

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS SURVEY 2019

ACTIONS, HOPES AND IMPEDIMENTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN SIERRA LEONE

Commissioned by Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law with funding from DFID and support from Christian Aid, Restless Development and Budget Advocacy Network





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PART ONE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report – commissioned by the Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law (with funding from DFID and support from Christian Aid, Restless Development and Budget Advocacy Network) - seeks a bottom-up account from the Sierra Leonean people regarding the status of corruption. It examines their perceptions about the fight against corruption; about the institutions involved; about the delivery of public services, and about their own roles and actions in relation to the fight against corruption.

The study was conducted between September and November 2019. Three data streams were utilized: a literature review; a social survey where 2619 persons were interviewed in all 16 districts of the country; followed by in-depth interviews geared towards getting detailed insights from experts and practitioners regarding their observations and reactions to the findings of the social survey.

Key Findings

Data from the survey and expert interviews show that corruption is abhorred but accepted, resignedly, as a way of getting things done. Those on the demand side of public services –ordinary people - pay bribes and engage in other corrupt acts because that is the only way they think they could get services delivered in a timely manner or in a better way. Those on the supply side of public services are either seen as engaging in corrupt acts because of low salaries (mainly lower level public service workers like teachers and nurses) or greed, as is the case with higher level public officials – ministers, parliamentarians and senior public officials. There is widespread sense of impunity both at lower levels of service delivery and at higher levels of the state, even though people are indicating that they are seeing a more activist anti-corruption commission and better capacitated audit service. Most ordinary Sierra Leoneans show readiness to support the fight against corruption, but they still think ordinary people would not have a great impact on the fight against corruption. And despite their perceptions of the police and judiciary as amongst the most corrupt institutions, they still think these institutions could play a big role in the fight against the scourge. Corruption is perceived as personalist - greed and lack of integrity by persons in office. It is also seen as institutional: certain institutions are perceived as very corrupt. Furthermore, it is systemic: a pattern of corruption has taken hold, allowing for large numbers of sacred cows, impunity, and widespread bribery. The main findings are summarised below:

Corruption Seen to be Prevalent and Increasing...

- About 73% of respondents indicated that corruption is a serious problem in Sierra Leone, 2nd only to unemployment which was considered a problem by 77% of people.
- When asked specifically about corruption, over 80% said corruption was very serious and less than 5% said corruption was not too serious or not at all serious.
- Corruption is not only perceived as prevalent but also persistent. About half of respondents consider corruption to have increased relative to three years back (33% say it has decreased and 18% say it stayed the same/don't know). This may be related to people's expectations that a successful fight against corruption would have positive impacts on their economic conditions, since they tended to see corruption as strongly correlated with poverty and deprivation. Poverty levels have not decreased significantly and hence people may not perceive a dent on corruption levels.



Corruption Caused by Poverty and Greed...

- Poverty is ranked as the main cause of corruption (70%), followed by greed (69%), lack of integrity (59%) and low salaries (54%).
- Attributing corruption to poverty suggests some tolerance for the practice, since it suggests people are forced by economic circumstances to be corrupt as some coping strategy or to overcome some of the vulnerabilities of poverty.
- However, the high attribution of corruption to greed and lack of integrity, and demand for harsher punishments for the corrupt, point to a condemnation of the practice. This suggests a distinction between corruption out of necessity (mostly lower level officials including nurses and teachers) and corruption out of greed involving higher-level public service officials, including parliamentarians and ministers.



Bribery seen as high but falling...



- Perceptions on bribery suggest an improvement in recent years: 71% of people said it was common to pay a bribe 3 years ago, falling to 56% who said it was common to pay a bribe in the last 12 months.
- Almost half of the respondents complied with requests to pay bribes in the last 12 months whilst 41% noted they did not comply.
- The major reason given for paying bribes is to speed up the service delivery process. This is followed by getting services done better, and to avoid higher official payments.
- The major reason for not complying was given as lack of resources to do so (63%). Less than 10% listed fear of punishment as reason for not complying. Poverty drives non-compliance, rather than fear of the law.
- 90% of the respondents said that paying a bribe is wrong.

Police, Health Centres, Schools and Parliament seen as most corrupt...



- The most corrupt public institution listed by participants was the police, followed by public health centres, public schools, parliament, local government, public universities and the judiciary. The least corrupt public institutions are religious leaders, followed by NGOs, traditional leaders and the ACC.
- Interactions and visibility may be fuelling these perceptions. Respondents interact more with police, health workers and teachers, and though the levels of interaction may not be as great with parliamentarians and ministers, the latter are more visible (including commissions of inquiry, forensic audits and media reports).

A sense of impunity and the presence of sacred cows is still widely held...



- People perceive that the presence of sacred cows has decreased from 57% three years ago to 47.7% over the last year. Whilst this is an improvement in people's perception about impunity and people getting away with corruption because of their power or connections, the rates are still high.
- Regarding the last 12 months, Politicians (70%) and Top Government Officials (60%) were the main categories selected.

A Sense of Resignation by half of respondents...



- Only 34% think corruption can be reduced to a great extent, 35% to a small extent and 16% say it can't be reduced (remainder don't know). This could be attributed to years of impunity for corruption-related offences, thereby leading to a lack of confidence in public institutions. Such views may be held irrespective of the effectiveness or otherwise of the ongoing anti-corruption efforts.
- Just over half of respondents said the strength of the public in the fight against corruption was weak or very weak (with 40% indicating strong or very strong).
- Despite this, 84% of people would be still be willing to report corruption and 68% indicated that they are not afraid of retaliation from reporting corruption.
- The most common reason given about why people fail to report corruption is on the grounds that no action will be taken.

A Sense of Resignation by half of respondents...



- 90% of respondents indicated that the ordinary people should refuse to pay bribe as a way of fighting corruption. This is followed by the perception reporting corruption cases to the police, with 77%, and reporting to the press, with 52%. Reporting corruption cases to the ACC and filing lawsuits against corrupt officials were selected by 41% of respondents.

- More than 80% of respondents indicated the ACC as an available corruption reporting channel. This was followed by the radio (55%), police (52%) and TV stations (41%). Traditional leaders and heads of institutions where corruption occurs were indicated by only 15.7% and 25.2% of the respondents, respectively.

Government efforts in reducing corruption seen as improving...

- 46% of people said the government's fight against corruption 3 years ago was at least good (that is, excellent, very good or good). This rises to 51% about their perceptions over the last 12 months. 36% deemed the overall government effort to be very poor or poor three years ago and the corresponding percentage of respondents for the last 12 months is 12.5. This is marked drop in the percentage of participants who view the efforts of the government as weak.

- Almost half of respondents felt the ACC had been independent of political interference in the last 12 months (around 32% thought they were not independent and 19% didn't know). This is an improvement from peoples' perceptions about 3 years ago, when only 39% felt the ACC was independent (42% not independent and 19% didn't know)

- Of those who had heard of the ACC (91%) most thought that prosecution is the most effective way for ACC to fight corruption (69%), followed by much lower figures for prevention (15%) and settlement (8%).

Government efforts in reducing corruption seen as improving...

- 91.3% are of the view that the ACC could make the greatest impact in the fight against corruption, followed by the police (51.3%) the judiciary (51.2%), the media (40.8%), government officials (34.4%) and ordinary people (33.9%). Parliament (9.2%) and heads of MDAs (8.4%) were the lowest responses. \

- For some, this seems like a contradiction given that most respondents perceive parliament and the judiciary as corrupt. These perceptions may be aspirational – they want parliament and the judiciary to play greater roles in the fight against corruption.

- 84% of respondents indicate that ACC investigation of suspicious cases of corruption is the most effective way of fighting corruption. This was followed by regular commissions of inquiry at fixed cycles (82%), media investigation (69%), regular auditing of MDAs (57%) and civil society organisations (42%).



Recommendations

1. Target Institutions that Ordinary People interact with most. The institutions most people interact with are the police, health and education sectors. To reduce the burden of corruption when ordinary persons engage the police, bail and traffic issues should be robustly targeted with anti-corruption prevention, detection and enforcement strategies. With schools, the major opportunities for corruption are found at the start of the school year or the commencement of terms, and involves issues relating to admission payments, uniforms and other school materials. Corruption opportunities also increase during processing of candidate forms for the government sponsored BECE and WASSCE exams. These are moments and processes that should be targeted. Some of the major hospitals should also be targeted with anti-corruption interventions.

2. Decrease points where cash changes hands. Linked to the above, continue to implement measures that decrease points at which monies physically change hands between citizens and public officials. The free healthcare and free quality education programmes are decreasing these points of contacts, use of electronic payments systems, banks and other strategies that further decrease these contacts or enhance their transparency could be very impactful. This could also include a review of traffic laws in order to make a clear distinction between arrestable and non-arrestable offences and communicate actions that incur charges to motorists. This would give greater awareness of the offences for which they can be arrested and detained versus those that would only attract on-the-spot fines and reduce payment of bribes.

3. Target specific key political institutions/offices/officers: to rebuild confidence in political institutions and decrease the reality and perception of sacred cows and impunity, target ministers, parliamentarians, mayors and chairpersons of district councils with anti-corruption strategies.

Already, the amendments to the Anti-Corruption Act has moved towards this direction by stipulating a more manageable declaration of assets process targeted at these political office holders. The same measures should also be instituted with key bureaucrats, including permanent secretaries and professional heads of government ministries, departments and agencies. Most people want stronger punitive measures rather than just fines alone and for this to be done across the board, and not just those perceived to be “small fishes”.

4. Utilize religious leaders to campaign and pass messages relating to corruption: Religious leaders, traditional leaders, and civil society activists may be authentic carriers of anti-corruption messages, given that they are generally considered the least corrupt.

5. Draw out credible links between corruption, poverty and conspicuous consumption elites. Anti-corruption campaigns should utilize data and insights showing that corruption is unproductive and mostly benefits conspicuous consumption habits of elites. Also, that corruption is regressive – it benefits the powerful more than it does the poor (for example even in cases of bribery where it seems like they benefit the poor in the short term to access services, it ultimately hurts the poor).

6. Look into corruption in certain key private sector operations, including real estate, transport and communication. This because these sectors were rated by respondents as highly corrupt out of the private sector institutions. Another key area for anti-corruption work is the mining sector, which is an important revenue-generating sector for the state, but also a sector with historic connections to the shadow state and corrupt practices.

7. Strengthen relationships with and build capacity of the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC). Though perceptions that parliamentarians are corrupt are high, most respondents indicate that parliament could play a leading role in the fight against corruption. Parliamentary oversights, especially by the PAC, which is constitutionally mandated to follow up on audit reports, must be targeted to help them carry out these oversight functions. This could range from increasing media spotlight on the work of the PAC, to increasing engagements between accountability CSOs, supporting the committee with research and MDA oversight, and building the capacity of members to conduct investigations and hold public hearings on the audit reports.

8. Contracts and Procurements: The 2019 amendments to the Anti-Corruption Acts gives the ACC Commissioner the mandate to intervene in procurement and contracts deemed as to be against the interest of the people of Sierra Leone. This is an important preventive enforcement process; however, care must be taken to build capacities of the ACC to do justice to these new powers.

PART TWO

Context

Overview of the Methodology

Literature Review

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Contradictory Trends

Several investigations have shown that the general Sierra Leonean populace abhors corruption: since the first survey on attitudes towards corruption by Sahr Kpundeh in 1992, corruption has stayed as either the first or second most pressing concern amongst Sierra Leoneans and many say they would want to be involved in the fight against it. The investigations have also shown a populace willing to engage in acts of corruption daily. These investigations collectively depict a people yearning to end corruption but finding ways of living with it, and engaging in it in what may be called the tragedy of the commons – since ending corruption would benefit everyone rather than just those who took risks to end it. Most would not bother to take risks or make personal sacrifices to end corruption.

This looks like the situation at the personal, institutional and systemic levels. At the personal level, people pay bribes to speed up services in the short term because not doing so would prevent valuable services from being personally delivered to them. At the institutional levels, what Kpundeh (1993) referred to as corrupting pressures on public servants, lack of stringent and enforceable audit measures, tardiness, poor work ethic, lack of proper records and communications amongst government agencies make corruption so widespread; and at the structural and systemic level, a large part of the country's politics and the socio-economic leverage of elites hinge on patrimonial politics: power-brokers – political parties and elites – have historically backed away from fundamental transformations of certain cultural configurations and other extant modes of political domination, economic exploitation. These modes included rent seeking as a means of garnering private resources and patronage as a way of ensuring political support and domination.

Starting with the National Reformation Council (NRC) military junta in 1967, every new regime, government or president would commence their rule on some anti-corruption platform but would recoil from it soon after - impunity reigned, and people involved in corruption were let off lightly. That was the case with the early Stevens regime, the Momoh Government, and the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) junta. The same observations have also been made about the Tejan Kabba and Ernest Koroma Governments. The Maada Bio Government, which took up office in April 2018, committed itself to a robust fight against corruption. It has established Commissions of Inquiry, conducted a forensic audit into some sectors and legislated amendments to Anti-Corruption Act giving the Anti-Corruption Commission greater powers than ever before.

2.2 Approaches to Understanding and Fighting Corruption

Many writers on the political economy of the country – including Sesay (1999), Reno (1995), Kpundeh (1993) would point at extreme politicization of the civil service as a mainstay of bad governance and corruption. Kpundeh (1993:113) stated that elites are to blame for administrative/bureaucratic and political corruption. Administrative corruption is the utilization of bureaucratic position for illegal gain and perpetuated by career bureaucrats. Political corruption involved the political elites – presidents, ministers, parliamentarians, councils and other politicians. Administrative and political corruption feed off each other. Where politicians do not encourage corruption, it would go away. However, it must not be forgotten that the structure of corruption included both politicians and civil servants. Kpundeh saw as a strategic error the NPRC's going after politicians and leaving the civil service intact.

Anti-corruption actions must include institutional strategies that also target high-level civil servants. Kpundeh advises against too much emphasis on personalist moralizing approaches to understanding corruption, since this places too much score on individual conduct rather on institutional and systemic contexts that could be more significant. Corruption takes place within institutional contexts, and there may be the need to examine institutions in order to understand what is going on. A major drawback of this approach, however, is that it leads to the examination of laws and institutions in isolation from the wider political context. It may be therefore important to utilize systemic explanations that look at the political economy and historical contexts in which government interacts with the public. Though with this approach one should be careful not to adopt reform strategies that capture too many factors as causes and courses of corruption. One sees this broad sweep, for instance, in the approaches to fighting corruption contained within the various National Anti-Corruption Strategies which tend to recommend, without prioritizing, and sequencing, and often with scarce resources, actions in nearly all institutions and most processes.

It has been advised that institutionalization of the fight against corruption yields better results than ad-hoc actions. Pre-1996, actions against corruption tended to be dominated by ad-hoc mechanisms, the most favoured of which was the Commission of Inquiry. Whatever institutionalized mechanisms existed – like the office of the auditor general – lacked capacity and were hardly utilized. However, a sea change in the fight against corruption began with the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2000, to fight the scourge, and subsequent strengthening of the powers of the institution in 2008. This was alongside building the capacity of another key institution, the Audit Service of Sierra Leone. Despite these developments, corruption has remained a major challenge in the country. Since April 2018, several reports alleging widespread corruption have been published, including the new Government Transition Team Report (GTTR) in 2018 and the December 2019 Report of the Auditor General of Sierra Leone.

But these have mostly been top-bottom accounts, mainly from state institutions. Whilst they provide invaluable information, a bottom-up study would complement them and bring up new insights, nuances, and perceptions of persons on whose behalf the fight is waged and whose greater benefit is sought by the dividends of successful anti-corruption efforts. This report emphasizes a bottom up approach, seeking the perceptions about corruption by ordinary Sierra Leoneans through a social survey, following up for more insights through in-depth interviews and ensuring a more contextualized understanding through review of the literature on corruption in Sierra Leone.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

Three major information streams fed into this work: desk review of existing literature on corruption in the country, a national survey and key informant interviews. The literature review served as a guide in the design of the survey questionnaire and the key informants interview questions. The social survey and key informant interviews are the twin arms in our collection of primary data.

3.1 Survey Tool Designing

A questionnaire was drafted by the consultants and validated at a one-day stakeholder workshop that brought together anti-corruption practitioners, business leaders, public servants, donors, representatives of political parties, civil society leaders and the consortium of implementers of the project. The validated questionnaire was utilized to obtain the perception of the wider public and key experts and practitioners on various aspects of corruption. The aspects of corruption that were considered included, but not limited to, the following:

- What is the overall public perception of the nature and scale of corruption?
- Is there a sense of optimism about the government's anti-corruption strategies?
- Does the public believe that the existing strategies are effective?
- What are the other strategies that the public thinks need to be implemented?
- What are some of the drivers of corruption?
- Which public sector institutions are perceived to be the most corrupt?
- Which public sector institutions are perceived to be the least corrupt?
- Which other public sector institutions – apart from the ACC – could be most useful in the fight against corruption?
- Has the public been supportive of the fight against corruption?
- Are there any differences in the perceptions of corruption between different groups in society?

3.2 Sampling Design

The required sample size was calculated based on the total voter registration from the 2018 voter registration published by NEC, which revealed a total of 3,178,663 adult population (registered voters). Table 1 below shows the distribution of sample size by district. Given this information, Table 2 shows various possible sample sizes under different values of margin of errors and confidence level. A sample size of 2400 was found to minimise marginal error, maximise confidence level and minimise financial resources and time spent on the survey field. This gives a margin of error of $\pm 2\%$ with the 95% confidence level. Hence, the survey utilized a sample size of 2,400. The average number of respondents per district is 150. The minimum number of respondents is 50 (in Falaba). The maximum number of respondents is 458 (Western Urban).

