TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 6

2. METHODOLOGY 10
   2.1 Target respondent 10
   2.2 Sample size and composition 10
   2.3 Fieldwork 12
      2.3.1 Interview language 12
      2.3.2 Fieldwork dates 12
      2.3.3 Refusals 12
      2.3.4 Margin of error 12

3. SAMPLE PROFILE 13
   3.1 Demographics 13
   3.2 Working status of respondents 14
   3.3 Type of employment 15
   3.4 Education level 16
   3.5 Affordability of goods and services 17
4. Findings

4.1 General insights on corruption in the Maldives
4.1.1 Level of trust and confidence in the Government, Courts, and Police
4.1.2 Government corruption is a problem
4.1.3 Corruption has increased
4.1.4 Perceived success of the government in tackling corruption
4.1.5 Anti-Corruption Commission is doing a bad job tackling corruption
4.1.6 Parliamentarians are the most corrupt

4.2 Personal experience with bribery
4.2.1 Main reasons for paying a bribe
4.2.2 Main reasons for using personal connections

4.3 Sextortion

4.4 Taking action
4.4.1 Reporting corruption
4.4.2 Right to information

5. Conclusions and recommendations
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) is the largest and most detailed public opinion survey that gauges citizens’ views of corruption and personal experiences of bribery on a global scale. The survey has been published by Transparency International, the leading global anti-corruption movement, since 2003. This year, the GCB was surveyed in 17 countries in Asia, including the Maldives.

The Global Corruption Barometer 2020 – Maldives, published by Transparency Maldives, a National Chapter of Transparency International, is based on data collected through a survey conducted throughout the Maldives. The key findings reported include public perception of government corruption and how direct experiences of corruption, through bribery, sextortion, or vote-buying, affect the lives of Maldivians. This report is based on findings from a sample of 1031 Maldivians aged 18 and above.
KEY FINDINGS

01 Government corruption is a big problem:

90%

A staggering 90% of Maldivians think corruption in the government is a big problem in the Maldives.

02 Corruption is on the rise:

53%

53% of citizens think corruption increased in the last 12 months, while an additional 24% think it stayed the same.

03 Parliamentarians are seen as most corrupt:

50%

50% thinks most or all members of the parliament are corrupt.

04 Government is failing to tackle corruption:

53%

53% of citizens think the government is doing a bad job tackling corruption.

05 Bribery is a major issue in urban areas:

2%

Out of Maldivians who accessed public services in the past 12 months, 2% were directly asked to pay a bribe to get the services they needed.

06 Use of personal connections is high:

15%

One in nearly six citizens (15%) who accessed public services in the past 12 months used personal connections to get the service they needed.
07

**Vote-buying is a major issue:**

18% of citizens were offered bribes in exchange for votes in the past five years.

08

**Citizens can make a difference:**

>1/2

Despite fears of retaliation for reporting corruption, more than half of Maldivians believe ordinary citizens can help stop corruption.
2.1 TARGET RESPONDENT

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the interviews for this survey were conducted via telephone using random digit dialing (RDD) as a sampling approach. Interviews were conducted among Maldivians aged 18 to 82 years from all 20 administrative atolls of the Maldives. Respondents were from urban and rural areas, including the capital, Male’.

2.2 SAMPLE SIZE AND COMPOSITION

A total of 1031 respondents were surveyed as outlined below. The survey used probability theory in determining the sample size that can represent the population of Maldives. The Random digit dialing (RDD) approach in sampling used in this survey helped in covering geographical areas. It is a probability sampling method used to derive a sample of households, families, or
persons through a random selection of their telephone numbers. According to the standard calculation for a sample size from an adult local population of 236,000, with the level of significance of 99% (α=.01), and a margin of error of 5% (E=±5%), the calculated minimum sample size is 662. For this survey, a sample of 1031 was used, which is statistically significant and representative of the population – even if the population heterogeneity in relation to their experience of corruption is factored in.
2.3.

FIELD WORK

2.3.1
INTERVIEW LANGUAGE

DHIVEHI

Interviews were conducted in Dhivehi.

2.3.2
FIELDWORK DATES

16 AUG TO 18

Interviews were conducted from 16 August to 18 September 2020.

2.3.3
REFUSALS

55 refusals were reported when requested for interviews. The refusal rate was 5% \[\frac{55}{(1031+55) \times 100}\].

2.3.4
MARGIN OF ERROR

95%

The results have a margin of error of +/- 5.0 percentage points at 95 percent confidence level.
SAMPLE PROFILE

3.1 Demographics

% of respondents from urban and rural areas

- Rural: 67%
- Urban: 33%

% of respondents according to gender

- Male: 51%
- Female: 49%

A total of 1031 interviews were conducted, whereby 51% of respondents were men and 49% were women. From the sample population, 33% respondents are from urban areas and 67% are from rural areas.

