



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Centre For Peace and
Development Initiatives

Corruption Perception and Ground Reality Survey

Field Research Based Study of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

30th May 2013

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Chapter 1.....	6
1. Introduction:	6
2. Methodology:.....	6
Chapter 2.....	8
Results of the Study	8
1. Corruption Perception Survey	8
1.1 Socioeconomic Profile of Respondents	8
1.2 Contacts with Government Departments.....	9
1.3 Perception about Corruption in Government Departments	10
1.4 Perception about Level of Corruption in Government Departments.....	11
1.6 Causes of Bribery in Government Departments.....	12
1.7 Perception about Accountability Departments	14
Chapter 3.....	17
Focus Group Discussions.....	17
District Abbottabad.....	17
FGD 1. Lawyers Community	17
FGD 2. Journalists' Community	17
FGD 3. Members of CSOs	18
FGD 4. Common Active Citizens.....	19
District Mansehra.....	20
FGD 1. Lawyers' Community	20
FGD 2. Journalists' Community	21
FGD 3. Members of CSOs	22
FGD 4. Common Active Citizens.....	22
District Mardan	23
FGD 1. Lawyers' Community	23
FGD 2. Journalists' Community	24
FGD 3. Active Citizens Group	25
FGD 4. Concerns of Trade Union.....	25
District Peshawar	26
FGD 1. Lawyers' Community	26

FGD 2. Journalists' Community	27
FGD 3. Members of CSOs	28
FGD 4. Concerns of Trade Union	29
Chapter 4.....	30
Results of Interviews.....	30
District Abbottabad.....	30
District Mansehra.....	33
District Mardan	35
District Peshawar	36
Chapter 5.....	39
Final Remarks.....	39
Findings:	39
Recommendations:	40

Acknowledgements

Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives acknowledges contribution of the following in carrying out this research report.

Ms. Zil-e-Huma Durrani, Project Manager, Mr. Ibrar Hussain, District Coordinator, Abbottabad, Mr. Imran Khan, District Coordinator, Mardan, Mr. Muhammad Hamid, District Coordinator, Mansehra and Mr. Zahoor Khan, District Coordinator, Peshawar for conducting the survey, Focused Group Discussions and Semi-structured Interviews;

Mr. Bilal Saeed for designing research methodology and imparting training to the project team;

Mr. Shahid Jatui for data analysis and write-up of the report;

Mr. Altaf Hussain and Ms. Saima Mughal for data entry;

Mr. Naveed Ashraf for the design of the report;

Mr. Zahid Abdullah for writing findings and recommendations of the report.

Executive Summary

The research study conducted in four districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, namely Peshawar, Mardan, Abbottabad and Mansehra, in the month of April, 2013 identifies that citizens perceive high level of corruption in government departments. Of the total 600 respondents, 132 (approximately 22%) had contacted with government departments during last one year. Out of these 132 respondents, about 64% responded that they had to offer bribe to government officials. Similarly, out of 600 respondents, there were three categories comprising of about 275 (46%), 164(27%), and 136(23%) respondents, who regarded provincial government departments as all corrupt, mostly corrupt, and “few corrupt” respectively. In addition, about 91% citizens in sample opined that the corruption has increased during the last five years. Around 234 (39%) citizens viewed offering bribery necessary for getting right and legal work done, while 289(48%) thought bribery essential for legal (right) work done on time from government departments. The citizens of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (52 %) thought non-qualified rulers and 18 % viewed recruitment of favorite government officials as big causes of corruption. Citizens of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were also skeptical about transparent functioning of accountability departments. Around, 564 (94%) never interacted with accountability departments and 28 (5 %), did not even know about the existence of these departments. Nevertheless, for making accountability departments effective, impartial and transparent, around 46 % demanded recruiting sincere officers, around 21% citizens were in favour of effective legislation, and 25(4%) viewed effectiveness of accountability departments through devising complaint mechanism through telephone and internet. The qualitative data gathered through focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews with different lawyers, doctors, journalists, active citizens, traders and members of civil society groups, complemented the quantitative data.

The trust deficit between citizens and state institutions, acceptability of corruption, ineffectiveness of accountability departments and the need for getting riddance from the menace of corruption are some of the key findings of the survey. Right to information is considered to be an anti-corruption tool. The Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province does not have a right to information law. The KPK right to information law should be enacted by keeping in mind international and regional best practices as well as the international principles and standards pertaining to an effective right to information law. Such a law will go a long way in rooting out corruption from provincial public bodies. There is an urgent need for the scrutiny of existing accountability laws of the province. The accountability departments need to be isolated from political influence. The autonomy of these departments needs to be ensured. There is need for the establishment of district governments in order to bridge the gap between state institutions and the citizens of the province. The new local government system should be based on the experiences learnt from the local governments established under LGO 2001. People should be made aware about the existing accountability mechanisms to highlight and tackle incidents of corruption through public services messages and other awareness raising means. There is need for computerization of records of revenue, courts and those records with the union councils so that citizens can have online access to these records. Furthermore, public departments do not display at prominent places the procedures and fee telling a common person how to access copies of these records. The public bodies should be made duty bound to display such information prominently at their premises. There is an urgent need about bringing reforms at the police stations level. The availability of funds with the police station together with the meaningful participation brought about through district government system will enhance the performance of police and corruption will be minimized.

Chapter 1

1. Introduction:

In Pakistan, government departments and its functionaries can be held accountable through several departments, especially through courts, ombudsman, anti-corruption department and exclusively designed accountability bureaus. Despite the presence of these institutions, Corruption Perception Index, (CPI) Pakistan ranking has fallen by nine points, from 42nd most corrupt in 2011 to 33rd most corrupt country in 2012 Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, (CPDI) carried out this the Ground Realities and Corruption Perception Survey (GR&CP Survey) in the month of April, 2013 to understand people's perception and understanding about corruption being practiced in government departments. The main objective of the study was to gauge the perceived level of corruption in the government departments, citizens understanding of corruption and tune and frequency of bribe being paid by citizens in these departments. This report is based on field research conducted in four districts of province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa namely Peshawar, Mardan, Mansehra and Abbottabad The baseline research report studies of the corruption perception of common citizens, especially who interacted with government departments. The study is also aided with focus group discussions with different segment of society along with semi-structured interviews with personalities having close interaction with the government departments.

2. Methodology:

Combinations of both qualitative as well as quantitative methods are used in this study. First, a sample of 600 respondents was selected from four (150 respondents in each) above-mentioned districts. These respondents were randomly selected and every fifth person was contacted for the interview. A questionnaire was designed to conduct survey from these respondents. On qualitative side, tools of focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews were employed to collect data. The method of purposive sampling was used for the selection of units of data. The purposive sampling method necessitates that sample has to be tied to the research objectives. The objectives for the study were to measure the level of corruption in the government departments as perceived by citizens especially for the last five years. Therefore, those communities and individuals for FGDs and interviews were selected who had either frequent interaction with the government departments or work in close contact with government departments. The reason was to get relevant data as well as to sensitize these units of data collection about corruption, role of accountability departments, and to draw down scientific recommendations. Therefore, lawyers' community, journalists, members of civil society organizations, and active citizens of the society were selected for the interviews and FGDs. A total of 16 FGDs were conducted (four in each districts), with lawyers community, journalists, members of civil society organizations, and active citizens of the society. In addition, 4 semi structured interviews in

each selected district involving citizens, CSOs, legislators and Journalists were also conducted.

The detail of data gathered and analysis is given on following pages.

Chapter 2

Results of the Study

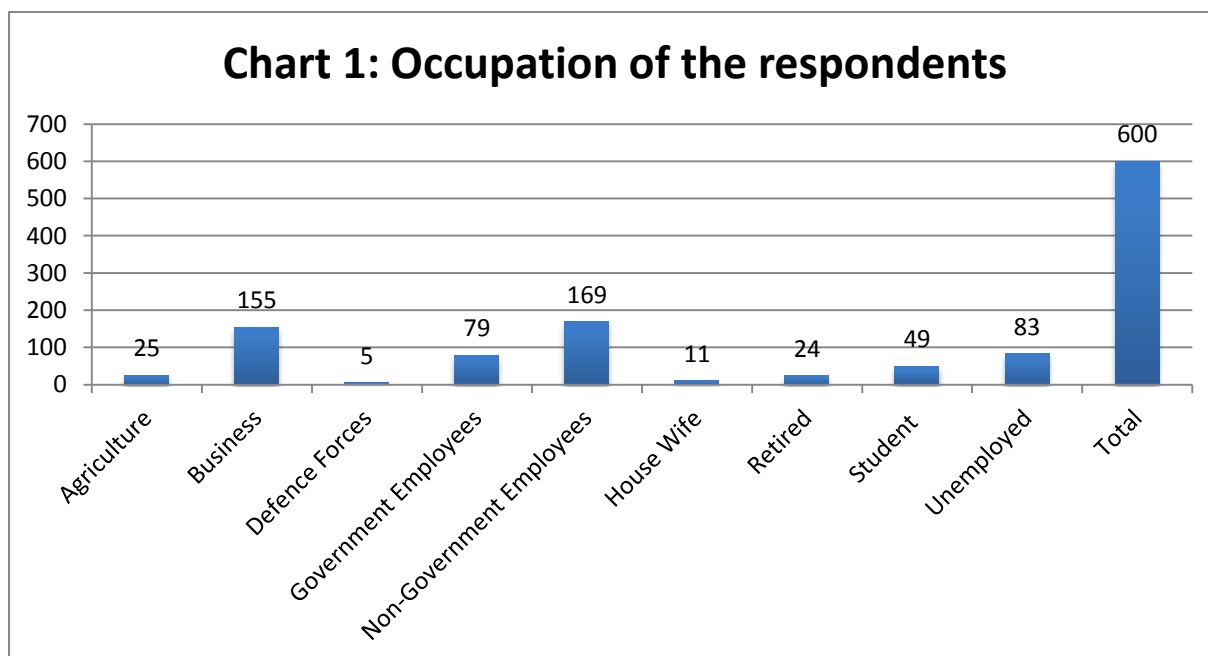
1. Corruption Perception Survey

As described earlier, in four districts the door-to-door survey was conducted in randomly sampled respondents of four districts.

1.1 Socioeconomic Profile of Respondents

As stated earlier, there was sample of total 600 respondents in all four districts. The socioeconomic profile of respondents is given in Table 1, which shows that among these 600 respondents, there were 131 persons belonging to age group 16-25 years, 273 were from the age group 26-39 years and about 196 respondents belonged to age group 40 years and above.

Table 1: Age group of respondents			
16-25 Years	26-39 Years	40 and above	Total
131	273	196	600



Similarly, chart 1 shows the occupation of the respondents, according to which the occupation of 169 respondents was private jobs followed by 155 persons doing their own small businesses. Additionally, 79 respondent were employed in government sector, 25

respondents were earning livelihood through agriculture and 5 belonged to defense forces. Out of the 600 respondents, 83 were unemployed, 49 students, and 24 retired and 11 housewives.