Table 1: Calculated Sample size by District

Region	District	Total Adult Population	% of total Adult Population	Sample size by District
East	Kailahun	165,753	5.2	125
	Kenema	280,141	8.8	212
	Kono	186,095	5.9	141
North	Bombali	187,664	5.9	142
	Falaba	65,761	2.1	50
	Koinadugu	84,293	2.7	64
	Tonkolili	204,231	6.4	154
North West	Kambia	155,484	4.9	117
	Karene	101,160	3.2	76
	Port Loko	233,962	7.4	177
South	Bo	284,348	8.9	215
	Bonthe	92,183	2.9	70
	Moyamba	147,041	4.6	111
	Pujehun	101,250	3.2	76
West	W/Area Rural	282,358	8.9	213
	W/Area Urban	606,939	19.1	458
Total		3,178,663	100	2400

DATA WAS COLLECTED FROM TEN SECTORS WHICH FORM **72.5%** OF THE ECONOMY. THE SECTORS STUDIED INCLUDE AGRICULTURE, MINING, ENERGY, FISHERY, CONSTRUCTION, BANKING, EDUCATION, HEALTH, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION.

Table 1: Calculated Sample size by District

Adult Population	Margin of error (%)	Confidence Level (%)	Required Sample size	Average Sample size
3,178,663	1	99	16,555	1,035
3,178,663	1	95	9,576	599
3,178,663	1	90	6,710	419
3,178,663	2	99	4,155	260
3,178,663	2	95	2,400	150
3,178,663	2	90	1,681	105
3,178,663	5	99	666	42
3,178,663	5	95	385	24
3,178,663	5	90	269	17

The sample size from each district headquarters was selected in proportion to the total population of the location, as discussed and agreed with the consortium. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents of the survey.

It is worthy to note that in the actual collection of data, the enumerators collected information from 2619 respondents. These additional respondents, however, have negligible statistical impact on the conclusions.

3.3 Conduct of the Pilot Survey

Following the training of enumerators, and before the actual survey in the field, a simulation exercise was carried out by the enumerators during the foundation training. The outcome of the simulation exercise resulted in further simplification of the questionnaire for easy administration and interpretations.

3.4 The Expert Interview

Twenty-one (21) key informants interviews were conducted by the consultants with persons from both the public and private sectors, including a police officer, an auditor, a school principal, the chairperson of a community-teachers association, two female councillors, a mid-career teacher, an executive member of the Sierra Leone Market Women Association, a solicitor's clerk, a paramount chief, a retired land surveyor, a past student union president, leaders of Kekeh and Bike riders, two executive members of two different opposition parties, an officer at the ACC, a government procurement officer, a project director of a local Christian Non-Governmental Organization, and a president of an Ataya base. The interviews were chosen on the basis of their knowledge of activities in their various areas of operation.

3.5 Analysis of the Survey Results and Expert Interview

After development of the questionnaires by the consultants, the questionnaires were uploaded on the Kobo platform by Restless Development, the consortium member charged with recruiting and supervising the enumerators. The raw data was handed over to the consultants who cleaned the data and analysed them using STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS (STATA). The consultants then used EXCEL to present tables obtained in STATA. The data from the survey were then triangulated with insights from the key informant interviews and the desk review. Whilst the desk review informed the development of the questionnaires, the analyses were based on the primary data derived from the field survey and key informant interviews.

CORRUPTION IS INHERENTLY UNDERGROUND, SO THE STUDY GIVES ESTIMATES ONLY “LIKELY TO BE AN UNDERESTIMATE”

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Types of Literature on Corruption in Sierra Leone

We could divide the literature on corruption in Sierra Leone into four broad categories: Government reports which include those of Commissions of Inquiry, the audit service, and reports compiled by the Anti-Corruption Commission. The second category relates to newspaper articles on corruption, which are filed tabloid pages since the colonial era. Prominent newspapers detailing corrupt activities in the country included the 'We Yone' Newspaper in the 1960s, Tablet Newspaper in the early 1980s, 'Weekend Shaft' in the Late 1980s, For Di People and New Breed in the 1990s, and 'Peep Magazine' in the first decade of the 2000. A third category included works by national and international organizations, including INGOs, sometimes working singly other times jointly. Reports by international organizations include those by Transparency International, Global Integrity and Witness, and nationally there have been reports by Campaign for Good Governance, the Local Chapter of Transparency International, Network Movement for Development and Justice, amongst others. In the fourth category we placed the academic literature, the more prominent amongst whom included works by Zack-Williams (1990), Kpundeh (1993, 2000, 2004), Reno (1995), Koroma (1996), Rashid (1997, 2004), Kandeh (1999, 2004), and Abraham (2004).

4.2 The Academic Literature

Two academics, one a national – Sahr Kpundeh - and the other international –William Reno - wrote extensively on corruption in the country, particularly during the 1990s and 2000s. William Reno (1995) looks at how informal networks in Sierra Leone link up with foreign interests under cover of a shadow patrimonial state to rip the country off its diamond resources, and in the process weakened the bureaucratic/formal state's ability to meet the basic functions of statehood: security and social provisioning. This led to state collapse.

Kpundeh (1993) has been mainly concerned with how ordinary persons and the powerful interact in a society suffering from widespread corruption, and crucially, on the fight against corruption. Kpundeh categorized causes of corruption into three types: personalist causes, institutional and systemic. He put greater emphasis on fighting the systemic basis of corruption since this has the most lasting effects. He divided the fight into those that emphasize process and those that look at systemic issues (Kpundeh 2004). Process interventions are more temporary measures and could include transitional mechanism like Commissions of Inquiry, coup d'etat and the establishment of anti-corruption agencies to provide a means of fighting corruption whilst longer term institutions and practices become embedded. He however argued that process interventions could become phoney where they are utilized to settle political scores, lend legitimacy to in-coming regimes or as a way of hoodwinking donors into believing that something is being done about corruption when in actual fact, elites are not committed to the fight.

This is why for Kpundeh (2004) the fight against corruption must move towards a more structural terrain. He discussed three areas of interventions for anti-corruption efforts: prevention, detection and enforcement. In another work he argued about the necessity of building coalitions with civil society and the press as key in the fight against corruption, though he argued that their contributions would also depend on the type of regime they are dealing with (Johnston and Kpundeh, 2002).

Military or non-democratic governments could constrain spaces for these alliances to work in the fight against corruption. However, he also argued that anti-corruption efforts could be built up during 'crisis of opportunities' when openings or some big scandals would serve as catalyst for greater energies and efforts. However, these could not be relied on to come often.

Generally, whenever political economy issues are discussed about Sierra Leone, from youth to women to politics and mining, the challenges relating to corruption loom large. However, a large number of the academic literature would take some broad analysis of corruption through the prism of patrimonialism. Whilst patrimonialism is useful in understanding some of the structural basis of corruption in Sierra Leone, it has been criticized as a catch-all concept about the informality and illegality of governance processes in the country. There have been calls to deepen analysis of this concept and greater understanding of the details of corruption and governance in the country.

Sesay (2019) differentiates between two types of patrimonialism, one based on the patron giving back to the community and this patrimonialism is usually considered tolerable, even where the source of wealth is hardly questioned. But there is the other type of patrimonialism, where the patron increasingly restricts his largesse, spending it only on himself or his immediate family. This is considered illegitimate. It is this second type of patrimonialism that has grown in recent decades, leading ordinary people to call high state officials and other would be patrons greedy and corrupt. Keeping in view this categorization of patrimonialism, and perceptions relating to the personalization and communalization of corruption proceeds may help us understand some of the contradictions relating to perceptions and reactions to corruption in the country. It also shows the possibilities of outright nudging of attitudes towards greater intolerance of corruption. This could be done by highlighting the activities of corrupt patrons, at the expense of the state resources to fund their often small circles of relations/influence.

4.3 Commissions of Inquiry

Commissions of Inquiries have provided detailed accounts of corruption, misappropriation, and abuse of office. The first major post-independence Commissions of Inquiry into high-level corruption were the 1967 Beoku Betts Commission of Inquiry which looked into the activities of the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board, and the Forster Commission that investigated the properties of Albert Margai and other senior officials. Established by the NRC military government, the Commissions unearthed extensive corruption, and recommended measures including return of stolen funds, seizures of property and banning officials from holding public office. There would be other Commissions of Inquiry in the 1970s and 1980s, but the most extensive and of the scale of the ones in 1967, were the 1992 Beccles Davies, Lynton Nylander and Laura Marcus Jones Commissions Inquiry established by the NPRC Junta following the overthrow of the APC. These inquiries also exposed massive corruption by high state officials of the 1980s. In between these commissions of inquiry, there were other note-worthy moments in the corruption narrative. In the early 1980s, the 'voucher-gate' (1982), 'million-gate' (1984) and 'scandal-gate' (1987) episodes exposed the diversion of the funds of the state in that era. The situation is such that a pattern of corruption has taken hold, leading to 'systemic corruption'. Gift giving, small in traditional settings, has been taken out of contexts, and is now widespread.

But people, despite the use of traditional language such as kola, clearly knew the difference between gift giving in traditional contexts and bribery in the relationships with public servants. A Commission of Inquiry established by the SLPP Government which took over governance in 1996 found massive malfeasance by the outgone NPRC government. When the SLPP was voted out of office in 2007, the incoming APC Government's Transition Report also indicated allegations of massive malfeasance in several ministries and government agencies during the previous administration. Three Commissions of Inquiry by the new SLPP Government in 2018 also heard allegations of enormous malfeasance by the preceding administration.

4.4 A Historical Baseline

Kpundeh's landmark study in 1992 on corruption perceptions in the country could provide a sort of historical baseline for looking at the progress and shortcomings of the fight against corruption. This is so because most other studies had mostly utilized government records –commissions of inquiry, audit reports, Bank of Sierra Leone reports and other archival sources or few interviews with the powerful and well-placed in order to track the trajectories of malfeasance in the country. Kpundeh's was the first social survey that tracked ordinary people's view on the issue all over the country.

His survey found corruption was the second most pressing concern, after the civil war that raged on at the time. Corruption was mostly perpetuated by elites. 88.7% indicated that bribery was doing a great deal of harm (p157); 45% indicated that bribery was a necessary part of doing business (p156). More than half (74.1%) said they felt pressured personally in their place of work to engage in corruption. 77.5% of respondents noted that it was harmful to give jobs to unqualified family member. In essence most people said most instances of corruption are wrong, but they do it anyway because it's systemic and there is no other way. Most people found corruption more prevalent in politics than business; although given the revelations at the NPRC Commissions of Inquiry most people did not think political corruption had decreased (given the revelations at the commission of enquiries then. However, it seemed like there was some tolerance for those corrupt persons who provide for their community use than those who use it solely for self and family.

4.4 A Historical Baseline

Since the return of multi-party democracy in 1996 and the end of the civil war in 2000, Sierra Leone has embarked on reforming its governing structures to enhance greater probity, accountability and integrity in public office, and to fight against corruption. Though the first legal instrument specifically targeted at corruption- The Prevention of Corruption decree⁶ – was promulgated by the NPRC in 1992, Kpundeh argued that there was no system in place to enforce it, and it did not look like a deterrent. Efforts to institutionalize the fight against corruption would commence with the creation of the ACC in 2000, and the strengthening of its powers in 2008 and 2019.

The country has also established a National Public Procurement Agency and a procurement corps attached to procurement committees in the various ministries. The country embarked on a decentralization process in 2004, spreading out significant decision-making processes to district and city councils around the country. Declaration of assets is also stipulated in the various acts relating the Anti-Corruption Commission. Reports by the Auditor-General are now a staple of the country's accountability architecture. This had not always been case, as successive governments since the 1970s were loath to building the capacity of the audit service or publish its findings. Matters began to change in the 2010s, especially after the appointment of Lara Taylor Pearce as Auditor General, the recruitment of qualified

accountants and other competent staff of the Audit Service. We subsequently witnessed little hindrance in the publication of the findings of the Audit service. Several reports would find massive unaccounted for use of public funds, under-invoicing, non-compliance with procedures and other egregious infractions. Whilst capacity of the audit service and transparency of its reports could be viewed as progress, the reports have had little or no follow up actions to remedy the situation or enforce recommendation, and year after year the Auditor General would make references to these failures. The trends seen with the Audit Service, which shows progress in some areas but lack of follow up, are an encapsulation of the situation with the fight against corruption in the country in general. There have been many legal, institutional and other changes, but corruption is still seen as foremost amongst the challenges that the country is facing.

Survey reports by the ACC, as well as its various strategic papers, have captured this contradictory picture. According to a 2013 corruption perception survey carried out by the ACC, 73% of respondents understood corruption as the giving of bribes and 16.6% as abuse of office. The same report cited the police as the most corrupt institution and the judiciary as second. Sierra Leone had a score of 2.4 on The Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI) in 2005, which showed that corruption is rampant in the country. TI's 2013 report found out that 84% paid a bribe, and 99% of respondents showed willingness to fight corruption, but according to its Afrobarometer, only 39% of persons think they could make a difference in the fight against corruption, amongst the lowest in Africa. Afrobarometer also showed that 54% of respondents indicated government was doing well, whilst 69% said police was the most corrupt institution; and 57% showed tax officers as second most corrupt.

SHARP
DECLINE
IN
CORRUPTION
IN 2018

PART THREE

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF
SURVEY RESPONDENTS**

PREVALENCE OF CORRUPTION

**THE MOST CORRUPT GROUPS OF PERSONS AND
THEIR UTILIZATION OF THE PROCEEDS OF CORRUPTION**

STATE INSTITUTIONS AND CORRUPTION

BRIBERY

SOCIO-ECONOMIC SECTORS AND CORRUPTION

**PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE FIGHT
AGAINST CORRUPTION**

SACRED COWS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

**OVERALL GOVERNMENT EFFORTS IN THE
FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION**

**IMPACT AND SUITABILITY OF INSTITUTIONS
IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION**

THE PUBLIC AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

5 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

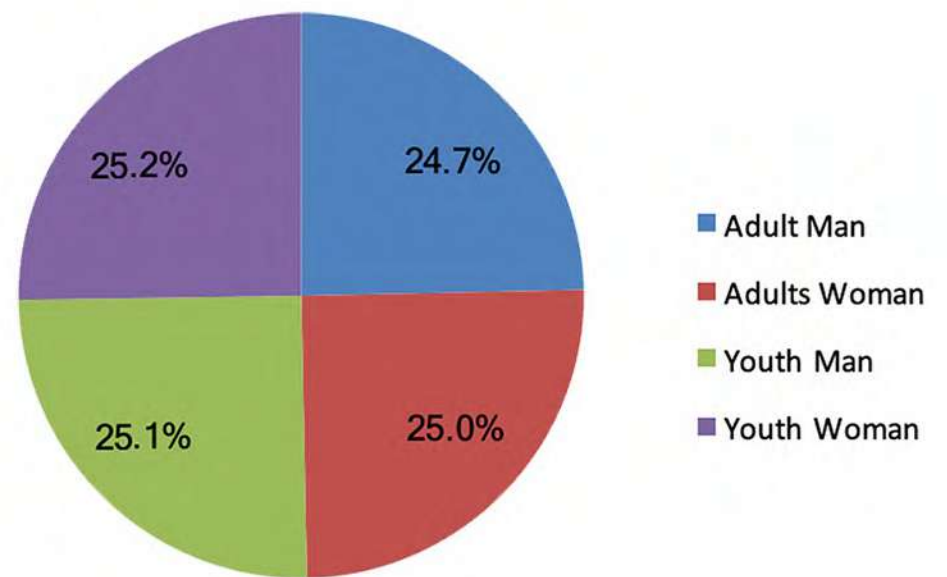
5.1 Distribution of Respondents by District:

Out of the 2619 surveyed, Western Urban, which took 18.8% of the sample had the highest number of respondents, followed by Bo and Kenema, each with 8.7% and Western Rural with 8.3%. The least number of respondents was from Koinadugu, which took 2.4% of the sample, followed by Bonthe, with 2.6% and Falaba with 2.8% of total respondents. This is in line with the overall proportion of the population in each of these districts. Table 3 shows the distribution of the respondents by districts.

5.2 Age, Gender and Physical Disability Distribution

Out of the total of 2619 respondents, 25.2% were female youth, 25.1% male youth, 24.7% male adults and 25.0% female adults. Overall, 50.7% of respondents were male and 49.3% female. Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents by youth status and gender.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by District



Most of the respondents (over 90 %) reporting having no physical disability. More specifically, 90.7% had no physical disability with respect to hearing was 90.7; 94.1% had no difficulty with respect to self-care; 90.0% reported no difficulty with respect to remembering, 94.4% reported no difficulty with communication.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by District

District	Frequency	Percentage
Bo	228	8.7
Bombali	166	6.3
Bonthe	72	2.8
Falaba	67	2.6
Kailahun	139	5.3
Kambia	132	5.0
Karene	80	5.1
Kenema	229	8.7
Koinadugu	62	2.4
Kono	162	6.2
Moyamba	127	4.9
Port Loko	202	7.7
Pujehun	81	3.1
Tonkolili	164	6.3
Western Rural	216	8.3
Western Urban	492	18.8
Total	2619	100.0

IF THE GOVERNMENT HAD TRACKED THE PROCEEDS OF CORRUPTION AND INVESTED IN PRODUCTIVE USE, AN ESTIMATE OF **\$245.2 MILLION AND \$758.3 MILLION US DOLLARS** WOULD HAVE BEEN GAINED IN GDP.

