

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



**TRANSPARENCY
MALDIVES**
A Coalition for Integrity

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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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MESSAGE BY OUR CHAIRPERSON

Greetings from Transparency Maldives.

As we conclude the year 2020, it is important to reflect on the lessons we have learned from this unprecedented and unforeseen year. During the year Transparency Maldives, similar to many other CSOs, were forced to re-strategize and learn new ways of working with our communities, partners and donors. Covid 19 pandemic highlighted the importance of building new partnerships, re-engaging with existing networks. The pandemic also highlighted the need to continue with our mission of advocating for good governance, human transparency and stronger anti-corruption framework.

With the Covid 19 Pandemic and travel restrictions limiting our outreach work, we focused our work on the enhancing integrity of key accountability institutions and enhance partnerships with these key institutions.

In 2020 TM conducted the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) Survey to gauge the public opinion of corruption as well as personal experiences of bribery.

The GCB results highlighted that corruption was perceived as very high within the public service providers, with majority respondents agreeing that corruption is a huge problem rooted within the government, and do not trust the government to properly tackle the problem of corruption. This highlights the need to continue our work as a responsible civil society to call on the government to commit to their promise of zero tolerance to corruption.

During the year TM also focused on enhancing integrity of key accountability institutions through capacity building. In this regard, TM facilitated a tailormade training on “Financial Crimes and Money Laundering” for 45 investigation staff of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). We also developed and disseminated an anti-corruption toolkit to relevant government agencies.

One important highlight of 2020 was the successful conclusion of the Maldives Transparency and Anti Corruption Conference. The 3 day virtual conference, held from the 7th to 9th December 2020 was co-hosted with the ACC and highlighted the issues around public procurement and corruption risks in public procurement.

The conference attracted over 800 participants to come together to join the dialogue on anti-corruption and good governance.

Further efforts to promote transparency and strengthen anti-corruption mechanisms include the advocacy conducted by TM regarding the importance of proper asset declaration mechanisms. Transparency Maldives has drafted an Asset Declaration Bill which aids to establish uniformity and accountability in the asset declaration process. The Bill will be presented to the government in 2021.

Among the mechanisms which are necessary to combat secrecy and misinformation within State Institutes is to strengthen the tools afforded to the public in order to access information. Therefore, Transparency Maldives worked closely with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICOM) throughout the course of 2020. A training was conducted with 13 ICOM staff to build their capacity and broaden their understanding of the spirit of the Right to Information Act. The training was conducted in partnership with Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi. Further efforts to build the capacity of ICOM also included monitoring ICOM's open hearings. Based on TM's observations, a recommendation report was written and presented to ICOM, in order to assist ICOM in improving their open hearings and provide the public with better access to information.

Undeniably, those who were hardest hit by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in the Maldives were migrant workers. The extent to which their rights had been violated and unprotected was one of the main issues that the pandemic exposed. In addressing this issue, TM provided free legal advice to migrant workers through our Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC). Furthermore, an ALAC subsite was launched containing resources developed by TM based on employment, whistleblowing, right to information and corruption. All this information has been translated to five different languages to broaden its accessibility.

In 2020, we also continued our work in the area of climate governance, gaining voice and engagement of other civil society actors and stakeholders calling the government to strengthen the mechanisms set in place to address climate change. Advocacy work in this area includes conducting a symposium on strengthening local governance with councillors from Meemu, Faafu, Dhaalu and Thaa atoll; and series of webinars focusing on importance of protecting and preserving coral reefs, held on the World Ocean Day and Environment Day. We also continued to advocate for the rights of persons who have lost housing rights due to forced migration as a consequence of climate change. TM was successful in securing housing rights to 52 families who were displaced and denied their housing rights for several years.

Having concluded what was undeniably a challenging year, we would like to thank our donors for supporting us with the resources to address the issues that Maldives was met with during this pandemic. Furthermore, I would like to thank the board members, management and staff of Transparency Maldives persevering and overcoming the challenges of 2020. Finally, we would also like to extend our gratitude to all State Institutes that worked alongside TM throughout 2020, especially the ACC and ICOM.

Mr. Ahmed Muizzu
Chairperson

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.”

