

Gambia Corruption Index (GCI) 2025

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Acronyms

CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
GCAA	Gambia Civil Aviation Authority
GCI	Gambia Corruption Index
GFS	Gambia Ferry Services
GID	Gambia Immigration Department
GP	Gambia Participates
GPA	Gambia Ports Authority
GRA	Gambia Revenue Authority
LGAs	Local Government Authorities
NAWEC	National Water and Electricity Company
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals

Perception Survey for the Development of the Gambia Corruption Index (GCI) for The Gambia

Executive Summary

The Gambia Corruption Index (GCI) provides the first systematic measure of corruption perceptions, reporting practices, and institutional trust in the country. Based on a nationwide citizen survey and secondary data review, the study set out to understand how Gambians perceive corruption, where they report cases, and whether they trust institutions to act. The goal is to generate evidence that can guide government, civil society, and development partners in strengthening accountability and reducing corruption.

Findings reveal that knowledge of corruption reporting channels remains limited and uneven across regions. While 72% of respondents said they would report cases to the Police, this reliance is problematic because the Police are simultaneously perceived by the public as the most corrupt institution in The Gambia. Formal accountability bodies such as the Anti-Corruption Commission (or relevant body) (14%) and the Ombudsman (18%) (respondents can choose more than one option) were mentioned by fewer respondents, highlighting weak visibility and limited public trust. Confidence in institutions to act on corruption is particularly low—only 18% of respondents expressed trust, compared to 50% who said “no” and 32% who were unsure. Urban centers such as Kanifing and Brikama showed the lowest trust levels, while Mansakonko and Kuntaur recorded relatively higher confidence.

The report recommends the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission, to deter, reduce the prevalence of corruption in the public sector and initiate reforms aimed strengthening reforms and accountability measures, and expanding public awareness campaigns on reporting mechanisms. The findings also signal the limited political will in addressing the growing public concern on the spread of corruption. It also highlights the importance of leveraging civil society, youth, and the media as alternative watchdogs and ensuring greater inclusion of women and vulnerable groups in anti-corruption efforts. These steps are critical to building transparency, accountability, and trust in governance, enabling The Gambia to move toward a more responsive and corruption-resilient state.

1. Introduction

Corruption remains a significant barrier to democratic consolidation, good governance, and sustainable development in The Gambia. It is an erosion that wipes away public trust, undermines public service delivery, and distorts the functioning of key institutions. While international corruption indices provide useful benchmarks, they often fail to capture the localized and institution-specific dynamics of corruption within national contexts. In The Gambia, the absence of comprehensive administrative records, systematic corruption audits, and publicly accessible case data presents a major challenge to fact-based measurement approaches.

Globally, corruption is recognized as a complex and evolving phenomenon that takes on many forms perpetrated by various actors across political, social, cultural, and economic spheres. Its hidden and collusive nature often prevents in-depth examination of its scope and impact. Corruption weakens institutions, distorts policy outcomes, and exacerbates inequality, ultimately undermining human development. For this reason, the international community has emphasized the importance of scientifically grounded, evidence-based approaches to measure corruption and track progress in addressing it.

1.1. About Gambia Participates (GP)

Gambia Participates, founded in May 2016, is a national civil society organization that has been working on strengthening good governance, through research and using data for targeted advocacy intervention. The core areas of intervention of GP are, but not limited to advocacy on, Public Finance Management (PFM), Anti-Corruption and Elections. As an organization that highly integrate data in its advocacy as a compass to achieve desired results, the organization over the past years has conducted numerous research and published several papers on governance ranging from (i) constitutional reform (ii) public service delivery (iii) fiscal transparency and accountability (iv) corruption (v) elections, etc.

1.2. About the Gambia Corruption Index (GCI)

This is the inaugural GCI conducted by Gambia Participates which aims at providing scientific data on public perception of corruption and various institutional, public confidence in reporting corruption, government's will in addressing graft in practice, measuring regional dynamics on the perception of corruption.

The objective of the GCI is to aid government institutions to understand public sentiments regarding the prevalence of corruption in accessing public service through their staff or agents and use the data to strengthen anti-corruption measures. The survey findings could also be helpful to the Gambia Anti-Corruption Commission (when established), the office of the Ombudsman, and the National Assembly in its anti-corruption and good governance oversight functions.

Development partners, media and civil society organizations could also use the data to inform their governance intervention programs and provide the necessary support to institutions that have weak anti-corruption measures to improve their services and restore public trust and confidence.

2. Corruption Measurement: Background and International Context

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, acknowledges corruption as a key obstacle to sustainable development. Through **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16**, the agenda underscores the need to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, grounded in transparent and accountable institutions free from corruption. Specifically, SDG 16 calls for the promotion of effective governance, the rule of law, equal access to justice, and the strengthening of institutions to combat corruption at all levels.

The SDG monitoring framework emphasizes the use of **nationally generated data** as the foundation for tracking corruption-related indicators. Yet, a large number of Member States face persistent gaps in producing regular, reliable data due to methodological challenges and resource constraints. This leads to under-reporting of progress globally and highlights the urgent need for national-level corruption measurement tools that reflect local realities.

Against this international backdrop, The Gambia stands out as a context where systematic, evidence-driven corruption measurement has been limited. To address this gap, this initiative adopts a **perception-based methodology** as the primary approach to developing the *Gambia Corruption Index (GCI)*. While perception data is inherently subjective, it offers invaluable insights into public sentiment, trust levels, and the social legitimacy of institutions—especially in environments where administrative data are scarce.

2.1. National Context and Rationale

This perception survey is commissioned by **Gambia Participates**, a leading civil society organization with a strong track record in advancing anti-corruption programs in The Gambia through research, advocating for government transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in governance processes. It is implemented in partnership with the **Center for Policy, Research, and Strategic Studies (CepRass)**, leveraging its expertise in governance research, public opinion polling, and national survey implementation.

By gathering data directly from citizens, public servants, civil society actors, and private sector stakeholders across the country, the *Gambia Corruption Index* will:

- Provide a credible, citizen-driven baseline on corruption perceptions.
- Highlight institutional perceived corruption, from the most to least corrupt.
- Identify demographic and regional patterns of corruption perceptions; and
- Strengthen public discourse and accountability around anti-corruption reforms.

In doing so, the Index will serve not only as a **national monitoring tool** but also as a framework that aligns The Gambia's anti-corruption efforts with broader international commitments under SDG 16. By bridging the gap between global frameworks and local realities, it will empower stakeholders to design context-specific, evidence-based strategies for building a more transparent and accountable governance system.

3. Survey Design and Methodology

3.1 Target Population

The perception survey was designed to capture insights from a broad spectrum of stakeholders whose experiences and opinions are essential to understanding corruption dynamics in The Gambia. The target population included four major groups. First, the **public**, comprising citizens aged 18 years and above, represented a diverse cross-section of Gambian society, including both urban and rural communities. Second, **public servants** were included to provide an internal perspective on integrity and corruption risks within government institutions. Third, **private sector stakeholders** such as business owners, traders, and professionals were engaged, given their frequent interactions with public officials and susceptibility to corruption practices. Finally, **civil society actors and media representatives** were considered, as they play critical roles in advocacy, oversight, and information dissemination on governance and corruption.

3.2 Sampling Strategy

To ensure that the findings are nationally representative and reliable, the study employed a **stratified random sampling technique**. Stratification was based on two main criteria.

The first level of stratification was **geographic**, ensuring adequate coverage of both urban and rural areas across all Local Government Areas (LGAs). This approach allowed the survey to capture regional diversity and reveal localized variations in perceptions of corruption. The second level of stratification was **sectoral**, with respondents drawn from institutions and sectors that are most exposed to corruption risks. These included the health, education, agriculture, and petroleum sectors; the Gambia Ferry Service; the Gambia Police Force; the Gambia Revenue Authority; local government administrations; the Gambia Immigration Department; the Gambia Civil Aviation Authority; and the National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC).

Recognizing that not all respondents, particularly those in rural communities, would have interacted with every institution, the survey adopted a **filtering mechanism**. Respondents were first asked whether they had ever accessed services from a public institution. If the answer was affirmative, follow-up questions assessed whether they had personally experienced or witnessed corruption, and their perception of corruption levels in that institution. If the answer was negative, the enumerator skipped to the next relevant institution. This approach enhanced the **credibility, specificity, and granularity** of the data by ensuring that responses were grounded in **direct experience** rather than speculation.

In total, the survey targeted approximately **1,556 respondents**, a sample size sufficient to provide statistical power for subgroup analyses by region and sector while maintaining national representativeness.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

The study employed rigorously designed tools and procedures to ensure the collection of **high-quality and reliable data**. The primary instrument was a **structured questionnaire** developed in

English and translated into major local languages to maximize understanding and accessibility. The questionnaire explored four key dimensions: the perceived frequency of corruption, the incidence and expectations of bribery, levels of trust and satisfaction with public institutions, and the accessibility and effectiveness of reporting mechanisms. To balance structure with nuance, the questionnaire combined closed-ended questions such as Likert scales and “yes/no” items with carefully selected open-ended questions that allowed respondents to elaborate on their experiences and perceptions.

To guide the field process, an **enumerator manual** was developed. This manual provided detailed instructions on interview protocols, techniques for handling sensitive questions, and procedures for ensuring confidentiality and informed consent. Enumerators underwent intensive training sessions that emphasized cultural sensitivity, ethical considerations, and practical interviewing skills. Training also included role-plays and mock interviews to strengthen enumerators’ ability to engage with respondents respectfully and consistently.

Prior to the full rollout, the tools and procedures were tested through a **pilot survey** conducted in selected urban and rural sites. The pilot tested the clarity of the questions, the accuracy of translations, and the overall flow of the survey. Lessons from the pilot were used to refine the questionnaire, strengthen enumerator guidance, and ensure that data collection protocols were robust before national implementation.

Finally, it is worth noting that the field work or data collection took place in the month of July 2025. It is equally important to note that, in the percentage analytical report, the figures might not add up to 100% due to rounding up or rounding down of figures.

3.4 Approaches to Measuring Corruption

The design of the survey was informed by broader international debates and practices in the measurement of corruption. Measuring corruption is inherently challenging because it is a **hidden and illicit activity** that victims are often reluctant to report. For reasons ranging from fear of retaliation to the normalization of corrupt practices, individuals frequently remain silent even when they have been directly affected. This challenge has led to the adoption of **indirect approaches** in both national and international efforts to measure corruption.

One of the most common methods is the use of **expert assessments**, where selected groups of experts provide evaluations of corruption trends and patterns in a given country. Another widely used approach is the creation of **composite indices**, which combine data from multiple sources into a single indicator. Global indices such as the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index and the World Bank’s Control of Corruption Indicator fall into this category. While influential, such indices rely heavily on subjective data and proxy indicators and are often criticized for lacking disaggregation and contextual relevance.

Another important distinction is between **perception-based** and **experience-based** indicators. Perception-based indicators capture the subjective opinions of citizens, businesses, and civil servants about levels of corruption. These reflect the **public mood, legitimacy, and trust** in institutions but do not necessarily correspond to actual levels of corruption. Experience-based

indicators, on the other hand, attempt to measure tangible encounters with corruption, such as whether a respondent has been asked to pay a bribe. These are more concrete but often face underreporting challenges.

In designing The Gambia Corruption Index, this survey integrates **both perception-based and experience-based approaches**. This dual approach ensures that the Index does not only reflect subjective opinions but also incorporates reported lived experiences. By doing so, it bridges the gap between global measurement practices and local realities. The resulting data will provide **granular, context-specific evidence** that can inform Gambian policymakers, strengthen civic participation, and serve as a baseline for monitoring progress under Sustainable Development Goal 16, which calls for building transparent, accountable, and corruption-free institutions.

4. Survey Findings

A. Respondent Demographics

The perception survey engaged a total of **1,556 respondents** across The Gambia, providing a representative picture of the country's demographic and socioeconomic landscape in relation to corruption experiences and perceptions.

Gender distribution reveals that **63 percent of respondents were male** and **37 percent female**, reflecting a male-dominated sample. This imbalance may partly be attributed to gendered patterns in labor force participation, mobility, and survey accessibility. The underrepresentation of women suggests that future corruption surveys should adopt more gender-sensitive sampling strategies to ensure that female voices and experiences—particularly in relation to service delivery and institutional accountability—are more fully captured.

In terms of **employment status**, **39 percent of respondents reported being unemployed**, a strikingly high share that underscores the vulnerability of many Gambians to corruption risks, especially when accessing basic services or seeking employment opportunities. Among the employed, **24 percent worked in the private sector**, **23 percent in the public sector**, **11 percent in informal employment**, and only **4 percent in non-governmental organizations (NGOs)**. The high unemployment and informality rates highlight structural labor market challenges, while also suggesting that corruption may be disproportionately felt by job seekers and those operating in informal spaces where regulatory oversight is weaker.

With regard to **educational attainment**, the survey demonstrates both progress and persistent disparities. A combined 63 percent of respondents had completed at least secondary education, with 34 percent attaining tertiary education. **However, 26 percent reported no formal education, and 12 percent had only primary schooling**, underscoring gaps in access to education that may shape awareness of rights, ability to resist corrupt practices, and access to formal complaint mechanisms. This finding reinforces the importance of continued investment in education and civic awareness programs as part of long-term anti-corruption strategies.

The regional distribution of respondents reflects the demographic weight of urban and peri-urban centers. **Brikama accounted for the largest share (26 percent)**, followed by **Kanifing and**

Kerewan (15 percent each). Other LGAs were also represented, including **Basse (14 percent)**, **Mansakonko (10 percent)**, **Janjanbureh (10 percent)**, **Kuntaur (7 percent)**, and **Banjul (3 percent)**. While this spread ensures that both urban and rural perspectives are captured, the larger sample shares from Brikama, Kanifing, and Basse mean that **urban and peri-urban experiences are more prominently reflected** in the findings.

Finally, the **age distribution** of respondents reflects The Gambia’s youthful population. The largest cohort was aged **25–34 years (31 percent)**, followed by **35–44 years (27 percent)**. Young adults aged **18–24 comprised 12 percent**, while **16 percent were aged 45–54** and **14 percent were 55 years and above**. The predominance of working-age respondents points to opportunities for harnessing youth perspectives on corruption but also highlights the urgency of addressing unemployment and vulnerability to petty corruption among younger demographics.

In summary, the demographic profile of survey respondents underscores the importance of adopting **inclusive, youth-focused, and gender-sensitive anti-corruption measures**, while also ensuring that regional disparities are addressed in policy responses.

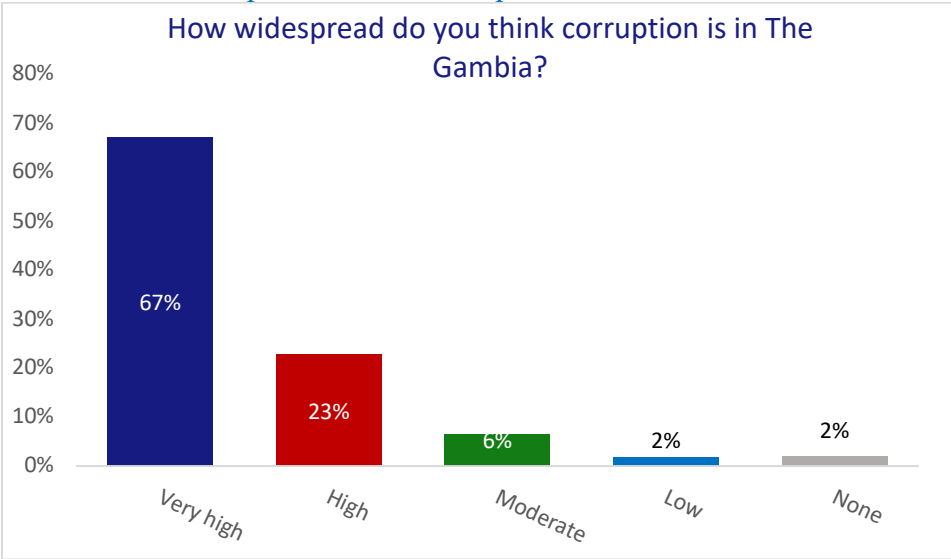
Table: 1

Demographic	Count	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Female	1556.00	0.37	0.48	0.00	1.00
Male	1556.00	0.63	0.48	0.00	1.00
Employment Status	count	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Public	1556.00	0.23	0.42	0.00	1.00
Private	1556.00	0.24	0.43	0.00	1.00
NGO	1556.00	0.04	0.19	0.00	1.00
Informal	1556.00	0.11	0.31	0.00	1.00
Unemployed	1556.00	0.39	0.49	0.00	1.00
Education Level	Count	Mean	SD	Min	Max
None	1556.00	0.26	0.44	0.00	1.00
Primary	1556.00	0.12	0.32	0.00	1.00
Secondary	1556.00	0.29	0.45	0.00	1.00
Tertiary	1556.00	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
Local Government Area	Count	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Banjul	1556.00	0.03	0.18	0.00	1.00
Kanifing	1556.00	0.15	0.36	0.00	1.00
Brikama	1556.00	0.26	0.44	0.00	1.00
Kerewan	1556.00	0.15	0.35	0.00	1.00
Mansakonko	1556.00	0.10	0.29	0.00	1.00
Janjanbureh	1556.00	0.10	0.30	0.00	1.00
Kuntaur	1556.00	0.07	0.26	0.00	1.00
Basse	1556.00	0.14	0.34	0.00	1.00
Age Group	Count	Mean	SD	Min	Max

18_24	1556.00	0.12	0.32	0.00	1.00
25_34	1556.00	0.31	0.46	0.00	1.00
35_44	1556.00	0.27	0.45	0.00	1.00
45_54	1556.00	0.16	0.37	0.00	1.00
55 and Above	1556.00	0.14	0.35	0.00	1.00

B. General Perception of Corruption

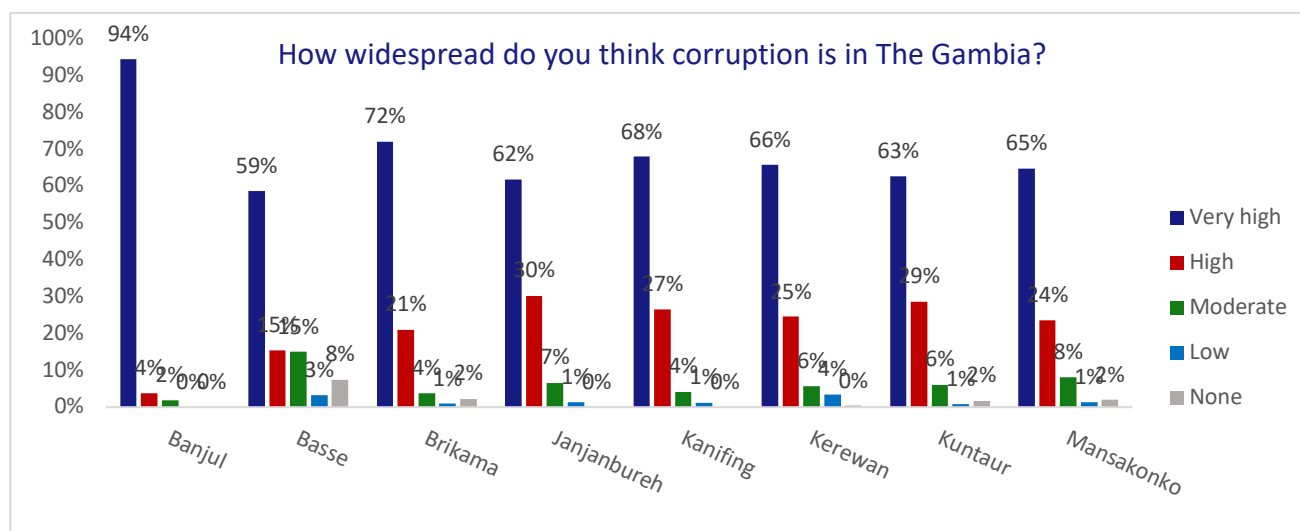
Chart 1. Perceived prevalence of corruption.



The findings reveal a strong public perception that corruption is a major challenge in The Gambia. An overwhelming 67% of respondents believe that corruption is **very high**, while an additional 23% consider it **high**. This implies that 90% of the respondents view corruption as a widespread problem in the Gambia. By contrast, only 6% of respondents described corruption as **moderate**, and very small proportions viewed it as minimal 2% rated it **low** and another 2% believed corruption is non-existent.