Age groups of the respondents were classified as below

- 18 - 24: 14
- 25 - 34: 30
- 35 - 54: 38
- 55 - 64: 11
- >65: 7
60% of the respondents were employed while more than 9% were unemployed.

- **Employed**
  - Working full-time (more than 30 hours per week): 55%
  - Working part-time (less than 30 hours per week): 5%
- **Unemployed**
  - Homemaker: 13%
  - Retired: 7%
  - Not working and looking for work: 9%
  - Does not work & not seeking for job: 5%
  - Student: 2%
### Type of Employment

The working respondents were from a variety of occupations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm Worker</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed services/Police/Security</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Worker</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Sector</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Worker</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Manual Worker</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Manual Worker</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Sector</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism &amp; Hospitality Sector</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Sector</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 **Educational Level**

Out of the respondents, 49% had not completed their secondary schooling, while 33% had completed their secondary school and 20% had a degree or higher qualification.

- **6%** Primary school completed
- **11%** No formal education
- **1%** Some primary schooling
- **3%** Some secondary school
- **20%** Informal education
- **17%** Secondary school completed
- **2%** Some higher secondary/ equivalent
- **12%** Higher secondary/ equivalent completed
- **8%** Bachelor/ equivalent degree completed
- **5%** Some Bachelor/ equivalent degree
- **49%** had not completed their secondary schooling
- **33%** had completed their secondary schooling
- **20%** had a degree or higher qualification
### 3.5

**Affordability of Goods and Services**

65% said that they have sufficient household income. 18% said they could manage but with difficulty. The remaining 11% expressed that they struggled to save money and manage their expenses.

- **65%**: Have sufficient household income
- **65%**: Enough to buy what we want
- **6%**: Refused to answer
- **11%**: Struggled to save money & manage expenses
- **9%**: We need to borrow, spend savings to buy
- **2%**: We can’t buy at all what we want, we have no savings or no income
- **18%**: We can manage with difficulties
**FINDINGS**

4.1

**GENERAL INSIGHTS ON CORRUPTION IN THE MALDIVES**

4.1.1

**LEVEL OF TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT, COURTS, AND POLICE**

Regarding the trust for Government, 42% responded positively while 55% were negative. As for the Courts, 31% responded positively while 64% were negative. 51% responded positively toward their trust with Police, while 46% were negative.

The difference between these institutes establishes that there is a disparity between the level of trust, whereby the government and Courts outweigh the level of trust when compared with the Police.

4.1.2

**GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION IS A PROBLEM**

An overwhelming majority of Maldivians believed that corruption in government is a big problem. Only 5% think corruption is no problem or a small problem.
Corruption has increased

When asked whether corruption has increased, decreased, or stayed the same in the last 12 months, 53% of Maldives think corruption has increased while only 15% think corruption has decreased. Majority of citizens from urban and rural areas as well as majority of women and men believe that corruption has increased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corruption has increased</th>
<th>Corruption has decreased</th>
<th>Corruption has remained the same</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53% ▲</td>
<td>15% ▼</td>
<td>24% ▼</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55% ▲</td>
<td>52% ▲</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52% ▲</td>
<td>54% ▲</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Increased

Decreased
4.1.4
PERCEIVED SUCCESS OF THE GOVERNMENT IN TACKLING CORRUPTION

Majority of Maldivians are dissatisfied with the government’s performance in tackling corruption. 53% think the government is failing to fight corruption, whereas 30% think the government is doing a good job.

4.1.5
ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION IS DOING A BAD JOB TACKLING CORRUPTION

82% of Maldivians are aware of the existence of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), while 17% are not. It is important to note that 47% are not aware of the duties and responsibilities of the ACC in mitigating corruption within the country.
Additionally, 58% believe that the ACC is doing a bad job in tackling corruption, while only 38% agree that they are doing a good job.

**4.1.6 PARLIAMENTARIANS ARE THE MOST CORRUPT**

When asked how much corruption is in various institutions, 50% think most or all members of the parliament are corrupt. Judges/magistrates and business executives are also among the top three groups thought to be most involved in corruption.
4.2

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH BRIBERY

Citizens were asked whether they paid a bribe, gave a gift, or did a favour to receive a service they needed from a public institution. 2% said that they paid a bribe at least once within the last 12 months to the officials of the public institutions depicted below.

Public Schools
1% of citizens from among the 17% who were in contact with public schools in the last 12 months have paid a bribe. 11% said personal connections were used to get the services they needed.

Public clinics or hospitals
Public clinics or hospitals: 1%, among the 51% of respondents who were in contact with public clinics or hospitals, paid a bribe. 11% used their personal connections to get the services they needed.

Identity documents
Identity documents: 24% interacted with government officers in the last 12 months, and among them 1% paid a bribe. 10% used their personal connections to get the services they needed.