Chart 2: Education background of respondents

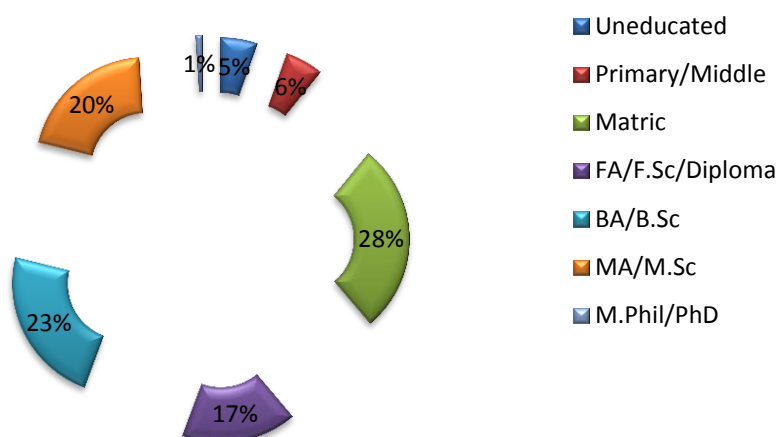
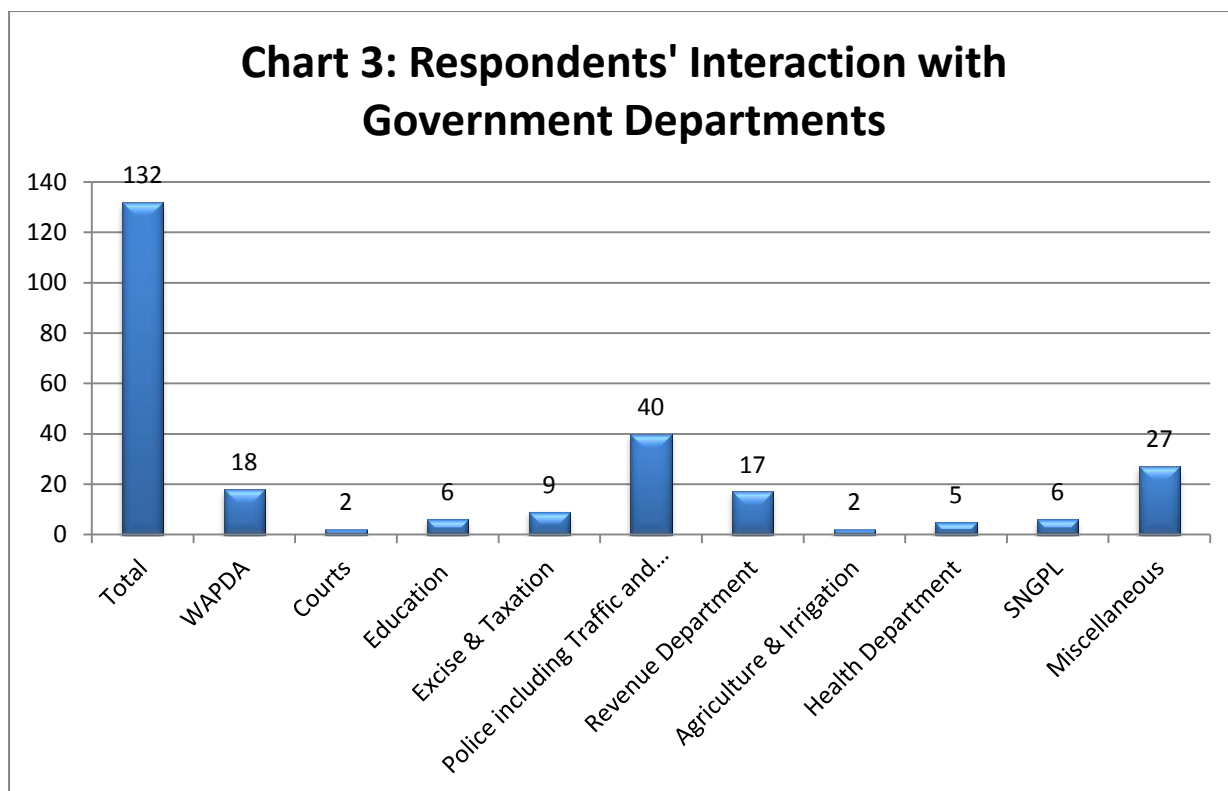


Chart 2 provides that among these 600 respondents of survey, there were 1% MPhil/PhD, 20% MA/M.Sc., 23 % BA/B.Sc., 17 % FA/B.Sc., 28 % Matriculate, 6% Primary/Middle and 5% were uneducated.

1.2 Contacts with Government Departments

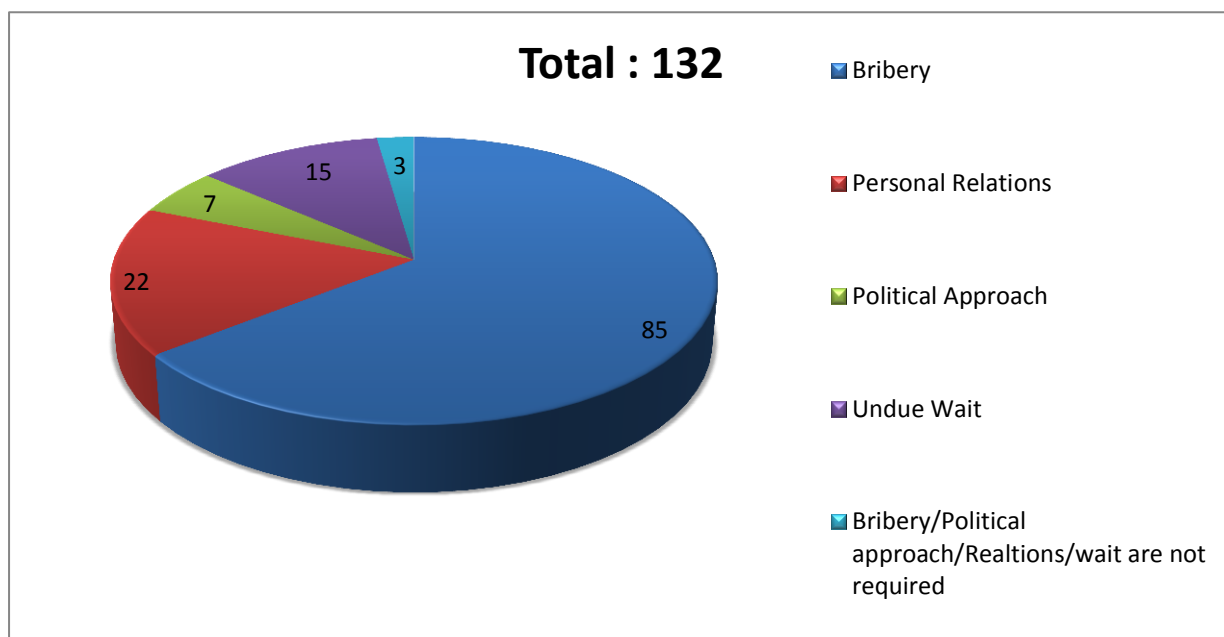
When asked to respondents about their interaction with government departments, 132 (approximately 22%) out of 600 respondents were those who contacted government departments for their personal businesses. Those 132, who contacted with government departments, their concerned departments were WAPDA (water and power development authority), Courts, Education, Excise and Taxation, Police, Revenue, Agriculture, Health and Some others. The detail is provided in chart 3 as shown below:



1.3 Perception about Corruption in Government Departments

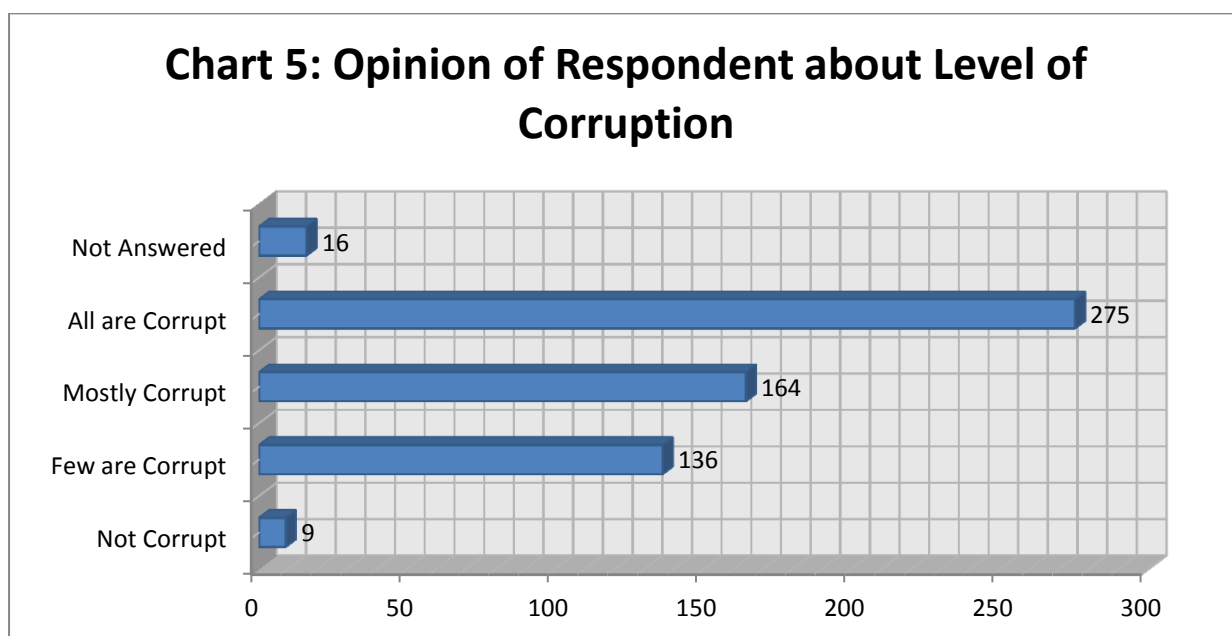
When the respondents were asked [who had contacted the government departments] about the way they got their work done, about 85 (64%) responded that they had to offer bribe to government officials. 17% had to use personal relations and 5% had to use political contacts to have work done. Around 11% who did not offer bribes or did not use political contacts had to wait for undue and an extended period of time to get things done. Approximately 2% had to use bribery along with political and personal relations and at the same time had to wait for an extended period of time. The following chart 4 describes the experiences of respondents regarding their efforts for legal work done from government.

