

TI IPP STRONGG IN THE MALDIVES

Deepening Democracy in the Maldives

Formally registered in 2007, Transparency Maldives (TI Maldives) is part of the Transparency International global coalition against corruption. The TI Movement 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.

With support from the *TI Indo-Pacific Partnership for Strong, Transparent, Responsive & Open Networks for Good Governance (TI IPP STRONGG) 2020 – 2023*, TI Maldives aims to strengthen anti-corruption actors' capacity to tackle corruption issues and enhance good governance in the country. Through the *Strong Institutions and Empowered Electorate for Deepening Democracy (SEEDD)* project, TI Maldives is working towards improving the national anti-corruption legal framework, increasing the compliance capacity of both public and private sectors, and encouraging people's use of social accountability mechanisms to take action against corruption. The SEEDD project will contribute to enhanced state of governance in the Maldives and increased public trust in institutions.

Project At A Glance

- Topics of focus:
Transparency in healthcare sector procurements & strengthened anti-corruption frameworks
- Project timeframe:
1 July 2020 – 31 August 2023
- Locations & project outreach:
Across the country through increased digital engagement.
- Budget: 155,000 EUR

#RightToKnow

Today is World #RightToKnow Day. Since the 2014 RTI Act, TM has been involved in training Information Officers, Councils, NGOs, and the public on #RTI & assessing the enforcement of the law.

This month, TM staff sent out #RTI requests to ministries and State institutions to test the enforcement of the RTI law.



Out of the 19 requests we sent

5	Full Information was received
1	Partial Information received
13	Information was not received

11	RTI requests were submitted without ID card copies.
8	Requests were rejected despite the RTI Act not specifying the need for ID when submitting requests

Graphic published for Right to Know Day on 28 September 2020. TI Maldives has been advocating for the effective implementation of the Right to Information Act since the legislation came into force in 2014.

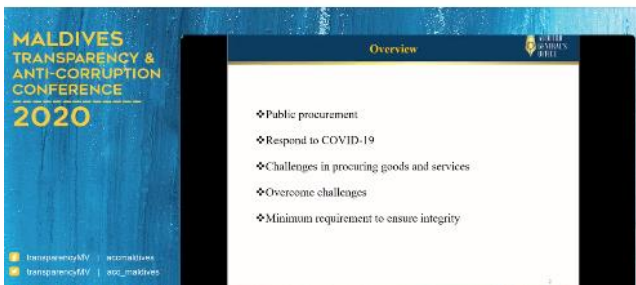
BACKGROUND

The environment for civil society in the Maldives has significantly changed in the last years. Until recently, civil and political liberties were severely restricted by the state. The Maldives scored very low in [Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index \(CPI\)](#), dropping from 31 to 29 points in 2019 and placing the country at the rank 130 (out of 180) in the 2019 Index. However, the election of a new administration in September 2018 resulted in new opportunities for TI Maldives and civil society actors to engage government and institutions on anti-corruption, a welcome change for the country where, according to [Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer – Asia 2020 \(GCB\)](#), 90% of the population still believes that government corruption is a big problem.



Transparency Maldives was live.
8 December at 05:32 · 🌐

COVID-19 - Procurement - Maldives Transparency and Anti-Corruption Conference 2020
#MTACC2020



TI Maldives advocates for transparency and best practices in emergency public procurements during the COVID-19 pandemic

TI Maldives's response to the COVID crisis

As part of the first phase of the project, TI Maldives is conducting a study on corruption in the healthcare sector identifying risks and good practices in the procurement of medical supplies, also specifically related to COVID-19. Through its ALAC services, the chapter is also offering support to clients on COVID-related complaints.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Objectives

1. Improve the understanding of the scale of corruption in the Maldives to better design and implement nationwide anti-corruption efforts through evidence-based research and advocacy.
2. Strengthen governance and anti-corruption legal frameworks.
3. Increase the capacity of public and private sectors to comply with anti-corruption legal instruments and to ensure the accessibility of social accountability tools.
4. Enhance the capacity of partner CSOs and raise citizens' awareness, including youth, women, and disadvantaged groups vulnerable to corruption, on anti-corruption.

Main Activities

Activities under this project include:

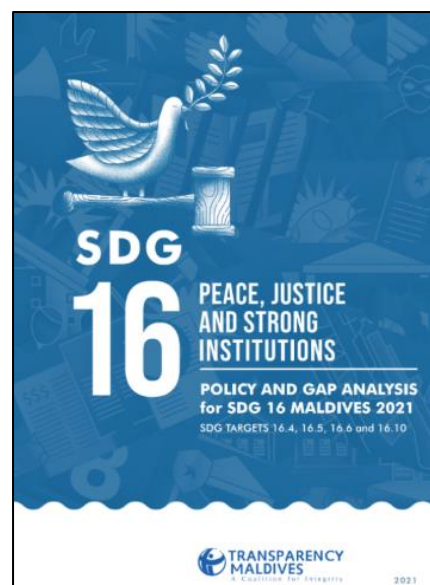
- Producing evidence-based research to advocate for good governance and **corruption risks mitigation** in public services and in the private sector.
- Conducting legal analysis and advocacy work around **whistleblower protection policies** and **asset declaration laws**, in partnership with institutions such as the Whistleblower Protection Unit.
- Enhancing anti-corruption actors' capacity through Whistleblower Protection and Right to Information (RTI) **compliance trainings for representatives from both public institutions and private entities**, as well as joint work on the RTI framework with the Information Commissioner's Office.
- Providing **free legal advice to victims and witnesses of corruption, whistleblowers, and RTI applicants** through the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) and help them to seek redress for their grievances.
- Raising awareness on avenues and mechanisms that citizens can use to take action against corruption. Outreach activities include **social media campaigns and trainings on social accountability tools** targeting civil society organizations and citizens, including youth, women, and vulnerable groups.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS & KEY ACHIEVEMENTS - 2022

With COVID-19 restrictions being lifted, TI-Maldives shifted back to in-person activities, with only a few activities being conducted online.

TI Maldives' project highlights for 2022 included:

- **The SDG16 Gap analysis report was launched** on the 10th of May 2022. Virtual and in-person meetings with stakeholders were conducted to present the recommendations and identify the next steps to closing the identified gaps.
- Finalised and validated the study on **“Corruption Vulnerabilities in the Healthcare Sector.”** TI-Maldives shared the findings with the Ministry of Health and are now awaiting a confirmation from the President's Office to schedule a meeting to share and publicise the findings of the report.
- Concluded the **research on the Covid-19 Vaccine** Procurement, Distribution and Service Delivery under the Maldivian health sector-related studies.
- Continued **lobbying for the Asset Declaration Bill**. The Bill progressed to the committee stage of the Parliament and was sent to the Attorney Generals on the 30th of May 2022. The Attorney General has reviewed and sent the bill back to the Parliament.
- **Participated in the “Labour Migration in Maldives” project**, which was conducted by the Public Interest Law Centre (PILC) as a key stakeholder along with Maldivian Red Crescent (MRC), Mission for Migrant Worker Maldives (MMWM) and Maldives Trade Union Congress (MTUC). This project aims to identify and address the issues faced by South Asian migrant workers in the Maldives, particularly Bangladeshi workers.
- To **mark International Migrants Day**, held on the 23rd of December 2022, TI-Maldives partnered with the Maldivian Red Crescent (MRC).
- TI Maldives set up **Salesforce and GlobaLeaks** to assist ALAC activities and trained staff on how to use these platforms. GlobaLeaks will be officially launched in 2023.
- Conducted various **training and information sessions**:
 - Whistleblowing & Asset Declaration session during the RTI & Whistleblower training for SOE's by the SANCUS project.
 - RTI & Whistleblower training for SOE's.
 - Conducted an Asset Declaration session during the national-level Anti-Corruption Conference held by TI-Maldives in collaboration with the Anti-Corruption Commission of Maldives, which was opened by the President of the Maldives.
 - Whistleblowing session for TI-Maldives staff on the 17th of May 2022.
 - RTI session conducted during the Youth Camp in Addu City on the 5th of December 2022.



Policy and Gap Analysis for SDG 16 report, launched on the 10th of May 2022



Transparency International Maldives providing advice at the Health & Legal Camp for Migrants, held at International Migrants Day / Picture @ TI Maldives

- **TV appearances** to increase awareness on topics relating to corruption and disadvantaged groups in the Maldives:
 - Dhivehi Channel, on the 12th of September 2022, to discuss Asset Declaration and Migrant worker rights and general employment law in the Maldives.
 - Sangu TV session held on the 26th of September 2022, to discuss issues related to corruption and lack of accountability in development projects.
 - Public Service Media (PSM) session on the 9th of December 2022 to discuss corruption issues in relation to Anti-Corruption Day.
 - Sangu TV session held on International Migrant Workers Day, the 21st of December 2022, with the Public Interest Law Center (PILC).

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY

To mark the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day TI Maldives participated as a panellist on a special program hosted by Public Service Media, 'ADU', that was broadcasted nationwide in the Maldives on the 9th of December 2022. The discussion covered topics such as: why corruption occurs, the harm caused by corruption and approaches to curb corrupt practices. The program's main objective was to increase awareness of working towards a corruption-free society. In addition to TI-Maldives, the Anti-Corruption Commission and an activist working in this area took part in this informative discussion.



TI-Maldives Participates in the Special Program hosted by PSM to mark International Anti-Corruption Day

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2023, the top priorities for TI-Maldives include:

- Launching and publicising health-related reports and holding a workshop to discuss follow-up measures.
- Advocacy work related to the Asset Declaration Bill.
- Training sessions on RTI and Whistleblowing for women and people with disabilities.
- Develop the ALAC further and officially launch GlobaLeaks.