These results underscore the deeply entrenched public concern about corruption, suggesting that it is perceived as a systemic issue. The near consensus on corruption prevalence highlights the urgency for governance reforms, stronger accountability mechanisms, and more visible anti-corruption measures to restore public trust in public institutions.

Chart 2. Perceived prevalence of corruption by LGA.



The findings reveal significant regional differences in how corruption is perceived in The Gambia. A striking 94% of the respondents from Banjul believe corruption is **very high** by far the highest of any LGA. This is by far the highest level of concern across all LGAs, signaling strong public distrust in governance and institutions in the capital.

In Basse, perceptions are more mixed. While 59% perceive corruption as **very high**, a notable 8% believe corruption is **non-existent**, making Basse the most optimistic LGA about corruption levels. However, 3% still perceive corruption as **low** and 15% as **high**, reflecting divided opinions.

Brikama shows higher concern, with 72% rating corruption as **very high** and 21% as **high**. At the same time, 2% believe corruption is **non-existent**, suggesting a split in perceptions between those who see corruption as endemic and those who do not.

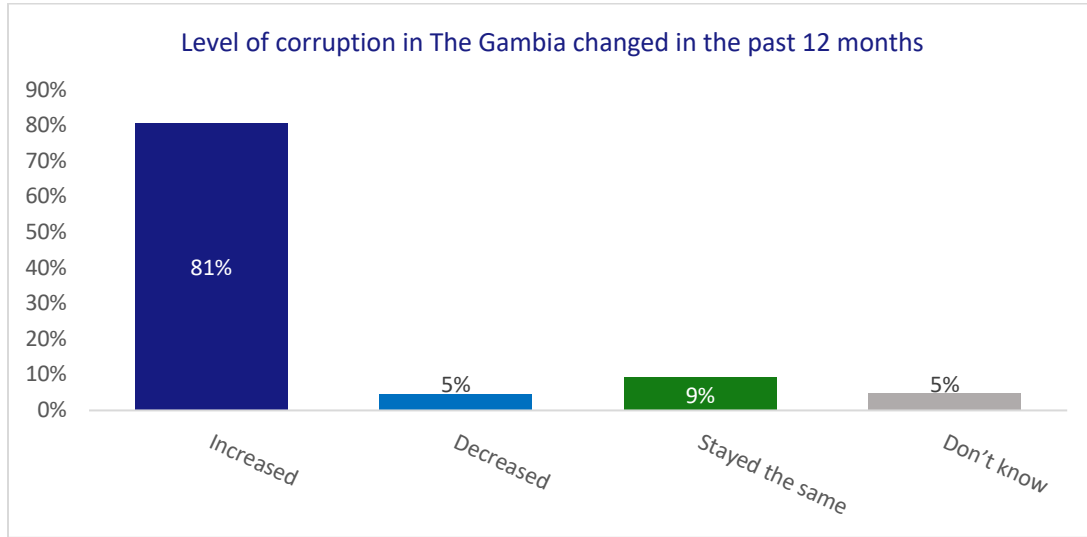
Janjanbureh records 62% describing corruption as **very high** and 30% as **high**, while 1% believe corruption is **low**. This indicates that corruption is largely seen as a challenge but not as overwhelming as in Banjul. Kanifing reflects a similar trend, with 68% rating corruption as **very high** and 27% as **high**. Still, 4% describe it as **moderate**, showing some diversity of views.

In Kerewan, 66% of the population believe that corruption is **very high**, 25% as **high**, 6% as **moderate**, and 1% as **Low**. The high proportion rating it **high** suggests that the widespread of corruption is felt in the rural communities as well, despite most public services being centered in the Greater Banjul Area (GBA).

In Kuntaur, majority (63%) consider corruption as **very high**, 29% as **high**, and 6% as **moderate**. Only a small minority view it as **non-existent** (2%).

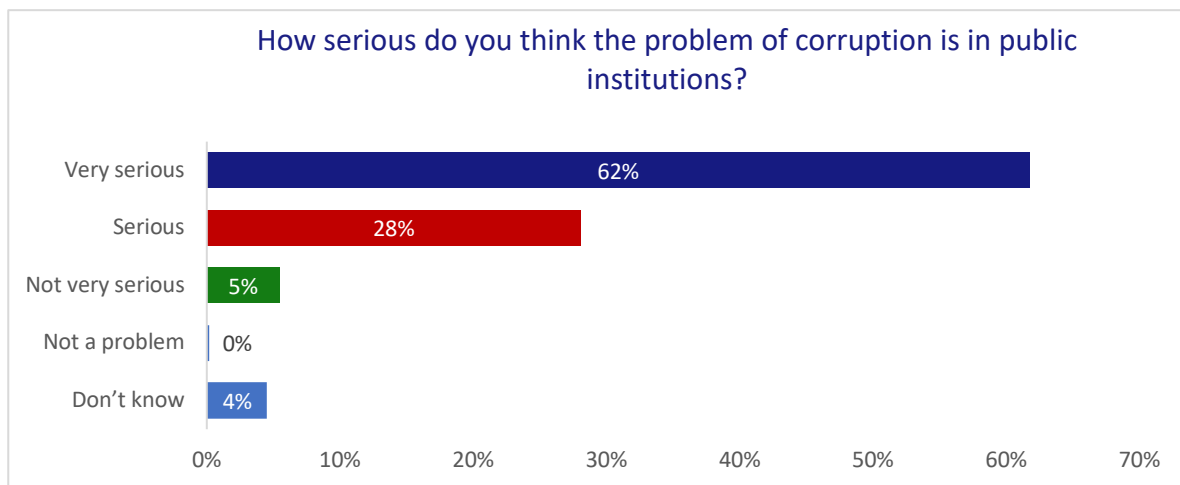
Mansakonko presents similar trend to other rural regions with public perception on the widespread of corruption recording 65% as **very high**, 24% as **high**, and 2% as **non-existent**. This indicates that while corruption is seen as widespread, perceptions are less extreme compared to Banjul.

Chart 3. Change in corruption level over past 12 months.



Majority of the respondents, 81% believe that the level of corruption in The Gambia has increased in the last 12 months. This dominant view reflects a widespread public sentiment that corruption is worsening rather than improving. By contrast, only 5% of respondents believe corruption has decreased, while 9% feel it has stayed the same. A further 5% indicated uncertainty (don't know) about changes in corruption levels. The fact that only a very small proportion (5%) see progress in curbing corruption indicates that the government's anti-corruption efforts are not visible or convincing to the public.

Chart 4. Seriousness of corruption in public institutions

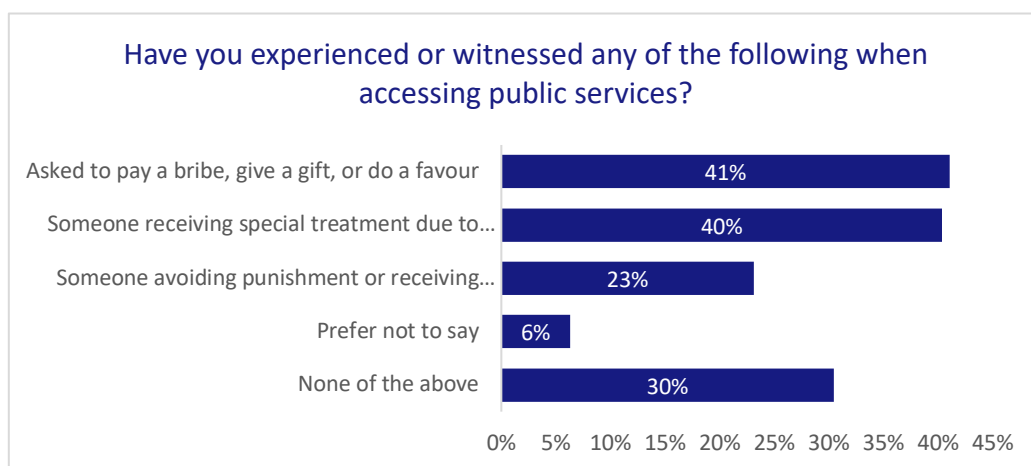


The results in chart 4 shows that majority of respondents perceive corruption in public institutions as a serious problem. 62% rated corruption in public institutions as **very serious** and 28% considered it **serious**. This implies that at least 90% of the survey respondents believe corruption is a serious issue with public institutions. By contrast, only 5% said corruption is **not very serious**,

and none viewed corruption as **not a problem**. By contrast, only 5% said corruption is **not very serious**, and none viewed corruption as **not a problem**. Meanwhile, 4% of respondents expressed **uncertainty** (don't know).

C. Personal Experience with Corruption

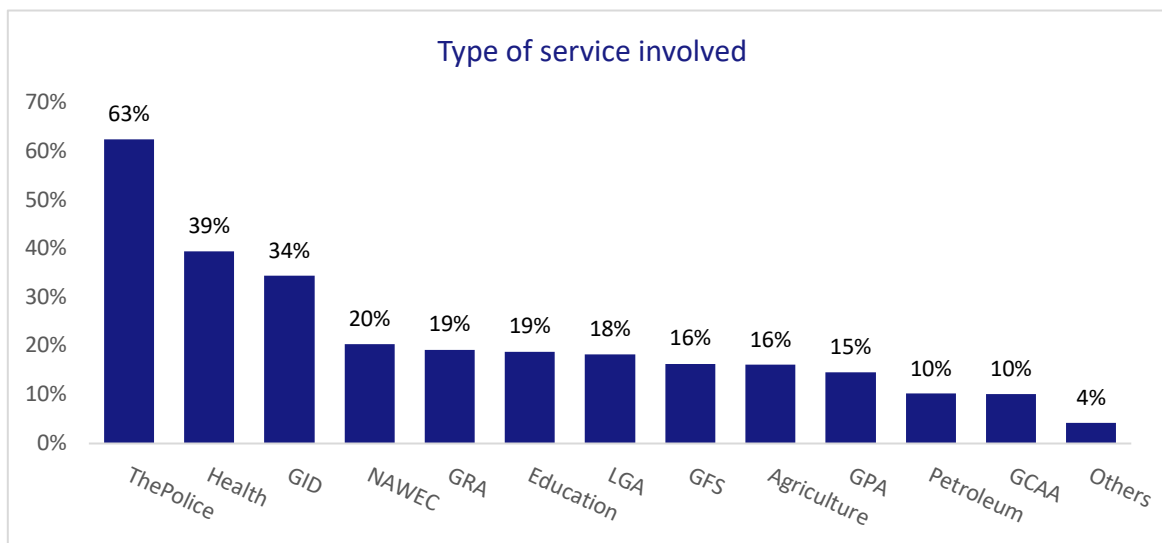
Chart 5. Experience of bribery, favoritism, impunity.



The above findings indicates that **bribery, giving a gift or do a favour** and **nepotism/patronage** are the most common forms of corruption directly experienced by citizens in The Gambia. 41% of respondents reported being asked to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour and 40% witnessed someone receiving special treatment due to personal, family, or political connections. 23% witnessed someone avoiding punishment or receiving impunity due to connections. This highlights perceptions of selective justice and lack of accountability, where the powerful or well-connected can escape consequences. 30% said **none of the above**, suggesting they haven't directly encountered or witnessed corruption in public service delivery and 6% preferred not to answer, which may reflect fear of reprisal, sensitivity of the subject, or mistrust in disclosure.

Note: In this question, respondents can choose more than one option.

Chart 6. Type of public service where corruption was experienced.



The responses to this question were provided only by individuals who had direct interactions with the listed institutions. This means the results capture firsthand experiences of corruption in service delivery, rather than general perceptions or secondhand accounts. Consequently, the findings highlight where citizens most frequently encounter corruption in practice when accessing essential public services.

A striking 63% of respondents identified the police as the institution most involved in corruption, making it by far the most cited service. This points to entrenched practices such as bribery, extortion, and abuse of power within law enforcement. Other highly affected sectors include health (39%) and the Gambia Immigration Department (GID) (34%). Corruption in the health sector often involves informal payments, preferential treatment, or diversion of resources, while corruption within immigration services relates to permits, border controls, and documentation, which are highly prone to rent-seeking behavior.

Significant levels of corruption were also reported in the National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC) (20%), Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA) (19%), Education (19%), and Local Government Authorities (LGA) (18%). Since these are essential services, corruption in these areas directly undermines livelihoods, access to basic needs, and overall economic productivity. Other sectors such as agriculture (16%), the Gambia Ferry Service (GFS) (16%), Gambia Ports Authority (GPA) (15%), Petroleum (10%), and the Gambia Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) (10%) were cited less frequently. However, corruption in these institutions still weakens key sectors of the Gambian economy. Finally, 4% of respondents mentioned other services, reinforcing the fact that corruption is widespread across public institutions, even if less frequently reported in some categories.

Chart 7.1 Reporting behavior and barriers to reporting

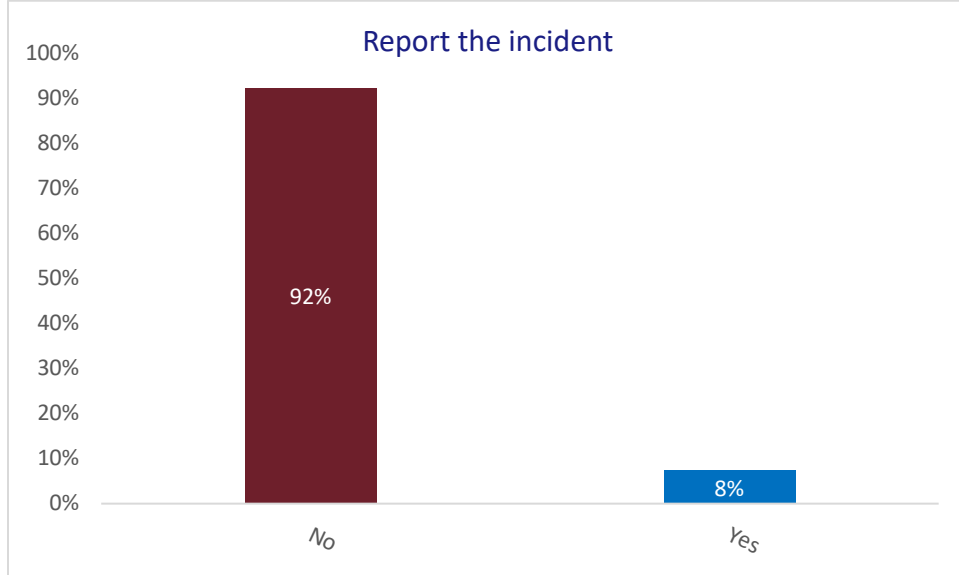
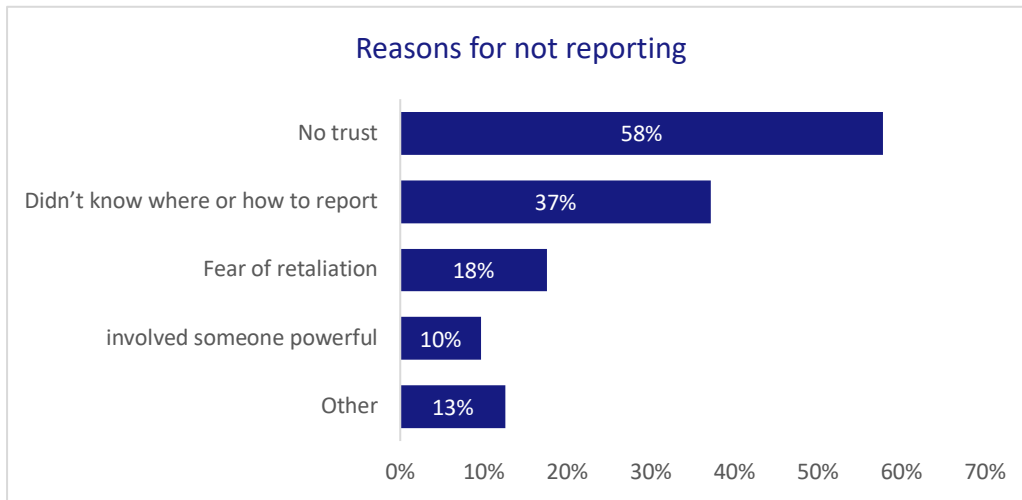


Chart 7.1 presents how respondents reacted when asked whether they reported corruption incidents they experienced or witnessed. 92% of respondents did not report the corruption incidents, only 8% reported such cases. The vast majority remain silent, suggesting a major gap between experiencing corruption and seeking accountability. This silence could be attributed to several factors as seen in chart 7.2

Chart 7.2 Reasons for not reporting



The findings reveal a striking gap between the high levels of corruption experienced and the very low rate of reporting. As shown in the chart above (chart 7.1), only 8% of respondents reported corruption incidents, while an overwhelming 92% chose not to report. This pattern highlights a serious challenge in the fight against corruption, as most cases remain hidden and unresolved.

The reasons for this silence as captured in chart 7.2, is lack of trust in reporting systems (58%), suggesting that citizens believe complaints will not lead to action. Additionally, 37% reported not knowing where or how to report, pointing to gaps in awareness and accessibility of reporting mechanisms. Fear of retaliation (18%) and the perception that corruption often involves powerful individuals (10%) further discourage reporting, reinforcing a culture of impunity. A smaller share (13%) cited other personal or contextual reasons.

Taken together, these results suggest that citizens are not unwilling to speak up, but rather feel powerless, unprotected, or uninformed. The combination of distrust, lack of information, fear, and power dynamics prevents corruption from being exposed and addressed.

D. Institutional Corruption Perception (35% weight)

Chart 8. Health

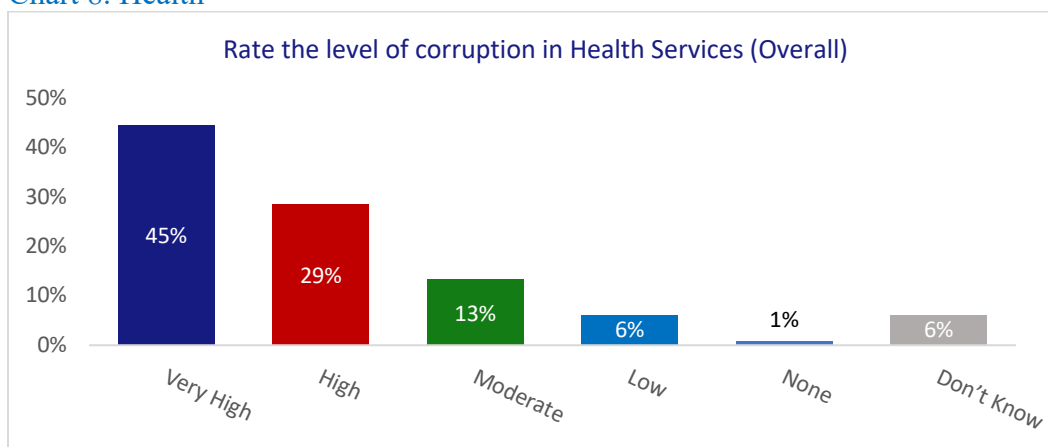
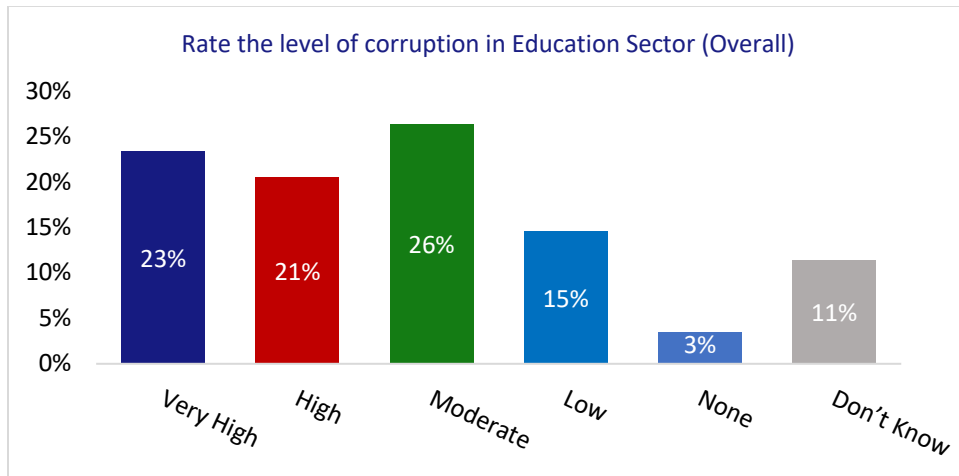


Chart 8 shows how respondents overall rating of corruption in the health sector, and it fits neatly with the earlier findings about direct experiences. High overall perception of corruption: A combined 74% (45% very high + 29% high) rated corruption in health services as serious. This mirrors the earlier finding where 39% of respondents who had direct dealings with health services reported corruption incidents, making health one of the most cited sectors after the police.