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”

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PROJECTS



SUPPORT TO THE ANTI-CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK OF MALDIVES

With support from European Union, granted through Transparency International, Transparency Maldives implemented the "Support to the Anti-Corruption Framework of the Maldives" from February 1, 2019 to December 20, 2020.

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to a strengthened anti-corruption chain and improved accountability in selected institutions under transformation. In this regard, the project aimed to combat ingrained corruption and corrupt practices in the Maldives by promoting clean leadership in key accountability institutions; support the independence of oversight bodies; and ensure public procurement and political finance transparency. The following were the specific objectives proposed under the project:

- To enhance integrity of key accountability institutions through capacity building
- To build partnerships, create dialogue and improve coordination between accountability institutions
- To understand and diagnose institutional gaps, and developing/ proposing best practices toolkits, and amendments to political finance, asset declaration and open contracting frameworks

PROMOTING RESILIENCE IN THE MALDIVES (PRIME) PROGRAM

PRIME is a four-year program that promotes leadership possibilities, positive social engagements, drug rehabilitation, and other activities to develop community resilience and social cohesion, with a focus on young men and women. PRIME also seeks to increase career and employment prospects for young Maldivians, as well as to promote alternatives to radicalization and violent extremism.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION

In February 2020, Transparency Maldives and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICOM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen the right to information regime through providing technical support, exchange programs and building capacity of ICOM. The project aims to build the institutional and human capacity to realise the full mandate of the RTI regime in the Maldives and address the gaps in the existing framework. Bearing in mind that an equally engaging public and private sphere is essential to a smooth functioning of the RTI regime, the project will also aim to reach the private entrepreneurs and Small Medium Enterprises (SME) in this area for advocacy on open government principles.

ADVOCACY AND LEGAL ADVICE CENTER

ALAC provides free and confidential advice and support to victims and witnesses of corruption enabling them to assert their rights, seek redress and stand up for justice encourage, and supports people to access public information and demand transparent, responsive and accountable government institutions while advocating for legislative, institutional, administrative and procedural change.

STRONG TRANSPARENT, RESPONSIVE AND OPEN NETWORKS FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE (STRONGG) PROJECT

TI STRONGG (TI Indo- Pacific Partnership for Strong, Transparency, Responsive & Open Networks for Good Governance) aims to strengthen anti-corruption actors' capacity to tackle corruption issues and enhance good governance in the country.

BAARU

BAARU project In January 2020, TM concluded its multi-year project decentralization project, BAARU project. This project was funded by the European Union (EU) and was designed to support and strengthen local governance systems in the Maldives. TM adopted a multi-pronged approach, focused on local government authorities and citizens to deepen democracy and enhance citizen participation in democratic processes, and to empower citizens for social accountability. The project worked on synergizing multiple activities in order to strengthen trust and dialogue between citizens and local governments, and empower local governments to act as catalysts for development and positive change in the communities they serve.

CLIMATE INTEGRITY PROJECT

TM has been conducting Climate Integrity Project since 2011 funded by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, through Transparency International. The overall aim of this project is to promote transparency, accountability and integrity in the governance of climate finance policy globally and nationally. For the year 2020, TM conducted following activities under the climate project.

MAIN ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES IN 2020



1. Training workshop on investigation for the Anti-corruption Commission Staff

A 3-day virtual training was conducted for 45 investigation staff of the ACC on 14th, 15th and 16th December 2020 on the topic “Financial Crimes and Money Laundering”. The main objective of the training was to build the capacity of ACC staff in investigation, particularly in financial crimes and evidence collection.

The training was conducted by Graham Barrow, Financial Crimes Expert and Director of Dark Money Files Ltd. Due to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic the training was conducted online.



2 Global Corruption Barometer Survey

The Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) is the largest and most detailed public opinion survey that gauge citizens' views of corruption and personal experiences of bribery on a global scale. In 2020, the GCB was surveyed in 17 countries in Asia, including the Maldives.

The GCB survey was conducted via telephone due to Covid 19 outbreak, and data was collected from 16 August to 12 September 2020 and included a total of 1,031 Maldivians aged 18 and above. The survey reports on the public perception of government corruption and how direct experiences of corruption, through bribery, sextortion, or vote-buying, affects the lives of Maldivians.