Chart 4: Description of respondents experiences of work done from government departments



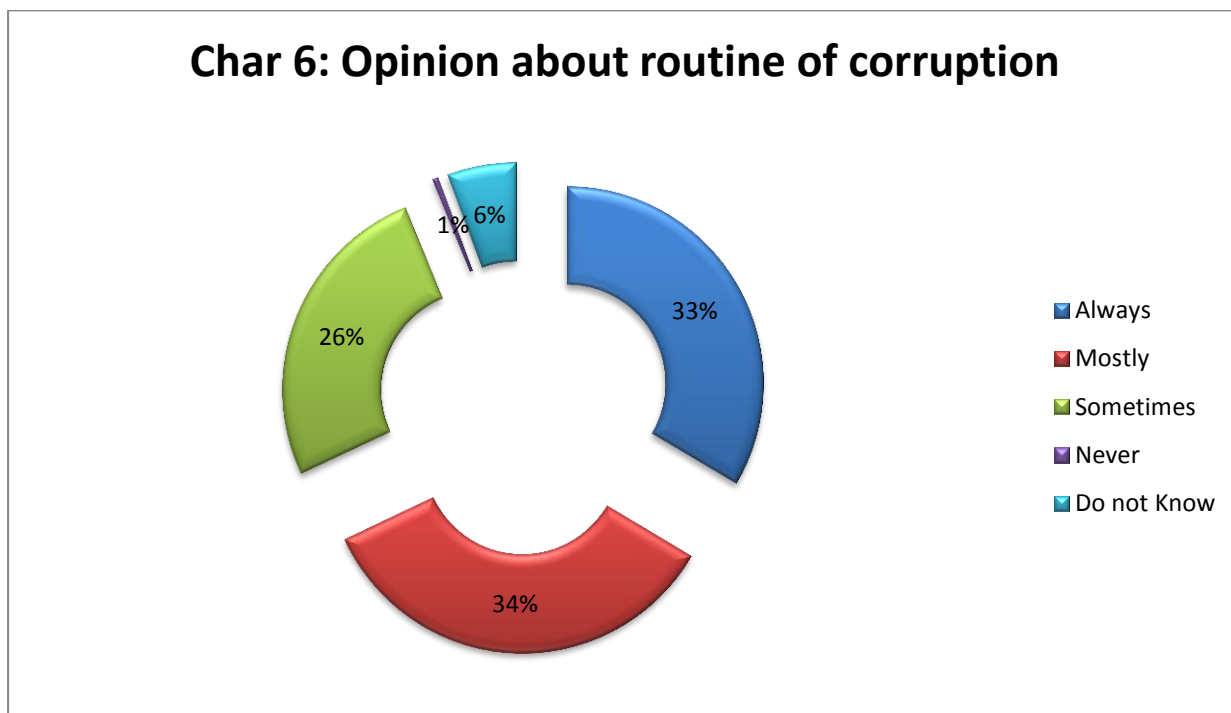
1.4 Perception about Level of Corruption in Government Departments

Out of 600 respondents, only 9 (1%) respondents thought that the provincial government departments were not corrupt.



However, chart no 5 above provides that about 275 (46%), 164(27%), 136(23%), regarded provincial government departments as all corrupt, mostly corrupt, and few corrupt respectively. Whereas 16(3%), respondents did not answered to this question.

Similarly, 201(33%) of the respondents opined that in order to get work done from government departments, there is always a need to give bribery to government officials. 207(34%) respondents felt this need “mostly”, whereas 155(26%) respondents sometimes, and 3(approximately 1%) respondents thought bribery is not required. However, 34(6%) respondents did not answer to this question. Chart 6 provides detailed description of respondents’ opinion about routine of bribery in government departments.



1.6 Causes of Bribery in Government Departments

When the respondents were asked about the causes of offering bribery in the government departments, 234 (39%) viewed it necessary for getting right and legal work done, while 289(48%) thought bribery was essential for legal (right) work done on time from government departments. However, 71 (12%), regarded bribery and corruption necessary for illegal or wrong work done, while 6(1%), did not respond. The detail is given in chart 7 below.

Chart7:The reason of giving bribe in government departments

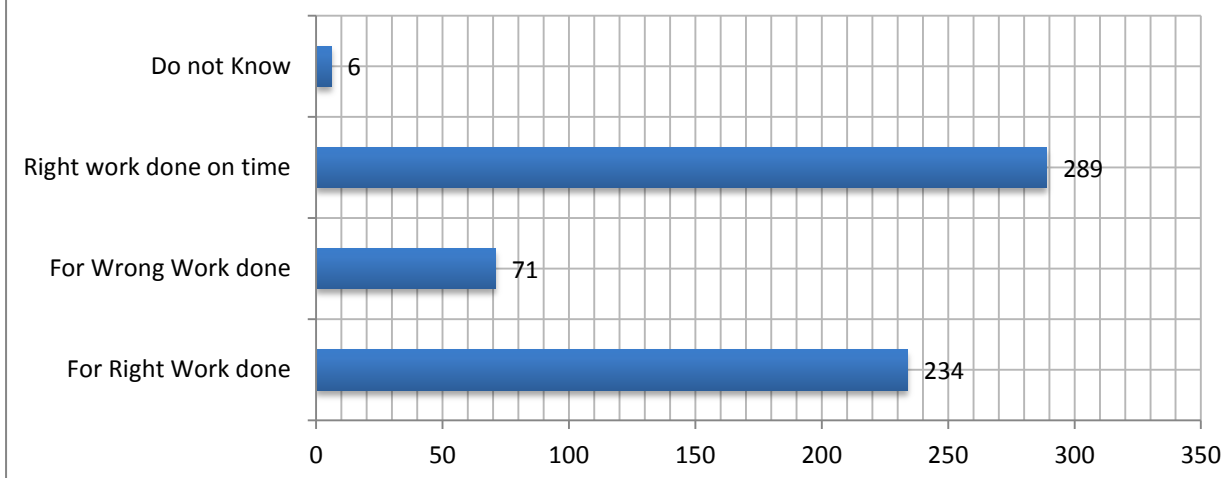
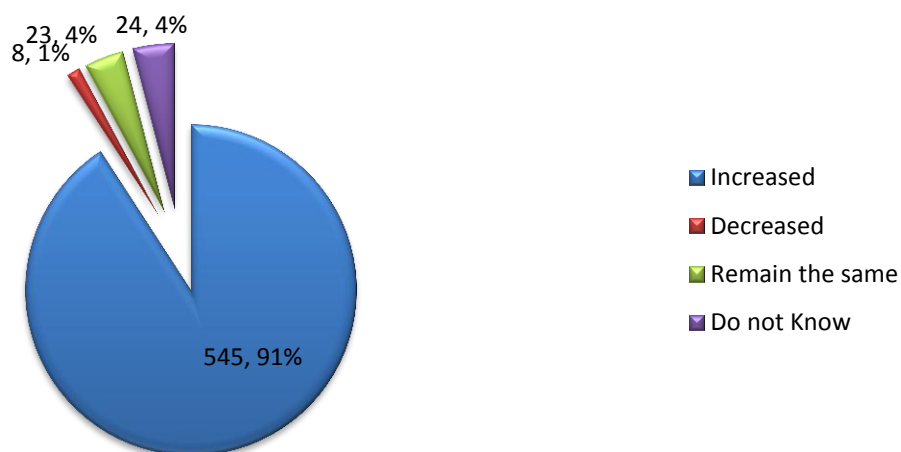


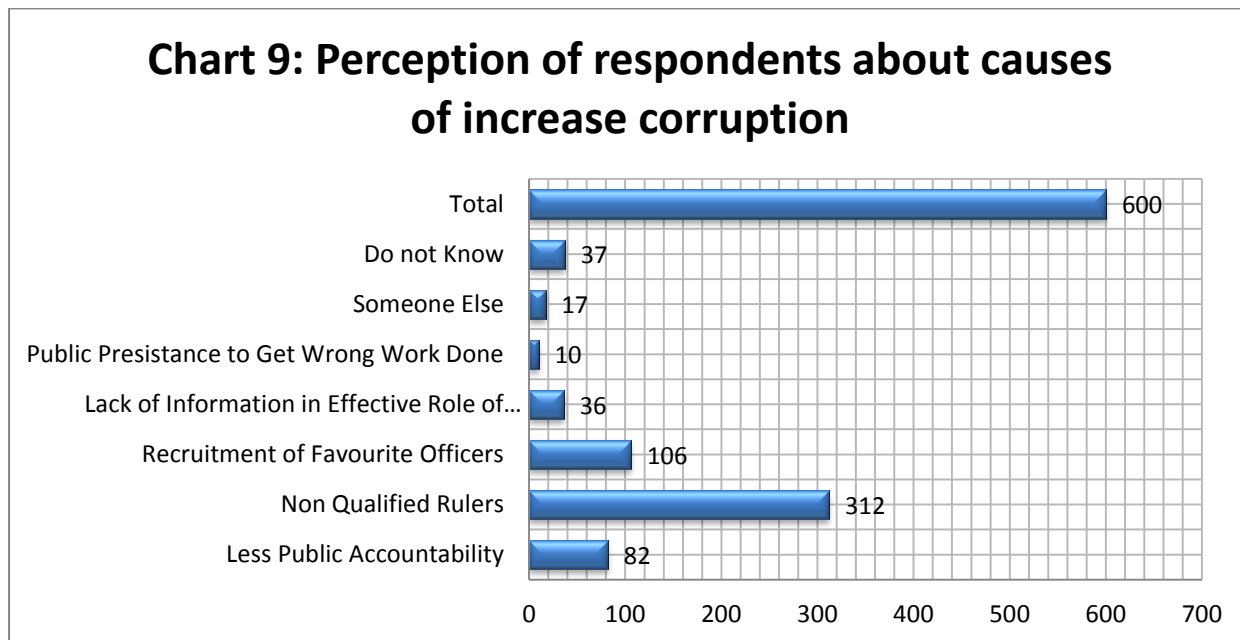
Chart 8 shows that about 545(91%) respondents opined that the corruption has increased for the last five years, while 23(4%) viewed corruption has decreased and 23(4%) thought corruption and bribery remained unchanged for last five years. However, 8 (1%), of the respondents did not answer to this question.

Chart 8: Corruption perception



In addition, 312 (52 %) respondents viewed non-qualified rulers and 106 (18 %) respondents thought recruitment of favorite government officials as big causes of corruption. Among the possible causes of corruption, 82 (14 %) respondents regarded less public accountability; 36 (6%) respondents included lack of information in effective role of accountability

departments; 17 (3%) respondents mentioned other causes; and 10(2%) respondents thought public persistence to get wrong work done through corruption. However, 37 respondents did not know the answer as shown in chart 9 below:



When the respondents were asked as to who takes bribery among government officials, 52 respondents opined that bribery is taken by senior officers; 40 respondents named middle level officers; 168 considered clerical staff and 46 respondent thought guards/agent as taking bribery. However, 242 respondents opined that all government officials take bribery. Similarly, 52 respondents did not answer the question. Table 2 illustrates the opinions of respondents.