6 PREVALENCE OF CORRUPTION

6.1 Most Serious Problem Facing the Country

The respondents were asked to point out the four most serious problems facing Sierra Leone by selecting from a list of eleven problems with provision for 'Others' and 'Don't Know'. Table 4 shows the distribution of responses. The table shows that corruption ranks second, after unemployment. About 73% of the respondents indicated that corruption is a serious problem in Sierra Leone. Unemployment ranked first and was considered a problem by 76.9 % of the respondents; poverty was considered a problem by about 64% of the respondents; and about half of the respondents considered high prices to be serious problem in Sierra Leone. The rest of the listed problems had between 14% to 31 % of respondents that considered them as serious problems and only 2.1% of the respondents cited "other" problems. These findings were corroborated during the in-depth interviews. Whilst corruption was still mentioned by all the interviewees as a serious problem facing the nation, matters relating to the economy, livelihood and access to health and education services were high on people's lists of concerns. We categorize the concerns from interviews into four broad areas: economic and livelihoods, access issues, corruption, and political issues. Economic and livelihood issues relate to unemployment and underemployment (low salaries and wages) poverty, inflation, and general 'bread and butter' issues. The access issues that were raised were mainly those related to health and education services. The corruption issues highlighted were mainly bribery, payments not receipted at public service delivery points, paying more for services than officially listed and nepotism. We notice a circuitous relation amongst these categories, with corruption being both cause and consequence of poverty, and poverty exacerbating corruption and lack of access to education and health services. Crucially also, - and this may explain the seeming contradiction in the data about the toleration and condemnation of corruption in the country - corruption is seen as a means to meet the challenges of poverty caused by underemployment (low wages and salaries) and also as a means to access services; though they are also condemned as causes of poverty.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by their Perception on the Most Serious Problems Facing Sierra Leone.

Issue	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployment	2013	76.9
Corruption	1905	72.7
Poverty	1682	64.2
High Prices	1301	49.7
General Economic Conditions	944	36.0
Poor Health Care	822	31.4
Poor Education System	543	20.7
Political Instability	432	16.5
Low Income	375	14.3
Crime	284	10.8
Infrastructure	140	5.3
Others	55	2.1
Don't Know	22	0.8

MOST SERIOUS PROBLEMS ACROSS AGE GROUPS

The disaggregated data shows that among the early youth age respondents (18-25 years) unemployment, followed by corruption, and poverty in order of magnitude, are the three most serious problems facing Sierra Leone, with 79.7 %, 75.2 % and 66.3 % respectively. Table 5 shows these results. This structure of the perception remains the same across all age categories, except for those that are 60 years and above, where corruption is considered to be the most serious problem facing Sierra Leone, with 72.9% indicating this, followed by unemployment and poverty with 58.3% and 57.3% respectively. With the exception of high prices, which was considered a problem for more than half of the respondents in the age groups 26-35, 46-55, 56-60 and 60 and above, no other problem was considered most serious by more than half of the respondents in each age group.

The pattern of responses is similar for men and women; the most serious problem cited by both groups is unemployment, followed by corruption and poverty (with differences of less than 5% across all categories).

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by most serious problems in Sierra Leone by age group

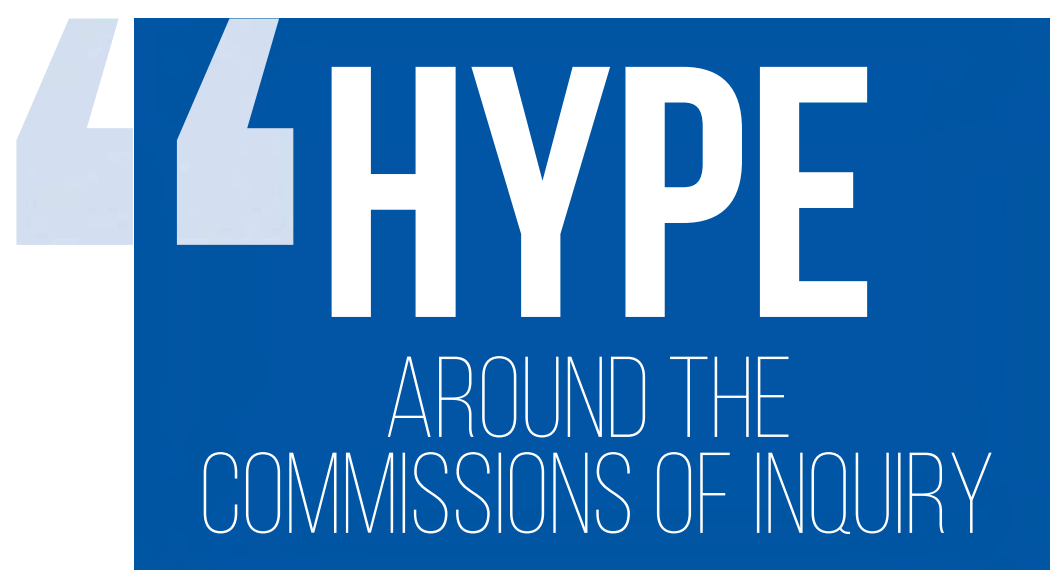
	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-60	60 and Above	Total
Unemployment	79.7	81.4	79	71.1	71.7	58.3	76.9
Poverty	66.3	64.6	67.4	62.4	58.3	57.3	64.2
Corruption	75.2	76.2	74	65	70.4	72.9	72.7
Poor Health System	29.9	32.3	26.9	33.7	37.9	27.1	31.4
Poor Educational System	25.2	19.6	22.8	19.1	16.8	10.4	20.7
High Prices	45.4	50.6	47.9	54.5	50.4	51	49.7
General Economic Problems	36.8	34.3	40.7	37.4	28.3	34.4	36
Crime	12.8	10.1	6.1	11.8	12.5	17.7	10.8
Infrastructure	5.1	3.8	5.3	6.3	9.6	3.1	5.4
Political Instability	14.5	17.4	14	18.3	20.4	14.6	16.5
Low Income	13.2	13.5	15.5	15.8	14.2	14.6	14.3
Others	2	2	2.6	2.2	2.1	1	2.1

6.2 The Seriousness of Corruption

Almost all respondents consider corruption a very serious problem. Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents by their perception on the seriousness of corruption in Sierra Leone. About 81% of the respondents indicated that corruption is a very serious problem in Sierra Leone and 14.4% indicated that it is somewhat serious, while less than 1% indicated that it is not at all serious or does not exist.

Table 6: distribution of Respondents by Description of Seriousness of Corruption

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Does not exist	2	0.1
Don't Know	34	1.3
Not at all serious	13	0.5
Not too serious	84	3.2
Somewhat serious	378	14.4
very serious	2108	80.5
Total	2619	100



Seriousness of Corruption across Age Groups

An analysis of the distribution of respondents by age group on the seriousness of corruption shows that more than 75% of the respondents of all age groups consider corruption to be a very serious problem, with the highest of 85.1% for the 36-45 year old group, followed by those in the late youth age, with 82 %. The least percentage of 75.4 % was from the ages 56-60 years.

Seriousness of Corruption by District

Table 7 shows the distribution of respondents by seriousness of corruption and district. It reveals that Moyamba has the highest percentage of respondents that consider corruption as a very serious problem, with 97.6% of district total. This is followed by Tonkolili and Pujehun with 94.5% each and Western Rural, with 94.0%. Western Urban had the least percentage of district respondents that consider corruption to be a very serious problem in Sierra Leone, with 64%, which is followed by Kailahun at 67%.

Table 7: percentage Distribution of Respondents by Description on Seriousness of Corruption by District

District	Does not exist	Don't Know	Not at all serious	Not too serious	Somewhat serious	very serious	Total
BO	0.0	3.1	0	3.1	22.4	71.5	100
Bombali	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	1.8	96.4	100
Bonthe	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.3	84.7	100
Falaba	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.4	86.6	100
Kailahun	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	27.3	67.6	100
Kambia	0.0	3.8	0.0	0.0	12.1	84.1	100
Karene	0.0	3.8	0.0	1.3	17.5	77.5	100
Kenema	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	15.8	83.8	100
Koinadugu	0.0	3.2	0.0	3.2	14.5	79.0	100
Kono	0.0	3.7	0.0	1.9	14.2	80.3	100
Moyamba	0	0.8	0	0	1.6	97.6	100
Port Loko	0.0	1.98	0.5	1	15.8	80.7	100
Pujehun	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.5	94.5	100
Tonkolili	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.5	94.5	100
Western Rural	0.0	0.0	2.8	1.4	1.9	94.0	100
Western Urban	0.4	0.6	1.2	11.8	22.0	64.0	100

6.2 The Seriousness of Corruption

Corruption is not only perceived as prevalent but also persistent, and this is the case despite the acknowledgement amongst survey respondents that the ACC has been more activist in the last year. About half (49.4%) of the respondents consider corruption to have increased relative to three years back. About a third (32.9 %) of the survey respondents indicated that corruption has decreased relative to three years ago. The percentages of respondents that consider corruption to have stayed the same or selected 'don't know' are 13.5% and 4.2% respectively.

Table 8 shows the distribution of respondents across districts by their perception about the trend of corruption relative to three years ago. The table shows that in 10 of the 16 districts, more than half of the respondents considered corruption to have increased relative to three years ago. Bombali has the highest district percentage of respondents that indicated that the trend of corruption has increased, with 71.1%, followed by Kambia with 63.6% and Karene with 62.5%.

Table 8: percentage distribution of respondents across districts by their perception about the trend of corruption relative to three years ago

District	Don't Know	Has decreased	Has Increased	Has Stayed the same	Total
Bo	3.5	56.1	30.7	9.7	100
Bombali	5.4	14.5	71.1	9.0	100
Bonthe	9.7	31.9	54.2	4.2	100
Falaba	3.0	22.4	46.3	28.4	100
Kailahun	1.4	34.5	57.6	6.5	100
Kambia	8.3	14.4	63.6	13.6	100
Karene	5.0	23.8	62.5	8.8	100
Kenema	0.4	38.9	52.8	7.9	100
Koinadugu	3.2	32.3	53.2	11.3	100
Kono	7.4	42.0	22.8	27.8	100
Moyamba	1.6	28.4	55.1	15	100
Port Loko	4.0	49	43.6	3.5	100
Pujehun	0.0	59.3	33.3	7.4	100
Tonkolili	15.9	29.3	41.5	13.4	100
Western Rural	1.9	20.8	59.7	17.6	100
Western Urban	2.4	27.0	50.6	19.9	100

Perception of Corruption Trends across Gender

On the perception of corruption trend across gender 51% of the female respondents considered corruption to have increased while 30.6% indicated that corruption has decreased. 47.9% of the male respondents indicated that corruption has increased, while 35.2% indicated corruption has decreased. About 13.2% of the females and 13.8% of the males respectively indicated that corruption has stayed the same as three years ago. This suggests that overall; women have a slightly more negative view on the trend of corruption compared to men, although the differences are minor.

Overall, the data show that more people think corruption has increased than those who think it has decreased, over the last 3 years. This is despite their perceptions about a more activist ACC. This may be related to people's expectations that a successful fight against corruption would have positive impacts on their economic conditions, since they tended to see corruption as strongly correlated with poverty and deprivation. Poverty levels have not decreased, and discussions in the country often also centre on increasing 'hardship' most people are still facing. Thus, without a dent on poverty levels, people don't perceive a dent on corruption levels.

6.4 Causes of Corruption

Table 9 shows the distribution of respondents by causes of corruption, which were selected from a list of possible options. Among the causes listed, poverty ranks the highest in terms of the major causes of corruption, selected by 70.3% of the respondents. It is followed by greed with 69.1%, lack of integrity and low salary with 58.8% and 54.3%, respectively. Other causes were selected by less than 40% of the respondents, with poor service delivery and impunity being the least frequent responses (both at 22.6% of the respondents). Attributing corruption to poverty seems like providing an excuse for corruption, and almost shows some toleration for the practice, since it suggests people are forced by economic circumstances to be corrupt as some coping strategy or to overcome corruption. However, the equally high attribution of corruption to greed points to a condemnation of the practice. These contradictory attitudes to corruption could also be seen in the large percentages that also attribute corruption to lack of integrity (bad) and low wages (therefore excusable). It is worth noting that only 22.6% of the respondent's attribute corruption to impunity, thus suggesting a level of confidence in efforts to hold perpetrators to account.

Table 9: Distribution of the respondents by the causes of corruption

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty	1842	70.3
Greed	1811	69.1
Lack of Integrity	1541	58.8
Low Salary	1421	54.3
Abuse of Power	946	36.1
Lack of Adequate Laws	836	31.9
Usage	642	24.5
Impunity (Lack of Implementation of Law)	592	22.6
Poor Service Delivery	591	22.6
Don't Know	32	1.2
Others (Specify)	25	1.0

Perceptions of the causes of corruption across age groups

On the distribution of respondents by the causes of corruption and age group, the perception of respondents about the causes of corruption indicates that greed and poverty are the main causes of corruption, with each indicated by at least 65% across the various age groups. In addition, greed was considered at the top by age groups 18-25 and 60 and above while poverty was considered at the top by the rest of the age groups. Among the other causes, lack of integrity and low salary are the ones indicated as causes of corruption by at least half of the respondents of each of the age-groups, with the exception the age group 60 and above. In relation to gender, there are only minor differences between male and female respondents about the cause of corruption.

7 THE MOST CORRUPT GROUPS OF PERSONS AND THEIR UTILIZATION OF THE PROCEEDS OF CORRUPTION

7.1 The Most Corrupt Group of Persons

The perception about the most corrupt group of persons in the public sector tended to be those that people interact with more often (the police, health workers and teachers) and also those who are very visible (ministers and parliamentarians). As shown in Table 10, among the listed groups of people indicated in the survey, the group perceived as most corrupt is the Police, selected by 83.6% of the respondents. It is followed by Parliamentarians, with 60.6% and Ministers with 52.7%. The rest of the groups were considered among the most corrupt groups by less than half of the respondents, with health workers having 48.7% , teachers at 43.2%, local councillors at 43.2%, and customs officers at 21.4%. The figures for customs officers are low, partly a result of the fact that they are not visible to most respondents, nor do they have significant interactions with them. However, during in-depth interviews, persons who had interactions with customs/NRA officials perceive them as very corrupt.

Table 10: Distribution of Respondents by the most corrupt persons

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Police	2189	83.6
Parliamentarians	1586	60.6
Ministers	1381	52.7
Health Workers	1275	48.7
Teachers	1140	43.5
Local Councillors	1132	43.2
Political Party Executives	1024	39.1
Customs Officer	560	21.4
Don't Know	39	1.5
Others (Specify)	35	1.3

Perceptions about Most Corrupt Persons across Age Groups

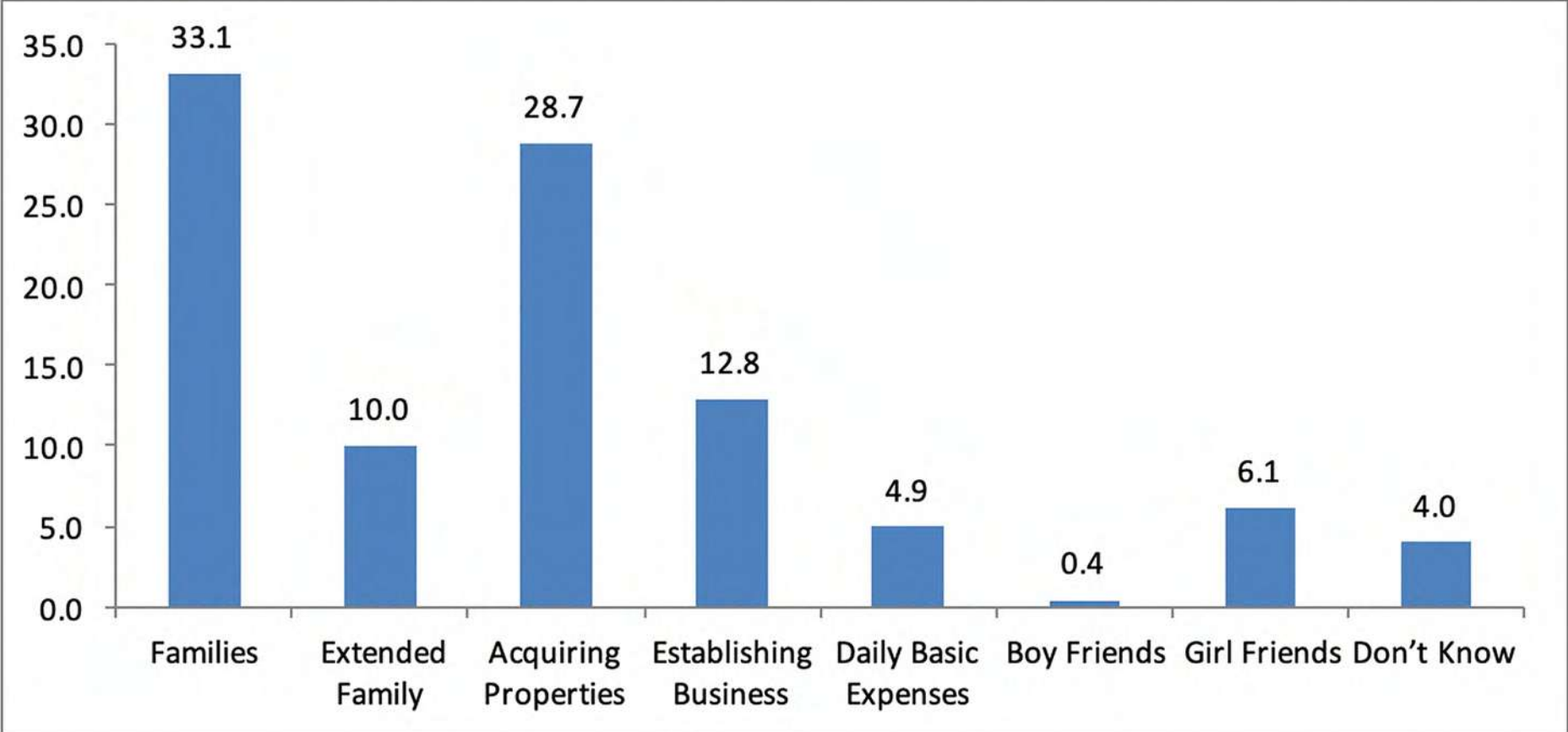
More than 80% of the respondents in each age group consider the police to be the most corrupt group of workers. Each age group indicated that the parliamentarians are the next group of workers that are most corrupt, after the police. The percentage for ministers is higher than 50% of each age-group category and for health workers, it is more than 50% among the age groups 56-60 and 60 and above and close to 50% by age groups 26-35 and 36-45. Customs officers carry the least percentage on this perception, across all age groups.