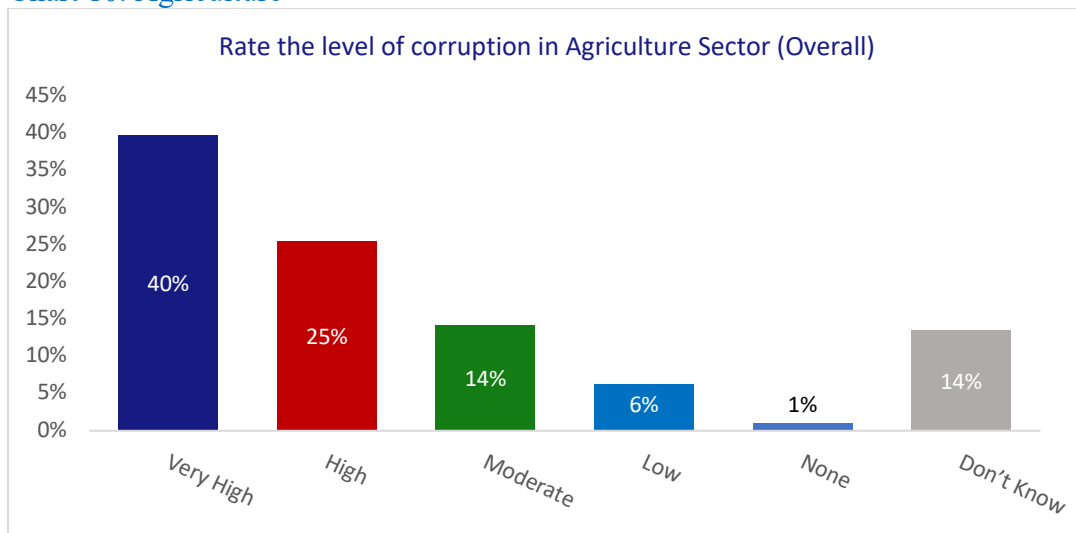
Moderate or lower ratings are minimal: Only 13 percent rated corruption as moderate, and even fewer thought it was low (6%) or none (1%). This confirms that corruption in health is not just an occasional issue but is seen as systemic. Uncertainty is low, just 6% said don't know, suggesting most citizens feel confident in their judgment, likely because health services are widely used and experiences are firsthand. Refer to appendix 3 for the regional ratings

Chart 9. Education



In the education sector, perceptions of corruption are mixed. About 44% of respondents rated corruption as **high** or **very high**, while 26% viewed it as **moderate**. A smaller share of 15% of the respondents rated it as low, 3% none, and 11% were uncertain. Compared to health, corruption in education appears less severe but still significant. While only 19% (chart 6) of respondents reported direct experiences of corruption in this sector, the higher overall perception suggests concerns about issues such as nepotism in recruitment, favoritism in admissions, etc. This points to corruption that may be less visible in daily interactions but more systemic in nature. Refer to appendix 4 for the regional ratings.

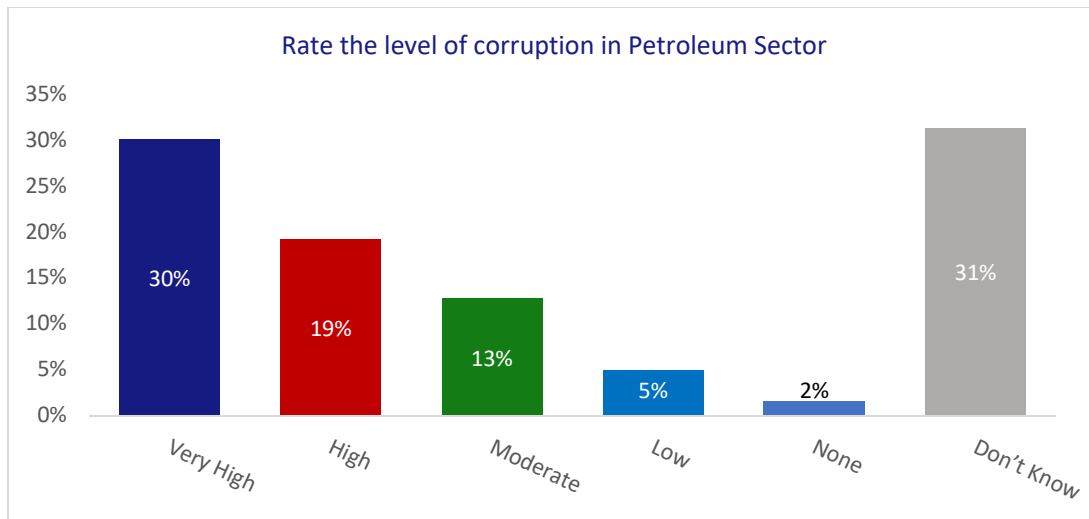
Chart 10. Agriculture



The agriculture sector is perceived as highly prone to corruption, with 40% of respondents rating corruption as **very high** and another 25% rating it as **high**. This means that two-thirds (65%) of respondents believe corruption is severe in this sector. Meanwhile, 14% considered it **moderate**, while only 6% rated it as **low** and 1% as **non-existent**. Interestingly, 14% of respondents were **uncertain**, reflecting either limited direct engagement with the sector or lack of awareness of its governance dynamics. Refer to appendix 5 for the regional ratings.

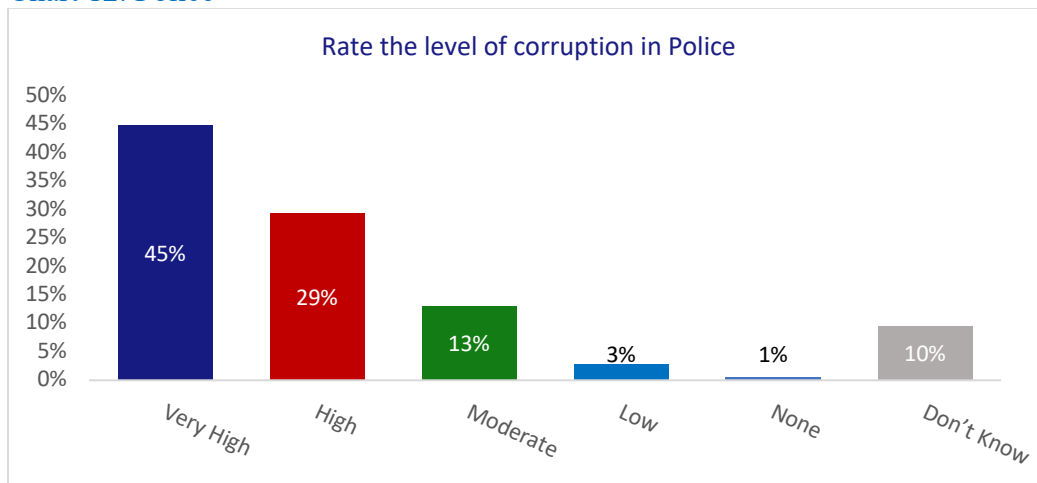
The high corruption perception in agriculture is particularly concerning given its central role in food security, livelihoods, and rural development. Reported challenges often include mismanagement of subsidies, diversion of agricultural inputs, favoritism in project allocations etc. The data suggests that despite agriculture’s critical role in economic growth and poverty reduction, governance weaknesses are undermining its potential.

Chart 11. Petroleum



The petroleum sector is perceived as highly vulnerable to corruption, with 30 percent of respondents rating corruption as **very high** and 19 percent as **high**. However, a notable 31 percent reported **don't know** reflecting limited transparency and possible lack of direct interaction with the sector compared to health, agriculture, or education. This uncertainty suggests that opacity in governance and restricted citizen oversight contribute to weak accountability. Strengthening disclosure practices, ensuring public access to information, and building trust in reporting mechanisms are therefore critical to improving integrity in the petroleum sector. Refer to appendix 6 for the regional scores.

Chart 12. Police

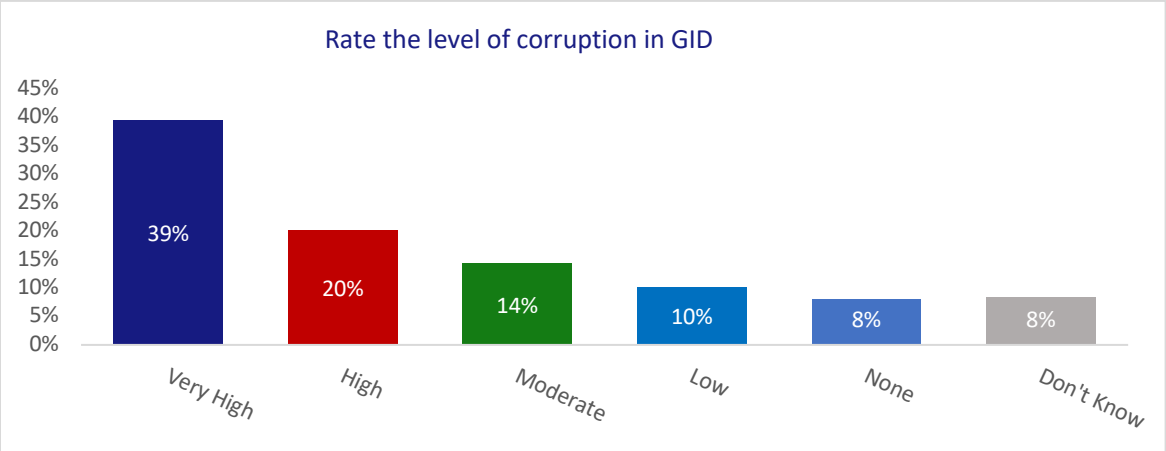


The survey results reveal that corruption in the police is perceived to be alarmingly widespread. A striking 74% of respondents rated it as either **high** or **very high**, while only 13% considered it **moderate** and a negligible 4% (low or none) believed corruption was minimal or absent. Additionally, 10% of respondents were **uncertain**, which may indicate limited transparency in police operations or low levels of direct engagement with the institution.

When linked to the overall national perception of corruption, where nearly 90% of citizens believe corruption in The Gambia is either **high** or **very high**, the police emerge as the institution most strongly reinforcing this view. The dominance of the **very high** and **high** responses suggests that citizens see police corruption as systemic rather than isolated, feeding into the broader sense that corruption permeates everyday governance and service delivery. The small proportion of respondents who believe there is no corruption underscores how deeply entrenched this perception is.

Overall, the data highlights a crisis of trust in the police, with corruption in law enforcement seen as one of the most pressing governance and institutional challenges in The Gambia, and a key driver of the negative public perception of corruption at the national level. Refer to appendix 7 for the regional ratings.

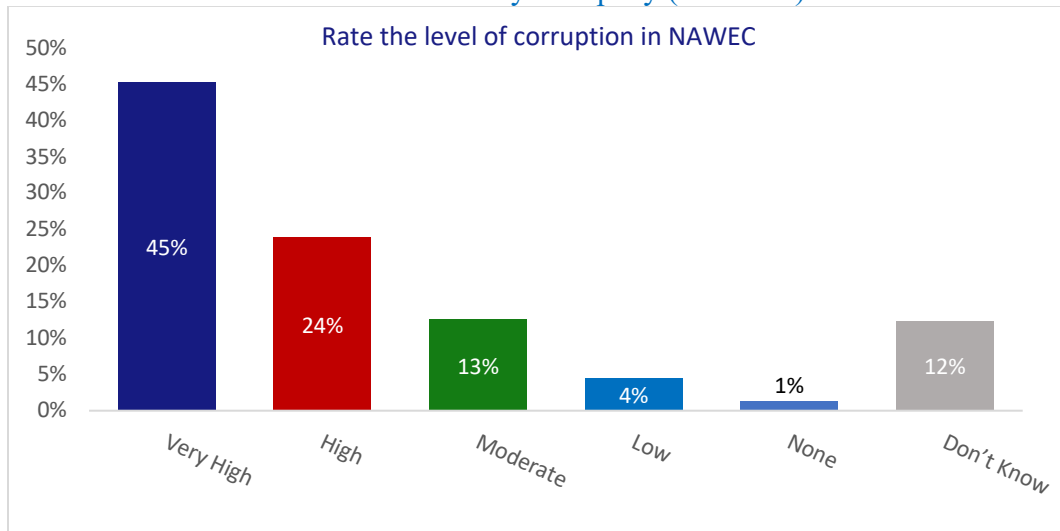
Chart 13. Gambia Immigration Department



The public perception of corruption in the GID is divided. A significant 39% of respondents believe there is no corruption in the institution, making it the single largest category. However, alongside this positive outlook, a notable proportion report corruption at varying levels. About 8% rated corruption as **very high** and 10% as **high**, meaning that nearly one in five respondents (18%) view corruption in the GID as serious. In addition, 14% consider corruption to be present at a **moderate level**, while 20% acknowledge corruption but regard it as **low**.

These findings show that while the 39% “None” response highlights trust in the integrity of the GID for many respondents. The results suggest polarized views: some see the GID as relatively clean, while others remain skeptical, helping explain why it was ranked as the third most corrupt institution overall. Refer to appendix 8 for the regional ratings.

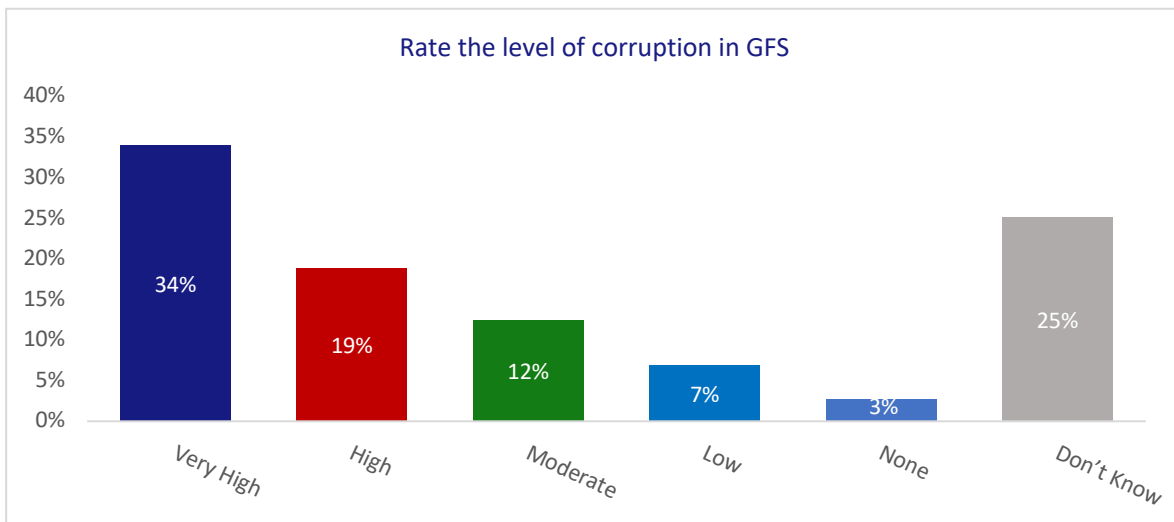
Chart 14. National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC)



The data shows that corruption in NAWEC is perceived as severe and systemic. A large majority, 69% of respondents (45% very high, 24% high), rated corruption as widespread, while only 13% saw it as **moderate**. Very few respondents rated it as **low** (4%) or **non-existent** (1%), signaling minimal trust in the institution's integrity. Additionally, 12 percent reported **Don't Know**, which may reflect limited direct engagement but still leaves the dominant perception overwhelmingly negative.

This points to a crisis of confidence in NAWEC, where the public strongly associates corruption with poor service delivery in electricity and water provision. The high ratings echo frustrations over inefficiency, irregular billing among others reinforcing the view that corruption is not isolated but rather entrenched in the institution's operations. Refer to appendix 9 for the regional ratings.

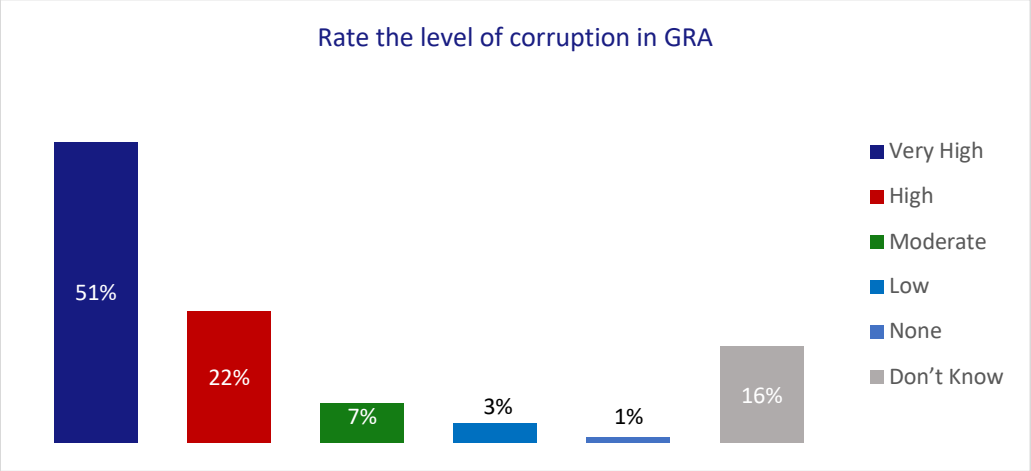
Chart 15. Gambia Ferry Services



The findings reveal that a majority of respondents perceive corruption in the Gambia Ferry Services to be severe, with 34% rating it as **Very High** and 19 percent as **High**, meaning more than half (53%) believe corruption is widespread at the Gambia ferry service. Only a small fraction view corruption as minimal, with 7 percent rating it **Low** and 3 percent **None**, while 12 percent consider it **moderate**. Notably, 25 percent of respondents selected **Don't Know**, reflecting uncertainty, lack of awareness, or limited interaction with the Ferry Services.

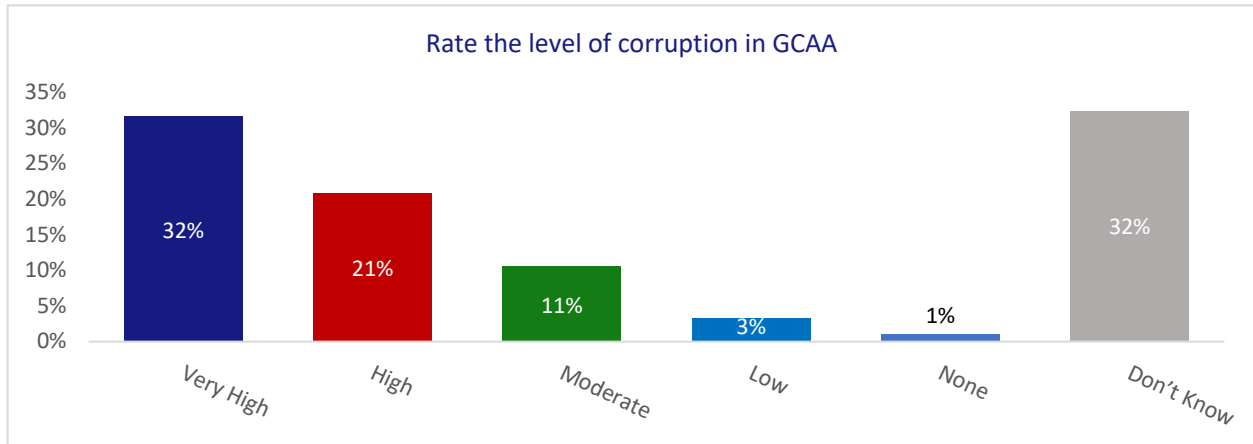
Overall, these results indicate a generally negative perception of corruption, highlighting a significant trust deficit in the institution. The dominance of high corruption ratings underlines the urgent need for reforms, stronger oversight, and anti-corruption measures, while the large share of uncertain responses points to the importance of improving transparency, communication, and public awareness to rebuild confidence in the sector. Refer to appendix 10 for the regional ratings.