The findings of the Maldives GCB survey were included in the TI GCB Asia report which was launched by TI in November 2020, presented at the International Anti-Corruption Conference held from 30th November to 5th December 2020, and presented to the media and public during the “Maldives Transparency and Anti-Corruption Conference” held from 7th - 9th December 2020.

The first of its kind, the MTACC was held via Zoom and was broadcasted live on both TM and ACC's social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter. More than 800 individuals participated in the sessions.

3. Maldives Transparency & Anti-Corruption Conference

TM in collaboration with the Anti-corruption Commission of the Maldives (ACC) held a nation-wide 3-day virtual conference titled “Maldives Transparency and Anti-corruption Conference (MTACC) 2020” to discuss issues on transparency and anti-corruption. The Conference was held from 7-9 December 2020, to coincide with the International Anti-Corruption Day.

The main objective of the Conference was to bring together stakeholders from all state and non-state institutions to a single forum to discuss anti-corruption issues including the difference facets of public procurement and the manner in which corruption has rooted itself in the process. It also aimed to create a framework towards a more integrous and transparent public procurement practice and to find out the challenges faced by the government in ensuring transparency in procurement.

A total of 14 institutions/organizations conducted 20 sessions at the Conference. The sessions provided invaluable insight on issues including local and international good practices initiated to promote transparent, inclusive and accountable use of public procurement system, local governance, anti-corruption and good governance.

TM in collaboration with the Anti-corruption Commission of the Maldives (ACC) held a nation-wide 3-day virtual conference titled “Maldives Transparency and Anti-corruption Conference (MTACC) 2020” to discuss issues on transparency and anti-corruption. The Conference was held from 7-9 December 2020, to coincide with the International Anti-Corruption Day.

Participants included the members of the public, public officials, private stakeholders, university students and lecturers, Members of Parliament, members of the local councils and State-owned Enterprises of the Maldives, representative from international development agencies and the Press. The conference was concluded on the International Anti-corruption Day and was honoured by the President of the Maldives addressing the nation and reaffirming his government’s commitment to combat corruption in the Maldives.