Table2: Perception of Respondents about Who Takes Bribery in Government Departments						
Senior Officers	Middle Level Officers	Clerical	Guard/Agent	All	Do Not Know	Total
52	40	168	46	242	52	600

1.7 Perception about Accountability Departments

When respondents were asked about their interaction with accountability departments, only 8 (approximately 1%) have had contact with accountability department, while 564 (94%) never interacted with accountability departments and 28 (5 %), did not know about the existence of these departments. Those 8 who interacted with accountability

departments, only one respondent found department cooperative and effective, while other 7 respondents viewed accountability departments as non-cooperative and hence ineffective.

Nevertheless, among 600 respondents of four districts of KPK, 275 (46%), were of view that accountability departments can be made effective by recruiting sincere officers in government departments. Similarly, 123 (21%) respondents opined effective legislation, 74 (12%) respondents thought by salary increase, and 25(4%) viewed effectiveness of accountability departments through devising complaint mechanism through telephone and internet. However, 37 (6%) demanded some other mechanisms while 66(11%) respondents did not answer the question.

Chart 10: Perceived ways to reduce corruption in government departments

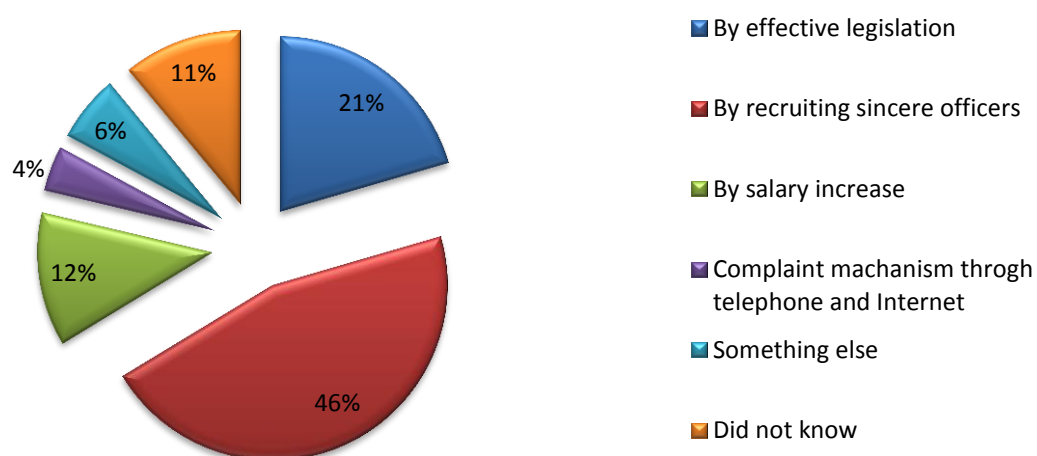


Table3: Credibility level of accountability departments

Accountability Laws of Govt. Departments	Anti-corruption Department	Provincial Ombudsman KPK	Something else	Did not know	Did Not Answered
38	87	44	12	412	7

When the respondents were asked about the credibility and effectiveness of provincial accountability departments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 38 (6%) viewed accountability laws of public departments as most effective toll whereas, 87 (15%) respondents thought

anticorruption department was most effective. Similarly, 44(7%) respondents named the provincial ombudsman while 12 (2%) respondents thought something else. Majority of the respondent i.e. 412(69%), did not know the answer while 7 (1 %) respondents did not answer the question. The detail is provided in table 3.

Chapter 3

Focus Group Discussions

There were total 16 focus group discussions in four districts; the detailed report of each FGD is given as under:

District Abbottabad

FGD 1. Lawyers Community

Among lawyers community, majority of the respondents were of view that the current situation in Pakistan especially law & order, terrorism, and corruption is worst. They argued that, as regards corruption, the society as a whole from president to peon is involved in the corruption. Moreover, corruption in our country is increasing because of non-observance of rule of law. Further, those found guilty are not punished according to the law. Some of the lawyers opined that, first common citizens are directly responsible for electing corrupt people, second those elected corrupt rulers along with bureaucracy is responsible for corruption in Pakistan. One respondent was of view that “common citizens have to bear the consequences of corruption, for instance in case of rental power corruption the common citizen has to pay high electricity bills”. Majority of the respondents thought low literacy rate as direct cause of corruption because people who are not properly educated to distinguish between right and wrong and therefore elect corrupt politicians. One respondent was of the view that “in our country everybody from peon to president is thinking for personal benefits”. We being lawyers have more responsibility to encounter the corruption and we can do so by educating the common citizens about how to claim their rights according to the constitution of Pakistan. They all felt the need for coordinated efforts by civil society to eradicate corruption. They viewed that individually everybody is thinking to stop corruption; however, there is need to unite these thoughts on a platform to raise voice against corruption. Many among the lawyers opined that accountability departments are themselves involved in corruption. The respondents being lawyers also pledged to raise voice against corruption that is being practiced in the courts and especially against clerical staff involved in looting the poor people. They argued, however, that citizen could play the vital role if they fully understand their rights and have firm stand on these rights and responsibilities. Only then corruption can be mitigated in the country. Some of the respondents viewed that state institutions such as Anti-Corruption Department, FIA, Ombudsmen offices, courts have become the symbols of corruption and have lost their credibility in the eyes of common citizens.

FGD 2. Journalists' Community

Most of the journalists agreed that the law and order, bad governance, unemployment, load shedding and corruption were most rampant and dominant issues in Pakistan. Some of the respondents viewed the corruption prevalent in whole society and almost 75 % of the society using unfair means to get their legal and illegal jobs done. In addition, corruption is increasing because the top management (rulers) is not interested to eliminate corruption. “The politicians are supposed to work for the welfare of the country. However, they are doing their own welfare”, stated one journalist with anger. Moreover, bureaucrats have also been encouraged by the politicians to be engaged in corruption, and then there are clerical staffs to peons so there is a complete chain led by our elected representatives. One journalist opined that “the society as whole was responsible for prevalence of corruption. Therefore, it has to bear the burden of corruption”. He explained his point by saying that “as a result of this corruption, the common citizens has to tolerate the increase in prices of food and non-food items, increase in utility bills, poverty, unemployment due to corruption and malpractices”. Majority of the journalists were convinced that wrong selection of elected people in the parliament was the main factor for corruption in Pakistan and unless we elect sincere people, the situation would become worst. They were also of the view that it was their responsibility and duty to highlight the corruption at any level in the country. They showed some level of satisfaction about the performance of media regarding governance issues however, they stated that for eradication of corruption in country, civil society would have to play proactive role. Without their sacrifices, they shared, there was no chance to decrease corruption in the country. All journalists were convinced that the accountability departments are fully involved in corruption. As a result, these departments have lost credibility in citizen’s eyes as. Some respondents opined that citizens could eradicate the corruption by improving themselves. They stated that if everybody shows reluctance for the corruption then it could be stopped. Majority were skeptical of the role of state institutions except higher-level judiciary involved in ending corruption.

FGD 3. Members of CSOs

The representatives of different civil society organizations in Pakistan identified that in Pakistan, the law & order, defilement of merit, violation of human rights, poverty, mismanagement, lack of education were the key issues. Majority agreed that corruption was rampant in our society and it was increasing with the passage of time. One participant opined that “As a nation we are corrupt and the current corruption situation is well depicted in the transparency international report. The main reason of corruption is non-implementation of laws in Pakistan”.

Some participants argued that both state as well as common individuals were responsible for corruption. However, common citizens have to face the repercussions of corruption eventually in shape of living below the poverty line, and facing many financial challenges. One respondent argued that “political interference in the Government departments, violation of merit during selection of employees”; insufficient staff, insufficient funds, and lack of rule of law were the key factors responsible for corruption in the country”. Many among CSOs members opined that civil society groups have the responsibility to take initiatives to raise voices against corrupt practices in governance and to create awareness among masses against corruption. Similarly, majority of the respondents discredited accountability departments and stated that currently these departments are used for political blackmailing and governments’ personal interests. One respondent argued that “at the key positions of National Accountability Bureau, all the employees were appointed on the contractual basis so every new government can appoint their own people to take



revenge from their political opponents or use them for political blackmailing”. As member of civil society organizations, this community has good understanding level of the corruption in the country. Nevertheless, some respondents stated that governance is not people friendly and that is the main cause of the corruption

in Pakistan. All the participants explicitly stated that unless, citizens did not prefer national interest to their personal interests, corruption might not be reduced. Further, if the accountability departments are fully facilitated by the state by providing these with sufficient resources and sincere staff, these departments will be able to play their role; otherwise it is much difficult to expect them to perform better.

FGD 4. Common Active Citizens

Many participants of the FGD stated that the circumstances in Pakistan are not good due to internal and external threats like terrorism. They all were of view that in country, the corruption was at its peak. One active citizen, dwelling on the gap between state institutions and citizens said “being a Pakistani citizen whenever you think to solve your legal issue the first thought comes into your mind is to resolve the matter illegally or using unfair means”. Some citizens also responded that corruption is increasing as system has failed badly.

Majority among citizens argued that complete Pakistani society, especially political leaders were responsible for corruption because ‘we are not doing self-accountability, just raising fingers on others’. However, some of the participants also recognized that due to corruption, common citizens had to suffer in terms of increase in prices of food and other essential items. Resultantly, common person cannot maintain his living standard, cannot educate his children, and becomes frustrated and intolerant. One of the respondents stated that “we have to encounter corruption in every aspect of life; however if citizens start paying rupees 300 as fine rather than giving bribe of rupees 100 to traffic police, the corruption would end. For this purpose, the role of civil society can be vital, as they have to raise voice at every forum against corruption. Many among participants stated that, the accountability departments were themselves corrupt; therefore, there is no role of these departments to reduce the corruption. A citizen was convinced that for eradication of corruption, every citizen could play a role if he/she started self-accountability. Few citizens argued sarcastically, that the main cause of corruption in our country was that ‘we perceive corruption as our moral and ethical right’. First, citizens should make themselves accountable in the society. Further, state Institutions should be strengthened through appointment of honest officers.

District Mansehra

FGD 1. Lawyers’ Community

The majority of lawyers’ community at district Mansehra stated that the current unsatisfactory situation in Pakistan is due to many issues including security situation, lack of jobs, and lack of investment, Poverty, Inflation, electricity shortage, and low salaries (income). In addition, the injustice is witnessed in every sphere of life and there is no rule of law in the country. Poor people cannot compete in election; rich people can get loan from bank easily and needy has to face big formalities; corrupt people are getting job by bribing; politicians are benefiting themselves and their family members and different departments are one the verge of collapse.



Some of the participants said that the politicians were involved in corruption. One lawyer shared “In our country, for every legal right and in order to get the work done, we have to search personal or political relations within the concerned department. When we cannot

find connection, we resort to corruption”. One respondent argued that “corruption was the basis for appointment of officers in accountability departments”. Many among the participants stated that responsibility of increasing corruption is on public as well as government departments and non-implementation of corruption laws. Moreover, politician spent millions of rupees during their election campaign; therefore, they have to recover this spent money by getting involved in corruption. Some of the participants opined that extravagant bad habit, raising the standards of life, and low literacy rate was exacerbating the corruption in Pakistan. One respondent was of the view that “awareness was required also for civil society groups and individuals for reducing corruption in society”. Majority was convinced that accountability departments did not have role in mitigating corruption. They opined that all accountability departments should be free from the political pressure and there should be explicit awareness regarding accountability departments among citizens.