Chart 16. Gambia Revenue Authority



The findings show that the Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA) is perceived by the public as highly corrupt, with 51 percent rating corruption as **Very High** and 22 percent as **High**, meaning nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents believe corruption in the institution is widespread. Only a small minority view corruption as minimal, with 3% rating it **Low** and just 1% **None**, while 7% consider it moderate. In addition, 16 percent of respondents selected **Don't Know**, reflecting uncertainty or limited awareness of GRA's internal practices. Overall, these results present a strongly negative perception of corruption within GRA, underscoring a serious trust deficit. The dominance of **very high** and **high** ratings indicates the need for urgent governance reforms and anti-corruption measures, while the relatively high share of uncertain responses highlights the importance of greater transparency and public engagement to restore credibility in the institution. Refer to appendix 11 for the regional ratings.

Chart 17. Gambia Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA)

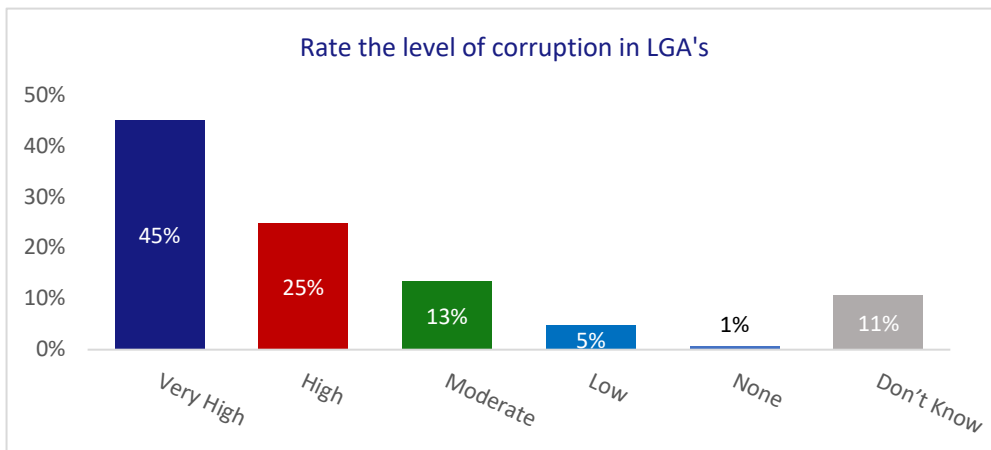


The results reveal that perceptions of corruption in the Gambia Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) are largely negative. Over half of respondents (53%) rated corruption as either **Very High** (32%) or **High** (21%), with an additional 11 percent seeing it as **Moderate**. Very few rated it **Low** (3%) or believed there is **No corruption** (1%), pointing to weak public confidence in the institution's integrity.

At the same time, the fact that 32 percent answered **Don't Know** is significant. This high level of uncertainty may reflect limited transparency and accountability, but it could also indicate low public engagement or direct involvement with GCAA, leaving many without sufficient information to make an assessment.

Taken together, the findings suggest that GCAA faces both a credibility challenge, due to widespread perceptions of corruption, and a visibility challenge, given the high share of respondents who lack knowledge or experience of its operations. Addressing these issues will require strengthened oversight, improved communication, and proactive public engagement to restore trust. Refer to appendix 12 for the regional ratings.

Chart 18. Local Government Authority

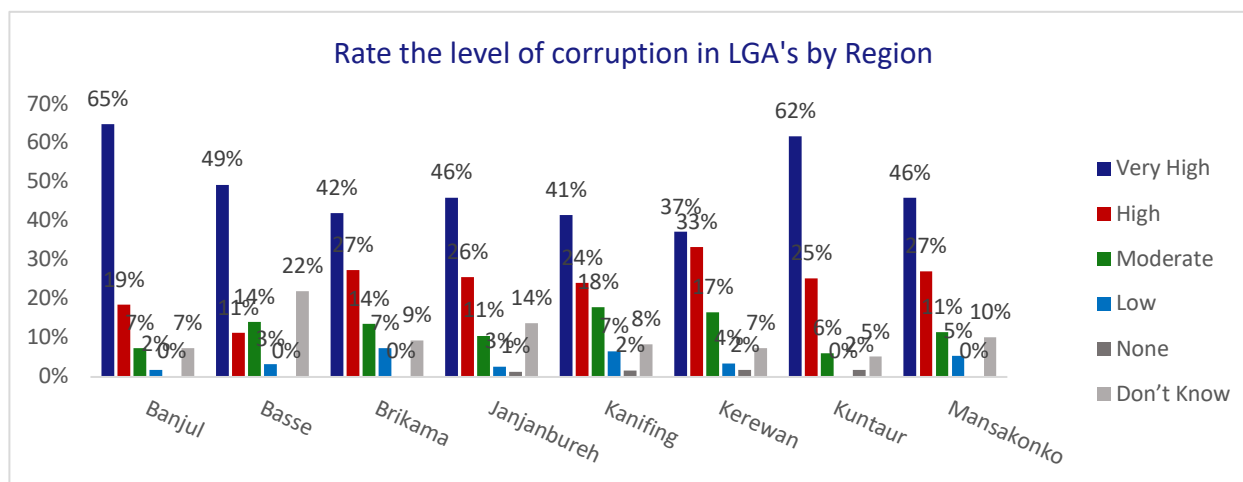


The findings indicate that corruption in Local Government Authorities is perceived to be extremely high, with nearly half of respondents (45%) rating it as **Very High** and another 25% as **High**. Altogether, this means that 70% of respondents believe corruption is severe, pointing to a strong lack of public trust in local governance. A smaller share (13%) rated corruption as **Moderate**, while only 5% and 1% viewed it as **Low** or **None**, respectively, suggesting that very few citizens see local authorities as credible or corruption-free.

The relatively low share of **Don't Know** responses (11%) compared to other institutions, such as GCAA, suggests that people are more directly engaged with local government and therefore feel informed enough to make a judgment. This highlights not only the depth of the corruption problem but also the fact that citizens' frequent interactions with local authorities expose them more directly to such practices.

Overall, the results reveal a serious integrity crisis in local governance, where corruption is seen as widespread and entrenched. Restoring public confidence will require visible anti-corruption reforms, stronger accountability mechanisms, and improved transparency to rebuild trust in local authorities.

Chart 19. Level of Corruption in LGA's by Region



The findings reveal that corruption in Local Government Areas (LGAs) is perceived to be extremely high.

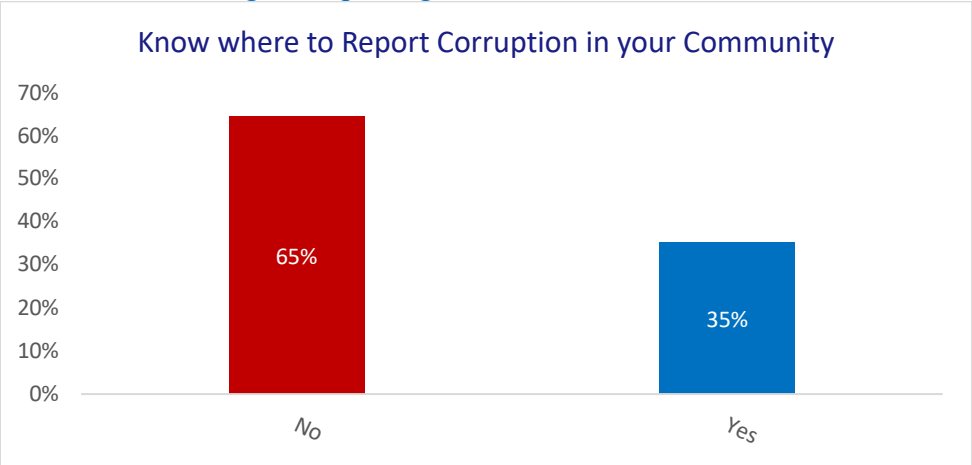
The regional breakdown provides deeper insights into this picture. Although corruption is seen as widespread across all LGAs, the intensity of perception and the degree of certainty differ. In **Banjul, Kuntaur and Basse**, many respondents perceive corruption as severe, but these areas also register some **Don't Know** responses, suggesting that while corruption is recognized, limited transparency and weak interaction with local authorities leave a large segment of the population uncertain. **Janjanbureh** and **Mansakonko** show similar trend with both regions recording corruption as **very high** (46%), higher proportions rating corruption as High or Very High and fewer **Don't Know** responses, implying more direct citizen engagement with local governance.

Brikama presents a more mixed picture, with corruption still strongly perceived as **very high in LGAs** (42%) but 7% described it as **moderate** and 9% **Don't Know**. In **Kanifing**, 18% believe the widespread of corruption in LGAs is **moderate**, the highest moderate response in all the regions.

Together, these results highlight two parallel challenges: the widespread belief that corruption is severe, and the lack of transparency and citizen engagement that leaves many without clear views on the issue. Tackling corruption in local governance will therefore require not only reforms to curb malpractice but also stronger mechanisms to improve openness, accountability, and civic participation. The data confirms that local governance in The Gambia faces both a corruption crisis, visibility crisis, and addressing both will be essential to restoring public trust.

E. Transparency, Accountability & Reporting

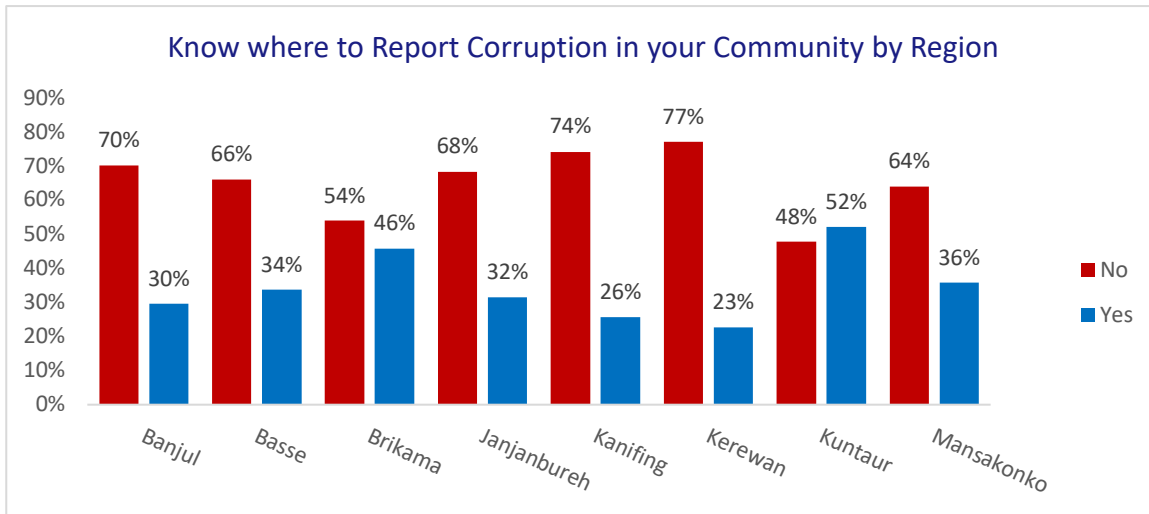
Chart 20. Knowledge of reporting channels.



The chart shows that **only 35% of respondents know how or where to report corruption in their community**, while **65% do not**.

This suggests a **serious gap in awareness** of reporting channels for corruption. Lack of knowledge about reporting mechanisms can weaken anti-corruption efforts, as individuals may witness corruption but fail to act due to uncertainty about procedures or available institutions. The finding points to a need for **greater public education, community outreach, and visibility of anti-corruption agencies** (e.g., hotlines, offices, online platforms).

Chart 21. Knowledge of reporting channels by region



The disaggregation of responses by Local Government Areas (LGAs) reveals notable disparities in citizens’ knowledge of corruption reporting channels. In **Banjul**, the capital city, only 30% of respondents reported knowing where to lodge corruption complaints, compared to 70% who did not. This is striking given that most anti-corruption institutions and offices are concentrated in the capital.

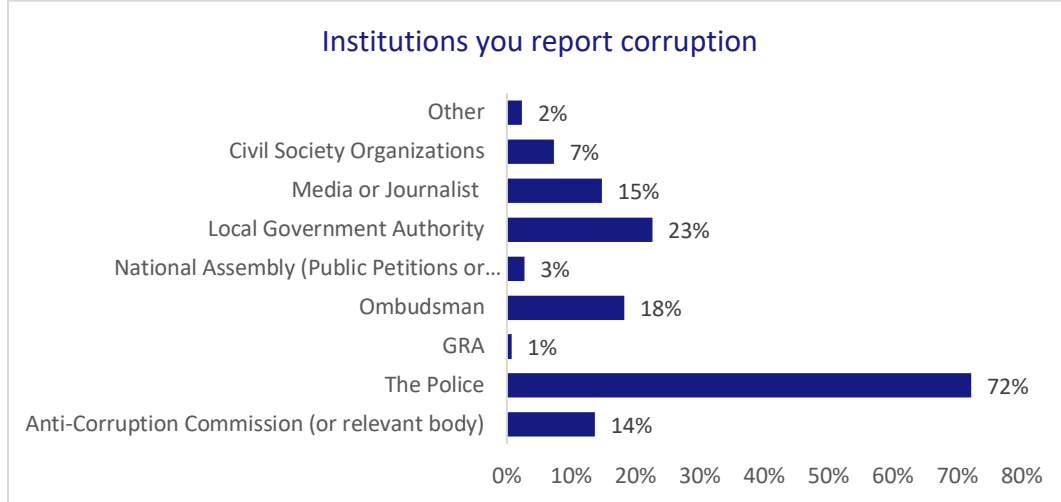
In **Basse**, unawareness levels of corruption reporting channels are also very high, with 34% of respondents indicating knowledge of reporting mechanisms, while 66% did not. Similarly, in **Janjanbureh**, only 32% of respondents knew where to report corruption, leaving a majority of 68% without such knowledge.

The **Kuntaur LGA** stands out with the highest level of awareness, where 52% of respondents indicated familiarity with reporting channels, compared to 48% who did not.

By contrast, **Kanifing** (26%) and **Kerewan** (23%) recorded one of the lowest awareness levels. This is particularly surprising considering Kanifing’s proximity to the capital and its role as a major urban center.

In **Mansakonko**, awareness levels were more balanced, with 64 percent of respondents reporting knowledge of reporting channels and 36 percent indicating otherwise.

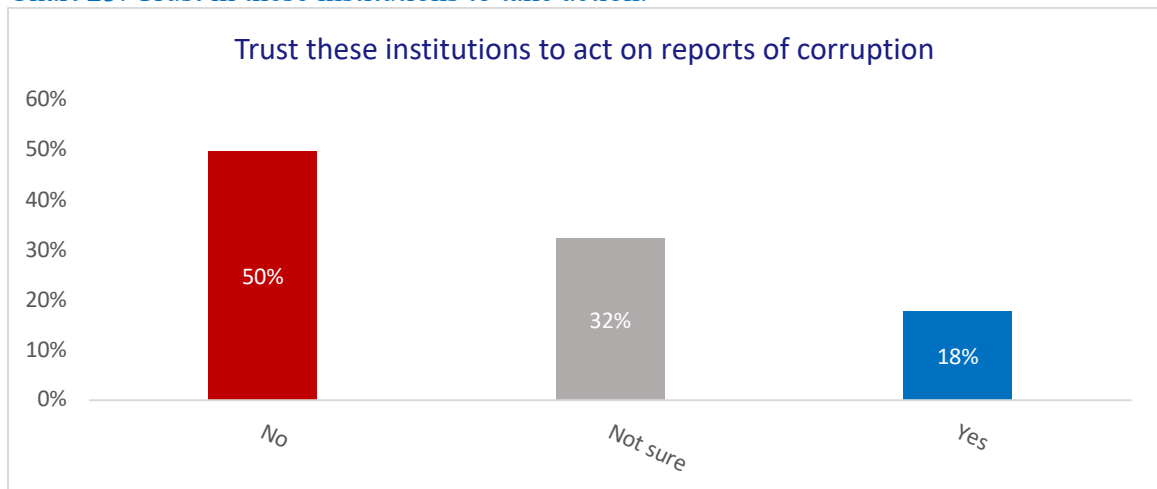
Chart 22. Institutions respondents would report to



Among those who knew how or where to report corruption, most respondents (72%) said they would report to the **Police**, underscoring its visibility but also revealing limited awareness or trust in alternative mechanisms. Specialized anti-corruption bodies were far less cited: only **14%** mentioned the **Anti-Corruption Commission (or relevant body)**, **18%** the **Ombudsman**, and **3%** the **National Assembly’s Public Petitions Committee**. At the local level, **23%** indicated **Local Government Authorities**, while non-state actors such as the **media** (15%) and **CSOs** (7%) were recognized but underutilized.

Note: In this question, respondents can choose more than one option.

Chart 23. Trust in these institutions to take action.

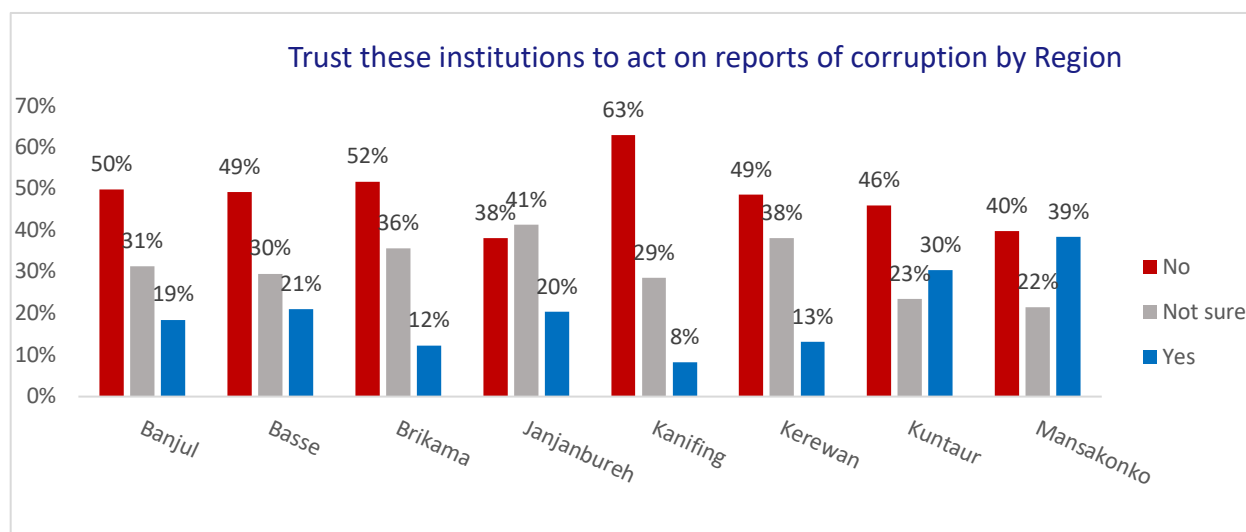


When asked whether they trust institutions to act on reports of corruption, the majority of respondents expressed skepticism. **Half (50%) said No**, indicating widespread doubts about the willingness or capacity of institutions to respond effectively to corruption complaints. Only **18% expressed trust**, suggesting that confidence in institutional accountability remains very limited.

Meanwhile, **32% were uncertain**, reflecting hesitation, lack of awareness, or ambivalence about institutional performance.

This distribution highlights a serious trust deficit: even though many citizens know the formal reporting channels, they doubt whether complaints will actually lead to meaningful action. The high level of uncertainty also suggests gaps in communication and public engagement by oversight bodies, which leaves many Gambians unsure about institutional effectiveness in fighting corruption.

Chart 24. Trust in these institutions to take action by region



The national-level data show low levels of trust, with only 18 percent of respondents confident in institutions, compared to 50 percent who do not trust them and 32 percent who remain unsure. However, when disaggregated by region, notable variations emerge, reflecting differences in local perceptions, institutional presence, and citizen engagement.

In **Banjul**, trust is relatively low: **19% said no**, 50 percent **yes**, and 31% **not sure**. This suggests that in the capital, where citizens are closer to national institutions, perceptions of institutional effectiveness and integrity is relatively low.

A similar trend is observed in **Basse**, where **21% expressed trust**. Here too, negative views (49%) slightly outweigh positive ones (21%), though a significant 30% remain unsure.

In **Brikama**, the most populous region, trust is lower: only **12% said yes**, while 52% said **no** and 36% **not sure**. The high level of uncertainty may reflect the complexity of governance and weak institutional outreach in this large urban setting.

In **Janjanbureh**, **20% expressed trust**, compared to 38% with no trust and 41% **unsure**. The high proportion of uncertainty indicates ambivalence despite a relatively higher **no** response.