7.2 The Utilization of Proceeds from Corruption

How corruption proceeds are utilized or how they are perceived as utilized has important implications for legitimation or condemnation of the act. It has been argued that cultural conceptions of legitimate wealth rests more on how it is spent than on how it is sourced. Kpundeh notes that people may usually not question the source of a person's income if the person is generous. Thus, a person who is 'freehand' and spends his or her wealth on wider circles of persons may be viewed as a great patron. However, the person who spends whatever they have only on themselves or their close family or on acquiring property for himself is usually viewed as wicked and corrupt. Sesay (2019) notes that patrimonialism is now under deep cultural strain because of increasing tendencies of patrons to spend proceeds only on themselves and immediate family. As a result, not only do people condemn them at this level of how they distribute incomes but also at the level at how they got their money. Thus the 'greedy person is now a person who is corrupt because of how he gets his resources and also corrupt because of how he spends it. Thus, there is increasing abhorrence of persons (especially high officials) who engage in corruption. Here lies a possibility of positive fit between legal conception of corruption and cultural conceptions of the corrupt and wicked. The survey results show that about 86% of respondents say corrupt proceeds are spent on what we may consider very restricted self-serving efforts -immediate family (33.1%), acquiring property (33.1%), establishing business (12.8), and girlfriends (6.1%)

**91% OF
PEOPLE HAVE
HEARD OF
THE ACC**

Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Sources of Spending Corrupt Proceeds



8 STATE INSTITUTIONS AND CORRUPTION

8.1 The Most Corrupt State Institutions

Corruption takes place within institutional contexts. Whilst persons may be very corrupt within institutions, institutional processes, inefficiencies and vulnerabilities to corrupting pressures may make corruption a way of doing things within institutions. Table 11 shows the distribution of respondents by how they rate corruption in various state institutions. The table shows that in 25 out of the 29 institutions listed, the most frequent response was that the perceived level of involvement in corruption was to ‘a great extent’. The Police is the state institution with the largest proportion of respondents that rated involvement in corruption to a great extent, with 69.1%, followed by Public Health Centre, with 54.7% and Public Schools, with 51.9%. Parliament, Local Government, Public Universities and the Judiciary followed with 47.7%, 46.4%, 44.2% and 43.9% respectively. The findings corroborate those about the social groups that are perceived as the most corrupt – the police, politicians (ministers, parliamentarians, local councillors), health workers and teachers. These social groups are ‘suppliers of state services’ and the processes of the supply are perceived as having lots of corrupt practices – bribery, payments without receipts, over-payments, and nepotism.

The institution/category with the least number of respondents that consider the prevalence of corruption to be at ‘a great extent’ are Religious Leaders (17.9%), NGOs (22.1%), Traditional Leaders (28.3%) and Anti-Corruption Commission (29.7%). In addition, “Religious Leaders” has the highest percentage of respondents that consider the institution/category as ‘Not Corrupt’, with 19.4%. This is followed by NGOs, Anti-Corruption Commission and Traditional Leaders, each with 12.6%, 12.2% and 10.9%, respectively. Hence, on the basis of perception of the respondents, these are the institutions where there are stronger levels of trust. However, the results show that across all institutions, very few people think that there is no corruption.

Table 11: Distribution of respondents by perception on the extent of corruption in various state institutions

	Great Extent	Some Extent	Very Limited Extent	Not Corrupt	Don't Know	Total
Police	69.1	14.9	6.7	2.8	6.5	100
Public Health Centres	54.7	17.2	12.0	4.5	11.5	100
Public Schools	51.9	18.6	12.3	4.9	12.3	100
Parliament	47.7	21.9	10.1	1.6	18.7	100
Local Government	46.4	24.5	11.3	3.0	14.8	100
Public Universities/ Colleges	44.2	16.4	13.8	4.6	21.0	100
Judiciary	42.9	23.9	10.6	3.4	19.1	100
Electricity Services	42.0	18.6	11.3	4.8	23.3	100
Land Acquisition Process	41.8	14.9	9.5	5.4	28.4	100
Other government institutions	39.7	24.8	12.3	3.6	19.6	100
Port Authority (Water Quay)	38.4	13.6	9.3	5.3	33.4	100
Other Tax Officers	37.2	16.2	13.1	5.7	27.9	100
Government Procurement	35.7	15.4	12.4	5.1	31.3	100
Immigration	35.2	20.0	10.6	5.1	29.1	100
Water Supply services	35.0	18.3	12.6	5.5	28.7	100
Electoral System	33.1	17.6	13.3	5.9	30.1	100
Civil Service	32.3	23.9	19.1	4.9	19.8	100
Micro-Finance Institutions	31.8	20.7	16.7	6.2	24.6	100
GST Officers	31.5	16.0	14.1	5.5	32.9	100
State Owned Commercial Banks	31.0	20.3	16.5	7.4	24.8	100
Private Health Centres	30.5	22.8	18.4	6.4	21.9	100
Unions	30.0	19.4	14.9	5.5	30.1	100
Anti-Corruption Commission	29.7	15.3	17.6	12.2	25.3	100
Other Commercial Banks	29.4	19.9	17.7	7.1	25.9	100
Private Schools	29.0	22.7	18.5	7.3	22.5	100
Private Universities/Colleges	28.4	20.1	19.7	6.6	25.2	100
Traditional Leaders	28.3	19.3	24.3	10.9	17.2	100
NGOs	22.1	17.8	24.0	12.6	23.4	100
Religious Leaders	17.9	20.6	22.8	19.4	19.3	100

THE TWO MAIN USES OF THE PROCEEDS OF CORRUPTION WERE:

A) TO BUILD PRIVATE HOUSES; AND

B) TO TRANSFER MONIES AND FAVOURS TO COMMUNITIES AND SPECIAL GROUPS.

BECAUSE OF THIS UNPRODUCTIVE TRANSFER OF STATE RESOURCES THROUGH THESE BACK CHANNELS, SIERRA LEONE ELITES RARELY CREATE WEALTH AND INVESTMENT.

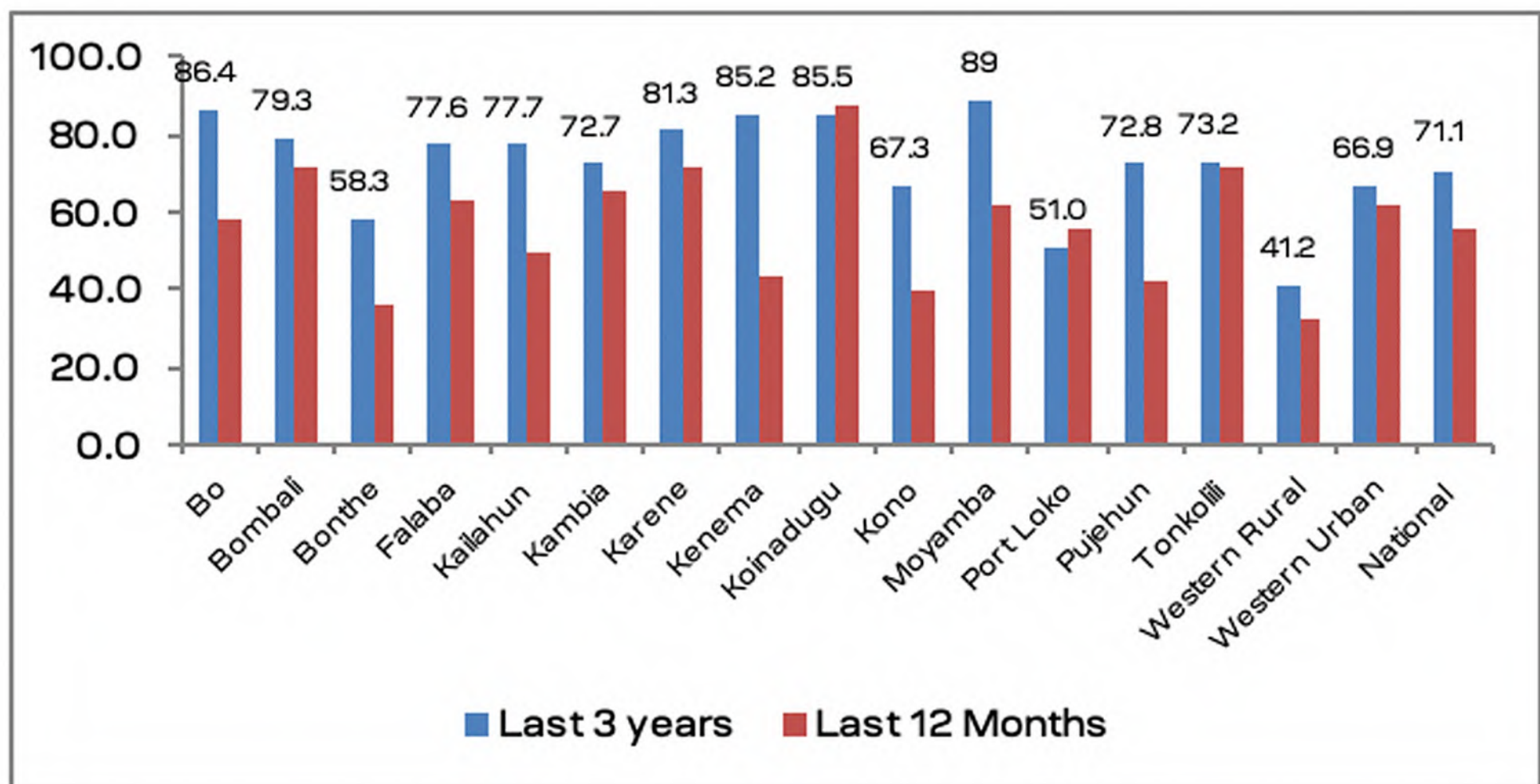
9 BRIBERY

9.1 The Prevalence of Bribery

Ordinary people mostly encounter state institutions through efforts to access services, especially in relation to health and education. These encounters form a key part of their perceptions of corruption in the country. Our survey shows that bribery is on a downward trend in the country, though still high. Figure 3 shows the percentage of respondents that believe it was common to pay bribe, give gift or do a favour to get a service done three years ago and in the last 12 months. The Figure shows that 71.1% of the respondents indicated that in the last three years it was common to pay bribe, give gift or do a favour to get a service done. Across district, it reveals that in all the districts, with the exception of one (Western Rural), more than half of the respondents indicated that in the last three years it was common to pay bribe, give gift or do a favour to get a services done. The highest percentage of respondents was from Bo (86.4%), followed by Koinadugu (85.5%), Kenema (85.2%), Karene (81.3%) and Bombali (79.5%). The least were from Bonthe (58.3%), Kono (67.3%), Western Urban (66.9%), Port Loko (51.0%) and Kambia (72.7%).

Over the last 12 months, the proportion of respondents who said it was common to pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favour to get a service done was 56.2%, a fall from the figure of 71.1% three years ago. The figure also shows that in 10 out of 16 districts more than half of the respondents indicated that in the last twelve months it was common to pay bribe, give gift or do a favour to get a service done. The highest percentage was from Koinadugu with 87.1%, followed by Bombali with 72.3%, Tonkolili with 72.0%, Karene with 71.3%, while the least was from Western Rural with 32.9%, Bonthe with 36.1%, Kono with 39.5%, Pujehun with 42.0% and Kenema with 43.2%.

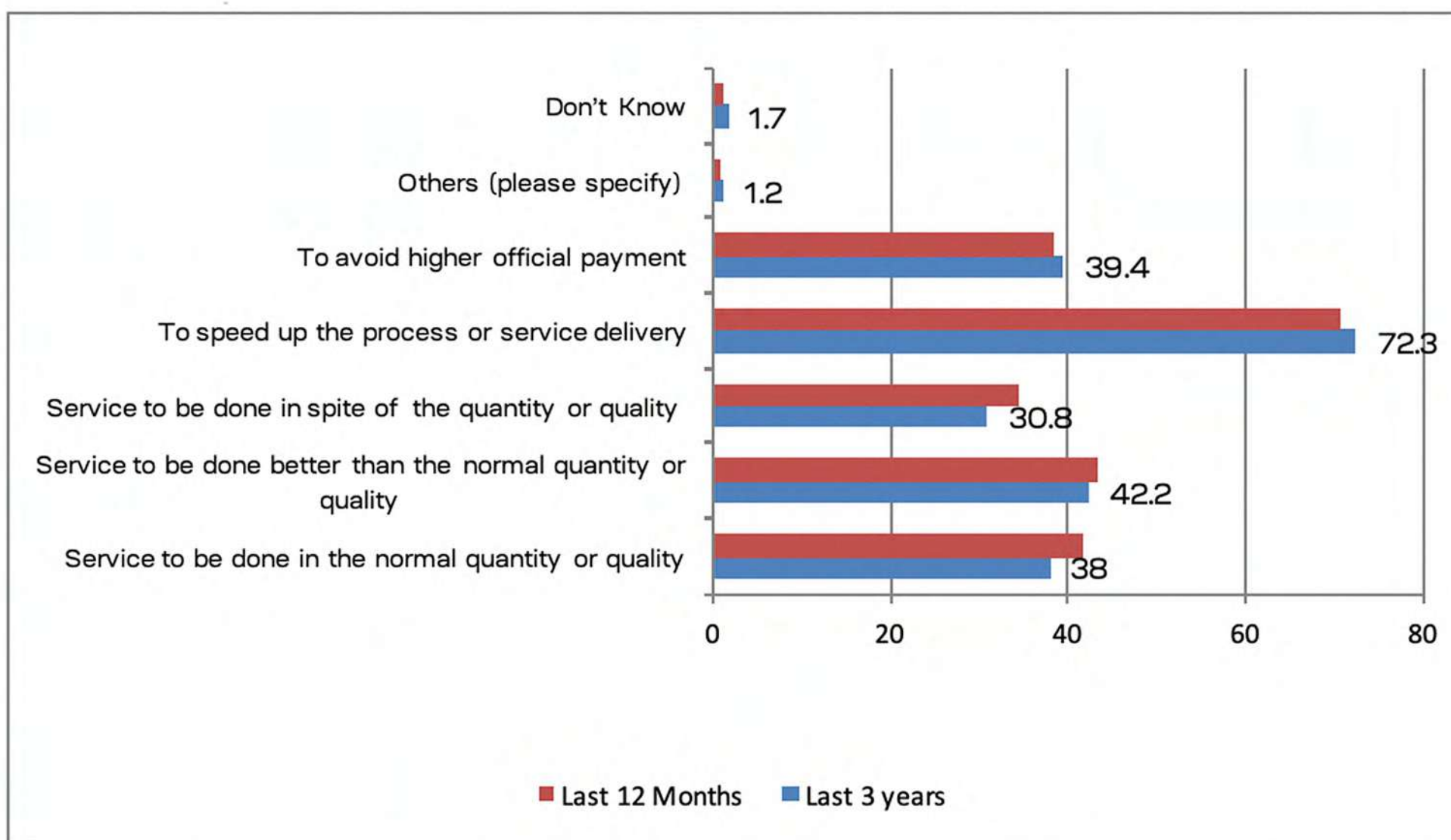
Figure 3: Percentage of respondents that indicated it was common to pay bribe, give gift or do a favour to get a service



9.2 Reasons for Paying Bribes

Figure 4 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of the reasons for bribery, both 3 years ago and over the last 12 months. The respondents perceive that the chief reason to pay a bribe was to speed up the process or service delivery (72.3% and 70.5% three years ago and in the last twelve months, respectively). The top two reasons following this for both periods are: the service to be done better than the normal quantity or quality and to avoid higher official payment while the option, 'to get service done in spite of quality or quantity' had the least percentage of the respondents. This suggests that there is strong delay in service delivery in Sierra Leone, and people are therefore willing to create an illegal and underground market to have efficient service delivery through spending less time in processing. This also suggests people are spending time to wait for services which is inefficient and likely to be damaging to the business environment and broader development.

Figure 3: Percentage of respondents that indicated it was common to pay bribe, give gift or do a favour to get a service



9.3 On Refusal to Pay Bribes

Table 12 shows the distribution of respondents by whether there were cases where they were requested to pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favour but refused to do so in the last 12 months. Overall, half of the respondents indicated that they complied with the request to pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favour in the last 12 months (50.9%) and 41.6% indicated they did not comply with the request. The table shows that over the last 12 months, 41.9% of the female respondents were asked to pay bribes but refused; 49.4% said they did not refuse; and 8.8% of the female respondents indicated “Don’t Know”. This implies that most of the females complied with corruption requests in the last 12 months. However, the percentage of male respondents that complied with the request was slightly higher than the case of the female respondents, with is 52.3%. The percentages of women and men that indicated that they did not comply with the request are very close, though the percentage of female is higher (42.9% for female and 41.3% for male).

