

TI IPP STRONGG IN PAKISTAN

Ready to Engage Project

Since 2001, Transparency International Pakistan (TI Pakistan) has been part of the Transparency International global coalition against corruption that brings together chapters operating in more than 100 countries worldwide with an international Secretariat based in Berlin, working towards a shared vision: a world free of corruption.

BACKGROUND

Overall, Pakistan's score in [Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index \(CPI\)](#) has declined from 31 in 2020 to 28 in 2021 and further to 27 in 2022. Despite the score increased to 29 in 2023, this persistent poor performance suggests that corruption remains a major obstacle to the improvement of national governance systems. Although some progress was made regarding legislation and convictions in a few high-profile corruption cases, citizens and civil society expect more accountability and transparency from their leaders and institutions. According to [Transparency International's 2017 Global Corruption Barometer – Asia Pacific \(GCB\)](#), Pakistan has a high bribery rate for the region, and at least 1 citizen out of 6 reported having paid a bribe to access a public service relating to utilities, the police or the judiciary, in the 12 months prior to the survey.

PROJECT APPROACH

With support from the *TI Indo-Pacific Partnership for Strong, Transparent, Responsive & Open Networks for Good Governance (TI IPP STRONGG) 2020 - 2023*, TI Pakistan worked towards promoting good governance in Pakistan by working at different levels and with different target groups to foster public demand for accountability, improve public service delivery, and strengthen institutions. Building on networks and partnerships established under past projects and initiatives, TI Pakistan scaled up its research, advocacy, and social accountability activities through the *Strengthening Civic Voices for Good Governance and Accountability* project to increase stakeholders' engagement in anti-corruption efforts. The project was implemented over a period of 3 years and 8 months, from May 2020 to December 2023.



TI Pakistan's Workshop on Gender and Corruption, District Mithi, Sindh / Picture @ TI Pakistan



Capacity Building of Public Information Officers on Proactive Disclosure, Sindh Transparency & RTI Act / Picture @ TI Pakistan

TI PAKISTAN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Strengthening Access to Information

The Balochistan Right to Information Act was approved by the provincial assembly on February 1, 2021. TI Pakistan had actively campaigned for its enactment and submitted a draft proposal to the provincial government. A number of proposed recommendations have been incorporated into the Act. Presently, TI Pakistan, alongside other civil society organisations, is advocating for its implementation.

Throughout the duration of the project, TI Pakistan, in collaboration with other civil society organisations, has been actively engaged in the transparent and effective implementation of RTI laws in the country. Despite the challenges in obtaining information as per the legal provisions, civil society's continued efforts have resulted in a significant milestone and breaking the ice. On October 17, 2023, the Supreme Court of Pakistan delivered a landmark judgment that has the potential to reshape transparency in Pakistan. The court ordered to provide its information sought under right to information laws. This verdict not only affirms the people's right to access information but also holds institutions, previously considered immune to scrutiny, accountable. While the provided information was granted under Article 19-A of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and not explicitly under the Federal Right of Access to Information 2017, the judgment, nonetheless, represents a

breakthrough. This achievement stands as a testament to the success of civil society organisations, including TI Pakistan.

Empowering Civic Participation in Accountability Mechanism

With the active support of TI Pakistan, citizens continued to raise their voice and demand accountability. Thousands of individuals actively asserted their rights and registered complaints regarding corruption and mal administration against authorities, seeking free legal advice from TI Pakistan Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre. Additionally, throughout the project duration, citizens filed Right to Information (RTI) applications to seek crucial information from various government departments holding them accountable. TI Pakistan's role in facilitating these channels empowered individuals to actively engage in holding authorities accountable, fostering a culture of transparency and responsiveness.

TI Pakistan conducted impactful training workshops on gender and corruption, empowering hundreds of women with knowledge about their rights and social accountability tools to participate in decision making processes. During the course of the project, TI Pakistan extended its outreach to vulnerable groups, enhancing awareness about corrupt practices and complaint mechanisms among many women through Mobile ALACs.

TI Pakistan also engaged and empowered hundreds of young people, enabling them to actively voice their concerns and hold their representatives accountable. Furthermore, through conferences, workshops, and sessions related to SDGs goal 16,

hundreds of young individuals, including young women, increased their awareness of youth leadership and good governance.

Expanding Multi-Stakeholder Coalitions

TI Pakistan has established impactful partnerships going beyond the duration of the project. The chapter collaborated with government institutions, anti-corruption agencies, regulatory bodies, information commissions, and the judiciary to highlight systemic reforms for eradicating corruption in the country. TI Pakistan also collaborated with more than 40 civil society organisations, reinforcing its presence at the grassroots level. The collaborations have extended the reach of TI Pakistan's outreach and advocacy, directly engaging with the communities. Through these partnerships, TI Pakistan contributed to building a multi-stakeholder coalition focused on addressing corruption. Emphasis was made to enter strategic collaboration with women-based organisations to highlight disproportionate effects of corruption on women. By partnering with these organisations, TI Pakistan not only expanded its outreach but also played a crucial role in raising awareness about women's rights; right to inheritance, right to vote, right to participation in decision making and gender equality. This collaboration demonstrates a commitment to addressing the specific needs of socially disadvantaged groups, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable anti-corruption initiative.

TI Pakistan also partnered with over 50 academic institutions through Youth Integrity Clubs (YIC). YICs serve as a platform for mobilising and sensitising the youth, fostering a sense of responsibility, leadership, and capacity building for effective participation in the fight against corruption.



TI Pakistan's Seminar on Gender and Corruption © TI Pakistan

PKR 1.13 Billion Outstanding Royalty Recovered from Two Companies on TI Pakistan Intervention

On December 16, 2022, TI Pakistan received a complaint regarding collusion between government officials and private companies, resulting in a loss of PKR 1.13 billion to the national treasury. It was discovered that M/s SPUD Energy and M/s Frontier Holding Companies had been granted exploration licenses for petroleum activities without fulfilling their obligation to pay royalties, as required by the Pakistan Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Rules, 1986.

Upon receiving this information, TI Pakistan took action by sending a letter to the Prime Minister of Pakistan. In response, the Prime Minister issued instructions to the Secretary of the Petroleum Division to recover the outstanding amount within two weeks and submit a compliance report. Following the Prime Minister's directive, royalties amounting to Rs. 1.025 billion have been deducted from the sale invoices of the defaulting companies. This amount was subsequently deposited into the Federal Treasury.

This successful intervention by TI Pakistan led to the recovery of a significant sum owed to the national exchequer, demonstrating the organisation's fundamental role in combating corruption and ensuring accountability in Pakistan.

Response to the COVID crisis

TI Pakistan utilised its expertise to monitor and advocate for transparent measures in the government's response to the COVID crisis. Initially, Pakistan's federal government approved the commercial sale of COVID-19 vaccines at significantly inflated prices. However, through TI Pakistan's advocacy efforts, the private import of vaccines at a 170% higher rate than international prices was reversed. This advocacy prompted the government to reassess its approach and work towards ensuring free access to vaccines for the population.