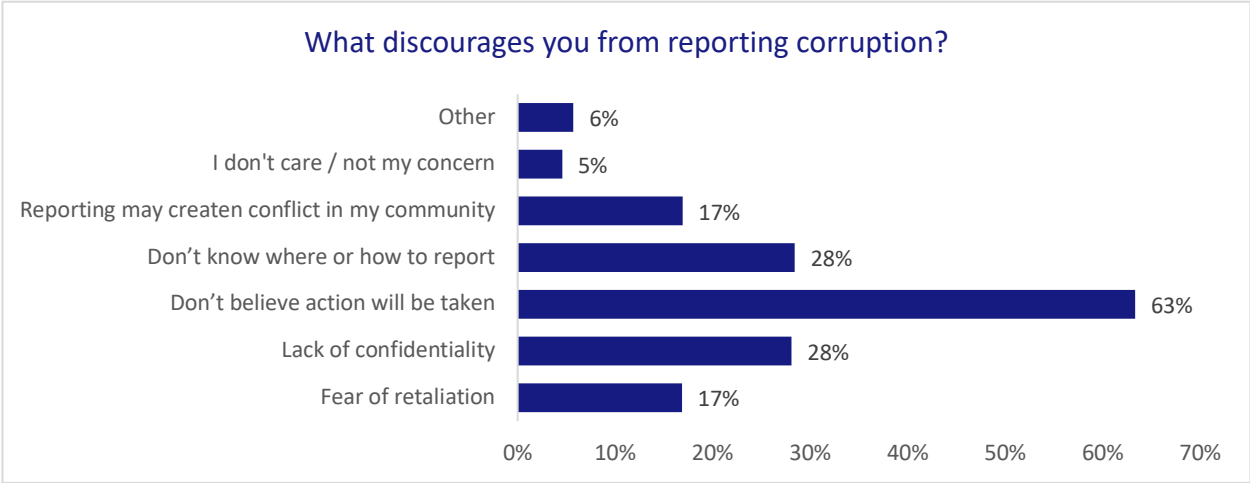
In **Kanifing**, trust levels are notably low, with only **8% saying yes**, compared to **63% no** and **29% not sure**. This indicates strong disillusionment despite the region’s proximity to national institutions.

In **Kerewan**, only **13% expressed trust**, while **49% said no** and **38% were unsure**. The high level of doubt mirrors weak institutional visibility and engagement in this LGA.

In contrast, **Kuntaur** recorded a majority expressing trust: **30% said yes**, compared to **46% no** and **23% not sure**. This is one of only two LGAs where trust levels surpass skepticism, suggesting stronger institutional presence or local responsiveness.

Mansakonko presents a more balanced trust levels with **39% expressed confidence** in institutions, compared to just **40% no** and **22% not sure**. This indicates a comparatively strong belief in institutional accountability at the local level.

Chart 25. Barriers discouraging reporting



The chart illustrates the main factors that discourage people from reporting corruption.

The **most significant barrier** is a lack of confidence in the system, with **63% of respondents stating they do not believe any action will be taken** after reporting. This highlights a serious trust deficit in anti-corruption institutions and accountability mechanisms.

A second set of concerns revolves around **confidentiality and access to reporting mechanisms**. About **28% indicated lack of confidentiality** as a key reason for not reporting, while another **28% said they do not know where or how to report**. This suggests both institutional weaknesses in guaranteeing anonymity and gaps in public awareness of reporting channels.

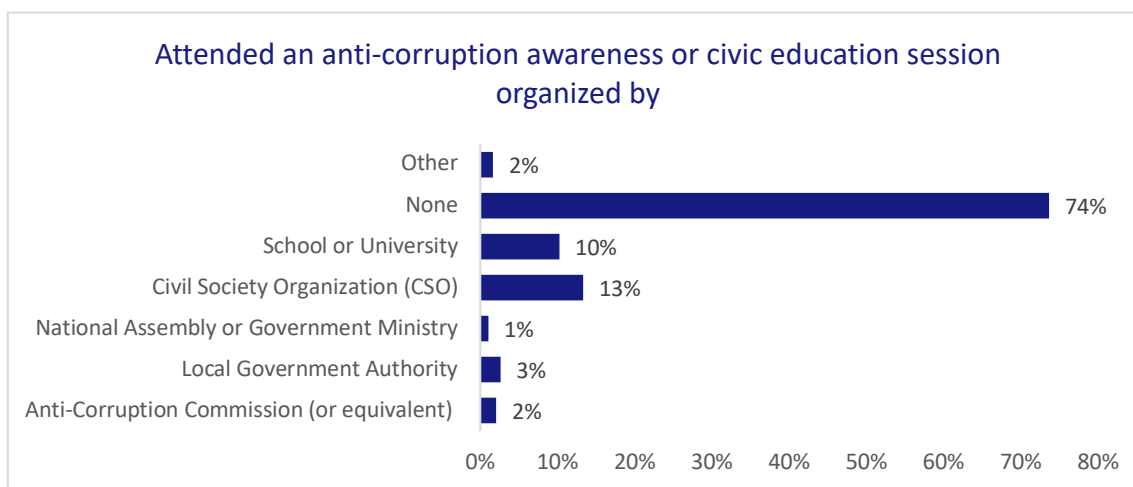
Concerns about **fear of retaliation (17%)** and the possibility that **reporting may create conflict in their community (17%)** reflect broader socio-cultural and security risks attached to

whistleblowing. These fears may be particularly strong in close-knit communities where reporting could expose individuals to stigma or threats.

A smaller proportion indicated **indifference (not my concern) (5%)** or **other reasons (6%)**, showing that while apathy exists, it is not a dominant factor compared to structural and trust-related issues.

In summary, the analysis reveals that the primary deterrent to reporting corruption is the widespread perception that complaints will not lead to meaningful action. This is compounded by concerns over confidentiality, limited knowledge of reporting channels, and fears of retaliation or social conflict. Addressing these challenges requires stronger enforcement of anti-corruption measures, robust whistleblower protections, greater transparency in handling cases, and widespread public awareness campaigns.

Chart 26. Awareness/civic education participation



The data reveals **very low participation** in anti-corruption awareness or civic education sessions across all institutions, with a striking **74% of respondents indicating they have never attended any such session**. This underscores a major gap in outreach and public engagement on anti-corruption education in The Gambia.

Among those who did participate, **Civil Society Organizations (13%)** and **schools/universities (10%)** emerge as the main drivers of awareness efforts, reflecting the stronger role of non-state actors and educational institutions in raising public consciousness. Religious or community-based organizations, while not quantified here, are also potential channels but appear underutilized.

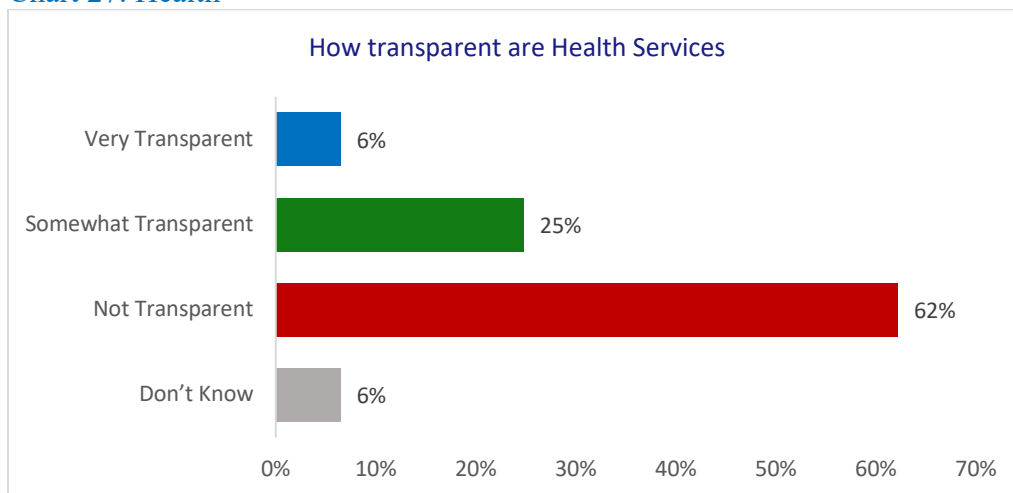
State-led initiatives are **extremely limited**, with only **2% reporting engagement through the Anti-Corruption Commission**, **3% through Local Government Authorities**, and a mere **1% through the National Assembly or government ministries**. This suggests weak institutional investment in public awareness despite the centrality of civic education in preventing corruption.

A small portion (2%) cited "Other," indicating fragmented or one-off efforts by actors not captured in the main categories.

In summary, the findings point to a serious lack of structured, large-scale anti-corruption education. The overwhelming majority of citizens remain unexposed to awareness programs, and where such initiatives exist, they are mainly driven by CSOs and schools rather than government institutions. This reflects both a missed opportunity by state actors and the need for stronger partnerships with community, religious, and educational platforms to reach wider audiences.

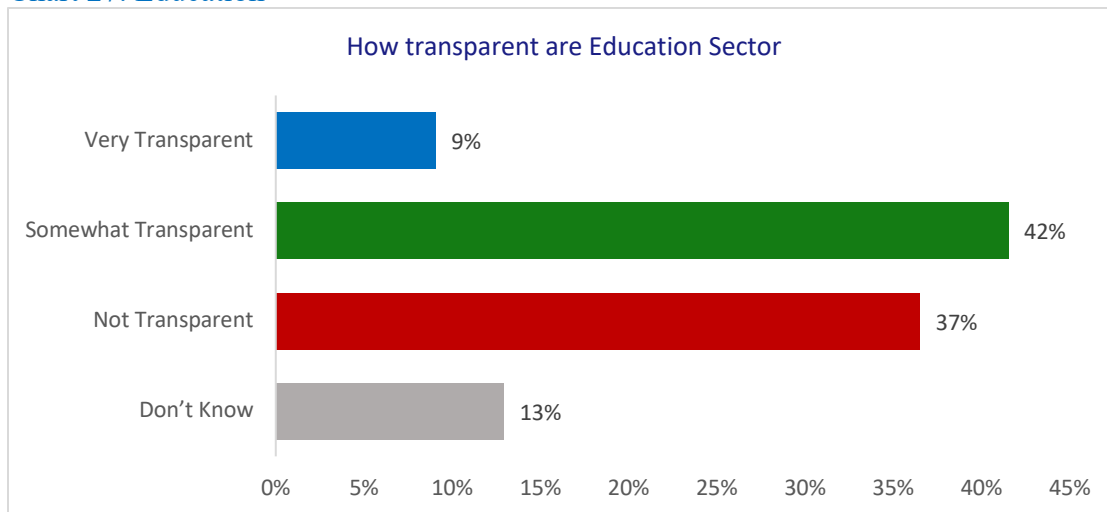
Transparency Ratings for each Public Institution

Chart 27. Health



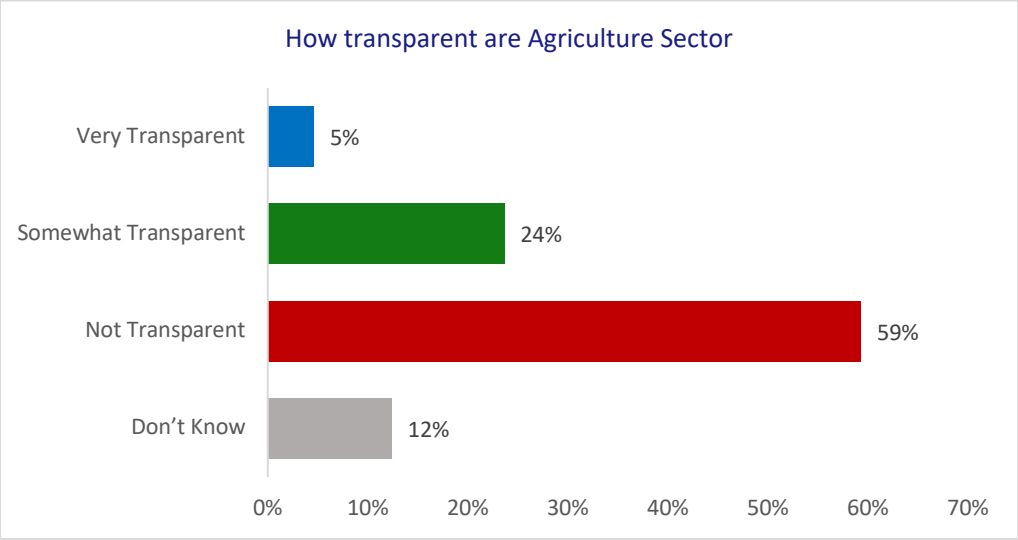
The health sector faces serious credibility challenges, with 62% of respondents perceiving it as not transparent. A quarter (25%) described it as somewhat transparent, and only 6% considered it very transparent. These results reflect growing concerns about accountability in the sector, particularly regarding the use of funds, access to drugs, and delivery of services.

Chart 27. Education



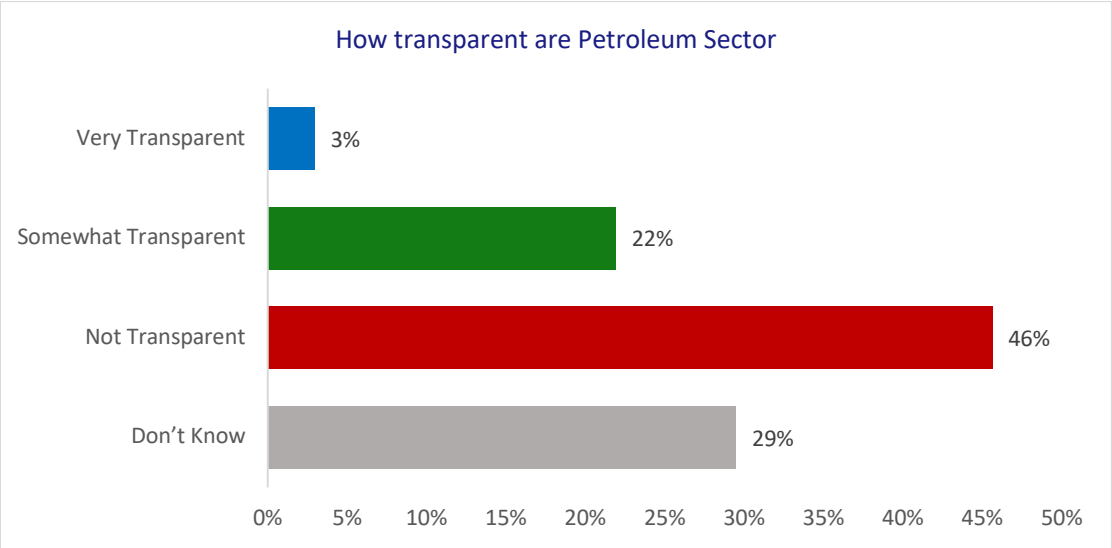
Compared to other institutions, the education sector fared relatively better. While 37% described it as not transparent, a higher proportion (42%) considered it somewhat transparent, and 9% said it is very transparent. This indicates moderate confidence in the sector, though issues of mismanagement and resource allocation remain concerns.

Chart 28. Agriculture



The agriculture sector is also widely seen as unaccountable, with 59% saying it is **not transparent**. Only 24% considered it **somewhat transparent**, and 5% said it is **very transparent**. These findings suggest that Gambians view agricultural governance as weak, despite the sector’s importance to food security and rural livelihoods.

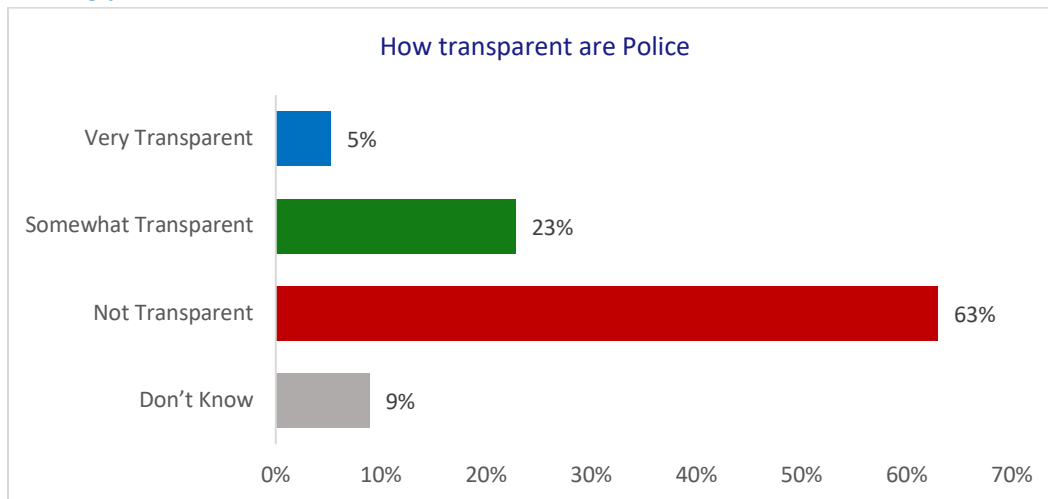
Chart 29. Petroleum



Perceptions of the petroleum sector are also poor, with 46% of respondents stating it is not transparent. Another 22% described it as somewhat transparent, while only 3% viewed it as very

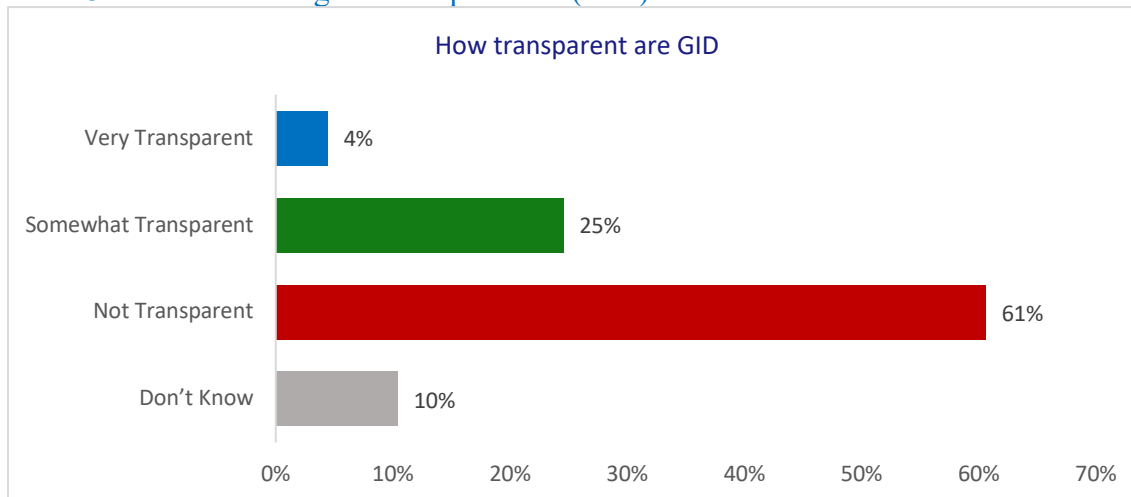
transparent. Notably, 29% of respondents admitted they **don't know**, suggesting a lack of information or public visibility into how the sector is managed.

Chart 30. Police



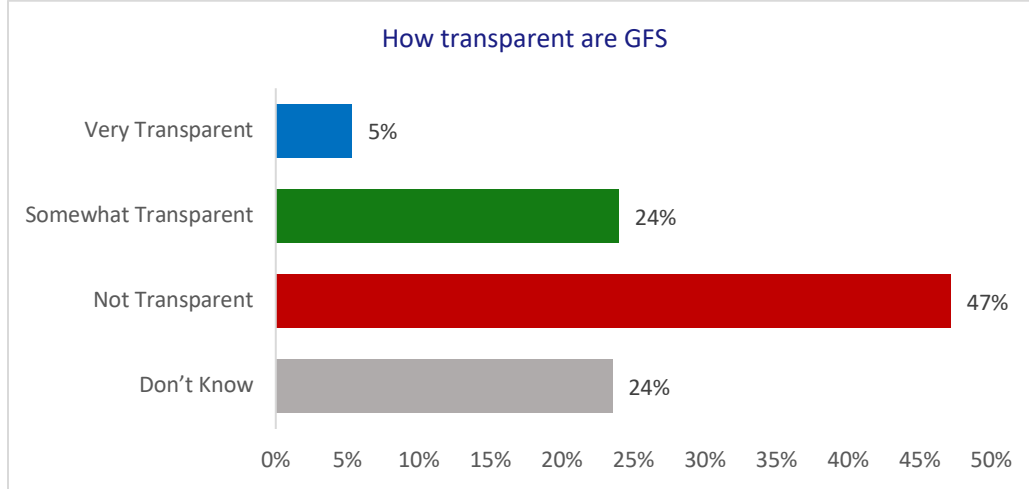
The police are widely perceived as lacking transparency. A striking 63% of respondents believe the police are **not transparent** in handling public funds and service delivery. Only 23% described the institution as **somewhat transparent**, while 5% said it is **very transparent**. This reflects deep mistrust in the police, which may be linked to negative experiences, allegations of corruption, and poor accountability.