MALDIVES TRANSPARENCY & ANTI-CORRUPTION CONFERENCE ----- 2020

7-9 DECEMBER 2020

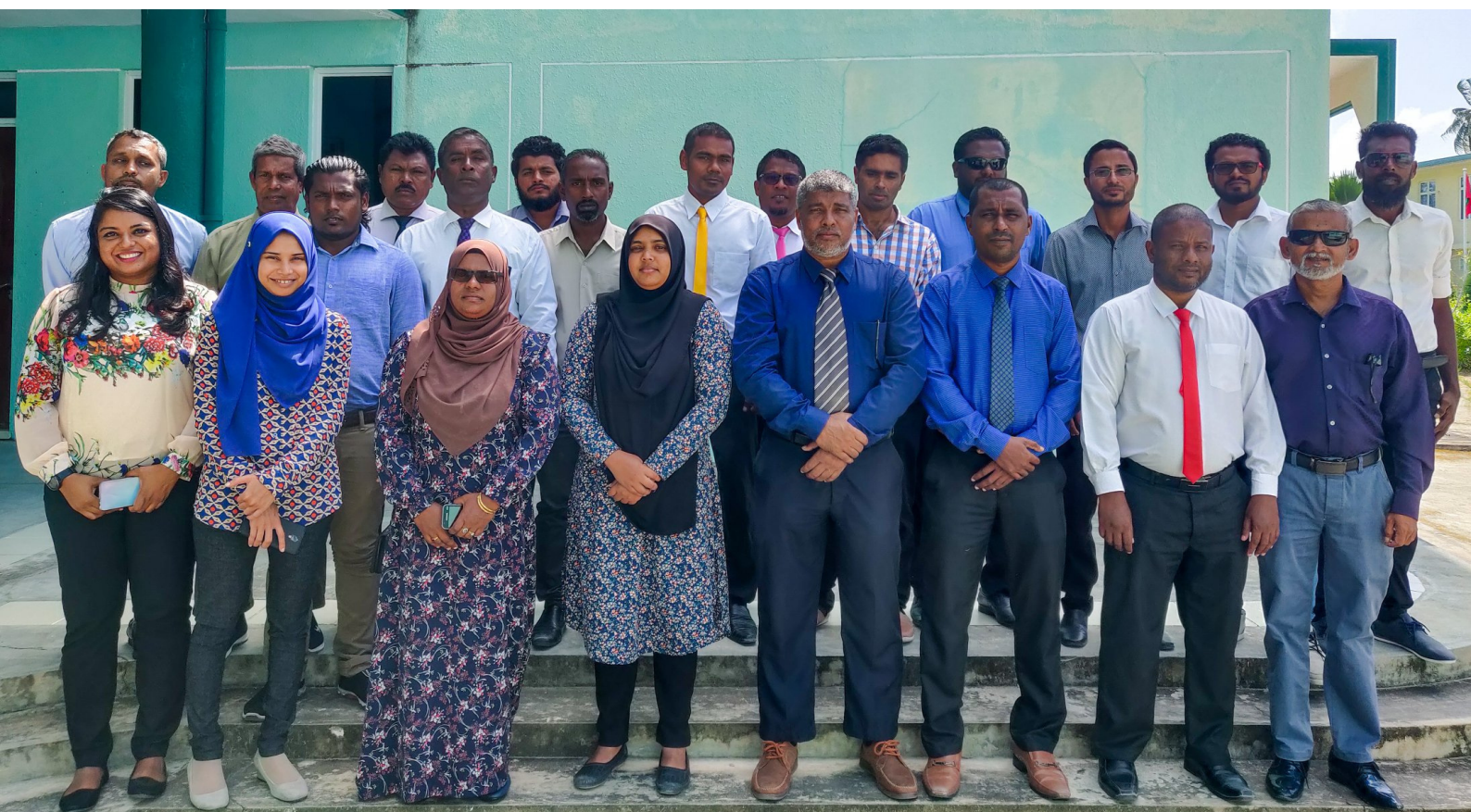
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4. Regional Decentralization Symposium

The last decentralization symposium of the series that was initiated during the 2nd quarter of 2019. This series was conducted as a part of TM's work on strengthening local governance. The symposium was targeted to the councilors from Meemu, Faafu, Dhaalu, and Thaa atol atoll. It was held on 22-23 January 2020. A total of 20 councilors (2 female, 18 male) representing 19 islands from 4 atolls participated in the symposium. The sessions of the symposium were structured on topics such as the importance of affirmative action and the positive impact it can have on the decentralization system, use and best practice of Right to Information, role of the Civil Service personnel in the effective functioning of local councils, sustainable development, and importance of development project monitoring by citizens.



5. Women Candidate Training

TM conducted a three-day capacity-building training for a batch of women candidates contesting for the local council election 2020. The training from 19-21 January 2020 with 24 participants was held in Male'. The sessions focused on the decentralization system and role of councilors, the importance of inclusive decision-making, good governance, Right to information, human rights, electoral process and decentralization, sustainable development, and public finance. The training aimed to go through intensive knowledge sharing and skill-building for the participants.