Table 12: Distribution of respondents requested to pay bribes, gifts or offer other favours and levels of refusal /compliance

Gender		Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Female	Percentage	41.9	49.4	8.8	100
Male	Percentage	41.3	52.3	6.4	100
Total	Percentage	41.6	50.9	7.6	100

9.3 On Refusal to Pay Bribes

Table 13 shows the district distribution of respondents by whether they rejected or complied with requests to pay a bribe, give a gift or offer other favours in the last 12 months. There is a wide variation between districts, suggestions differing views/approaches towards bribes across the country. The district with the highest bribe request compliance rate is Kono, with 72%, followed by Bombali, with 65.2%, Pujehun with 63.0% and Bonthe with 61.1%. Other districts with compliance rate exceeding the national rate of 50.9% are Kailahun with 56.1%, Tonkolili with 56.7% and Kenema with 52.4%. The district with the least compliance rate on corruption request is Moyamba, with 31.5%, followed by Western Rural with 35.7%, Falaba with 41.8% and Karene with 42.5%.

Table 13: Distribution of respondents across districts by whether they requested to pay bribes, offer gifts or other favours (Yes indicates refusal to pay bribe)

District	Don't Know (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	Total (%)
Bo	9.2	45.2	45.6	100
Bombali	9.8	65.2	25.0	100
Bonthe	30.6	61.1	8.3	100
Falaba	7.5	41.8	50.8	100
Kailahun	2.9	56.1	41.0	100
Kambia	8.3	48.5	43.2	100
Karene	13.8	42.5	43.8	100
Kenema	3.5	52.4	44.1	100
Koinadugu	6.5	45.2	48.4	100
Kono	7.4	72.2	20.4	100
Moyamba	2.4	31.5	66.1	100
Port Loko	6.9	42.1	51.0	100
Pujehun	2.5	63.0	34.6	100
Tonkolili	7.9	56.7	35.4	100
Western Rural	10.2	35.7	54.2	100
Western Urban	6.1	53.3	40.7	100
Total	7.6	50.9	41.6	100

9.4 Reasons for Not Cooperating with Corruption Requests

Figure 5 shows the distribution of the reasons for refusing to pay a bribe, give a gift or offer other favours are requested by public officers. Out of the total of 1,083 respondents that indicated that they resisted corruption requests in the form of bribe, gifts and other favours in the last twelve months, 63.1% indicated that the reason for not complying was lack of resources to do so and 44.8% indicated they would get the service even without participating or aiding an act of corruption. About 42% indicated that the non-compliance was due to the fact that the act of cooperating with corruption request is immoral and about 38% of them indicated that they would not get the service even by adhering to the request. About 27% of them indicated that it is fear of public knowledge. Less than 10% of those who failed to engage in acts of corruption did so out of fear that of punishment, suggesting that punishment for corruption in Sierra Leone is not a deterrent to certain acts of corruption.

Figure 5: Reasons for not cooperating with Corruption requests

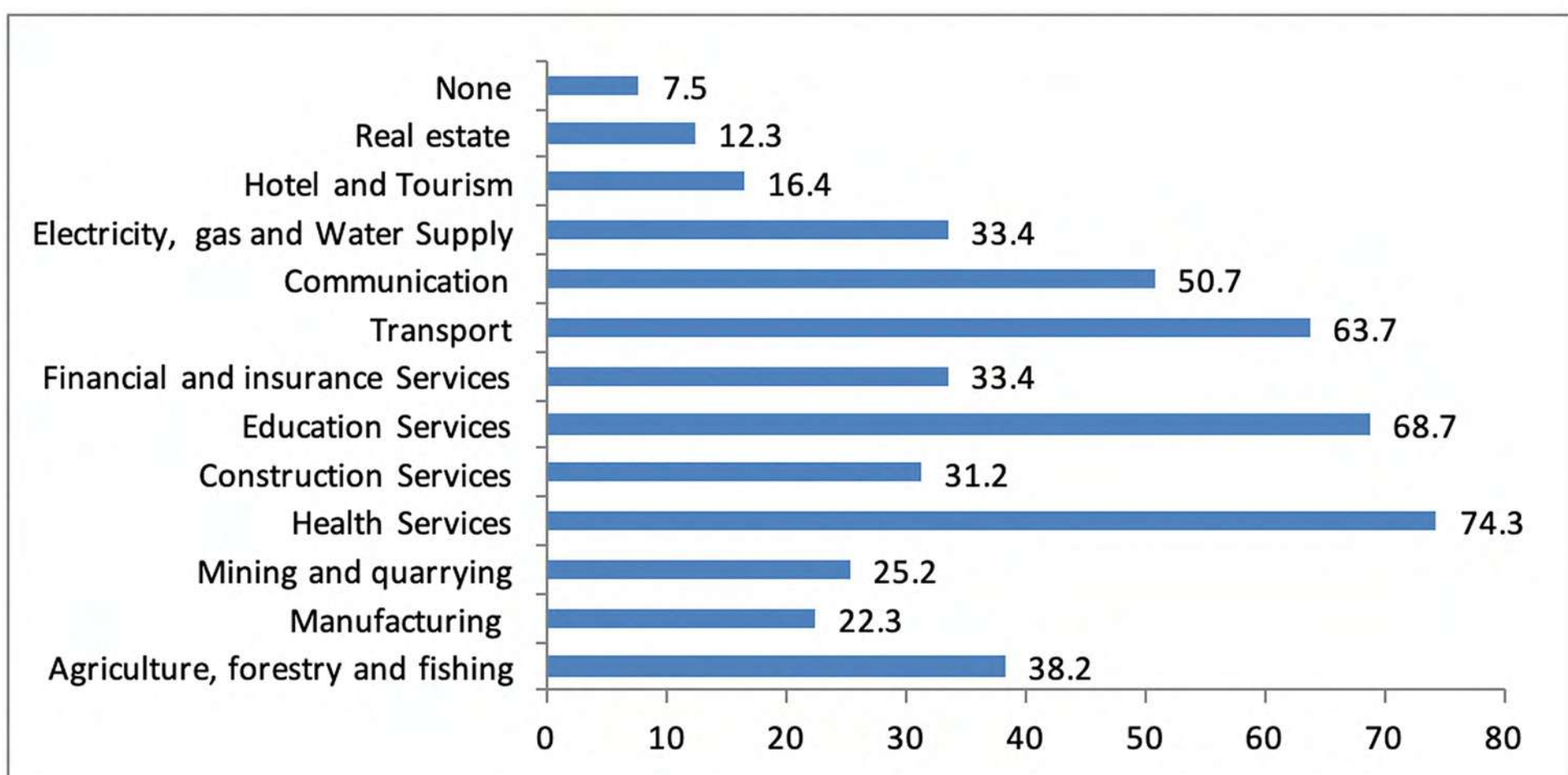


10. SOCIO-ECONOMIC SECTORS & CORRUPTION

10.1 Transactions and Interactions with Operators in the Sectors

We discuss here the state and other socio-economic sectors that people often come into contact with and their perceptions of corruption in those sectors. The survey shows that respondents had transacted or been in contact with workers in the health sector more than any of the other sectors, with 74.3% indicating they had, as indicated in Figure 6. Additionally, more than half of the respondents indicated that they had transacted or been in contact with operators in each of the following sectors: education (68.7%), transport (63.7 %) and communication sectors (50.7 %). These percentages were lower for the other sectors, with the least coming from real estate (12.3 %), followed by hotel and tourism (16.4 %) and the manufacturing sector (22.3 %).

Figure 6: Distribution of the Economic Sectors by percentage of respondents that had transacted or been in contact with operators.



10.2 Contact, Transaction and Corruption

Perceptions about high levels of corruption are prevalent amongst persons who have been in contact with operators in almost all of the various sectors. Table 14 shows the distribution of respondents who had transacted or been in contact with operators in the various sectors by their perception about the level of corruption in those sectors. The table shows that in eight of the eleven sectors, more than half of the respondents that had transacted or been in contact with workers in those sectors think that corruption is happening there to a “Great Extent”, with the highest coming from health services - 59.6%, followed by real estate with 57.3%, education service sector with 57.2%, transport with 55.3%, electricity, gas and water supply with 56.8% and communications with 52.3%. It may be worth noting that health, education, and electricity and water sectors are dominated whilst the real estate, transport and communications sectors are dominated by the private sector. In essence, a sense that things are being done corruptly dominates perceptions of both the state and private sectors. The same conclusion is derived from Table 15, which is based on all respondents, in spite of whether they had transacted or been in contact with operators in the sector. However, only health and education sectors have more than half of the respondents indicating that to a “Great Extent” corruption is taking place there.

Table 14: Distribution of respondents by their perception about the level of corruption in the sectors they had transacted or been in contact with operators

	Great Extent	Some Extent	Very Limited Extent	Not Corrupt	Don't Know	Total
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	50.7	32.5	11.7	1.8	3.3	100
Manufacturing	46.9	29.1	18.7	2.2	3.1	100
Mining and quarrying	48.6	24.6	17.9	5.5	3.5	100
Health Services	59.6	22	12.2	3.1	3	100
Construction Services	44.7	26.8	17.6	3.6	7.3	100
Education Services	57.2	23.5	12	4	3.3	100
Financial and insurance Services	51.4	26.5	15.4	3.2	3.3	100
Transport	55.3	24.5	14.4	3	2.8	100
Communication	53.2	27.1	13	3.3	3.3	100
Electricity, gas and Water Supply	56.8	22.7	13.4	2.9	4.3	100
Hotel and Tourism	45.2	17	22.1	6.1	9.6	100
Real estate	57.3	13.9	17.7	2.8	8.4	100

Table 15: Distribution of all respondents by their perception about the level of corruption in the various sectors

	Great Extent	Some Extent	Very Limited Extent	Not Corrupt	Don't Know	Total
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	36.4	25.9	12.1	2.5	23.1	100
Manufacturing	25.1	25.8	15.2	4	29.6	100
Mining and quarrying	33.2	20.8	12.9	3.1	29.9	100
Health Services	56.7	21.2	12.7	2.9	6.6	100
Construction Services	33	23.4	15.2	3.8	24.6	100
Education Services	53.8	22.4	12	3.5	8.2	100
Financial and insurance Services	39.1	20.5	14.4	4	22	100
Transport	48.3	23	16.1	3	9.6	100
Communication	40.7	24.2	14.3	4.2	16.7	100
Electricity, gas and Water Supply	39.4	19.1	13.2	3.6	24.8	100
Hotel and Tourism	22.4	12.4	17	7.2	41	100
Real estate	22.1	12.6	14.9	6.3	44.1	100

10.3 Incomes and Corruption

The data reveals that almost three quarters of respondents believe that the major source of incomes of parliamentarians is from corrupt practices, with 73.1%. This is followed by top government officials (66.3%), health workers (60.7%), junior level government officers (55.4%) and middle level government officers (55.0%). The perception on the sources of income from corrupt practices was lower for teachers (57.4%), NGOs (38.7%) and formal private sector (36.5 %).

11 PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

11.1 The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is Widely Known

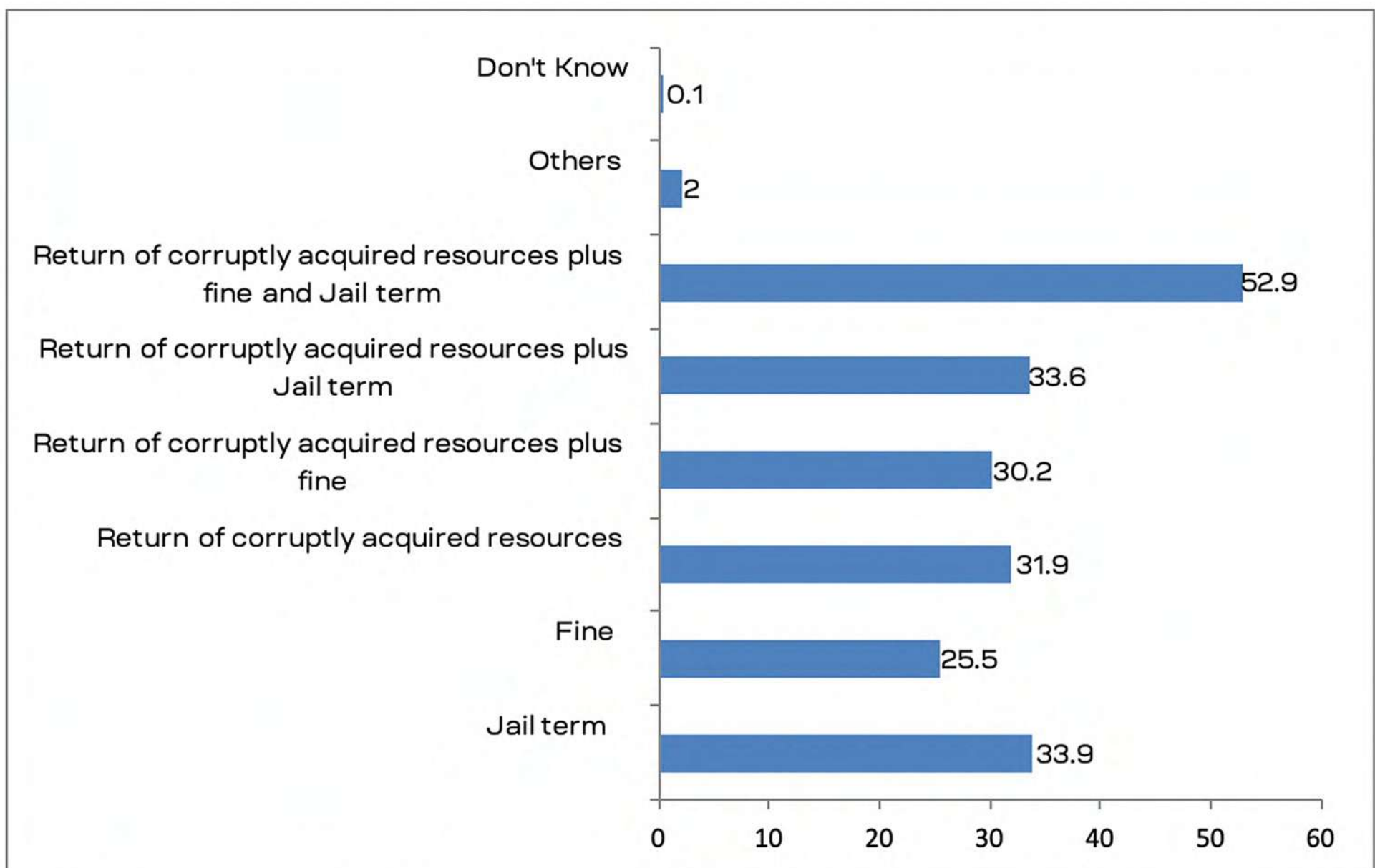
We did an analysis of the distribution of respondents by whether they had heard about Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), which is the commission charged with the mandate of fighting corruption and other related financial crimes. The figure shows that 90.6% of the respondents had heard about the ACC which is positive.

Out of the 90.6 % (2,370) that had heard about the ACC, 68.7% indicated that the most effective way the ACC can fight corruption is prosecution, which is followed by prevention (15.4 %) while only 8.3% indicated settlement as the most effective option.

11.2 Strong Punitive Measures Against Corrupt Persons

Figure 7 shows the distribution of respondents by their perception about how to handle corrupt persons. It shows that most people want strong punitive measures against corrupt persons. More than half of the respondents (52.9%) indicated that persons guilty of corruption should return the corruptly acquired resources, pay a fine and serve jail term, which was the most popular option selected. Each of the other options were selected by less than 35% of the respondents, suggesting that the respondents prefer very tough measures to deal with persons guilty of corruption, which combine jail term, fine and return of corruptly acquired resources.

Figure 7: Distribution of respondents by their perceptions about how to handle persons guilty of corruption.

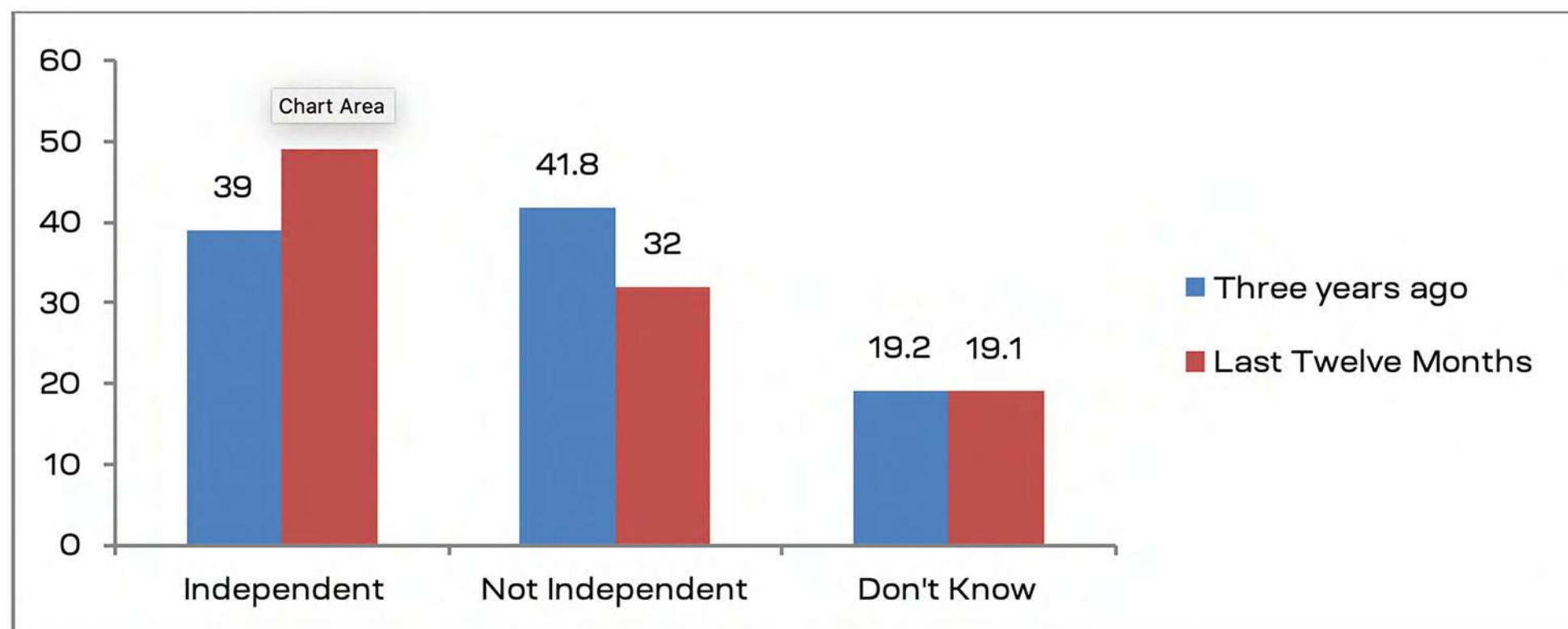


11.3 Independence of the Anti-Corruption Commission

The independence (from political interference) of the ACC has been a long fought for goal in the fight against corruption. For instance, security of tenure for the ACC commissioner and the commission being able to prosecute cases without reference to the Attorney General are substantive pillars of this independence and they are now enshrined in law. But independence is not only about what the law says, but also about whether it appears to be so by the population. Figure 8 shows the respondents' perception about the independence

the ACC from political interference. The figure reveals that about half of the respondents (48.9%) indicate that the commission is currently independent. This is an improvement of the perception that respondents say was the case three years ago (39%). Data from the in-depth interviews show some more nuanced perceptions. The ACC seems to have a freer hand when dealing members of the erstwhile government and those who may be politically unconnected. The true test may be in how the public perceives the conduct of the ACC when there are allegations of corruption amongst high ranking members of the current administration or persons perceived as highly politically connected.