FGD 2. Journalists’ Community

According to the journalists’ community of district Mansehra, Pakistan was facing the worst security situation, problem of rule of law, lack of essential information, inflation and energy shortage. Some of the respondent also shared that lack of business opportunities in the country in general and in district particularly as big problem. Public is not aware regarding their rights; and politicians are corrupt and they do not have any serious jobs but to shift from one party to another party and still they get chance to participate in election. One of the participants stated with lot of frustration that “approximately 60 years had passed and corruption could not be rooted out from the country. Citizens have to bribe in every government department for legal as well as illegal work. The situation is so grim that in every department there are private agents to fix the bribe money for corrupt officers. Even politicians are directly involved in corruption and get benefit”. The respondents agreed that corruption was increasing in the country and there was open violation of merit in the country for appointment in government jobs. A seemingly experienced journalist argued that in Pakistan “there was a big difference in corrupt and honest persons’ life. Corrupt person’s life standard is rising day by day and honest cannot fulfill his daily life expenses and it gives birth to tension and anxiety. Corruption is imbedded in habits and corrupt persons do not feel ashamed in getting involved into corruption even when highlighted in the media”. Another journalist shared that “in every sphere, from government departments especially police, WAPDA and revenue to all district departments, we have to give bribe for legal or illegal business”. Many among participants were of view that civil society could play constructive role through education and awareness of the people about their rights and advocating to raise voice against corruption. Some participants opined that accountability department did not play their role in eliminating corruption. They argued that if these departments were working effectively, the corruption in the country might not have been on the rise. One journalist argued that “there are inadequacies & Institutional weaknesses in the Anti- Corruption Agencies. Consequently, no specific actions are taken on the corruption

cases even when these are highlighted in media. Nevertheless, majority of the journalists was committed to identify the corruption scandals in media.

FGD 3. Members of CSOs

Majority of the members of civil society organizations agreed that currently in Pakistan, there were many issues related with governance that include violation of merit based employment, shortage of electricity & gas, no quality education, poverty, and no business and livelihood opportunities. In addition, there were issues of internal security and terrorism and absence of rule of law. There is also class difference in following rule of law, for instance the elite upper class does not obey the law and law is only for the poor people to follow. One civil society activist was convinced that “for getting any legal work done in state departments, bribery was essential. Not only government departments, the private organizations are also involved in corruption in the country”. Dwelling at length on the causes of corruption, a seasoned activist said that “the fundamental reasons behind corrupt practices in government sector include low salaries, pressures of luxurious life, meritless appointments, bad governance, and inefficiency of accountability departments, inflation and corrupt politicians. The corruption is increasing on daily basis.” On the issue of how to tackle the menace of corruption, one participant shared “in this regard, civil society can bring awareness among the citizens about their rights, responsibilities and duties to raise voices against corruption and malpractices in government departments. Through community outreach and civic engagement programmes, seminars and other activities, civil society groups could educate and aware the citizens about laws and civic responsibilities. Citizens are not aware of the accountability departments and their functions; people generally believe that NAB (National Accountability Bureau) and Anti-Corruption departments are originally corrupt”.

FGD 4. Active Citizens

Socially activist group of district Mansehra agreed that non-implementation of laws was the basic problem of the country; and other issues are concerned with security situation, inflation, unemployment, violation of merit, shortage of electricity & gas, illiteracy and ever-increasing corruption in the country. One concerned citizen shared that “the governments and politicians themselves do not obey the laws and law is considered for the poor people to follow. Corruption has become the rule of law in Pakistan and it is increasing on daily basis in every government departments””. Another citizen argued that “not only government departments, but the society as well as accountability institutions were also responsible for increasing corruption in government departments”. One of the respondent stated that “government was not stopping corruption in the country, community was not fulfilling their duty being a good citizen of the state, and anti-corruption and accountability departments had poor investigative means and lack of professional expertise to cope with the menace of corruption”. The participants were of the view that the fundamental causes of individuals involvement in corruption were low salaries, pressures of luxurious life coupled with tension and anxiety, and greediness of becoming rich overnight’,. Resultantly,

there are meritless appointments, bad governance, and corruption in country. While government departments inclusive of accountability departments are inefficient and not properly following laws. Talking about solution, one participant suggested that “at local community level, civil society could bring awareness among the citizens about their rights, responsibilities and duties to raise voices against corrupt and malpractices in government departments”. A social activist stressed “the need for civil society to make things transparent and free of corruption and set an example for others to follow”. The group identified that citizens were not aware of the accountability departments and their functions. People generally believe that NAB (National Accountability Bureau) and Anti-Corruption departments are originally corrupt and performs functions for political blackmailing. Therefore, there is need to reform these departments as well as launching awareness campaign for citizens. All social activists pledged to work for awareness campaign at community level against corruption.



District Mardan

FGD 1. Lawyers' Community

Majority of lawyers community of district Mardan was of the view that the current situation of Pakistan was becoming worse day by day. Some of them declared categorically that all government departments were corrupt, and the officials in government departments did not provide any legal service to public without asking for bribe. There is no one raising voice for the rights of the people other than higher judiciary, which played role to mitigate corruption. Many among these



participants stressed the need of loyal, honorable and sincere politicians who are the servants of the peoples of this country in real sense and not the masters. One lawyer was of the opinion that “government was responsible for increase in corruption because on the one hand, governments were directly involved in corruption, and, on the other hand, they had not given accountability departments enough powers to control over the menace of corruption”. Some participants also blamed media as a key factor and responsible for propagating corruption in Pakistan. Deliberating on how to bring about change, one lawyer said that “we can encounter corruption if we bring honorable leaders to the forefront. We have to bring changes in the mindset of the peoples about corruption and about its repercussion”. They all agreed about the effective role of civil society in decreasing corruption. Civil society can raise voice against corruption and can make people aware about the evil of corruption. One participant was of the view that “corruption is higher in our country because people have lost trust in government and state institutions. They believe that state institutions and its functionaries are there to exploit people”. Another lawyer argued that “the role of accountability departments in mitigating corruption was not as good as was expected because government had not given accountability departments much independence and autonomy to take measures against every corrupt politician and bureaucrat”. Nonetheless, lawyers’ community pledged to play their effective role to reduce corruption. “We must educate our children and choose responsible politicians”, a respondent stressed.

FGD 2. Journalists’ Community

According to journalists, the current situation of Pakistan was not good. One journalist argued that “there is state of status-quo in country and no one here is to bring change in the structure of the government. Peoples of Pakistan witnessed democratic government for the previous five years that government did nothing for the betterment of the people. Most of the politicians are corrupt and they always filled their own pockets from state treasury”. Social media can play a positive role to make people aware about the current situation of Pakistan. They agreed that the ratio of corruption in the country had increased and main reasons were lack of education, unawareness, and politicians who provide support to every corrupt bureaucrat and facilitate them even when they are punished by the courts. Few opined that corruption is badly affecting citizen’s life, country’s economic conditions and social fabric of society. “We can encounter corruption through education and through promoting honest persons in government sector”, a journalist stressed. They agreed that in order to reduce corruption, civil society could play a huge role through mass awareness and education. Civil society can arrange meetings in schools and colleges for the awareness of the public and about the negative effects of corruption. Explaining the ineffectiveness of accountability departments, one journalist was of the view that “accountability departments worked under the umbrella of the government that was why they cannot take action against everyone. They work under political pressure; therefore, government should have to make these departments autonomous”. He further argued that “journalists can play their role in

the reduction of corruption if they could make the general masses aware about the evils of corruption”.

FGD 3. Active Citizens Group

Active citizens of district Mardan were concerned about of the social, political and security situation of Pakistan. Some were of the view that the country was facing extreme corruption and resultantly, most of governmental departments had been paralyzed. The major reason being inactive and mostly corrupt politicians in governments. Therefore, ‘we need young people to come to assembly as people’s representatives to raise their voice for our rights.” Many among participants stated that, currently, in our country corruption was on peak and was increasing day by day. One young person stated with resentment that “most of the politicians and government servants considered corruption as their legal right”. Another participant shared that “society was responsible for increase in corruption because citizens do not know about their rights and responsibilities and frequently give bribes to any government official to get every sort of work done”. It was also shared that corruption impacted in variety of ways. It adversely affects a person life and it is because of corruption that rich is becoming richer and poor is becoming poorer day by day. Oned participant was extremely skeptical of the role of accountability departments in mitigating corruption as compared to accountability departments of other countries because “these departments in Pakistan work under government pressure. The veins of accountability departments are in the hands of the governments or politicians. However, ‘we can encounter corruption through mass awareness of the public about the evils of corruption through media or wide range public awareness campaigns”. One participant suggested, “Civil society can play their role in decreasing corruption through propaganda and to aware the peoples about its negative impacts on individual’s lives. we can play a positive role in reducing corruption through messages about the negative effects of corruption and about its repercussion”. Some of the participants stated that accountability departments should take bold decision like Supreme Court to end corruption in the country.

FGD 4. Concerns of Trade Union

The opinion of the trade union group of Mardan was not much different from that of others. They did not paint a good picture of the country so far as corruption was concerned. One trade union activist stated that “most of the politicians and bureaucrats were involved in corruption. Unemployment increased in the previous five years due to which graph of poverty increased. The value of Pakistani rupee dropped due to which petroleum prices increased and in turn the prices of daily commodities also increased. Government should frame policies which could facilitate all the citizens of this country”. Some other members of Trade Union expressed their concerns about the increase of corruption in country in the previous five years. They further argued that corruption was increasing because most of the people made it their habit and consider it legal and their birthright. One activist said, “Politicians as well as society members were responsible for corruption. Corruption impacted everyone. It affects the life of every person”. Majority of the participants were

convinced that civil society could play the role in decreasing corruption from our society. It is the responsibility of civil society to raise awareness among public about corruption and its negative effects on individual's lives. One respondent stated that "we could encounter corruption if we choose honest persons as our leaders and educate every citizen of this country". Another participant was convinced that "accountability departments could play positive role in mitigating corruption provided these departments work freely without any external pressure and without the involvement of any political person. Accountability department officials should work honestly". Another participant was of the view that "surely, we can play a role in reducing corruption. First, we have to make ourselves aware about corruption. We have to know about our rights and obligations".