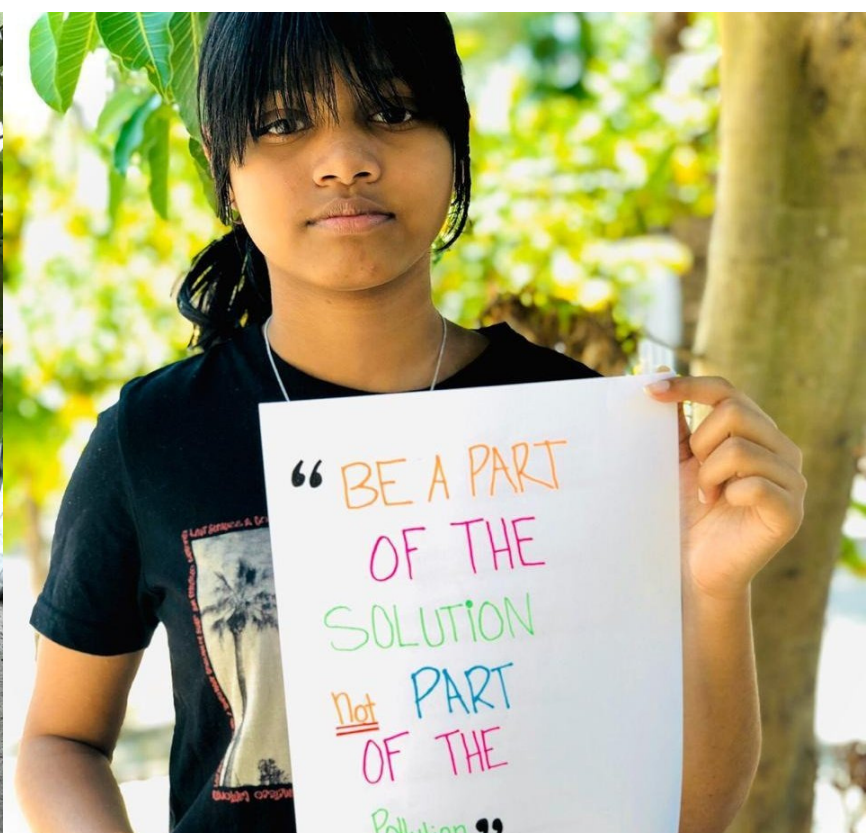
6. CSO commenting session on Climate Change Bill

During the first week of November, TM organized a virtual session for CSOs to comment on the Climate Change Bill that was being discussed in the Climate Change and Environnement Committee of the Parliament. A total of 7 CSOs participated in this meeting. The final comments were submitted to the Climate Change and Environnement Committee early 2021 with the endorsement from 11 CSOs.



7. IACC 2020 session on Climate Action: Time for Integrity

On 30th November 2020, TM participated as a panelist on the panel Climate Action: Time for Integrity, organized by TIS. TM's Grants and Outreach Manager, Shaziya Ali highlighted the important role played by the climate defenders in improving climate governance and in the fight against corruption in the Maldives.



8. ALAC Sub-site

ALAC subsite was launched on 14th December 2020. The subsite contains all the curated resources created by TM connecting to Employment, Whistleblowing, RTI, and Corruption. All resources related to Employment have been translated into 5 languages; Hindi, Dhivehi, Bangla, Filipino, and Tamil.



9. Right to Information (RTI) Training

The Right to Information Training for staff of Information Commissioner's Office was conducted from the 15th to 16th September 2020, in partnership with CHRI, a Delhi-based international non-government organization. The training was divided into eight sessions with each session focused on different themes of the RTI. Thirteen participants from a total of seventeen ICOM staff participated in the training

10. PRIME CSO trainings series

On the 2nd and 3rd of December 2020, a series of virtual sessions for CSOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), and psychosocial support providers was held. The aim of the sessions was to foster resilience and social cohesiveness and increase capacity of participants in designing and implementing interventions addressing community resilience and youth vulnerabilities.

11. Introductory meetings with main government stakeholders

Over the course of 2020, virtual and in-person meetings were held with representatives from the Ministries of Youth, Sports, and Community Empowerment, Home Affairs, Education, Economic Development, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Authority, National Counter Terrorism Center, Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Maldives Correctional Services. The meetings' goals were to explain PRIME, identify and explore possibilities for collaboration, and understand the current work on CVE executed by these organizations.

12. Roundtable of Civil Society Organizations

On 13th October 2020, a virtual roundtable was held for civil society organizations and providers of psychosocial support. The goal of the roundtable was to introduce PRIME Project and the sub-grant options available through the program, as well as to recognize civil society organizations working to promote resilience.

13. 'Dagana' Panel Discussion Series

13. 1 Muraka Vaahaka

Under the 'Dagana' panel discussion series, the "Muraka Vaahaka" was organized in celebration of World Ocean Day and Environment Day. With four panelists, the webinar highlighted the importance of coral reefs to our adaptation, the impact of protection & preservation of coral reefs, & the importance of public participation in adaptation projects.

The panel also emphasized the importance of having an independent Environmental Protection Agency and long-term strategic assessments to ensure the protection and preservation of resources. A total of 50 participants attended the panel via zoom and reached over 4300 people on Facebook.