Chart 31. Gambia Immigration Department (GID)



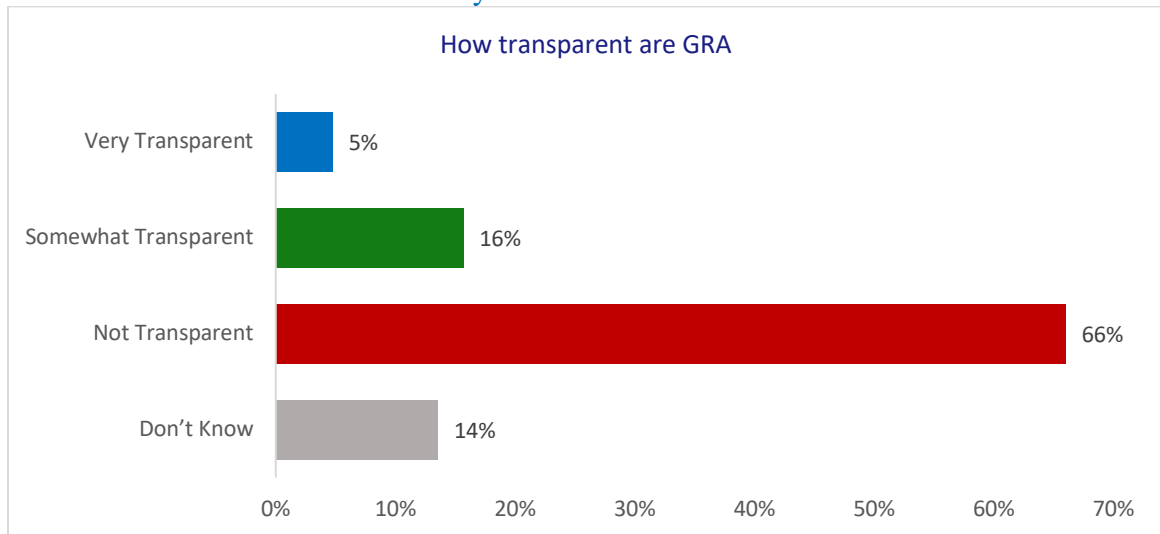
The immigration department received similarly negative ratings, with 61% saying it is **not transparent**. A quarter (25%) described it as **somewhat transparent**, while only 4% said it is **very transparent**. With 10% saying **don't know**, the results suggest that the department is widely distrusted, likely due to perceptions of bribery and favoritism in service delivery.

Chart 32. Gambia Ferry Service (GFS)



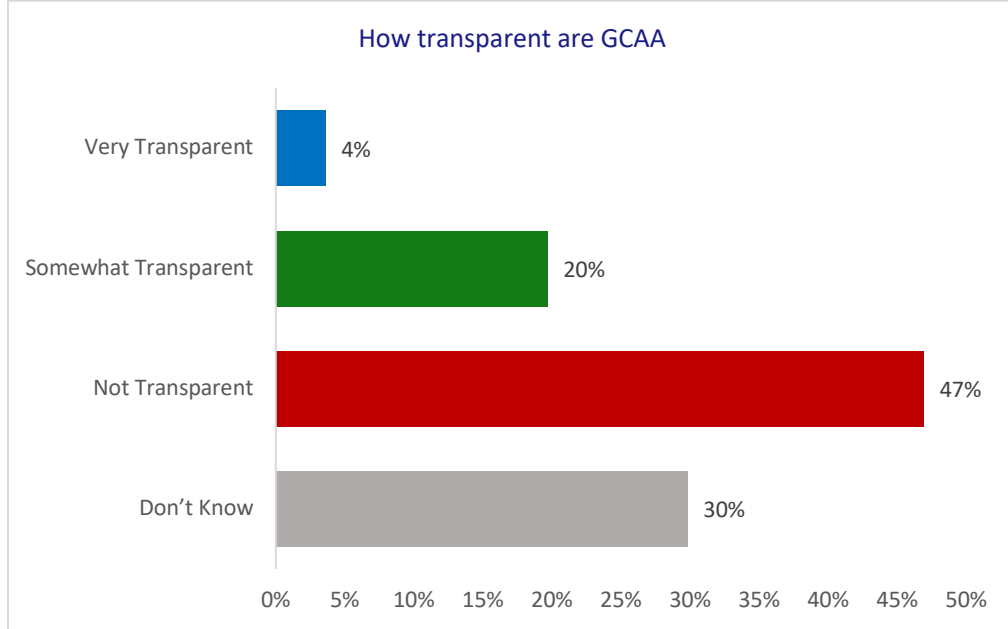
The ferry services are also perceived poorly, with 47% of respondents saying they are **not transparent** and 24% saying they **don't know**. Only 24% described them as **somewhat transparent**, and 5% as **very transparent**. This indicates both distrust and uncertainty about how the institution operates.

Chart 33. Gambia Revenue Authority



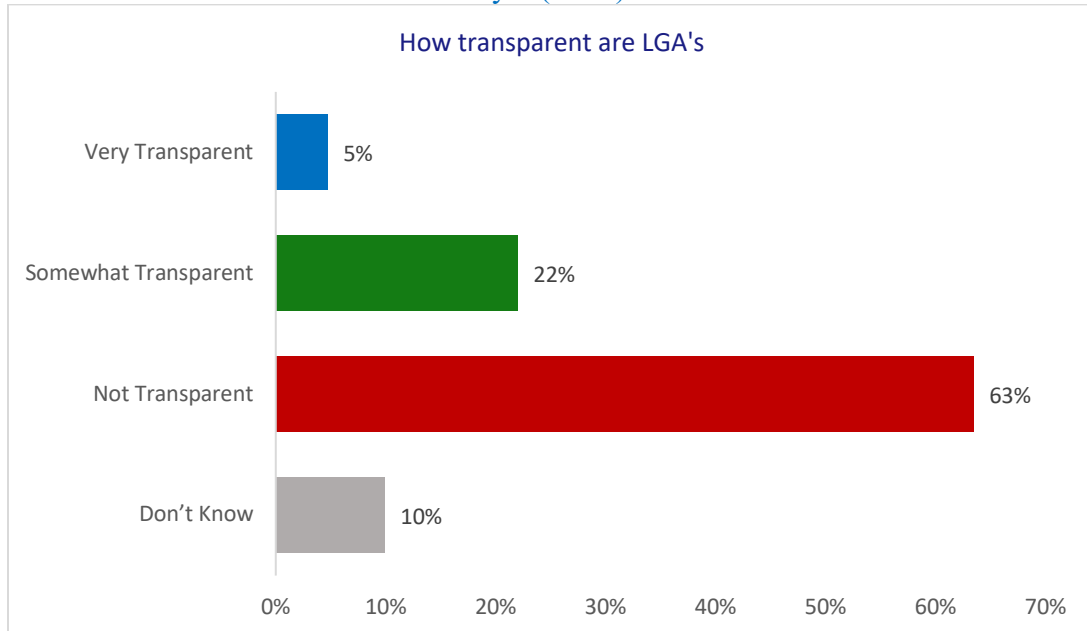
The GRA received the worst transparency rating of all institutions, with 66% of respondents stating it is **not transparent**. Only 16% believed it is **somewhat transparent**, and a mere 5% described it as **very transparent**. This highlights widespread mistrust in the authority responsible for tax collection and revenue management.

Chart 34. Gambia Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA)



Public perceptions of the GCAA are also low, with 47% describing it as **not transparent** and 20% as **somewhat transparent**. Only 4% viewed it as very transparent. A relatively high 30% responded **don't know**, reflecting limited public access to information about aviation governance and operations.

Chart 35. Local Government Authority's (LGA)

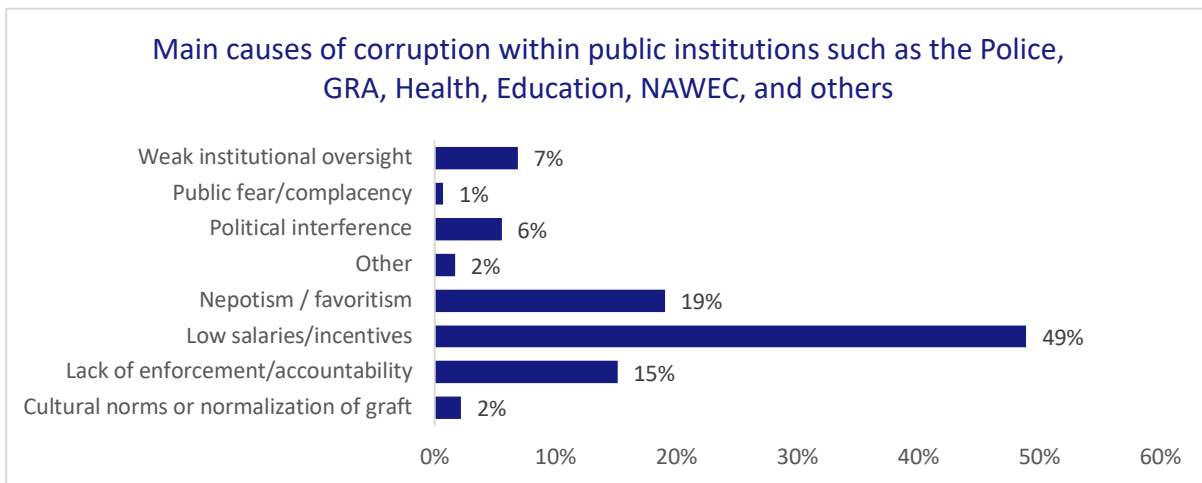


Local governments are also seen as largely unaccountable. Sixty-three percent of respondents rated them as not transparent, while only 22 percent considered them somewhat transparent and 5

percent very transparent. With LGAs playing a crucial role in service delivery, this widespread distrust underscores the need for stronger accountability mechanisms at the local level.

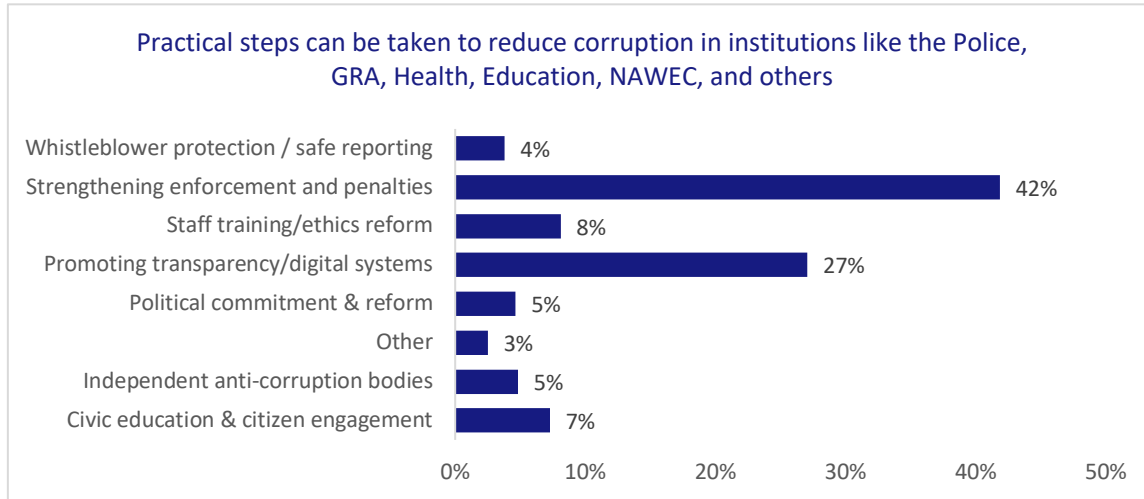
F. Open-Ended Insights

Chart 36. Causes of corruption in institutions



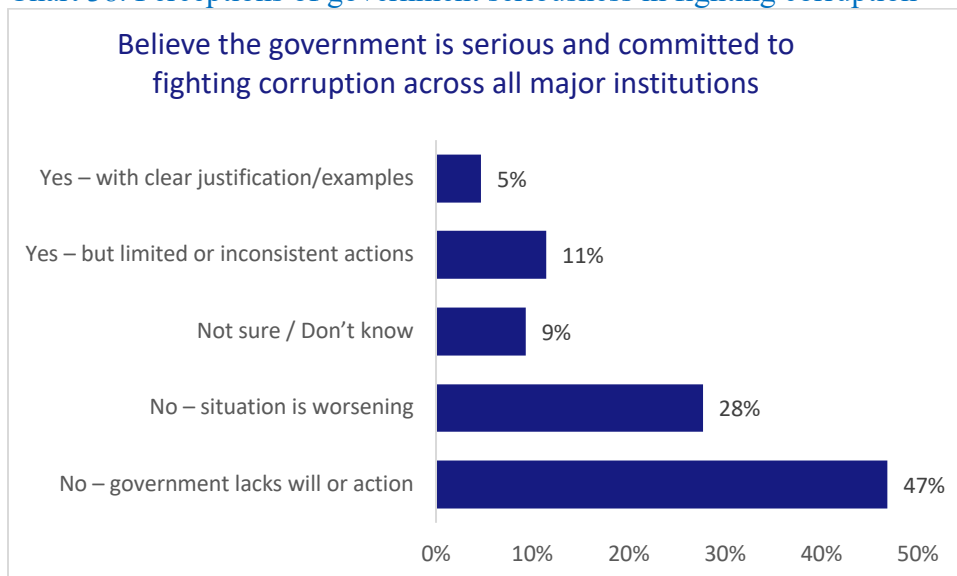
The findings from the survey highlight that corruption within public institutions such as the Police, GRA, Health, Education, and NAWEC is largely driven by structural and economic factors. The majority of respondents (49%) identified **low salaries and incentives** as the main cause of corruption, pointing to the reality that underpaid staff are more likely to resort to corrupt practices as a means of supplementing their income. In addition, **nepotism and favoritism (19%)** were highlighted as significant contributors, reflecting how political patronage and personal networks often undermine merit-based recruitment and accountability. Another key factor is the **lack of enforcement and accountability (15%)**, which demonstrates the weakness of institutional checks and balances. Other causes, such as **weak institutional oversight (7%)**, **political interference (6%)**, and cultural normalization of graft (2%), were noted but ranked lower. Interestingly, only 1% of respondents attributed corruption to public complacency, which suggests that citizens view corruption as being primarily rooted in systemic and governance failures rather than in social or cultural acceptance.

Chart 37. Suggested solutions for reducing corruption



When respondents were asked about practical steps to reduce corruption, their answers emphasized the importance of strengthening accountability mechanisms. The most common recommendation, cited by 42% of participants, was **strengthening enforcement and penalties**. This finding indicates that citizens perceive the persistence of corruption as being directly linked to impunity, where individuals are rarely punished for corrupt practices. Another significant solution identified was **promoting transparency through digital systems (27%)**, which respondents believe can reduce opportunities for corruption by limiting discretionary decision-making and ensuring more traceable transactions. Other proposed measures included **staff training and ethics reforms (8%)**, **civic education and citizen engagement (7%)**, and **independent anti-corruption bodies (5%)**. Meanwhile, **whistleblower protection (4%)** was mentioned less frequently, reflecting limited public confidence in the existence or effectiveness of protective mechanisms for those who report corruption.

Chart 38. Perceptions of government seriousness in fighting corruption



Despite recognizing both the causes of corruption and possible solutions, there remains a widespread **lack of trust in government's commitment** to address the issue. Nearly three-quarters of respondents (75%) believe that the government either lacks the will or is failing to take meaningful action against corruption. Specifically, 47% stated that the government has “no will,” while 28% argued that it has “no action.” Only a small minority (16%) expressed some confidence in the government's seriousness, with 5% citing clear justifications or examples and 11% acknowledging limited but inconsistent actions. A further 9% of respondents were unsure or did not know.

Taken together, the results suggest that Gambians view corruption as being driven more by economic hardship and institutional weaknesses than by cultural or public tolerance. They believe that effective solutions require a combination of deterrence through strict penalties and systemic reforms such as digitization and transparency measures. However, the biggest obstacle identified is the low level of public trust in government commitment. Even if anti-corruption reforms are introduced, the skepticism of citizens toward political leaders' willingness to follow through presents a significant challenge.

5. The Gambia Corruption Index (GCI) Framework

5.1 Method for Constructing the GCI

The Corruption Index (CI) for The Gambia has been designed as a multi-dimensional composite index that integrates perceptions, experiences, and institutional ratings of corruption. It is constructed using five weighted components, each reflecting a key dimension of corruption measurement.

1. **General Perception of Corruption (GPC) (20%)** – This component assesses how respondents perceive the prevalence and seriousness of corruption across institutions. Responses to the question “*How would you rate the level of corruption in the following institutions?*” are scored on a five-point scale (Very High = 5, None = 1). The average institutional score is normalized and weighted to account for 20 percent of the total index.
2. **Personal Experience with Corruption (PEC) (25%)** – This measures the frequency with which respondents directly encountered corrupt practices such as bribery, favoritism, or misuse of office. Service-related experiences are assigned values (Yes = 5, No = 1) to capture actual encounters with corruption. Scores are normalized and weighted to contribute 25 percent of the index, reflecting the importance of lived experiences.
3. **Institutional Corruption Perception (ICP) (35%)** – This is the **core of the index** and the most heavily weighted dimension. Respondents were asked to rate institutions on a scale from 1 (Not corrupt) to 5 (Extremely corrupt). The average institutional rating is normalized and weighted to account for 35 percent of the index. This ensures that institutions perceived as highly corrupt are ranked accordingly.
4. **Transparency, Accountability, and Reporting (TAR) (15%)** – Respondents rated the transparency and accountability of institutions using a five-point scale (1 = Very transparent, 5 = Very not transparent). Higher scores indicate lower levels of transparency and accountability, which are treated as proxies for corruption risk. These ratings contribute 15 percent to the total index.

5. **Open-Ended Insights (OEI) (5%)** – Qualitative responses regarding the causes, severity, and solutions to corruption were systematically coded into categories ranging from “None” (score = 1) to “Severe and frequent allegations” (score = 5). These insights provide contextual nuance and account for 5 percent of the index.

The final Corruption Index for each institution is computed as:

$$\text{CI Score} = A + B + C + D + E$$

Where:

- A = General Perception (0–20)
- B = Personal Experience (0–25)
- C = Institutional Perception (0–35)
- D = Transparency & Accountability (0–15)
- E = Open-Ended Insights (0–5)

This composite index produces a **score between 0 and 100 for each institution**, enabling straightforward comparisons and rankings.

5.2 Interpretation of Scores

The Corruption Index is interpreted on a **five-band scale**:

- **0–20 → Very Low Corruption**
- **21–40 → Low Corruption**
- **41–60 → Moderate Corruption**
- **61–80 → High Corruption**
- **81–100 → Very High Corruption**

This classification enables policymakers, researchers, and the public to understand not only which institutions are perceived as more corrupt, but also the **intensity and severity of those perceptions**. For example, an institution scoring 65 would be classified as “High Corruption,” while one scoring 85 would fall under “Very High Corruption.”

5.3 Results of the Corruption Index

Table 1 presents the CI results for key public institutions in The Gambia.

Table 1: Corruption Index Scores by Institution

Institution	GPC (20%)	PEC (25%)	ICP (35%)	TAR (15%)	OEI (5%)	Total Score	CI Category
Police	15.45	15.63	26.87	11.66	4.57	74.18	High
Petroleum Sector	11.10	2.56	21.81	8.91	4.57	48.95	Moderate
Health service	15.67	9.87	26.58	11.76	4.57	68.45	High
Education Sector	12.47	4.72	22.02	9.48	4.57	53.26	Moderate
Agriculture Sector	14.23	4.05	24.98	11.17	4.57	58.99	Moderate
GRA	14.78	4.82	27.18	11.45	4.57	62.81	High
GCAA	11.26	2.54	22.78	8.92	4.57	50.06	Moderate
LGA	15.06	4.57	26.60	11.63	4.57	62.44	High
GFS	11.97	4.10	23.24	9.39	4.57	53.27	Moderate
NAWEC	14.82	5.10	26.62	10.39	4.57	61.50	High
GID	8.10	8.62	26.47	11.43	4.57	59.18	Moderate
Other	1.06	1.06	29.25	10.35	4.57	46.29	Moderate

(Source: GCI Survey 2025, authors' computation)

5.3 Interpretation of Findings

The results reveal significant institutional variation in corruption perceptions:

- **Most Corrupt Institutions (High Corruption):** The Police (CI = 74.18) are perceived as the most corrupt institution, followed by the Health Service (CI = 68.45). The Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA) (CI = 62.81), Local Government Authorities (CI = 62.44), and the National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC) (CI = 61.50) also fall within the high-corruption category. Collectively, these findings underscore widespread public concerns over bribery, extortion, favoritism, and weak accountability mechanisms in law enforcement, health service delivery, tax administration, local governance, and utility provision.
- **Moderately Corrupt Institutions:** The Education sector (CI = 53.26), Agriculture (CI = 58.99), and the Petroleum sector (CI = 48.95) are perceived as moderately corrupt.