District Peshawar

FGD 1. Lawyers' Community

The group of lawyers in district Peshawar responded that in Pakistan the overall situation was gloomy. The check and balance system almost does not exist. The poor performances of institutions are jeopardizing the situation instead of reforming. One lawyer declared that "corruption was a social evil in the country, which was growing day by day. Corruption prevailed in various kinds and types that include monetary benefits, in shape of gifts, reciprocal benefit/ bargaining i.e. transfer, posting, employment and others". An example was quoted by a participant that an officer in one office extends his un-due favour to another person belonging to another office to a relative of the officer in order to take money or other's benefits. Another participant added, "Today corruption had gained currency". Many among the participants argued that the State was not fully functioning to end or reduce the corruption because the high ups are involved in the dirty game. Dwelling on the causes of corruption, one participant was of the view that "It is increasing due to spiritual distance from the education of Deen-e-Islam where everyone is dealt equally and Justice done without any discrimination and delay. The injustice is the basic root of corruption". Majority of the respondents agreed that primarily the state machinery was responsible to deal with corruption. A participant also quoted the *Hadith* that "one who will give bribe and the one who will accept it will be convicted to hell". The participants agreed that it was the responsibility of every citizen to say no to corruption. A respondent expressed that the exploitation of merit creates discomfort and hatred among the victims. One participant said, "the trust and confidence on the state authorities is diminishing with the passage of time. The corrupt culture always nurtures the corrupt people". It was stated that although media was playing a vital role in information dissemination and in developing public opinion but at times it highlights the situation with exaggeration. Most of the participants expressed the opinion that corruption had increased rapidly for the last five years. One participant added that "corruption starts from the upper level and then it trickles down to the lower level. Accountability departments have failed to eliminate or even reduce corruption". Some respondents stated that civil society had strong network at grassroots level where they could educate communities on their rights, access to information, good

governance and protection of their rights provided by the constitution of Pakistan. “The Lawyers have a strong network of thousands of members who are united and represent a legal body but it is the responsibility of all citizens who are officers, Businessman, NGO workers and a common man to increase their legal knowledge and fight against every violation, exploitation and corruption”, said by the President Bar Association. Some of respondents shared that citizens were not aware of legal rights and constitution, which interprets the rights of citizens. The people even do not know where they could lodge litigation against the culprits. Majority opined that citizens needed to stand firmly against the malpractice and seek justice through a legal way for which education was highly important. They further added there was a need for autonomous body consisting of government and public representatives who ensure accountability of Public department regularly. The accountability departments, independent and free from external and internal influence, could play an effective role to eliminate corruption and improve accountability.

FGD 2. Journalists’ Community

The majority of the journalists of Peshawar agreed that citizens of Pakistan were unhappy with different social, economic and political crisis, high inflation, unemployment and corruption. The people want change and reforms for their wellbeing and relief. They remarked that corruption had increased in all walks of life. The people are willingly providing money, gifts and other kinds to get their work done by the officers concerned. They explained that it was not easy to get legitimate rights without money. One journalist shared that “journalist were also victims of corruption as most of the reporters could not write against the influential because the newspaper owner would not publish a report against the influential. The newspapers are generally run by the advertisements and all advertisements are contributed by the corrupt elements. If a report is published against corrupt elements, the advertisements are curtailed to put pressure on the newspaper. Most of the reporters had to face court cases for reporting against highly influential people”. Another journalist was of the view that “the ineffectiveness of accountability departments encouraged the people in government to indulge in corruption”. One journalist explained that “power politics provided a way to corruption. The politician uses all means whether fair or unfair to be elected into parliament. They ignore merit and insist to favor their vote bank”. One of the participant pointed out through an example that when our people worked in the Middle East, they tend to comply all rules and regulations because of the system which compelled them to stay in the queue. Some participants viewed corruption as creating imbalance in a society as the deserving people are left behind and the elite class got their benefits based on corruption. They added that deprivation from a genuine right leads to violence among the people who perform anti-state activities. One journalist added that “there was a lack of investigative reporting due to which information is not shared with the public”. He was also of the view that “the high inflation and un-controlled prices of daily use including medicines have contributed to promote culture of corruption”. Another journalist shared, “The journalists are the eyes of society and they reported what they saw.

Journalist community is facing various issues, which had reduced their role to minimize corruption. Media has played a vital role and highlighted various cases but on the other hand, Judiciary and Administration have the responsibility to bring culprits to book". The majority however, was convinced that bad governance is a major symptom of rampant corruption, which has gain momentum for the last 5-6 years. One journalist said, "although corruption is present in the world but in our society, it had become a way of life". Majority of the respondents pointed out that civil society could also highlight the issue of corruption through seminars and other awareness raising programs. They can educate citizen to report such cases to the proper forum. One participant was convinced that accountability departments were not free and independent. All these departments need to be autonomous and free from any influence. All those departments should be strengthened with a modern system and public representation should be ensured. Corrupt elements hampered the reporters by target killing, abduction and claiming damages in the court whereas their organizations cannot protect them from these corrupt elements". One journalist was of the view that "departments were established to eradicate corruption but such departments did not enjoy the public confidence and are perceived to be corrupt". Some others argued that courts had gained confidence and trust of public by taking some bold initiatives but courts took lot of time in deciding public interest cases.

FGD 3. Members of CSOs

The representatives of civil society organizations were of view that in Pakistan, the social and economic development had been hampered due to frequent disasters i.e. armed conflict in tribal areas with associated IDPs crisis, devastating flood of 2010, and earthquakes. Majority of the respondents opined that corruption prevailed not only in Pakistan but also in the whole world although culturally and ethically it is considered immoral and an offense. One activist shared that "institutions lack in capacity and technology, which impedes their performance and effectiveness. On the other hand, people do not point out if a public servant commits bribery. They are reluctant to disclose the dishonesty or offense because they considered that no one can punish them for his/her wrong doings". Another activist added that there was also a perception strongly embedded in the masses that every public servant considered each other as family members and having strong ties to support each other in the time of impeachment. They extend undue favor to protect their fellow". Enumerating reasons for corruption, one activist shared that "various factors are contributing to the spread of corruption. It is multi-dimension and multifaceted in nature. The poor law enforcement and violation by the ruling class of the laws of the land has resulted in shaking confidence of common people in rule of law. Law and institutions are in place but these laws are largely ineffective in dealing with corruption. The lack of competence, weak institutional accountability mechanisms, unavailability of safeguards to protect inquiry officers and weakness of disciplinary processes are some of the reasons which encourage corrupt practices. All public servants need to account for all their work publically". The participants were of the view that corruption directly affects the

overall economic development of a country. The corrupt practices deprived poor citizen of the opportunities and as a result rich become richer and poor people poorer. Majority of the participants pointed out that the civil societies groups were working at the grassroots level and they had accessed to marginalized communities. They could empower the people to understand their legal rights, duties and responsibilities of the public services departments and enhance their awareness through information dissemination. This will help in empowering people to tackle with the disease of corruption. One participant opined that “establishment of various organizations/departments like anti-corruption, Ehtisab, Mohtasib, RAB (Regional Accountability Bureau) and NAB (National Accountability Bureau) were initiatives to tackle corruption but these initiatives had largely failed to deliver the results. The accountability of the departments established with the purpose to hold public functionaries and public bodies accountable needed to be ensured”. They were of the view that civic education, right of vote and democratization are important tools for eradication of corruption. One participant pointed out that “all institutions established to combat corruption are lacking standardization. The existing setups provide opportunities for discretions. Anti-Corruption, Federal Investigation Agency and ombudsman needed to be modernized and capacitated to deal cases impartially and professionally:.

FGD 4. Concerns of Trade Union

The traders of Peshawar expressed that terrorism had highly affected the overall situation in the province as well as in the country. One participant argued that “price hike, insecurity in transporting goods, and bomb blasts had shaken the business community adversely. The administration and security forces have failed to protect life and property of the people”. Many respondents argued that corruption was now an open secret. Every government official is ready to accept money and gifts in exchange for his/her services. One participant shared that “public services departments were not providing services effectively. They are only concerned about their salaries. They do not care about people and their service delivery issues”. Majority of the respondents agreed that the governments as well as citizens were responsible for corruption due to their submissive and inactive role. Some of the respondents mentioned an example that SMEDA provided USAID grants to assist conflict victims’ business community but most of the funds had been disbursed among the non-deserving beneficiaries. One participant explained that “political interference, nepotism in transfer and postings of government officials were key elements in promotion of corruption. All transfers and posting on high positions are carried out based on corruption. Honest officers cannot stay on a key position for a long time and such officer is transferred in far-flung areas as a punishment for their honesty”. Responding to the question, some of the traders shared that media portrayed negative picture some time without investigation in the matter. The participants pointed out that trade unions always advocate for the policy reforms for public relief like price revision and rebate in sales tax in order to reduce burden on common man. They added that through Sarhad Chamber of Commerce, the union had promotes its policy for reforms and public and political accountability. They shared that

Union had strict policy against the fraud in market and ensured good quality product across the markets. One participant identified that corruption was increasing at national level. Most of the traders had grievances against railways as all wagons were being allotted through nepotism and corruption. The traders shared that each citizen could put pressure on government to ensure effective service delivery. They further added that their union had already implemented its policy in respective markets to abandon illegal commodities. One trade union activist expressed that people were aware about the corruption and their practices but could not fight against the social evil. The corruption and the corrupt elements were so strong that citizen could not cope them. The participants were of the view that citizen could bring change by electing honest persons. One of the participant said, “power corrupted everyone when they joined the ruling class”. The participants highlighted that people lacked confidence in the departments and institutions constituted for combating corruption. They were of the opinion that no institutions could ensure protection of a person and his or her family who disclose maladministration of a department led by a high official. One participant shared that “people generally avoid help from the anti-corruption and other related departments, as they do not want animosity. Departments meant to combat corruption only exist in paper and do not enjoy confidence of the people”.

Chapter 4

Results of Interviews

Apart from survey and FGDs, 16 interviews (4 in each district) were also conducted with those persons who had frequent interaction with government departments. The detail is as below:

District Abbottabad

Raja Haroon

President Press Club, Abbottabad

Mr. Raja Haroon is the president of press club, Abbottabad and he has approximately twenty years of working experience in journalism. He responded that currently, Pakistan was facing issues of law and order and from President of Pakistan to peon of public department, the whole society including lawyers, journalists, and private companies etc. were involved in corruption. Further, corruption is increasing on daily basis because the people know that there is no rule of law in the country to punish the corrupt people. He categorically blamed politicians as being responsible for corruption in the country. He further argued that the life of a citizen had become miserable and people were living hand to mouth. They cannot even pay utility bills, and cannot afford to educate their children. Similarly, they are also facing many other problems only because of the ever-increasing corruption. We, being journalists always point out the corruption in the country without

biases and irrespective of the power and position of the person and we will continue our efforts. Raja Haroon discredited all accountability departments being involved in corruption and he was skeptical of impartiality and utility of these departments. Nevertheless, he was hopeful that civil society could play vital role in mitigating corruption and for this, they have to divert their thinking for the common interest of the country instead of individual interests. He was of the view that journalist community and society in general was well aware of the corruption in our system; however, they are in fact compelled to use unfair means to resolve even their legal matters because of culture of corruption. He said that citizens should not use any unfair means to resolve their legal issues and urged them to take stand for their rights for eradication of corruption. He argued that State with its efficient system of accountability like Anti-Corruption Departments, FIA, Ombudsmen and courts possibly would play effective role to end corruption in the country.