13.2 HaamaKurey

On 16th July, TM hosted a virtual panel discussion on Asset Declaration and Verification mechanism. The event had panelists from the Anti-Corruption Commission, Auditor General's Office and Transparency Maldives who highlighted how a robust asset declaration would help in reducing the risk of corruption and illicit enrichment. The panelists also emphasized on the importance of access to information, and lack of laws that limits criminalization of illicit enrichment.

13.3 Haggu Minvaru

As a part of Human Rights work, on 15th June 2020, TM organized a panel discussion on the status of migrant workers right. The event had panelists from the Maldivian Red Crescent, Labour Relations Authority, Parliament, Navaanavai, Tranaparency Maldives and a probono lawyer. The panelists highlighted how xenophobia fueled policies & increasing trafficking and exploitation makes migrant workers the most vulnerable groups in the country.

A second panel discussion of the Haggu Minvaru was held on 8th July 2020, focusing on the systemic challenges to ensuring the rights of migrant workers. This panel specifically focussed issues around BoduFinolhu case.



SOCIAL MEDIA AND ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS



1.

#SEXTORTION , #CORRUPTION , #MIGRANTRIGHTSAREHUMANRIGHTS

From 14 September to 28 September, TM launched a global online campaign to raise awareness of the work that Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) are doing during the COVID-19 pandemic. On December 14th 2020, ahead of International Migrants Day 2020, ALAC's sub-site was officially launched. The launch was announced on all our social media platforms attached with graphics specifically designed for the subsite. The subsite now acts as a single contact and information point where users can access the curated resources related to employment, anti-corruption, whistleblowing, and RTI. TM requested for and met with the Commissioners of Human Rights Commission (HRCM) on 13th December 2020. At this meeting, TM highlighted and discussed in length the issue of administrative detention of the Bangladeshi workers who were detained at B. Bodufoinolu for protesting against their employer for non-payment of wages. This discussion resulted in a roundtable discussion session being organised by HRCM on 17th December 2020. TM took part in the discussion session along with other stakeholders. TM has also started sharing ALAC client stats on its social media platforms. This is to increase awareness of ALAC's services and to invite complainants to lodge their cases at ALAC.



2.#52AILAA

In 2020, TM continued to fight for the rights of #52Aailaa. After three and half years of advocacy and working with the Ministry of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, on 18th December, the government handed over the keys of the housing unit to the 52 families. The Ministry also informed that the full amount of compensation money was handed over to the island council to disburse. As of December 2020, the families received 45% of the compensation money and are expected to settle the full amount during January 2020.



During 2020, a documentary film on 52 families were screened during the Anti-Corruption Conference organized by TM and ACC. The documentary film was created by Ms. Dhahau Naseem, an activist who has mainly been involved in protests involving human rights, civil rights, and freedom of thought. The documentary filmed in 2018, showcased the migration of people from three islands (Hdh. Kunburudhoo, Maavaidhoo, Faridhoo) to Hdh. Nolhivaranfaru in 2011 by the government. However, they were not given sufficient housing or resources upon arrival and despite various actions by the families, things have not been settled till now. TM has been involved with the case since 2017. Over 30 participants including journalists, attended the session. Local media, Corporate Maldives covered the session in their article.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

