,000.00	3,000.00
Subtotal Supporting Costs for Operations and Facilities					18,925.00		224,100.00		224,100.00		467,125.00	
6	Financial Oversight and Auditing											
6.1	Auditing fee		1		2,000.00	2,000.00	1	2,000.00	2,000.00	1	2,000.00	6,000.00
7	Overhead Costs*: 10%											
					10,572.50		49,010.00		45,010.00		104,592.50	
Total Budget					116,297.50		539,110.00		495,110.00		1,150,517.50	

Note:* Overhead costs are to be used for fundraising expertise, products, and core supports for organization's sustainability.