Utilities
7% of citizens interacted with public utility service providers, of which, 1% admitted to having paid a bribe. 7% used their personal connections to get the services they needed.
Findings

Police
Of the 15% that interacted with the police, 2% paid a bribe in the last 12 months. 9% used their personal connections to get the services they needed.

The Courts
10% of respondents had interactions with the Courts, and among them, 1% paid a bribe to get the assistance they needed or to avoid a problem. 6% used their personal connections to get the services they needed.

4.2.1
Main reasons for paying a bribe
Of those who paid a bribe in the past 12 months, 27% of citizens were asked to pay a bribe. 22% stated that while they were not asked to pay a bribe, they knew it was expected of them. 36% of men paid a bribe to get things done quicker or better, while women did not pay such a bribe.
### 4.2.2
**Main reasons for using personal connections**

Out of those who used a personal connection to get a service, 37% of men and 33% of women believe they would not have received the service without their personal connection. 42% of men and 44% of women used their personal connection to get a quicker or better service than what is usually offered. 29% from urban areas and 40% from rural areas think they would not have received the service without their personal connection. 33% from urban areas and 50% from rural areas used their personal connection to get a quicker or better service than what is usually offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used Personal Connection</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Citizens from Urban Area</th>
<th>Citizens from Rural Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quicker or better service than what is offered</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Citizens with a tertiary education had the highest percentage, amounting to 35%, agreeing that they would not have received the service without their personal connection. 25% of respondents with primary education and 37% of respondents with secondary education used their personal connection to get a quicker or better service than what is usually offered. Students (55%) and unemployed population looking for jobs (43%) had to use their personal connections the most to get a service. 68% homemakers were the most to believe that they would not have got a quicker or better service without using their personal connection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used Personal Connection</th>
<th>Quicker or better service than what is offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (Unemployed)</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed Looking for job</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemakers</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3

**Sextortion**

Sextortion is the abuse of power to obtain a sexual benefit or advantage and often occurs in exchange for public services. Respondents were briefed about sextortion and were asked how often, if at all, they thought sextortion occurred in the Maldives. A total of 1% admitted that they have been a victim of sextortion. 1% of men and 2% of women revealed to have encountered sextortion, which does not account for a notable difference between genders. No significant difference was seen comparing urban (2%) and rural (1%) areas. In addition to that, people within the age group of 18 to 24 (3%) and 25 to 34 (2%) reported to have had the most cases of sextortion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-64</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4

**Taking action**

4.4.1

**Reporting corruption**

11% of citizens said that they reported an incidence of paying a bribe to a government official or someone in authority. Less than 1% reported an incidence in which the police or state institutions asked a respondent or a member of their household for a bribe, gift or favour in return for bypassing Covid-19 related restrictions.
Moreover, 58% admitted that they fear retaliation if corruption was reported. On the other hand, 34% believes that they can report an act of corruption, without any fear.

57% of respondents believe that government authorities will not take any action when corruption is reported, while 24% agrees that action will be taken by the Government authorities.

In addition to that, 56% of respondents agree that ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption. 35% expresses that the government takes the views of people into account when making decisions, while 54% does not agree with the statement. Over 70% of citizens think that the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.
4.4.2 
RIGHT TO INFORMATION

68% were aware of the right to request for information from government, while 33% were not aware. However, despite the high level of awareness, only 13% have officially contacted a public body to request for information.

% aware about their right to request information from government
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Corruption was noted to be perceived as very high within the public service providers, especially the Members of the Parliament, Judges and Magistrates of the Courts, business executives as well as among Government officials. Majority of the respondents agreed that corruption is a huge problem rooted within the Government, whereby they also agree that their voice is constrained in achieving transparency across the public institutes. They also derive the conclusion that, their freedom of speech will not weigh upon the decisions of the Government toward mitigating corruption here in the Maldives.

Low number of reporting incidents of corruption is one key challenge to be tackled. In addition to that, over 58% expressed that they fear of retaliation if they were to report any acts of corruption. This raises another challenge on reducing corruption within the public institutions and integrating transparency in the public services provided to the community. On top of that 57% agrees that the government will fail to take an action, even if acts of corruption were reported. This aligns with the 90% agreeing that they do not trust the government to properly tackle the problem of corruption. Thus, this raises the third challenge in ending corruption in the public sector.

Based on the findings of this report, the following recommendations are suggested. Firstly, it is imperative that the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) of Maldives pursue to investigate allegations of bribery or corruption, to strengthen the fight against corruptive measures pouring into the socio-cultural, economic, and political dimensions. Building public faith in the system should be the steppingstone toward mitigating corruption across the public sector since public awareness is key to success in this regard. To do so, the public needs be widely enlightened on how to report corruption, regarding the wide arrays of situations where corruption is persistent. Different channels need to be opened to lift their voice and bring that assurance over to the public. Thus, calling upon all the stakeholders involved within the nation, to step up in following through out with zero tolerance toward corruption and creating a culture of integrity among both public and private sector institutes and its initiatives.