IN 2020, TM RECEIVED

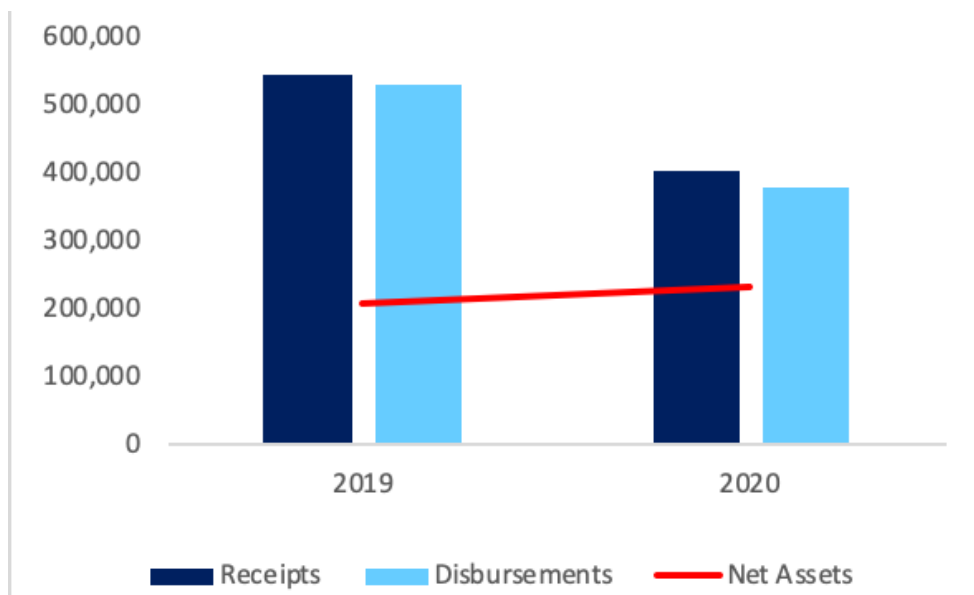
- USD 395,950 from grants and contracts
- USD 4,795 from other income sources

IN 2020, TM DISBURSED

- USD 9,281 for operating expenses
- USD 51,333 for program expenses
- USD 81,349 for contract services
- USD 233,979 for personnel expenses