Figure 8: Distribution of respondents with respect to ACC independence of political interference three years ago compared to the last twelve months



11.4 The Audit Service

Since the appointment of the present Auditor-General of Sierra Leone, the Audit Service has undergone tremendous transformation: from the enhancement of its staff capabilities to being given relatively free hand in conducting audits and publishing their findings without waiting for the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) to conclude any inquiries into it. This is progressive from an earlier situation where the audit service was mainly seen as a dumping ground that produced reports that were never made available to the public prior to the conclusion of inquiries by the PAC. A major challenge, however, has been the lack of action on the findings of the audit reports. Survey data indicates that more than half of the respondents had heard about the Audit Service. And out of those who had heard about the Audit Service, 66.5% had heard about the Annual Audit Service report. The data further shows that 74.7% of the respondents indicated that the Audit Service is effective, 19.0% indicated it is not effective while the rest indicated Don't Know. This suggests that if perceptions reflect the reality, annual report of the Auditor General is a useful instrument in the fight against corruption in Sierra Leone. However, this needs the support of other institutions, including parliament and the Public Accounts Committee, which is a major player in ensuring action on the reports of the Audit Service.

11.5 Independence and Effectiveness of the Report of the Auditor General in the Fight Against Corruption

The data shows that of those who indicated that the Audit Service is effective, 68.2% indicated that the Auditor-General is independent. In addition, out of those who indicated that it is not effective, 69% indicated that the Auditor-General is not independent, and out of those who indicated "Don't Know" for effectiveness, 67.2% also indicated Don't Know for independence. This implies that respondents that say the annual report of the Audit Service is effective fight against corruption tend to say it is independent, suggesting that the independence of the Auditor General is important for society's perception of audit effectiveness.

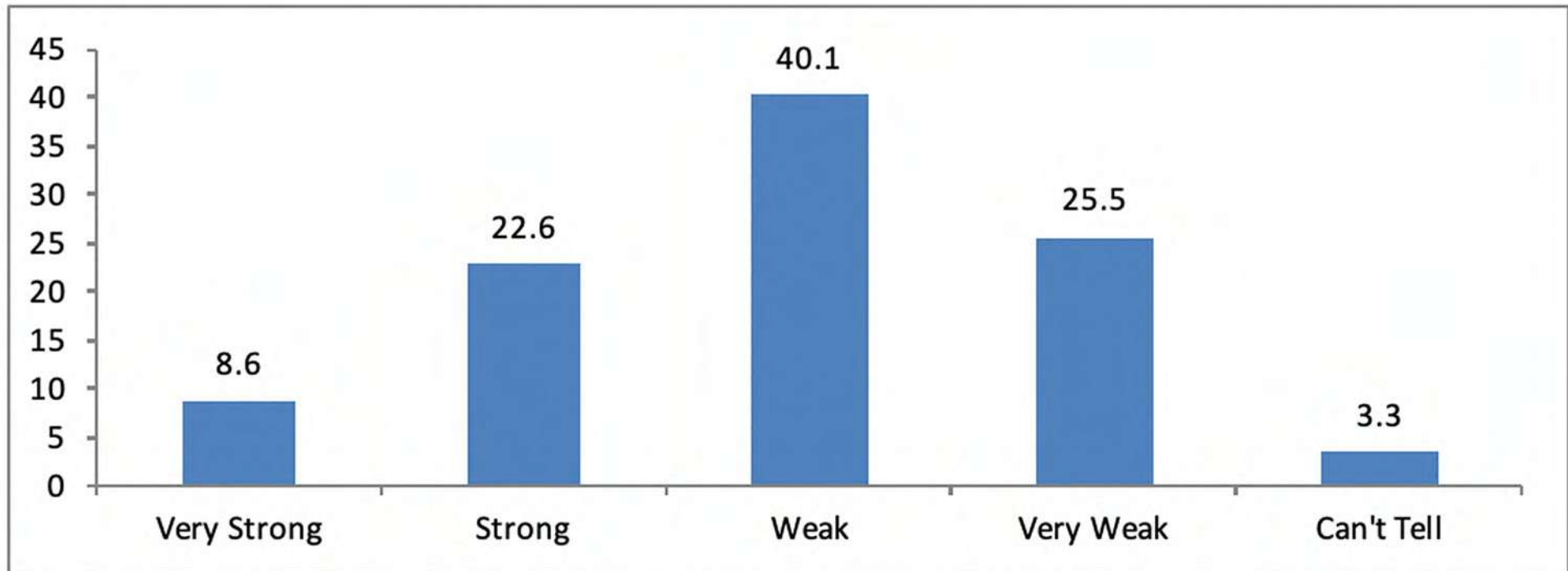
11.6 The Police and the Fight Against Corruption

The data shows that of those who indicated that the Audit Service is effective, 68.2% indicated that the Auditor-General is independent. In addition, out of those who indicated that it is not effective, 69% indicated that the Auditor-General is not independent, and out of those who indicated "Don't Know" for effectiveness, 67.2% also indicated Don't Know for independence. This implies that respondents that say the annual report of the Audit Service is effective fight against corruption tend to say it is independent, suggesting that the independence of the Auditor General is important for society's perception of audit effectiveness.

11.7 Perception of the Quality of Police Involvement in the Fight Against Corruption

Figure 9 shows the distribution of the respondents who indicated that the police are involved in the fight against corruption, by their perceptions about the quality of police involvement in the fight. The majority of respondents who think police are involved in the fight against corruption consider the level of involvement not to be robust (that is weak or very weak, accounting for 65.6%) and less than a third perceiving it as robust (31.2% rating it strong and very strong). This suggests that the society would want to see greater improvement in the quality of involvement of the police in the fight against corruption in Sierra Leone, as 67% of respondents indicated that the police are suitable to fight corruption in Sierra Leone.

Figure 8: Distribution of respondents with respect to ACC independence of political interference three years ago compared to the last twelve months

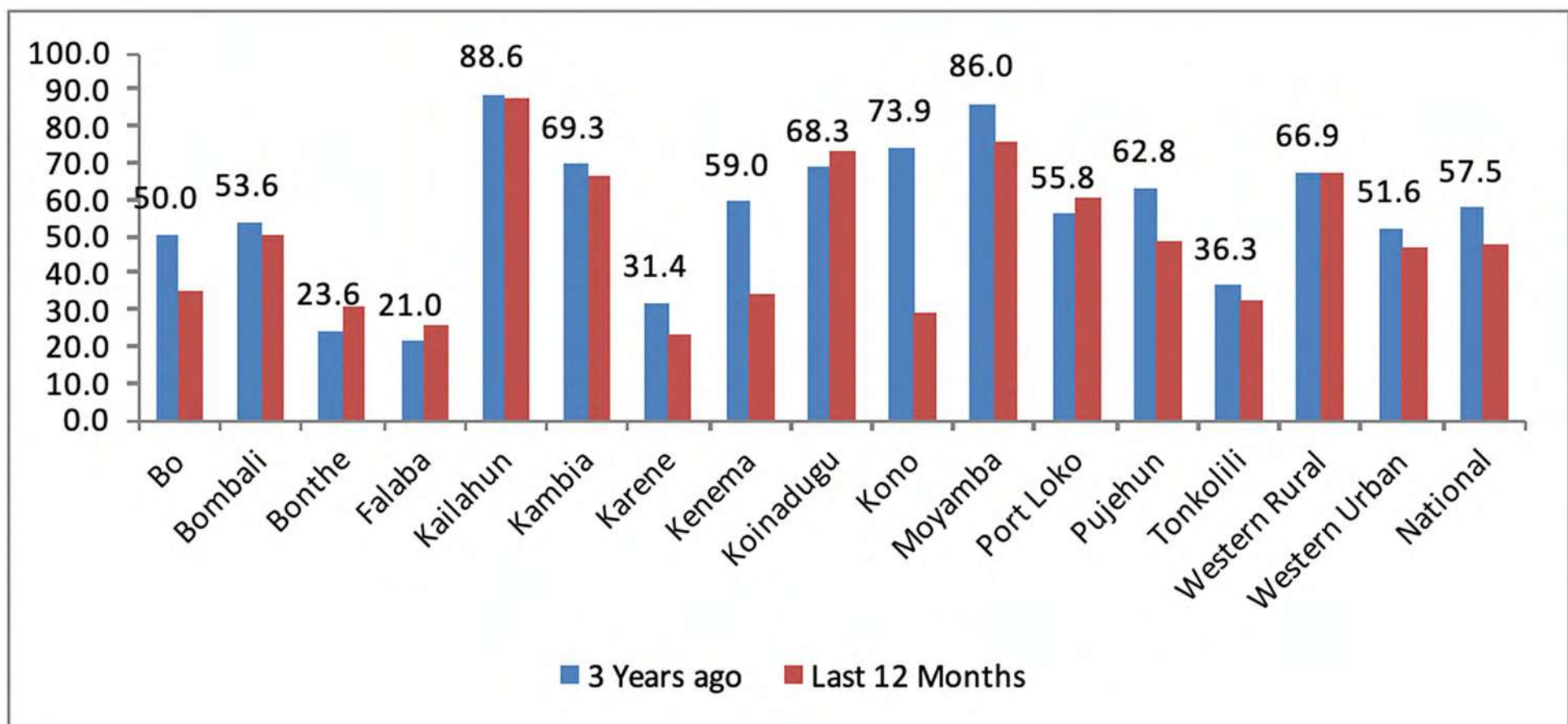


12 SACRED COWS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

12.1 The Existence of Sacred Cows

'Sacred cow' is one of the more popular phrases in discussions about corruption in Sierra Leone. When high government officials say 'there shall be no sacred cows', it usually signifies a determination to fight impunity. It could point to people's perception of impunity when they assert the existence of sacred cows in the country. Figure 10 shows the distribution of respondents across districts by their perception of the existence of sacred cows in the fight against corruption. The figure shows that at the national level, 57.5% of respondents indicated that there were sacred cows three years ago and 47.7% indicated that there are sacred cows in the last 12 months. The number of districts where more than half of the respondents indicated that there were sacred cows in the last 12 months was 7, compared to 12 for three years ago. The district that has the highest percentage of respondents that indicated that there were sacred cows three years ago is Kailahun with 88.6%, followed by Moyamba with 86.0%. These two districts are also on the top in saying there are still sacred cows in last 12 month ago, with 87.0% and 75.5% respectively. The district with the least percentage on the sacred cow question three years ago is Falaba, with 21.0%, followed by Bonthe, with 23.6%. In the case of existence of sacred cows in the last 12 months, the district with the least percentage is Karene with 22.9%, followed by Falaba with 25.8% of respondents.

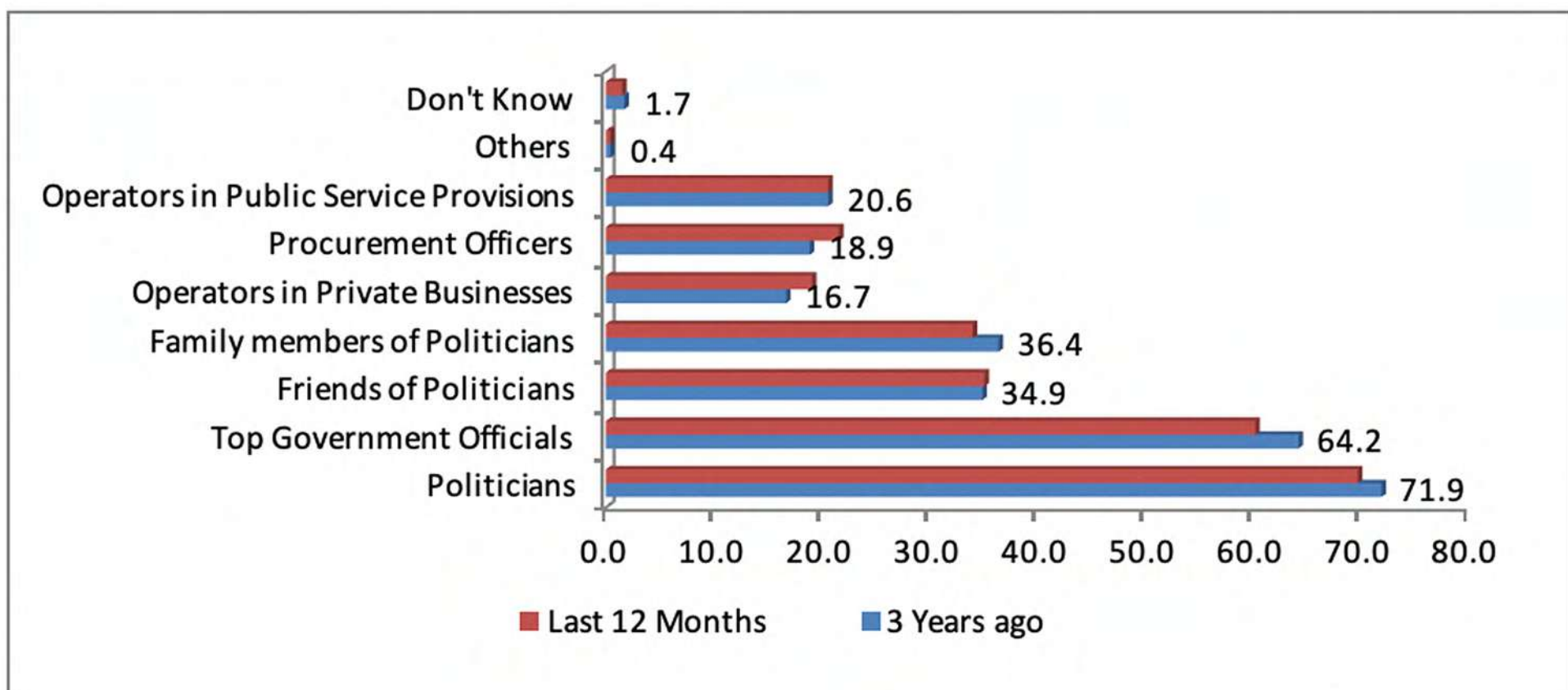
Figure 10: Distribution of respondents across districts by their perception about the existence of sacred cows in the fight against corruption



12.2 Who Are the Sacred Cows?

Perceptions about sacred cows run deep in people's discussions about impunity and bias in the fight against corruption. Figure 11 shows that 71.9% and 64.2% respectively perceive Politicians and Top Government Officials as the main sacred cows three years ago (from the categories indicated in the survey). While these two categories are seen as the leading sacred cows in the last twelve months, the percentage of respondents is lower compared to the case of three years ago, with Politician's dropping to 69.7% and Top Government Officials dropping to 60.2%. In both the 3-years-ago scenario and the last-12-months scenarios, the percentages of respondents indicating the existence of sacred cows in the other categories are lower than 35% for each category. Private business operators is the category with the least percentage of respondents that perceive them to be sacred cows (16.7% and 19.7% for 3 years ago and last 12 months, respectively), which is followed by the category on procurement officers (with 18.9% and 21.6% for 3 years ago and last 12 months respectively).