Gufran Hashmi

Principal Muslim Education System, Abbottabad

Mr. Gufran Hashmi is the Principal Muslim Education System Abbottabad and has fifteen years of teaching experience. He stated that Pakistan was facing worst situation in corruption, law and order, violation of merit, unemployment, and inflation. The corruption seems operative from 'grassroots level to upper level, however, there are exceptions and I believe that our country is running just because of these few fair people'. He said, ironically, corruption was increasing because 'when a person [whether he is poor citizen or well off] had some concern [with public department], he could not resolve it legally'. Therefore, he has to use unfair means to resolve his issue, and in this way, this attitude becomes his permanent methodology to get work done from public department. Mr. Gufran Hashmi identified that law enforcement agencies and accountability and anti-corruption departments were responsible for increase in corruption because all the appointments in these institutions were made on political bases or bribery, therefore these officials instead of enforcing law, work for the political benefits or their personnel benefits. He also held citizens responsible for corruption because in elections 'they elected wrong and corrupt politicians and then they [politicians] get involved in corruption. Resultantly, corruption has a deep impact on citizen's life as well.

He told that he has always been discouraging corruption in his professional as well as private life; for instance, 'during examinations different parents approached me and asked to arrange meetings with examiners [for allowing copy during examinations], but I refused them and told them that they were encouraging their boys for using unfair means'. Similarly, I always advised my students never to use unfair means neither in exams nor in any other place. Gufran Hashmi maintained that normally, 'we use two words rights and duties of individuals. In my opinion, it should be duties first then rights'

Mujhaid Khan

Advocate High Court, Abbottabad

Mr. Mujhaid Khan is advocate of High Court and practicing law for last seven years in Pakistan. He discussed that current situation in Pakistan was not good especially after the incident of 9/11. He added that the entire system had become corrupt and this corruption was the root cause of the rest of all the issues in country. For instance, 'when a student, after completing his studies, cannot find job on merit, he becomes frustrated and this frustration leads him to find unfair means to fulfill his needs thereby resulting into corruption'. Similarly high prices and less purchasing power have also made the life of the people miserable. He argued that people from all segment of society and especially the governments and bureaucracy were responsible for all issues of state including corruption. He stated that according to his information, most of the accountability departments were themselves involved in corruption therefore they were increasing corruption instead of mitigating it. Further, the political interference in appointment of employees also gives birth to rampant corruption, lack of check and balances and violations of merit and rule of law. When decisions are not taken on merit then it directly affects the citizens' behavior. The corruption is 'proliferating in the country because there is no rule of law in the country and there is no exemplary punishment for corrupt people. Nevertheless, Mujhaid Khan opined that 'We could encounter corruption through public awareness. He also credited national and local media for highlighting many corruption scandals, applauded judiciary for its timely actions on corruption scandals, and urged civil society to support all the efforts made by different sector of the society. He also pointed out that there was lack of ownership of public departments due to credibility issues. He maintained that citizens should play the their role to eradicate the corruption by highlighting it through media and they should decide not to use any unfair means for corruption. All accountability departments as NAB, RAB, FIA, and anti-corruption departments are not functioning properly. However, at higher level some of the departments are performing better due to the pressure of judiciary.

Farhat Jabeen

Bureau Chief Anti- Corruption Magazine, Abbottabad

Miss Farhat Jabeen is the Bureau Chief of anti- corruption magazine and is working there for last five years. She said that country was facing security and terrorism problems, corruption and Political instability. She argued that the whole society was responsible for corruption and it had become the culture in the country. She explained that corruption was increasing because we were always in search of short cuts and want to get our issues resolved through fair or unfair means. She pointed out that our system encouraged corruption. Take the example of Police stations, Patwari, Hospitals etc., where there is no system of check and balance and as a result these bodies have become the symbol of corruption. She maintained that citizens were facing huge problems owing to corruption and cost of living had become very high and out of reach of an ordinary person. She opined that the system needed to be reformed and this could only happen if there was dedicated and honest leadership. She

shared that accountability departments needed to be more proactive in order to be effective. She also insisted that the civil society needed to raise collective voice against corruption. However, it was only possible if we started discouraging corruption. She said that she would continue her fight against corruption through her magazine. She was of the view that should follow the rule of law and should not resort to corrupt practices to get their issues resolved.

District Mansehra

Arsalan Saied

District Coordinator, HRD Mansehra

MR. Arsalan Sayed is the district coordinator of an NGO named Human Resource Development in district Mansehra. He has ten years of working experience in development sector. He discussed that the security situation is not good in the country; governance is bad and there are issues of inflation, energy shortage and economic crisis. Owing to bad governance, people were shifting their businesses in other countries. There is no rule of law and merit in the country and corruption has become order of the day. Politicians mostly support uneducated relatives for key posts and there is no justice for poor. Every individual of the society is responsible for corruption. Governments have completely failed in reducing corruption and there is no effective role of the anti-corruption departments. Resultantly, people display negative outlook in issues pertaining to every aspect of life. He further argued that it was the duty of civil society to make people aware about menace of corruption and motivate them to elect right persons in parliament who work for rule of law in the country. He also stressed the need for making rules for enhancing transparency at all levels and urged citizens to raise their voices against corruption and corrupt people by identifying them.

Dr. Zia

Medical Officer in District Head Quarter Hospital, Mansehra

Dr, Zia is medical officer in district Head Quarter Hospital, Mansehra and is working there for last three years. Like all other persons, he was also disappointed by the situation in country. He was of the view that public bodies were not independent and were controlled by MPAs and MNAs of the country. No citizen is fair and honest with his or her job and every individual is pursuing only personal interests. He further added, "in our country corruption is legalized as commission or percentage." He was of the view that our country lacks sincere leadership. The powerful people sell jobs instead of hiring people on merit. Common citizens in Pakistan are facing many problems like food and energy shortage, free education, unemployment, health issues and inflation. Dr. Zia further remarked that civil society has important role in combating corruption. For this, there is need to work at house level, street level, mohallah level, village level and city level. He opined that accountability departments

were almost invisible and their poor performance was due to corrupt elements working for those departments.

Saqib Qurashi

Advocate, Mansehra

Mr. Saqib Qurashi is practicing lawyer for the last six years. He argued that Pakistan situation is getting worse day by day due to many reasons which include corruption, lack of employment opportunities, political uncertainties, high rate of inflation, economic recession, low rate of developmental activities and terrorist activities. He added that corruption existed in Pakistan from top to bottom. Common person is struggling for his or her rights everywhere and there is poor implementation of existing laws. Citizens are responsible because they do not speak/fight for their rights. He further stated that major factors are the poor implementation of laws by government, lack of proper monitoring and follow-ups systems and inefficient anti-corruption departments. He was hopeful that civil society could play a bridging role between community and authorities by bringing awareness among public at large about their rights and increasing linkages between common person and officials of public bodies. He further demanded that accountability departments should have section to take feedback from communities and listen to their problems. Further, lawyer community can provide support to honest persons. Corruption can be reduced through increased level of awareness among common people regarding their rights and by giving proper punishment to criminals and corrupt people.

Naseer Ahmad

President Press Club, Mansehra

Mr. Naseer Ahmad is president Press Club Gari-habib-ullah and has work experience of five years. He pointed out that Pakistan had remained under terrorist attacks for last few years and as result there had been massive loss of life and property and economy has been severely hit by terrorism. He further stated that all this had happened because people have deviated from Islamic code of life. He admitted that as a nation, 'we all are responsible because we do not elect legislators through honesty and resultantly governments do not fulfill their promises. Every day there are 'violations of rights of poor citizens like their rights to justice, rights to employment, good education, and good health facilities at their village levels. Mr. Naseer therefore stressed the need of increased awareness among communities about their rights and establishment of effective anti-corruption departments and feedback/helpline services for citizens to share their views with higher authorities. Moreover, proper implementation of policies and laws is of utmost importance if we want to curb corruption, he opined. Civil society has the responsibility to highlight corrupt persons living in our society and to make citizens aware to raise voices against corrupt people and practices in their daily life.

District Mardan

Mohammad Ali Shaheen

Journalist, Mardan

Mr. Mohammad Ali Shaheen is a journalist in a newspaper “Shaheen.” Mr. Ali had ten years of working experience as a journalist. He argued that the current situation of Pakistan is getting worse day by day. The politicians have destroyed the country in the name of democracy. There is no value of human beings; innocent people are being killed without any reason. There is no check and balance. Politicians and government departments are involved in corruption. The ratio of corruption is increasing day by day from officer rank to clerk. There is bad governance and lack of awareness in public. If I rank the person responsible for corruption, first is politician and then the government officials. The citizens are losing their trust in government departments. The citizens have been made to believe that everything can be done through unfair means; and this is the root cause of corruption. He further argued that every citizen is affected by corruption. Mr. Ali was of the view that politicians do not have as much assets when join the politics but once they get elected, their assets witness phenomenal increase. As a citizen we should know our responsibilities and this is only possible if we are able to spread education in our country. He was of the view that the corruption virus was increasing day by day. It is the primary duty of civil society to educate more and more people to abolish this virus from the country. He argued that anti-corruption departments were not playing their roles effectively in dealing with the issue of corruption. He was of the opinion that checks and balance was virtually non-existent. He was of the opinion that as a journalist through writing he could stop the corruption. The community considers that the entire government department along with politicians is involved in corrupt practices. There is no check and balance from the Government side. He stressed the need that people should be made aware about development funds and utilization of these funds. Here is a need of more awareness among the general public regarding the expenditure of the government in developmental funds.

Arif Khan

Lawyer, District Courts Mardan

Mr. Arif Khan is a lawyer at District Court and he has been in this profession for last 13 years. He argued that due to continuous democracy, the current situation of the country had been changing and after two or three successful tenures of democracy, the system of the country would definitely be change for better. Democracy played positive role with the help of which, judiciary and media highlighted many issues for putting the country on the right path. He was of the view that common person had lost faith in the Government Departments and it has created many social problems in the society like poverty, injustice, price hacking etc. There is a strong need for creation of more and more awareness among the public about the curse of corruption. Corruption is prevailing in our country because

there is no culture of punishing those who are involved in this crime. There is no accountability and transparency in the Government departments to remove corruption. He further suggested that all the departments should take bold measures like Supreme Court to eradicate corruption from our society.

Mohammad Saeed

Principal of GHS, Landaky

Mr. Mohammad Saeed is a Principal at Government High School Landaky and he has been in teaching profession for 18 years. He was of the view that situation in the country was improving and media and judiciary had played significant role in that regard. He argued that if we compare the levels of corruption we would find out that mostly low-level staff was involved in the corruption. He argued that Government has not planned anything to stop the culture of corruption prevailing in the society. High level officials are responsible for this because they have no monitoring system. Due to corruption, the rich man is getting richer, poor man is getting poorer, and this is resulting in many social problems in our society.