NET ASSETS

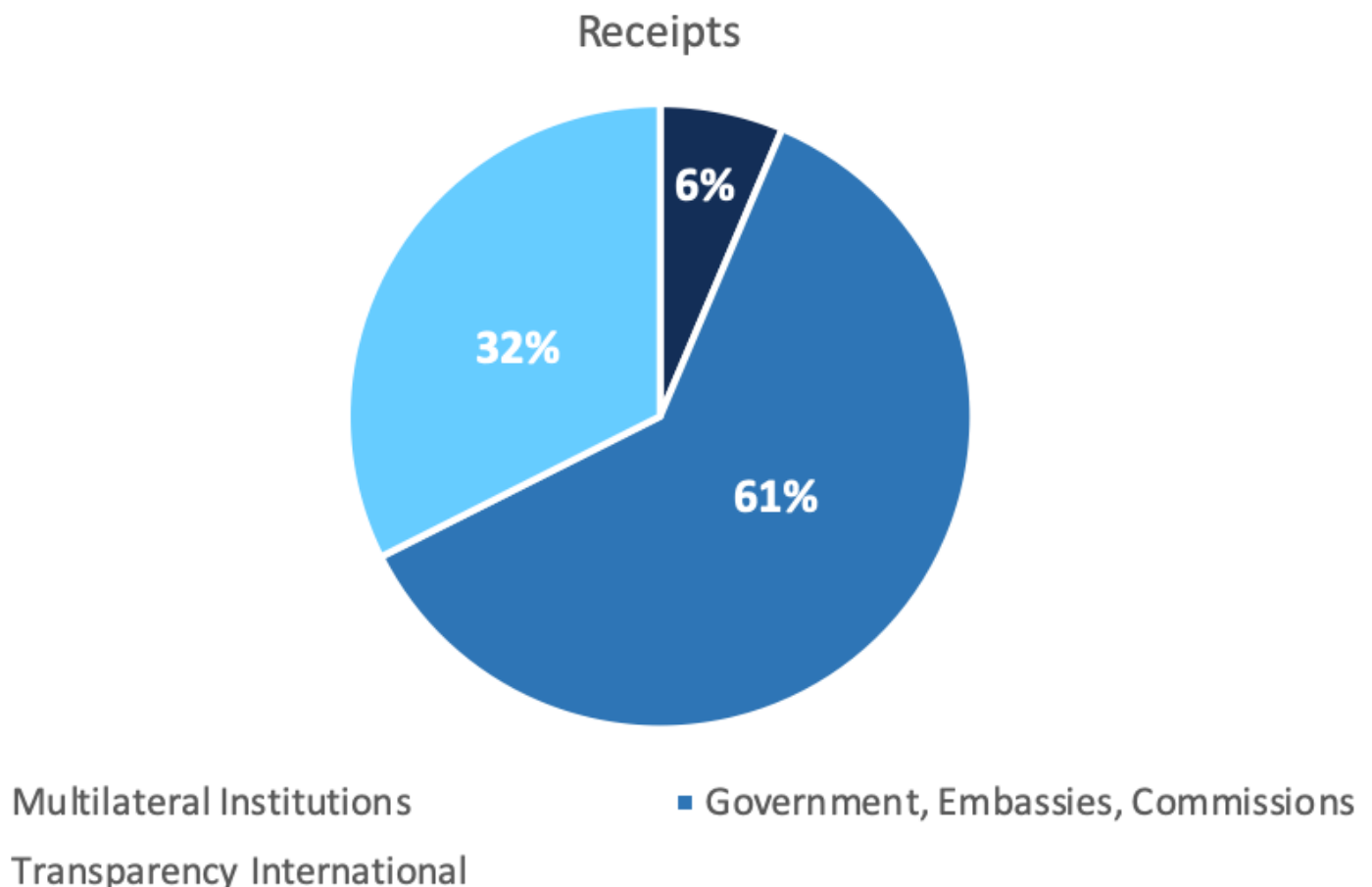
- USD 207,843 2020
- USD 232,646 2019



FUND BREAKDOWN BY DONORS

Covid-19 has brought a lot of challenges and uncertainties in 2020 but through continued donor support, TM was able to continue to carry out its mission and implement various programs.

TM's donors are classified into three main categories, 1) Multilateral Institutions 2) Government, Embassies, & Commissions & 3) Transparency International



DONORS, PROJECTS & FUNDING



Expanding ALAC Services
USD25,310



**Amplifying New Entrepreneur Voices
(ANEV)**
USD 8,498



Promoting Resilience in the Maldives (PRIME)
USD 398,750



Support to Anti-Corruption Framework
USD 47,790

Climate Governance Integrity
USD 19,698

Strong, Transparent & Open Networks
USD 32,304

FINANCIAL RATIOS: 2019 & 2020

LIQUIDITY (Current Ratio)

2019 - 6.92
2020 - 2.09

PROFITABILITY (Return on Assets)

2019 - 4.2%
2020 - 5.6%

PROGRAM EFFICIENCY

2019 - 96%
2020 - 97.5%

BUDGET VARIANCE SUMMARY: 2020

Projects	Budget	Actual	Variance (US\$)	Variance (%)
Climate (TI)	233,295	91,481	141,814	61%
ECSO (US State Dept.)	73,766	66,051	7,717	10%
GACC (TI)	24,184.30	24,184.30	0	0%
ALAC (UNDP Maldives)	25,310	20,110	5,200	21%
EU-AC (TI)	202,170	150,735	51,435	25%
PRIME (USAID)	1,010,756	190,478	820,278	81%
ANEV (CIPE)	91,399	13,562	77,837	85%
STRONGG (TI)	32,304	1,390	30,914	96%

PUBLICATIONS, PRESS STATEMENTS, GOVERNANCE UPDATES

23 January 2020: CPI 2019: Maldives falls 6 positions in the CPI

<https://transparency.mv/v16/2020/01/cpi-2019-maldives-falls-6-positions-in-the-cpi/>

27 January 2020: Sallaa - “Laamarukazy visnumeh amalygothun fehnaakah neih!”

<https://transparency.mv/v16/2020/01/sallaa-laamarukazy-visnumeh-amalygothun-fehnaakah-neih/>

6 February 2020: Transparency Maldives calls on the State to safeguard public interest

<https://transparency.mv/v16/2020/02/transparency-maldives-calls-on-the-state-to-safeguard-public-interest/>

15 March 2020: Position Paper on Asset Declaration - Towards a Robust Asset Disclosure Regime

<https://transparency.mv/v16/2020/03/towards-a-robust-asset-disclosure-regime/>

24 November 2020: Global Corruption Barometer Asia 2020

https://images.transparencycdn.org/images/GCB_Asia_2020_Report_Web_final.pdf

1 July 2020: Joint Press Statement calling on the State to address polarisation and promote social cohesion

<https://transparency.mv/v16/2020/07/joint-press-statement-calling-on-the-state-to-address-polarisation-and-promote-social-cohesion/>

<https://transparency.mv/v16/2020/08/press-statement-legal-representation-for-the-migrant-workers-arrested-at-b-bodufinolhu/>