Similarly, the Gambia Ferry Service (CI = 53.27), the Gambia Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) (CI = 50.06), and the Gambia Immigration Department (CI = 59.18) also fall within this category, alongside “Other Institutions” (CI = 46.29). While corruption remains a concern across these sectors, it is reported and experienced less frequently compared to high-corruption institutions such as the Police, Health, and GRA.

- **Transparency and Accountability Weaknesses:** Across institutions, transparency (TAR scores averaging 9–12 out of 15) remains a concern. Respondents report limited trust in reporting mechanisms and poor institutional responsiveness to corruption complaints.
- **Open-Ended Insights:** Respondents frequently cited **low salaries, weak enforcement, and political interference** as drivers of corruption, especially in security and service-delivery institutions.

5.4 Comparative Perspective

While the GCI is a national index, results align with broader **regional and global benchmarks**. Transparency International’s **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)** consistently highlights law enforcement and service-delivery sectors as vulnerable in Sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, World Bank governance indicators point to systemic weaknesses in accountability and institutional checks in the region.

The GCI therefore provides a complementary, localized lens for tracking corruption trends in The Gambia, offering disaggregated, institution-specific evidence to guide reform priorities.

6. Risks and Limitations

While the perception-based methodology provides valuable insights into public views on corruption in The Gambia, the study is not without challenges and limitations.

Risk	Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Data Reliability Issues	Respondents may underreport corruption experiences due to fear of retaliation or reluctance to disclose sensitive information.	Medium	High	Guarantee anonymity, train enumerators on confidentiality, emphasize informed consent.
Social Desirability Bias	Respondents may give “acceptable” answers instead of honest ones, leading to misrepresentation of corruption levels.	High	Medium	Enumerator training on neutral probing, reassure respondents, cross-check responses with multiple questions.
Perception vs. Reality Gap	The Index relies on perceptions that may not always align with	High	Medium	Clearly communicate limitations, use multiple indicators (perception + experience + transparency),

	actual corruption cases.			complement with secondary sources where available.
Limited Scope of Measurement	The survey provides a snapshot and does not capture long-term or hidden corruption (e.g., procurement, political financing).	Medium	Medium	Position CI as a baseline; recommend follow-up studies and integration with administrative/judicial data.
Non-response / Fatigue	Respondents may decline participation or provide incomplete answers due to survey length or sensitivity.	Low–Medium	Medium	Keep questionnaire concise, rotate sensitive questions, allow flexible participation (online/phone where possible).
Sampling Gaps	Some regions, demographics, or institutions may be underrepresented due to resource/time constraints.	Low	High	Use stratified random sampling; ensure proportional representation across LGAs, gender, and age groups.
Enumerator Bias	Inconsistent recording or influence by enumerators could affect data quality.	Low	Medium	Provide detailed enumerator manuals, role-play training, and close supervision during data collection.

Despite inherent limitations, the application of these mitigation strategies strengthens the validity and reliability of the Gambia Corruption Index (CI). By carefully interpreting perception-based data alongside contextual knowledge, the Index offers an important baseline for tracking corruption, shaping reforms, and informing evidence-based advocacy.

7. Recommendations

The findings of the Corruption Index (CI) survey reveal both systemic and institution-specific challenges that require bold and coordinated reforms. Based on the data and analysis, the following recommendations are proposed:

7.1 Policy and Institutional Reforms

There is an urgent need for comprehensive policy frameworks that embed anti-corruption safeguards across public institutions. This includes mainstreaming anti-corruption clauses in sectoral policies (health, education, energy, and security) and strengthening enforcement of existing laws such as the Anti-Corruption Act. Institutional reforms should focus on enhancing

internal audit systems, closing loopholes in procurement and financial management, and ensuring merit-based recruitment and promotion to reduce opportunities for rent-seeking behavior.

7.2 Strengthening Oversight Bodies

Independent oversight institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission, the National Audit Office, and parliamentary committees must be adequately resourced, insulated from political interference, and empowered to carry out their mandates effectively. Stronger coordination among these bodies is essential to avoid duplication and ensure systematic follow-up on audit findings, corruption cases, and public complaints.

7.3 Enhancing Whistleblower and Citizen Engagement Mechanisms

The creation of robust, secure, and anonymous whistleblower systems is critical to encouraging reporting without fear of retaliation. At the same time, citizen engagement platforms, such as community scorecards, hotlines, and public complaint desks, should be institutionalized within major service delivery sectors. Public education campaigns must be sustained to raise awareness of citizens' rights and available reporting mechanisms.

7.4 Increasing Salaries and Incentives for Frontline Staff

Low wages and poor working conditions are consistently cited as drivers of petty corruption. Improving the remuneration and incentives of frontline staff (e.g., police officers, teachers, health workers, customs officials) will reduce the incentive for informal payments while improving morale and professionalism. Incentives should be performance-based and tied to transparent evaluation mechanisms.

7.5 Leveraging Technology for Transparency and Accountability

Digital tools offer powerful opportunities to reduce human discretion and limit corruption risks. Expanding e-governance platforms—such as e-tax filing, e-procurement, biometric payroll systems, and digital service delivery portals—can significantly reduce face-to-face interactions where bribery often occurs. Open data platforms should also be promoted to provide citizens and civil society with access to budgetary, procurement, and service delivery information in real time.

7.6 Prioritized Action Matrix

Priority Area	Short-term (0–12 months)	Medium-term (1–3 years)	Long-term (3+ years)
Policy & Institutional Reforms	Prioritize the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission and National Assembly taken serious action on audit recommendations from NAO.	Mainstream anti-corruption clauses in sectoral policies; establish clear sanction frameworks.	Institutionalize periodic corruption risk assessments across all sectors.
Oversight Bodies	Provide immediate funding for Anti-Corruption Commission & Audit Office; enforce compliance with audit recommendations.	Build technical capacity, case management systems, and independent monitoring frameworks.	Entrench autonomy through constitutional reforms ensuring independence of oversight bodies.
Whistleblower & Citizen Engagement	Launch secure whistleblower hotline and online portal; roll out civic education campaigns.	Expand citizen scorecards and social accountability tools in priority sectors.	Institutionalize whistleblower protections in national legislation with guaranteed anonymity.
Salaries & Incentives	Reform the current pay scale of The Gambia and introduce targeted allowances for frontline staff in high-risk sectors (police, customs, health).	Establish performance-based pay systems and transparent promotion criteria.	Implement long-term public service reform focusing on professionalization and sustainability.
Technology for Transparency	Pilot e-procurement and digital tax systems; roll out biometric payroll verification.	Scale up e-governance portals and integrate across ministries.	Develop a national open-data hub providing real-time transparency in budgets, contracts, and service delivery.

8. Conclusion

The findings of the Gambia Corruption Index (CI) provide a comprehensive picture of how corruption is perceived and experienced across key public institutions. The survey revealed widespread perceptions of corruption, with some institutions—such as the Police, the Gambia Revenue Authority, and NAWEC—consistently ranked among the most affected. Personal experiences of bribery, favoritism, and impunity remain common, while trust in reporting and accountability mechanisms is limited. Despite these challenges, the survey also highlighted growing public awareness of corruption and strong citizen demand for transparency, accountability, and reform.

The introduction of a nationally owned, perception-based Corruption Index represents a major step forward for The Gambia. By providing systematic, evidence-driven insights into corruption trends, the CI allows government, civil society, and oversight bodies to monitor progress over time and hold institutions accountable. Unlike international indices, this national index is tailored to the Gambian context, reflecting local realities and offering actionable information for targeted reforms. Sustaining and institutionalizing this index will be vital for measuring the effectiveness of anti-corruption policies, building public trust, and reinforcing democratic governance.

Looking ahead, the next steps are clear. The government must prioritize the strengthening of oversight institutions, enforcement of anti-corruption laws, and digitalization of service delivery to reduce opportunities for rent-seeking. Civil society organizations should continue to play a watchdog role, ensuring that citizen voices remain central in the fight against corruption. Development partners can complement these efforts by providing technical and financial support for scaling up the index, investing in capacity building, and promoting cross-country learning within ECOWAS and beyond.

Ultimately, the Corruption Index should not remain a one-off exercise but evolve into a permanent monitoring tool. Its regular publication will foster transparency, stimulate constructive dialogue, and sustain pressure for reforms. By committing to this process, The Gambia can take decisive steps toward building transparent institutions, restoring public trust, and advancing inclusive and sustainable development.

9. Key Takeaways

1. Purpose and Scope

- The Gambia Corruption Index (GCI) is the first nationally owned, systematic tool to measure corruption perceptions and experiences in the country.
- It combines citizen surveys, institutional ratings, and qualitative insights to provide a baseline for monitoring corruption trends and guiding reforms.
- The survey reached 1,556 respondents nationwide, ensuring representation across regions, age groups, gender, and employment sectors.

2. Major Findings

- **High Perceived Prevalence:** 90% of respondents believe corruption in The Gambia is widespread, with 81% saying it has increased in the last 12 months.
- **Most Corrupt Institutions:** The Police (CI = 74.18), Health Service (CI = 68.45), Gambia Revenue Authority (62.81), Local Government Authorities (62.44), and NAWEC (61.50) are rated as “High Corruption.”
- **Moderately Corrupt Institutions:** Education, Agriculture, Petroleum, Gambia Ferry Service, Immigration, and GCAA fall in the moderate range (46–59).
- **Low Reporting Rates:** Only 8% of corruption incidents were reported. Citizens overwhelmingly cited lack of trust (63%), lack of confidentiality (28%), and fear of retaliation (17%) as barriers.

- **Weak Trust in Institutions:** Only 18% of respondents trust institutions to act on corruption cases, while 50% do not. Trust is lowest in Kanifing (8%) and Brikama (12%), but higher in Mansakonko (39%) and Kuntaur (30%).
- **Root Causes:** Low salaries (49%), nepotism/favoritism (19%), and weak enforcement (15%) are identified as the main drivers of corruption.
- **Government Commitment Questioned:** 75% of respondents believe the government lacks either the will or the action to fight corruption effectively.

3. Risks and Limitations

- Reliance on perceptions may not fully align with actual corruption cases.
- Fear of disclosure and social desirability bias likely led to underreporting.
- The survey provides a **snapshot**, not long-term monitoring.

4. Recommendations

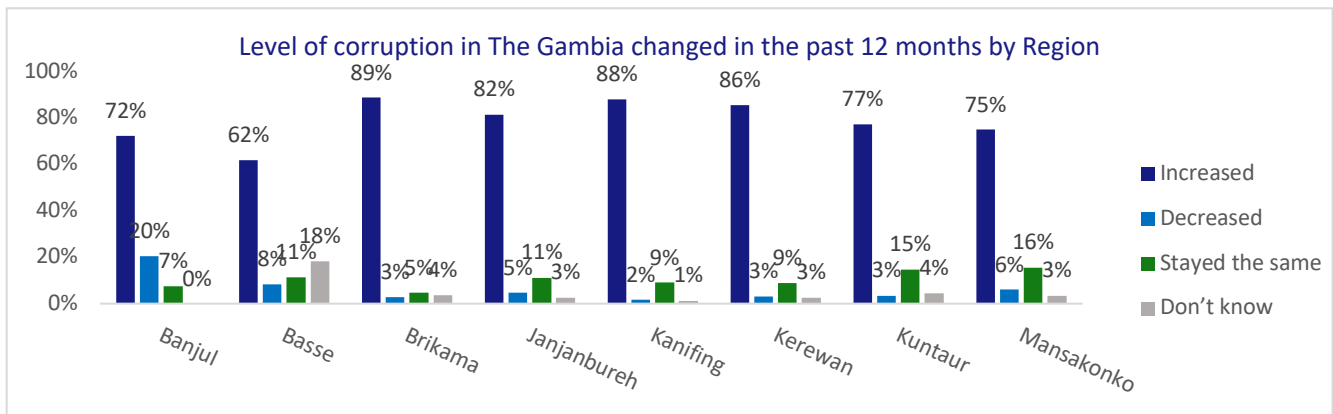
- **Policy & Institutional Reforms:** Establish and strengthen the Anti-Corruption Commission, close procurement loopholes, and institutionalize risk assessments. Reform accountability institutions in taking actions on reported corruption cases.
- **Oversight Bodies:** Resource and insulate the Anti-Corruption Commission, Audit Office, and Parliament from political interference.
- **Whistleblower & Citizen Engagement:** Launch secure hotlines, portals, and community scorecards; guarantee protections.
- **Staff Incentives:** Revise the grading scale, improve salaries and working conditions for frontline staff in high-risk sectors (police, GRA, health, etc.).
- **Technology & Transparency:** Expand e-procurement, e-tax filing, digital payroll, and open data platforms to reduce opportunities for bribery.

5. Strategic Importance

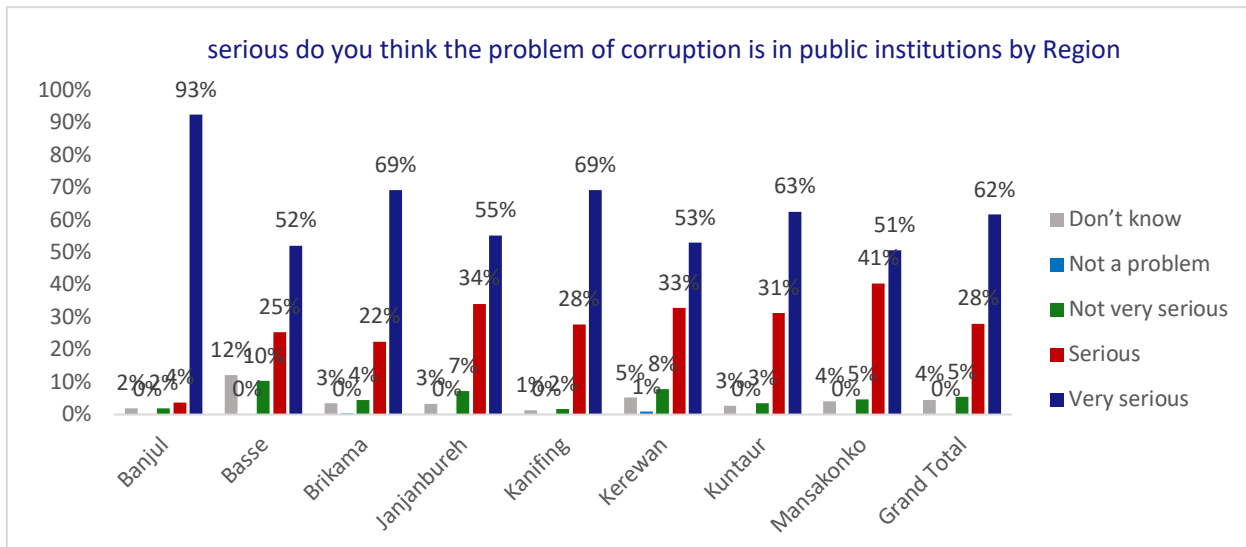
- The GCI aligns with **SDG 16** (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), offering a localized tool for tracking corruption.
- It complements international indices by providing granular, institution-specific data relevant to Gambian realities.
- Sustaining and institutionalizing the GCI as a permanent monitoring framework will be crucial for building accountability and restoring public trust.