Figure 11: Distribution of Respondents by perception about categories where sacred cows belong

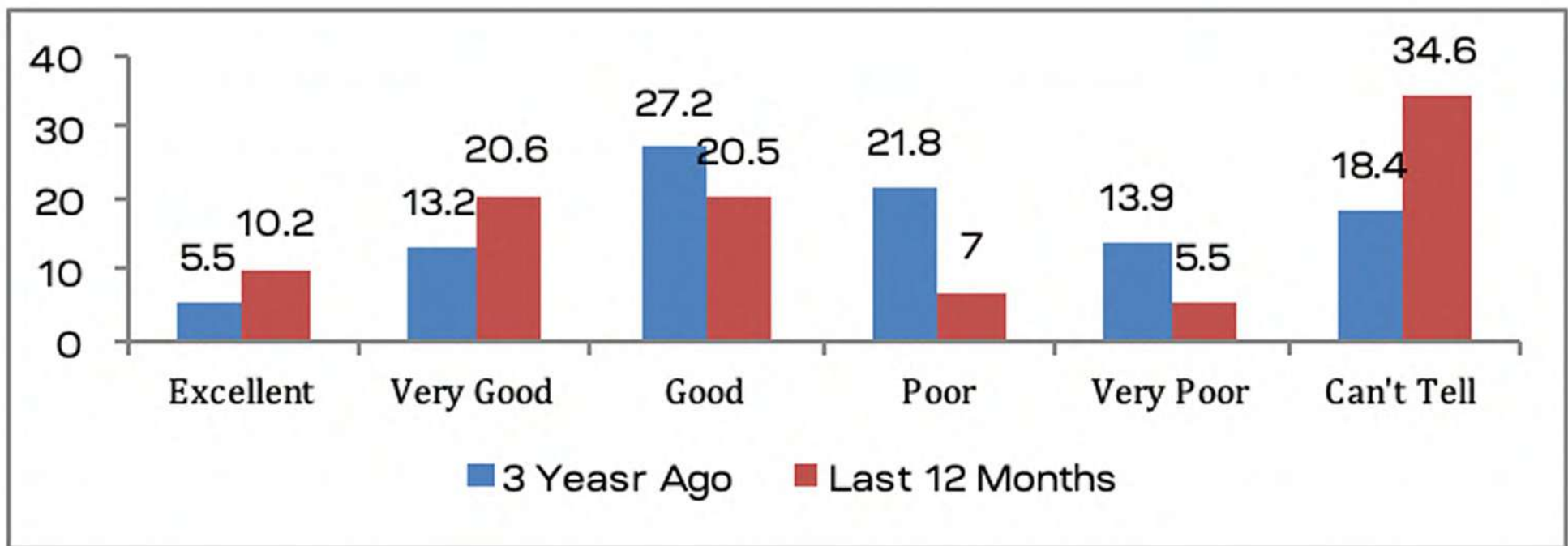


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13 OVERALL GOVERNMENT EFFORTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Whilst the ACC and Audit Service are lead institutions in the fight against corruption, they do so within the ambit of the overall government efforts at fighting corruptions. The data shows a slight improvement compared to three years ago in people's perception about the government's overall efforts in fighting corruption. As shown in Figure 12, the percentage of respondents who considered the overall government effort to be at least good (that is, excellent, very good or good- the sum of the percentages in these categories) is 45.9% for the case of three years ago and 51.3% for the case of the last twelve months.

Figure 11: Distribution of Respondents by perception about categories where sacred cows belong

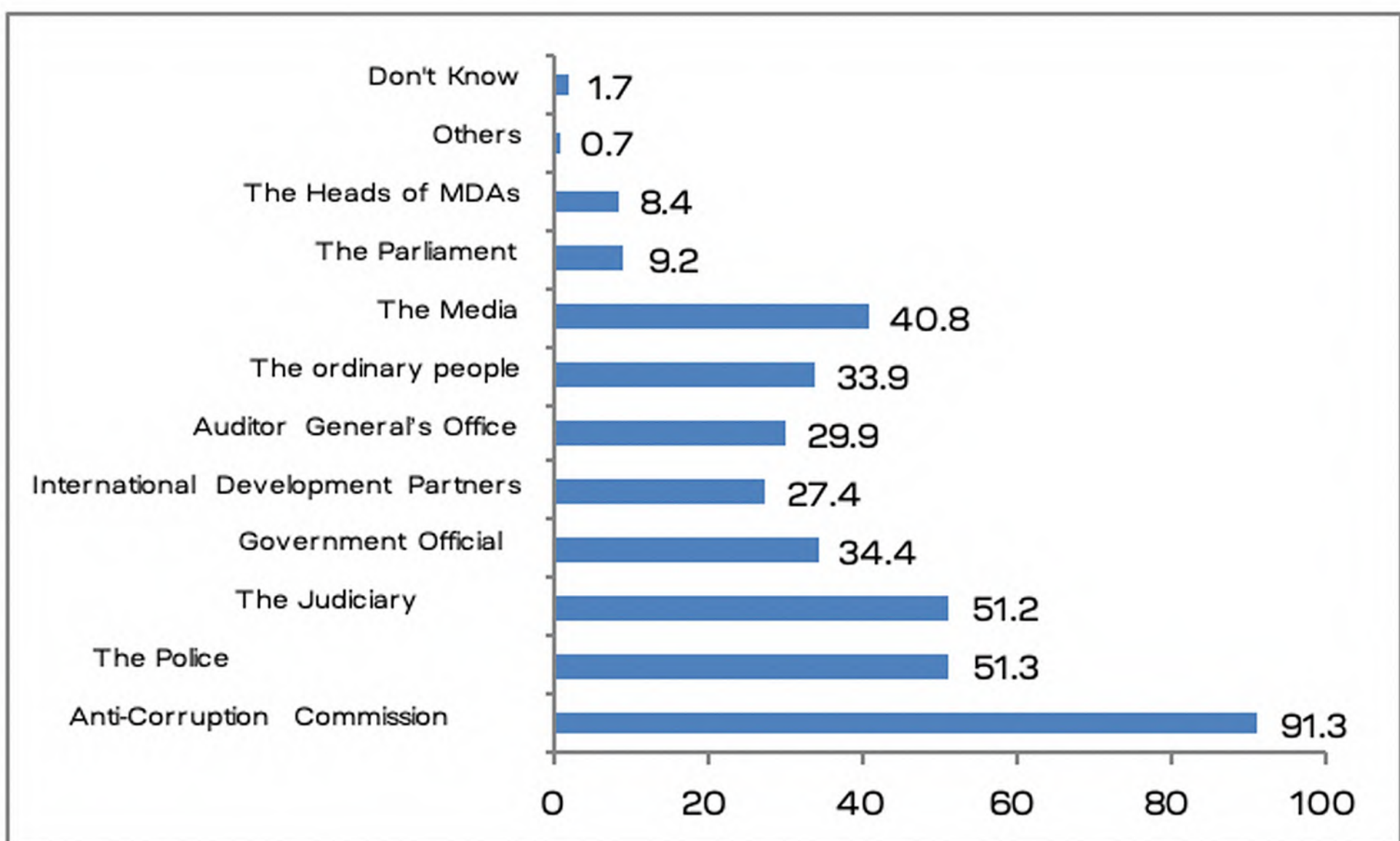


35.7%of respondents deem the overall government effort to have been very poor or poor three years ago, while only 12.5% of the respondents perceive that government's efforts has been poor or very poor in the last 12 months. This is marked improvement on the public perception about the government's efforts in the fight against corruption in the last 12 months compared to three years ago.

14 IMPACT AND SUITABILITY OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Figure 12 shows the distribution of respondents by their perceptions about who can make the greatest impact in the fight against corruption. The figure shows that over 90% of the respondents indicated that the Anti-Corruption Commission is the institution that can make the greatest impact in fighting corruption. The institutions that follow are the Police and the Judiciary, with around half of respondents. A similar question on suitability of institutions in the fight against corruption shows the majority of respondents also listing the judiciary, the police, the media and civil society organizations. The perceptions about the suitability of the police and the judiciary in the fight against corruption may be aspirational, and do not necessarily reflect the impact these institutions are currently having in the fight against corruption, as borne out by the fact that most respondents perceive the police and judiciary as corrupt institutions. However, if these institutions improve performance, they could have the greatest impact in the fight against corruption. The heads of MDAs are deemed to have the least impact on the fight against corruption, with only 8.4 % of respondents. This is followed by the parliament (9.2%). About 27.4% of respondents indicate that International Development Partners could be impactful. The numbers for the Auditor General's office and for ordinary people are 29.9% and 33.9%, respectively.

Figure 12: Distribution of respondents by their perceptions about who can make the greatest impact in the fight against corruption



14.2 Perceptions of Impact Across Age Groups

Table 16 shows a distribution of respondents by age group in terms of the institution that can make the greatest impact on fighting corruption. It shows that at least 86% of each age group indicated that the ACC can make the greatest impact, with the highest percentage of age group respondents coming from the early age groups, up to age group 46- 55, with each early age group having more than 90 % of its respondents indicating this. The next highest is the police. However, the police being higher than the judiciary is the result of it having a far higher percentage of respondents in the 36 - 45 category. The institution with the third highest percentage of respondents is the Judiciary. It has between 50% and 52% across the age groups, except for the last age group (60 and above) which has 42.7%. The other institutions have less than 50% of the age group respondents. However, across all age groups, the media comes fourth (total 40.7%), followed by ordinary persons and the Office of the Auditor General. There are no differences between the perceptions of males and females as to the impact of institutions in the fight against corruption.

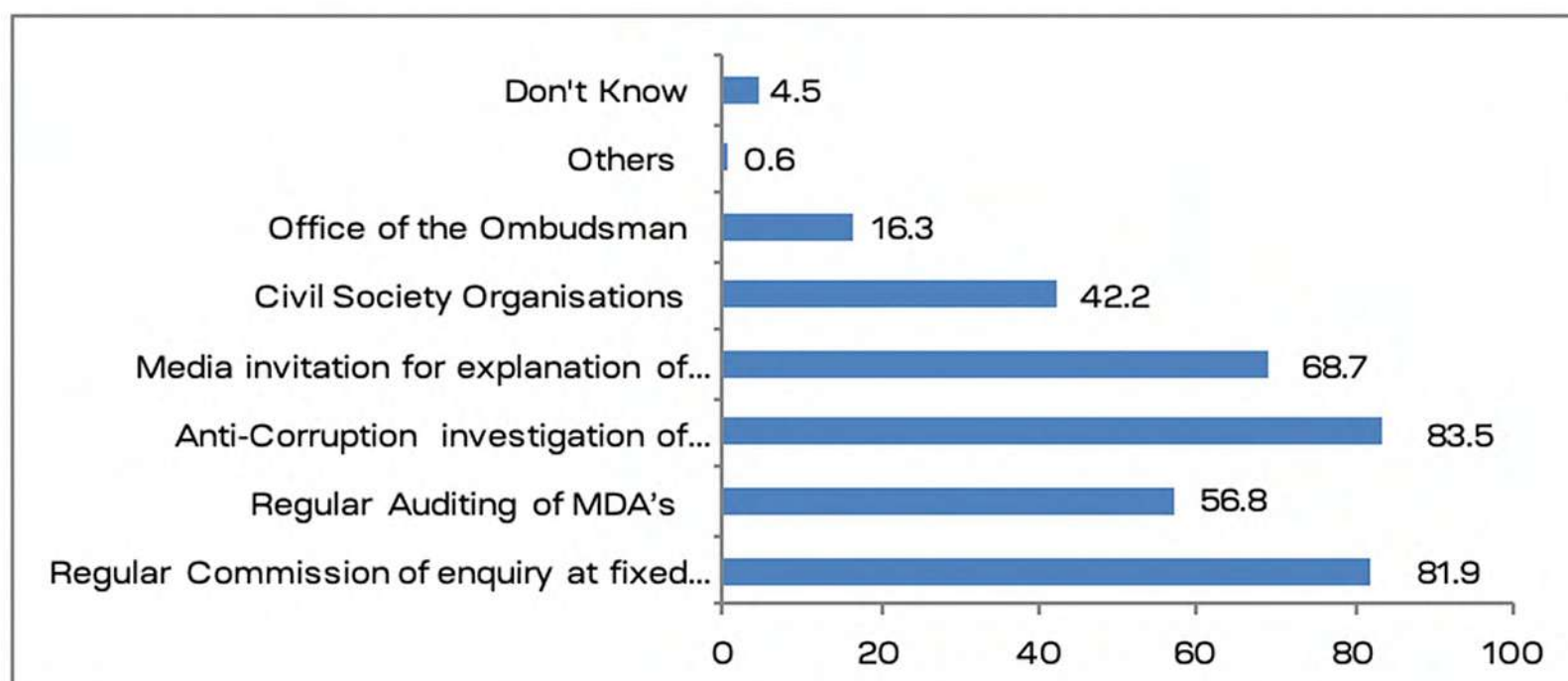
Table 16: Institutions which can make the greatest impact in fighting corruption, as distributed by age Groups

Institution	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-60	60 and above	Total
Anti-Corruption Commission	91.3	90.8	93.4	91.7	86.7	89.6	91.1
The Police	50.8	51	56	49	49.2	47.9	51.2
The Judiciary	51	52.1	52.1	50.2	51.3	42.7	51.1
Government Official	37.2	34.6	37.2	33.1	29.2	19.8	34.3
International Development Partners	26.1	29.2	23	31.5	30.8	10.4	27.3
Auditor General's Office	30.6	32	29.5	29.1	24.2	29.2	29.9
The Ordinary People	32.4	33.9	33	37	30.4	37.5	33.8
The Media	41	41.1	38.5	41.5	42.9	36.5	40.7
The Parliament	10.1	9.6	8.8	8.3	10.4	5.2	9.2
The Heads of MDAs	10.5	7.8	9.4	6.1	7.5	9.4	8.4
Others	0.3	0.4	0.9	0.6	1.3	2.1	0.7
Don't Know	1.1	1.7	0.4	2	3.8	5.2	1.7

14.3 How to Fight Corruption

Figure 13 shows the distribution of respondents with respect to the most effective ways of holding government accountable. 83.5% of respondents indicate that ACC's investigation of suspicious cases of corruption is the most effective way of fighting corruption. The second most effective way is regular commissions of inquiry at fixed cycles, with 81.9% and media investigation of suspicious corruption cases follows with 68.7%. Regular auditing of MDAs is also considered effective in holding government accountable, with 56.8%. Civil society organizations were selected as effective to a lesser extent (only 42.2% of the respondents considers it to be among the top four most effective ways) and the Office of the Ombudsman was considered by only 16.3% of the respondents. But it must also be noted that investigations constitute just one stage of an effective process. Respondents also indicate strong punitive measures against those found guilty. During in depth interviews, it was observed the bodies charged with implanting these measures should do so without bias, with no regard for sacred cows, be they current or past government officials or highly connected persons.

Figure 13: Distribution of respondents by the most effective way of holding government accountable

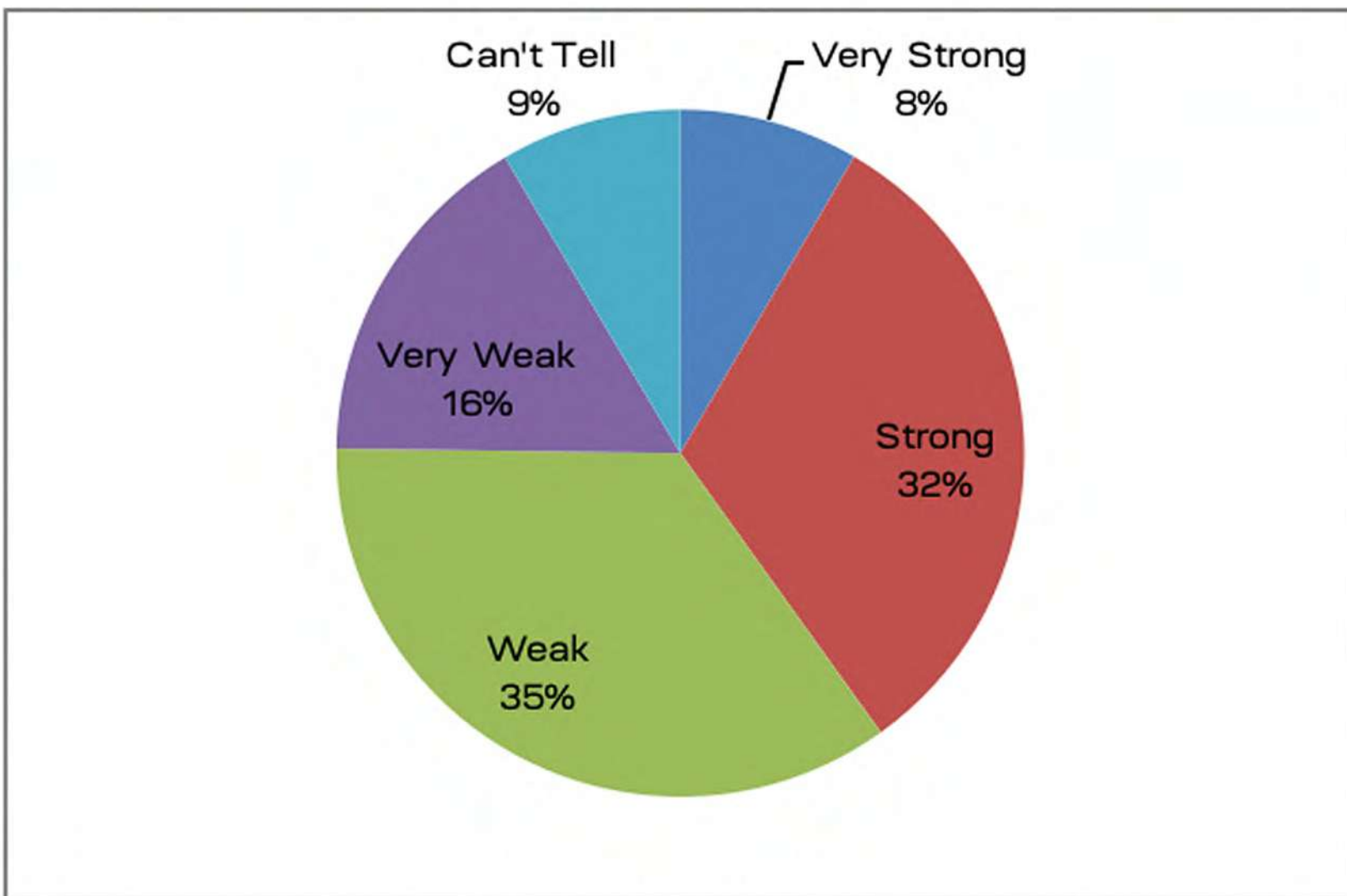


15 THE PUBLIC AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

15.1 Strength of The Public in the Fight Against Corruption

Figure 14 shows the distribution of respondents by their perceptions about the strength of the public in fighting corruption. The majority (51%) indicated the strength of the public as weak or very weak, with 40% selecting strong or very strong.