Mohammad Idrees

Program Director at Integrated Regional Support Program, Mansehra

Mr. Mohammad Idrees is a Program Director at Integrated Regional Support Program (IRSP). He has twelve years of working experience in this field. He was of the view that there was no check and balance system and all the departments were working haphazardly. Mr. Idrees argued that both Politicians and Government departments were involved in corruption and corruption was increasing on daily basis. Mr. Idrees shared that there was need for launching awareness campaign to tackle the menace of corruption. As an active citizen, we need to know our responsibilities. This will only happen if there is education in the country and only then we will be able to protect our rights. He opined that people had firm conviction that politicians and public bodies were involved in corrupt practices.

District Peshawar

Abdul Latif Afridi

President at High Court bar Association, Peshawar

Mr. Abdul Latif Afridi is President at High Court Bar Association. He argued that the development indicators of Pakistan were not very impressive as compared to other countries. The fact that Pakistan has faced many challenges like terrorism and dictatorships in the country, but country on the whole is on the path of recovery. He argued that there are two levels of corruption, upper level and lower level. The ruling elite are involved in the upper level of corruption whereas common people are involved in the lower level of corruption. The institutions are weak and power is concentrated in few hands who

manipulate the power for their vested interests. The citizen should get legal education and should know their rights under the constitution of Pakistan.

Maryam Bibi

Director of Khwendo Kor, Peshawar

Ms. Maryam Bibi, Director of Khwendo Kor, has twenty years of work experience. In the interview, she stated that due to the poor policies our country was unable to achieve a prestigious position in the comity of nations. She lamented that our democratic institutions are still weak. She was of the view that corruption had acquired legitimate status and people considered corruption a normal practice. It is a common knowledge that in order to get your work done from a public body, the person has to pay bribe. She was of the view that corruption was playing havoc with the lives of the poor. She expressed that civil bureaucracy in partnership with politicians was involved in perpetuating corruption in the country. She claimed that, the civil society could play vital role to eliminate corruption from the society. The communities are lacking knowledge about their rights. They consider the demands of public officials are legal and often they do not know how to lodge a complaint against a person. The lack of information provides opportunities to culprits to exploit the uneducated poor.

Nasir Hussain

President of Press Club, Peshawar

Mr. Nasir Hussain is a President of Press club Peshawar. In the interview, he was of the opinion that people had become aware of the tactics of government and now they wanted change. He was hopeful that the elections 2013 could bring some change as people were fed up of the malpractices prevailing in the society. He stated that corruption was increasing in the society and the rule of law did not prevail in the country. He shared that people did not respect rule of law. The institutions have also shaken the confidence of public. The government machinery and the public officials are responsible for the state of corruption in the country. Mr. Nasir argued that corruption is directly related to the economic development in the society and if it prevails, the economic system will collapse. The corruption affects the poor people the most as all funds for the benefits of poor people are embezzled by the corrupt elements. He further added that the mega corruption at high level is carried out through an organized group. He was of the view that by improving education and awareness, the communities can be empowered to demand for enhancing institutions' performance. Nasir proposed that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) should be given autonomy to work without any political or external influence. The participation of common people should be ensured in the accountability departments to curb the corruption.

Dr. Sareer Bashah

Registrar Islamia College & University Peshawar

Prof. Dr. Sareer Bashah is a Registrar at Islamia College and University of Peshawar. Prof. Sareer stated that the level of education has increased in recent years which has led to prosperity in the country. Corruption exists in different forms and not fulfilling ones duty is also a corruption. The lack of check and balances system has contributed to corruption in the country. The political leaders, weak policies and personal attitude are responsible for growth of corruption. Mr. Sareer argued that corruption has increased the gap between rich and poor and has destructed the society internally. The education institutions can play pivotal role in creating respect for the laws of the land. The institutions can mobilize the public and create awareness to fight the evils like corruption.

He proposed that there is a need for a lot of homework to be done by the institutions to change the system and make it corruption free. The poor compliance to court orders and laws of the land has resulted in raising levels of corruption in the society. He was of the view that effective implementation of the laws of the land will result in dealing with rampant corruption in the country.

Chapter 5

Final Remarks

Findings:

Following are the pertinent findings of 'Ground Reality and Corruption Perception Survey.

Trust Deficit between State Institutions and Citizens:

The citizens seem to be alienated from the state institutions. As the citizens can get their rights only through offering bribes to public officials, this has led to creating wedge between citizens and the state institutions. This has resulted in creating a trust deficit and citizens experience lack of ownership of public bodies. One respondent was of the view that "corruption is on the higher side in our country because people have lost trust in government and state institutions. They believe that state institutions and its functionaries are there to exploit people".

Acceptability of Corruption:

Corruption has gotten currency to the extent that it has almost become a norm. The perceptions of the respondents of FGDs and interviews, backed by the findings of survey of 600 respondents in four districts lead one to conclude that corruption has become rule of law in the country. The common perceptions are that nothing can be done without offering bribe. As a result, offering and accepting bribe is not considered to be a bad practice. One respondent was of the view that "in our country everybody from peon to president is thinking individually for personal benefits". One respondent opined that "As a nation we are corrupt and the current corruption situation is well depicted in the transparency international report. The main reason of corruption is non-implementation of laws in Pakistan". One active citizen, dwelling on the gap between state institutions and citizens opined that "being a Pakistani citizen whenever you think to solve your legal issue the first thought comes into your mind is to resolve the matter illegally or using unfair means".

Ineffectiveness of Accountability Departments:

There is lack of faith in accountability departments. The perceptions of the respondents reveal that they considered corrupt practices being exercised in accountability departments. The perceptions captured through this survey also show that people consider non-transparent and meritless recruitment of officers in these departments as primary reasons for their ineffectiveness. One respondent argued that "political interference in the Government departments, violation of merit during selection of employees; insufficient staff, insufficient funds, and lack of rule of law were the key factors responsible for corruption in the country". One respondent argued that "at the key positions of National

Accountability Bureau, all the employees were appointed on the contractual basis so every new government can appoint their own people to take revenge from their political opponents or use them for political blackmailing”.

Need for Change:

The respondents showed their frustration with the existing state of affairs. The quality of basic services being provided by the state is deteriorating because of the massive corruption aggravating and contributing to the miserable plight of the common man. One respondent was of view that “common citizens have to bear the consequences of corruption, for instance in case of rental power corruption the common citizen has to pay high electricity bills”. There is a general perception that the existing state of affairs is unsustainable and people want to get rid of corruption and are yearning for change. One of the respondents stated that “we have to encounter corruption in every aspect of life; however if citizens start paying rupees 300 as fine rather than giving bribe of rupees 100 to traffic police personnel, the corruption would end there. For this purpose, the role of civil society can be vital, as they have to raise voice at every forum against corruption to eradicate menace of corruption in the country”.

Recommendations:

Following are key recommendations in the light of survey findings.

Need for Right to Information Legislation:

Right to information is considered to be an anti-corruption tool. There is corresponding link between the level of corruption and the level of flow of information from the public bodies. The Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province does not have a right to information law. As a result, residents of the province cannot seek information as their right from public officials. They cannot get information about budget allocated and its utilization for the basic services. As a consequence, they cannot make public officials accountable.

Not only the province needs to legislate on the issue of right to information but such legislation should be major departure from the existing right to information laws in the field in the country. The province of Punjab has also not carried out legislation on right to information and the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan have replicated largely discredited and ineffective Freedom of Information Ordinance 2002 in the shape of Sindh Freedom of Information Act 2006 and Balochistan Freedom of Information Act 2005 respectively. The KPK right to information law should be enacted by keeping in mind international and regional best practices as well as the international principles and standards pertaining to an effective right to information law. Such a law will go a long way in rooting out corruption from provincial public bodies.

Strengthening Accountability Departments:

There is an urgent need for the scrutiny of existing accountability laws of the province. Do these laws have an effective in-built implementation mechanism? The accountability departments need to be isolated from political influence. The autonomy of these departments needs to be ensured.

Establishment of District Governments:

There is need for the establishment of district governments in order to bridge the gap between state institutions and the citizens of the province. The anomalies in the district governments established under Local Government Ordinance 2001 are well documented. The new local government system should be based on the experiences learnt from the local governments established under LGO 2001. The police needs to be brought under the control of elected district representatives. The district police chief should either be directly elected or should be nominated by the district political head. The system of judiciary also needs to be revamped. There is need for learning from the good practices elsewhere in the world and explore the possibility as to whether District Attorney and district judges should also be elected.

Awareness Raising Initiatives about the Menace of Corruption:

There is strong need for launching awareness raising initiatives about the menace of corruption. The siphoning off of the public resources is exacerbating miserable plight of people with regard to the poor service delivery of basic needs. People should be made aware about the existing accountability mechanisms to highlight and tackle incidents of corruption through public services messages and other awareness raising means.

Proactive Disclosure of Information through Information Technology:

There are plethoras of records related to a common man that are held by public bodies. The District Copying Manual contains list of public records and citizens can get copies of these records by depositing prescribed fee to the concerned department. There have never been public services messages about the fee and procedures making people aware how common people can have access to their own records. Neither public bodies display such information at prominent places at their premises. Consequently, a majority of citizens do not know about the fee and procedures to get copies of public records held by courts, revenue department and other district public bodies. As a result, a common man runs from pillar to post, offers bribes for the copies of his own records.

There is need for computerization of records of revenue, courts and those records with the union councils so that citizens can have access to these records from their web sites. Furthermore, public departments do not display at prominent places the procedures and fee telling a common person how to access copies of these records. The public bodies should be made duty bound to display such information prominently at their premises.

Reforms at the Police Stations Level:

There is an urgent need about bringing reforms at the police stations level. The police officials are not given proper facilities to perform their duties. They are often over worked. They are not provided with necessary travel and communication related funds when they need to travel far off distances to investigate some cases. This burden is naturally transferred to the public. The drawing and disbursal system is centralized which needs to be devolved at the police station level. If head of a school can act as a drawing and disbursal officer, why the same cannot be done at the police station level. The availability of funds with the police station together with the meaningful participation brought about through district government system will enhance the performance of police and corruption will be minimized.

Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, (CPDI) is an independent, non-profit and a not-for-profit civil society organization working on issues of peace and development in Pakistan. It is registered Under Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance, 1984 (XLVII of 1984). It was established in September 2003 by a group of concerned citizens who realized that there was a need to approach the issue of peace and development in an integrated manner. CPDI is a first initiative of its kind in Pakistan. It seeks to inform and influence public policies and civil society initiatives through research-based advocacy and capacity building in order to promote citizenship, build peace and achieve inclusive and sustainable development. Areas of special sectoral focus include promotion of peace and tolerance, rule of law, transparency and access to information, budget watch and Legislative Watch and Development.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Centre for Peace and
Development Initiatives

409-B, Nazim-ud-Din Road, F-11/1, Islamabad

t: +92 51 210 82 87, 211 23 15

f: +92 51 210 15 94 e: info@cpdi-pakistan.org

A Company setup under Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance, 1984

www.cpdi-pakistan.org