10. Appendices

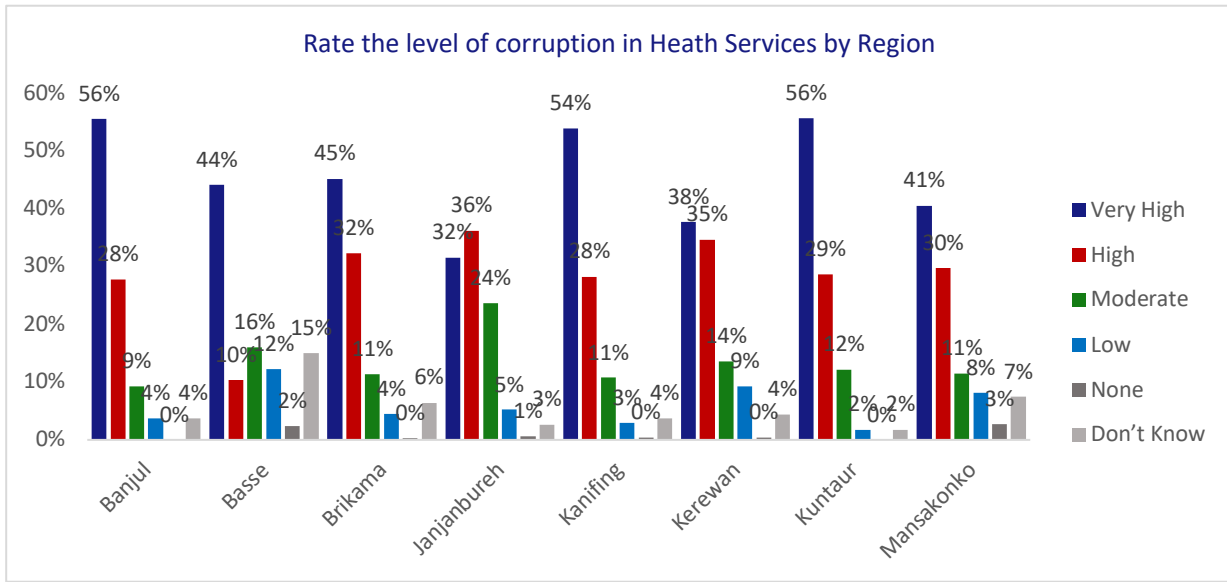
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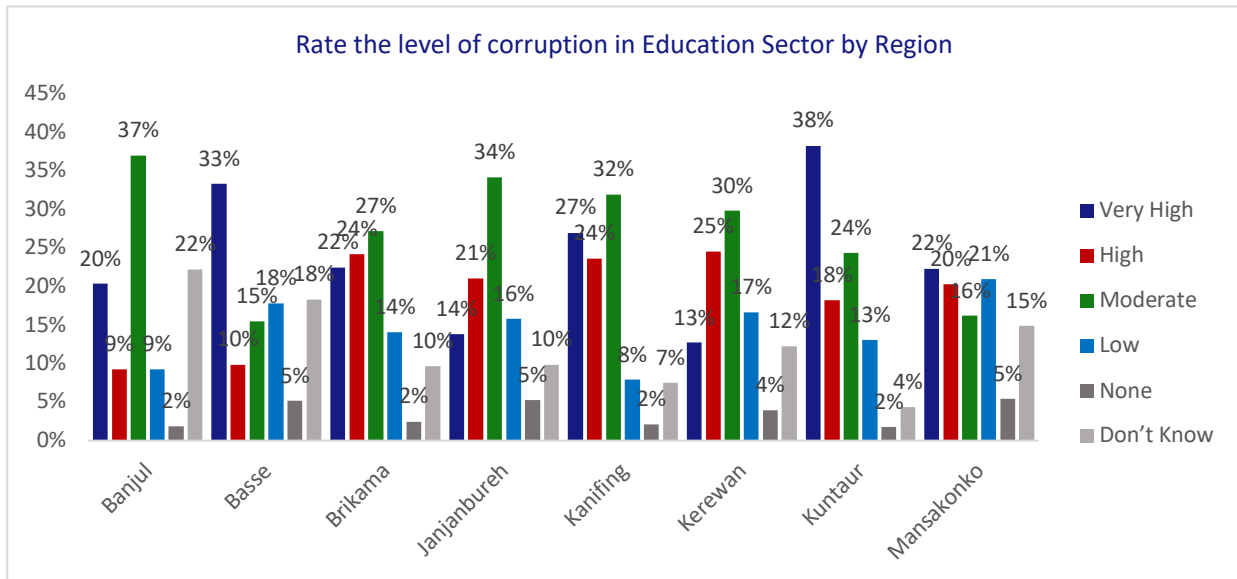
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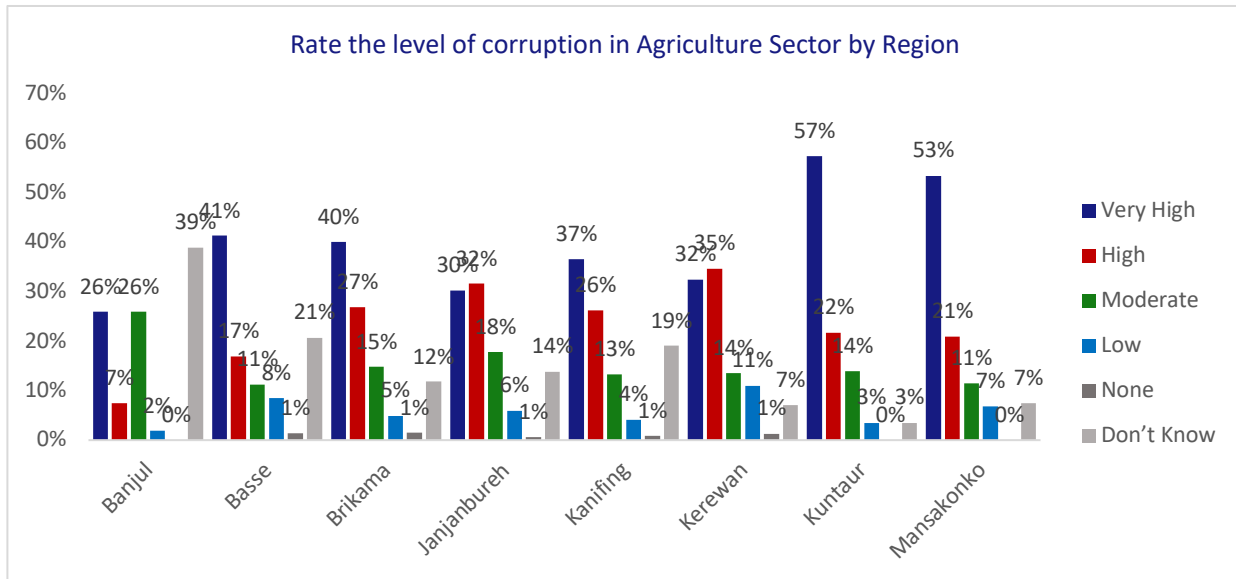
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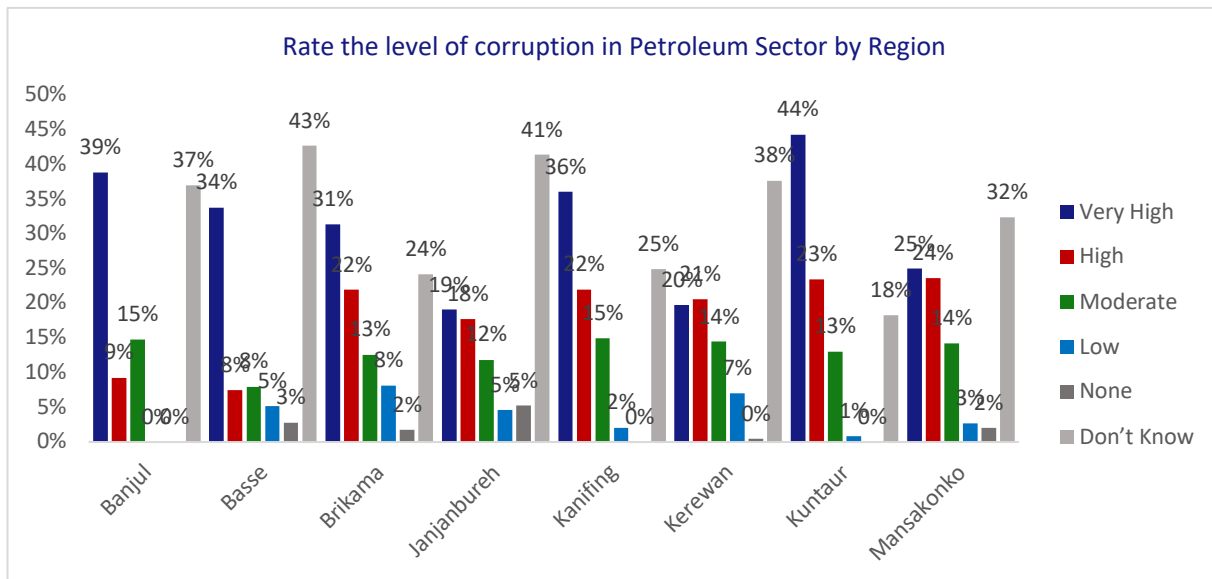
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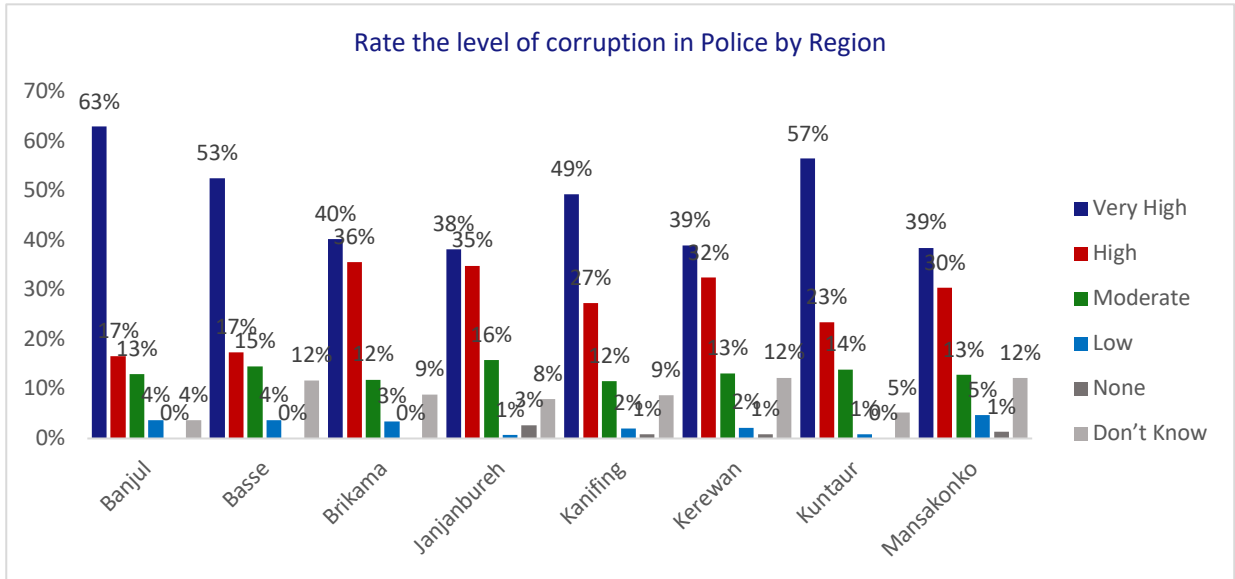
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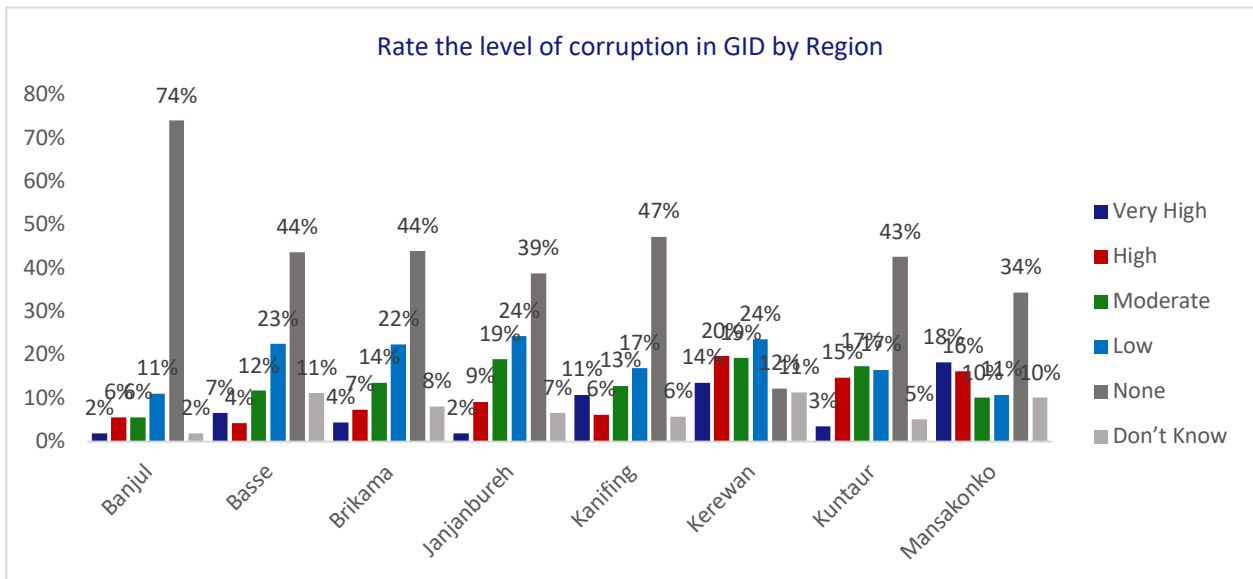
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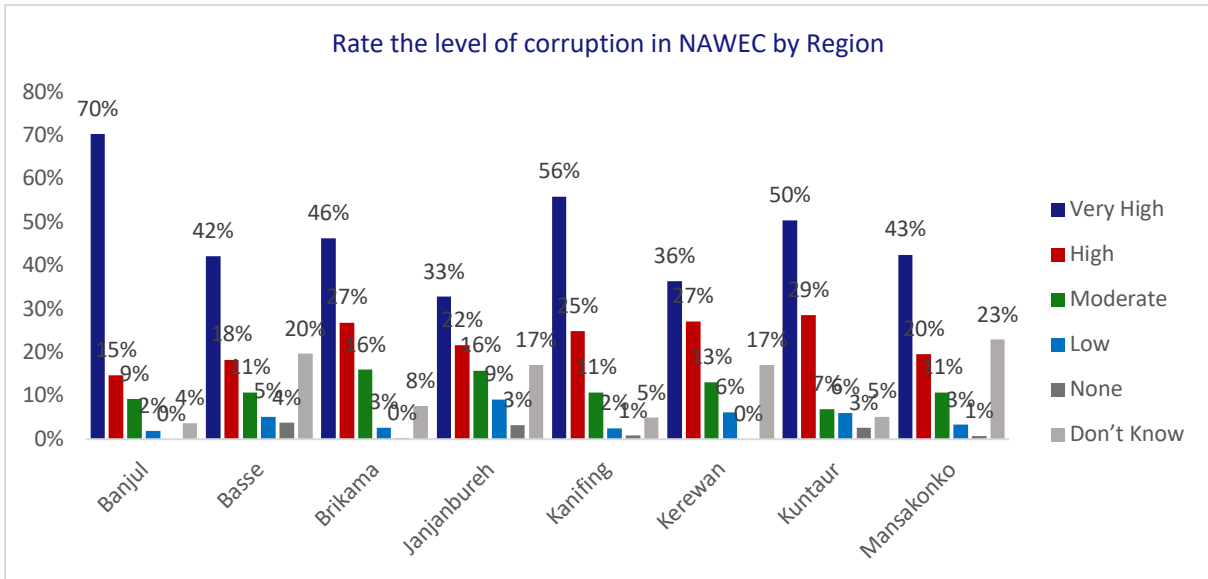
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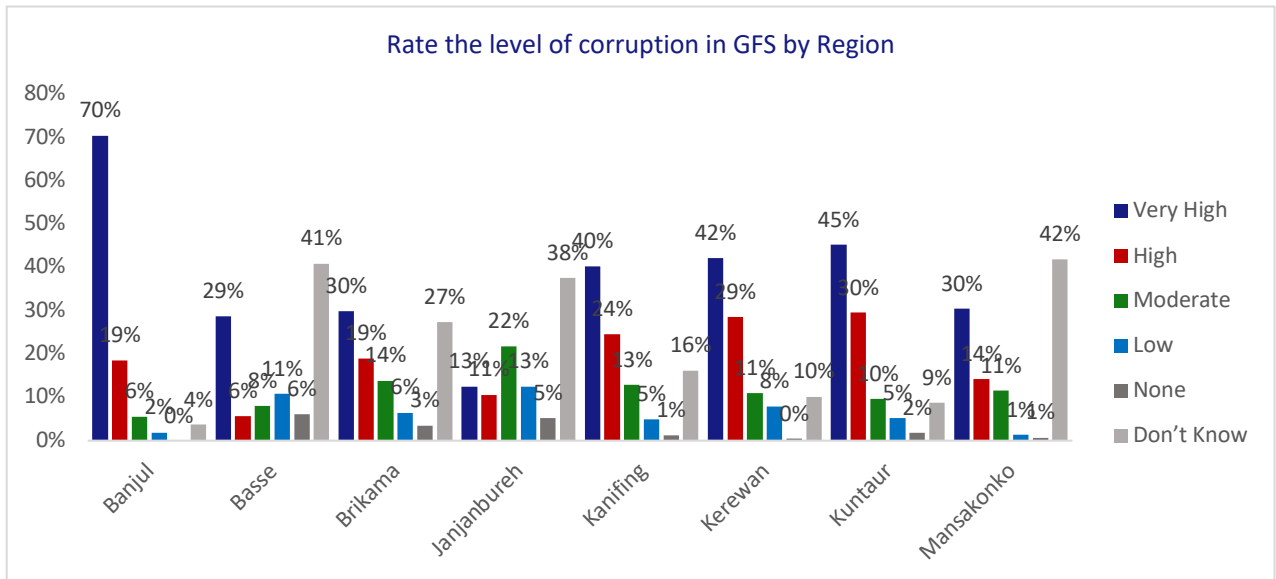
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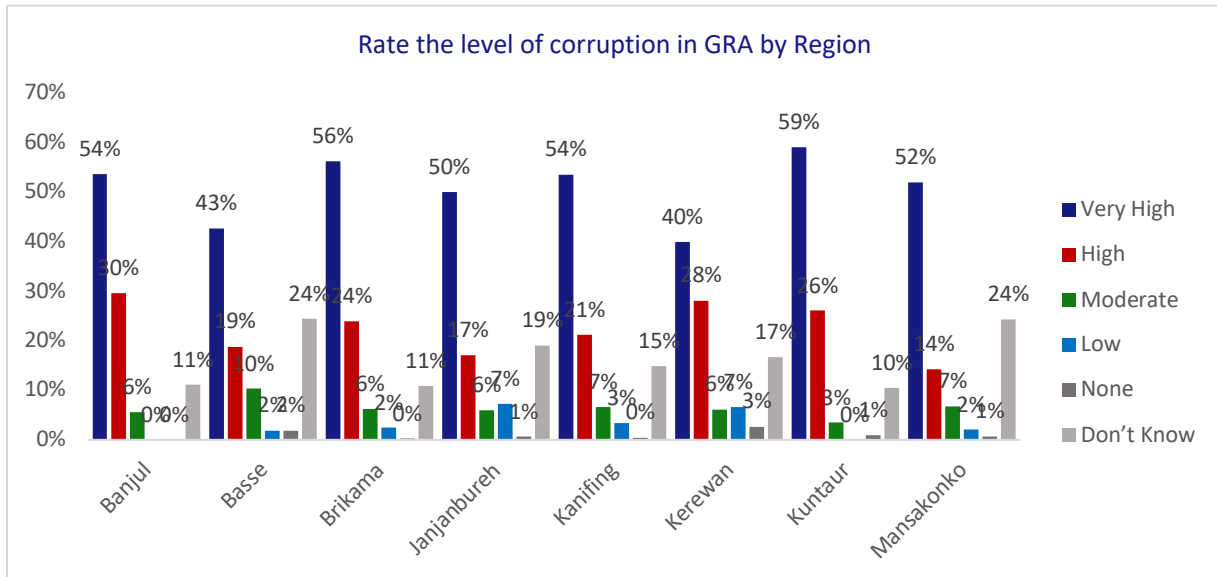
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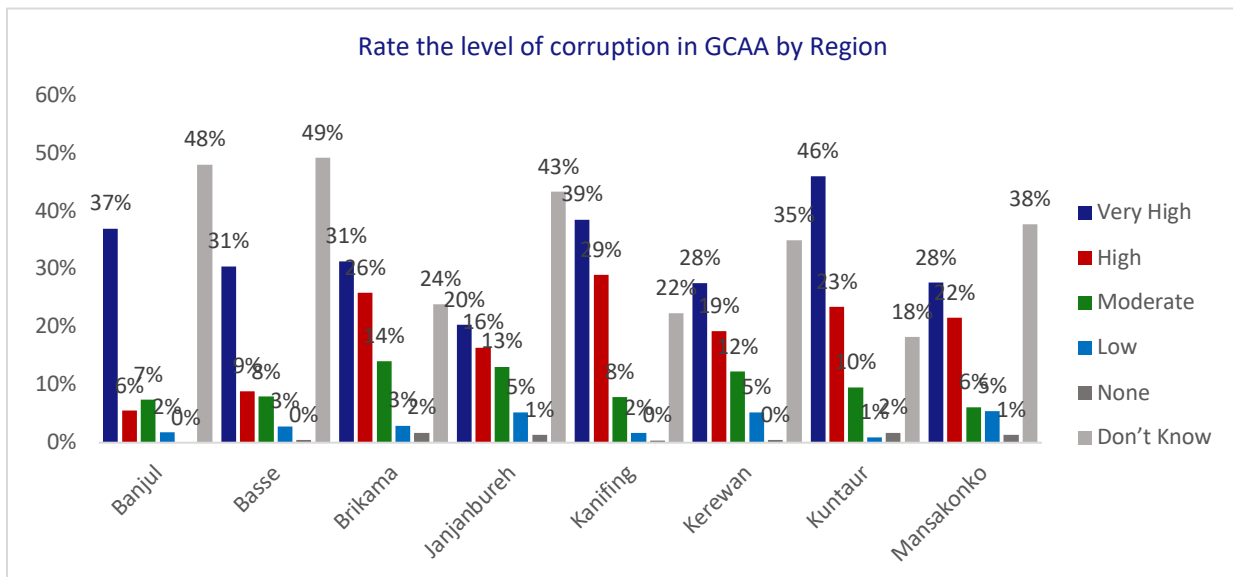
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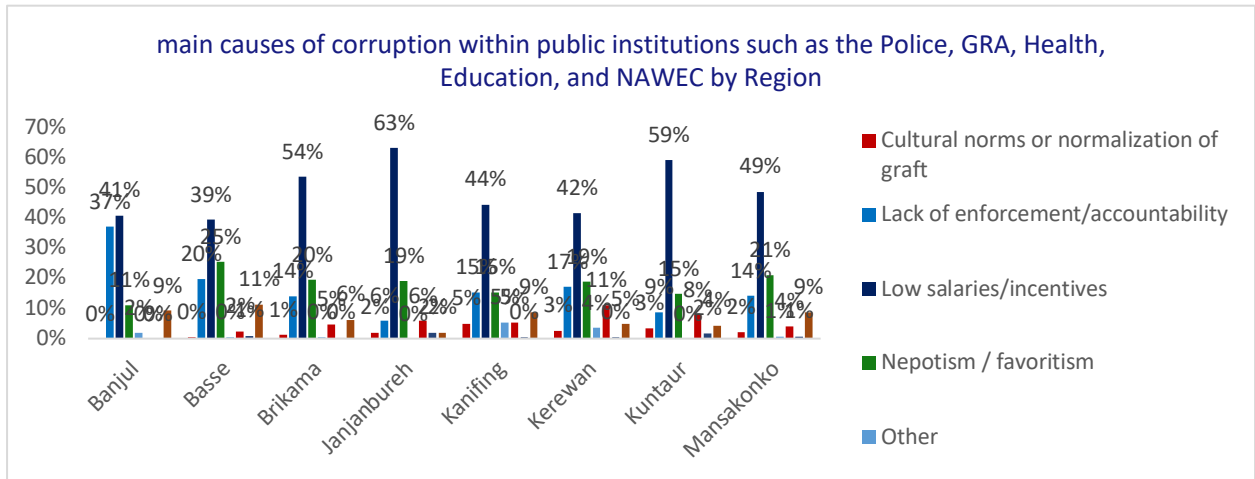
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Appendix 12.



Appendix 13.



Appendix 14.