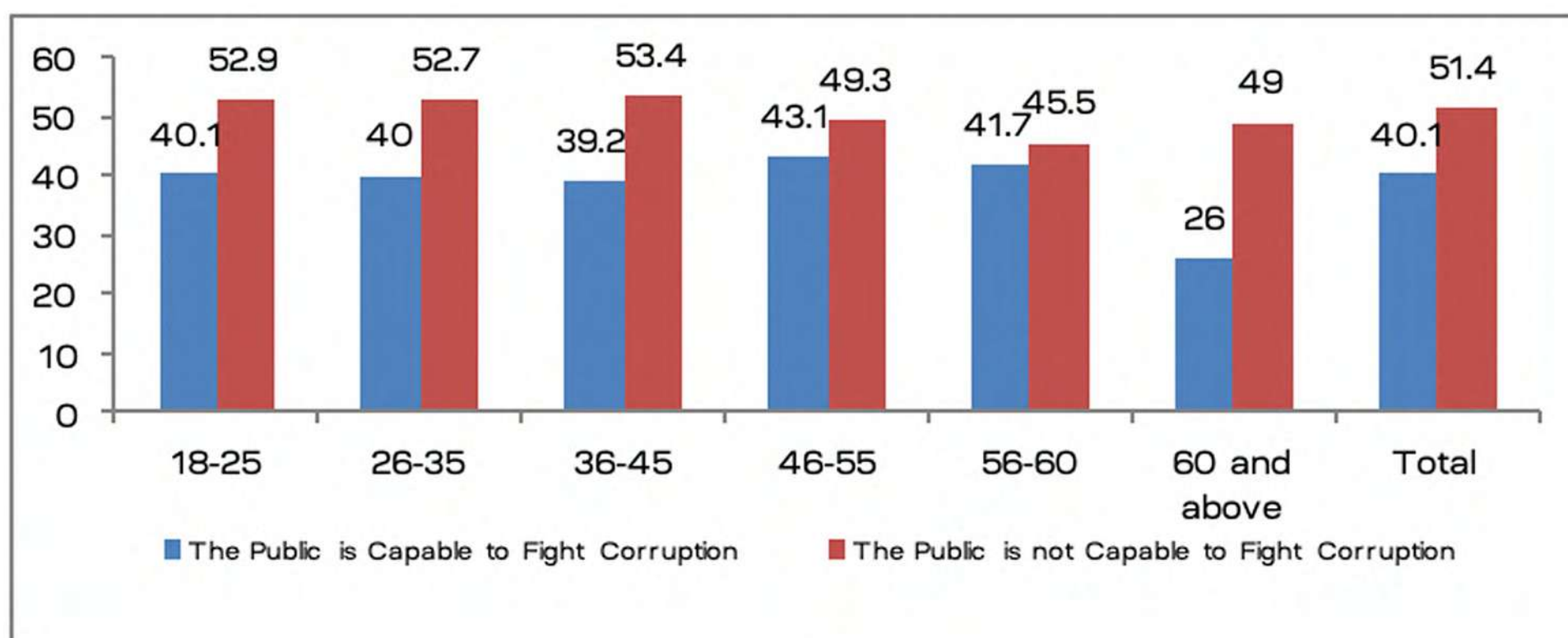
Figure 14: Distribution of respondents by their perception about public strength in fighting corruption



15.2 Perceptions of the Strength of the Public in The Fight Against Corruption Across Age Groups

Figure 15 shows the percentages that considered the public to be strong/very strong against those who considered it to be weak/very weak, broken down by age category. Those who are 55 years and below do not consider the public to be capable (i.e. weak or very weak) while for the elderly age, most of them consider the public to be capable, while in aggregate, more than half of all respondents consider the public not to be capable. This shows more cynicism about the role of the public amongst older Sierra Leoneans than younger ones, though generally cynicism and resignation about the role of the public is strong in all age groups. There are no significant differences in perceptions about role of the public in the fight against corruption between male and female respondents

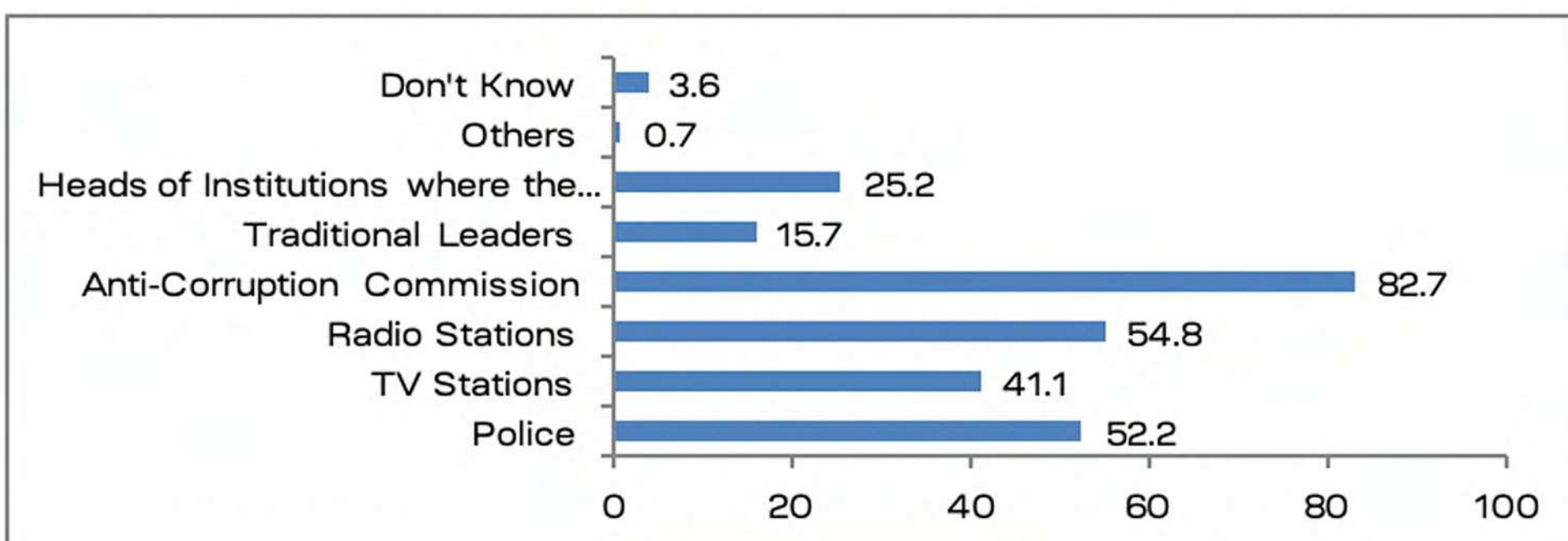
Figure 15: Capability of Public to fight corruption



15.3 Reporting Corruption

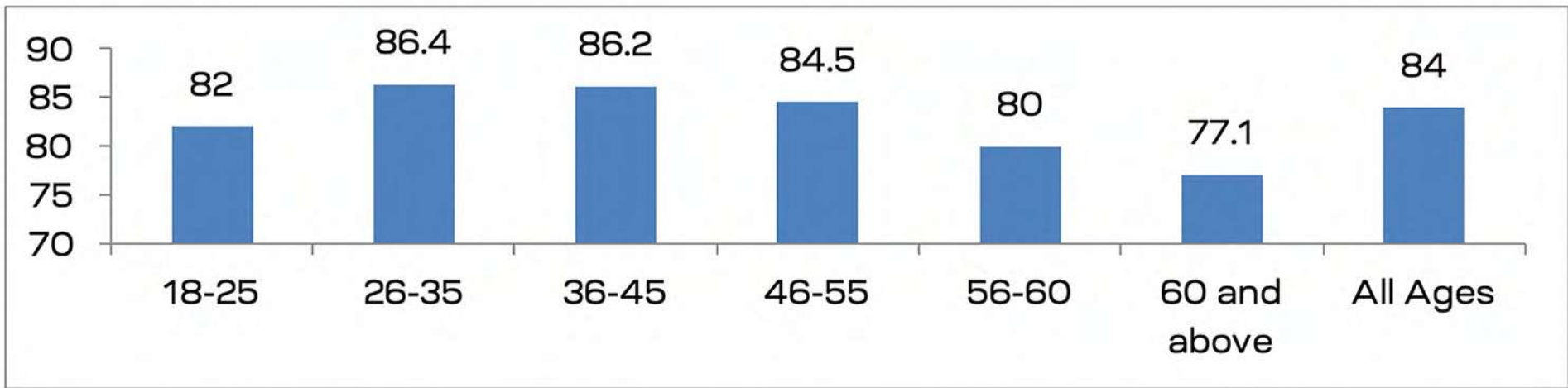
Figure 16 shows the percentage distribution of respondents by their perceptions about available corruption reporting channels. The figure shows that more than 80% of the respondents indicated ACC as an available corruption reporting channel. Other corruption reporting channels indicated by more than half of the respondents are radio stations, with 54.8% and the police, with 52.2%. TV stations were indicated by 41.1% and traditional leaders and heads of institutions where corruption occurs were indicated by only 15.7% and 25.2% respectively. This suggests that a significant number of Sierra Leoneans consider the ACC as an available corruption reporting channel, with less preference for or knowledge of other channels and a lack of trust or knowledge in reporting to the institutions where the corruption occurs.

Figure 16: Percentage distribution of respondents by their perceptions about available corruption reporting channels



In terms of whether respondents are inclined to report corruption, figure 17 shows that all age categories had at least 70% of respondents indicating they are inclined to report corruption cases. Males are marginally more inclined to reporting corruption cases than females, with 86.3% compared to 82.2%. We did not ask respondents about their levels of satisfaction or otherwise with the response rate of the ACC or other institutions to reports of corruption in the last twelve months, but it is important to point out during interviews and wider research one of the major reasons many citizens do not believe that corruption can be eradicated is the generally slow response to complaints of corruption. During the implementation of the “Pay No Bribe” project, for example, CSOs were concerned that little or no action was taken by the leaderships of many MDAs in respect of complaints of malfeasance against service providers. During community town hall meetings, many citizens said they did not see the relevance of reporting as hardly anyone followed up on their reports. It is important to create reporting channels, but efforts should be made to act on reports and provide timely feedback to the public or the informants. That perception has not changed as 72.4% of the respondents to this survey said they do not file complaints because they do not believe that any action will be taken.

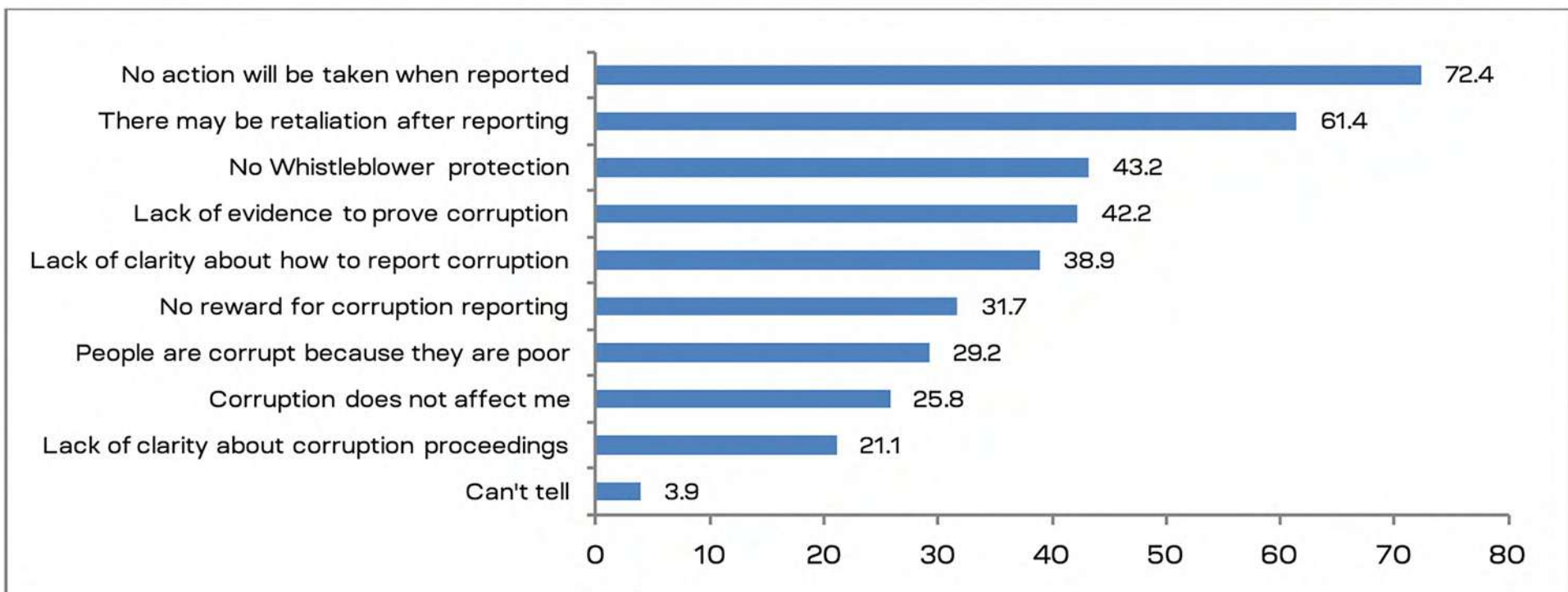
Figure 17: Percentage of respondents who would be Inclination to Report Corruption Cases by Age Group



15.4 Reasons for Failing to Report Corruption across Age Groups:

Respondents were also asked about common reasons why people may fail to report corruption. Figure 18 shows the findings. The most common reason given is that no action will be taken when corruption is reported (72.4% of respondents). This is followed by the option 'there may be retaliation after reporting corruption', with 61.4%. No whistleblower protection and lack of reward for corruption reporting follow with 43.2% and 42.2% respectively. Lack of clarity about corruption proceedings and the idea that people don't report corruption because it does not affect them are the least, with 21.1% and 25.8% respectively.

Figure 18: Percentage distribution of respondents by reasons for failing to report corruption

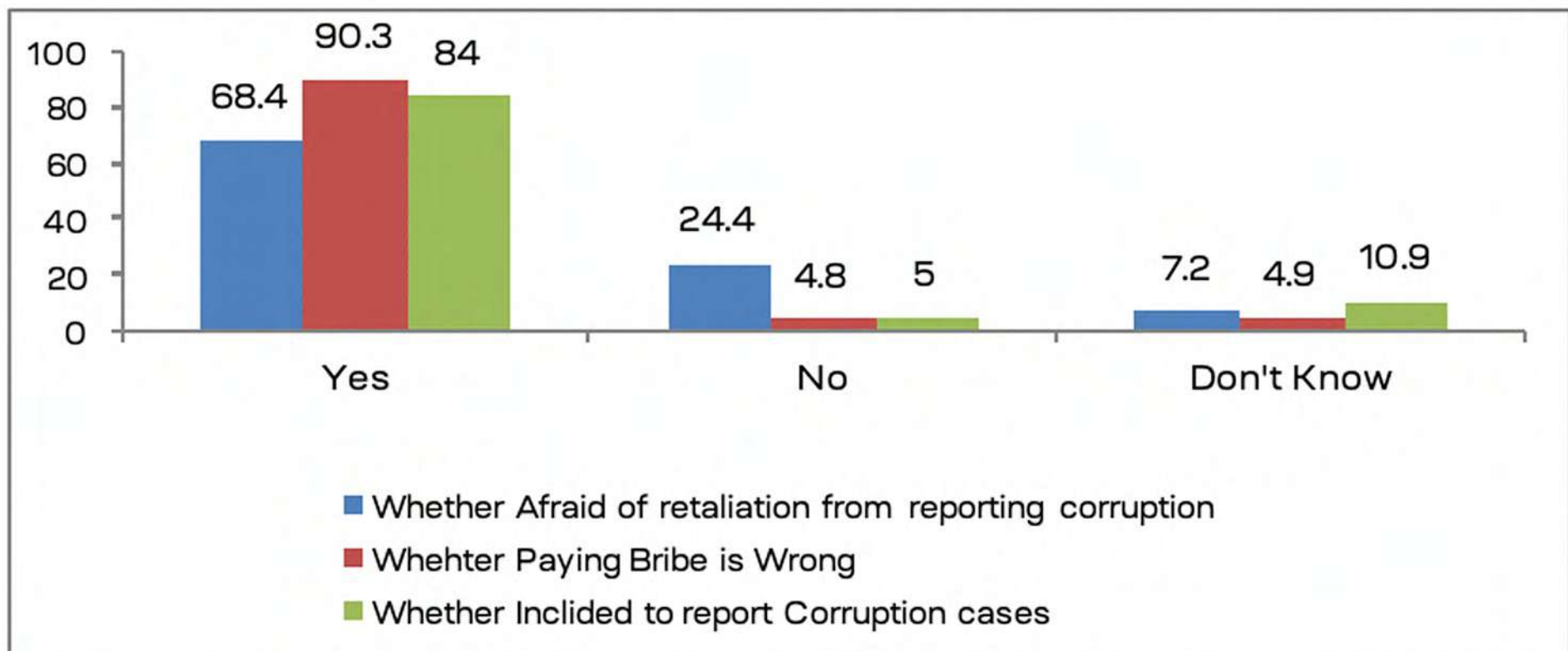


15.5 Perceptions about Paying Bribes and Reporting Corruption

A successful fight against corruption by the ACC depends on, among others, whether people understand and accept that paying bribe is wrong in itself; whether the fear of retaliation from reporting corruption would inhibit them from doing so; and whether they would be inclined to reporting corruption cases. In light of this, the respondents were asked to give their thoughts on these issues. Figure 19 shows the Percentage distribution of their answers.

About 90% of the respondents indicated that paying bribe is wrong, 84% indicated that they are inclined to reporting corruption, and 68% indicated that they are not afraid of retaliation from reporting corruption.

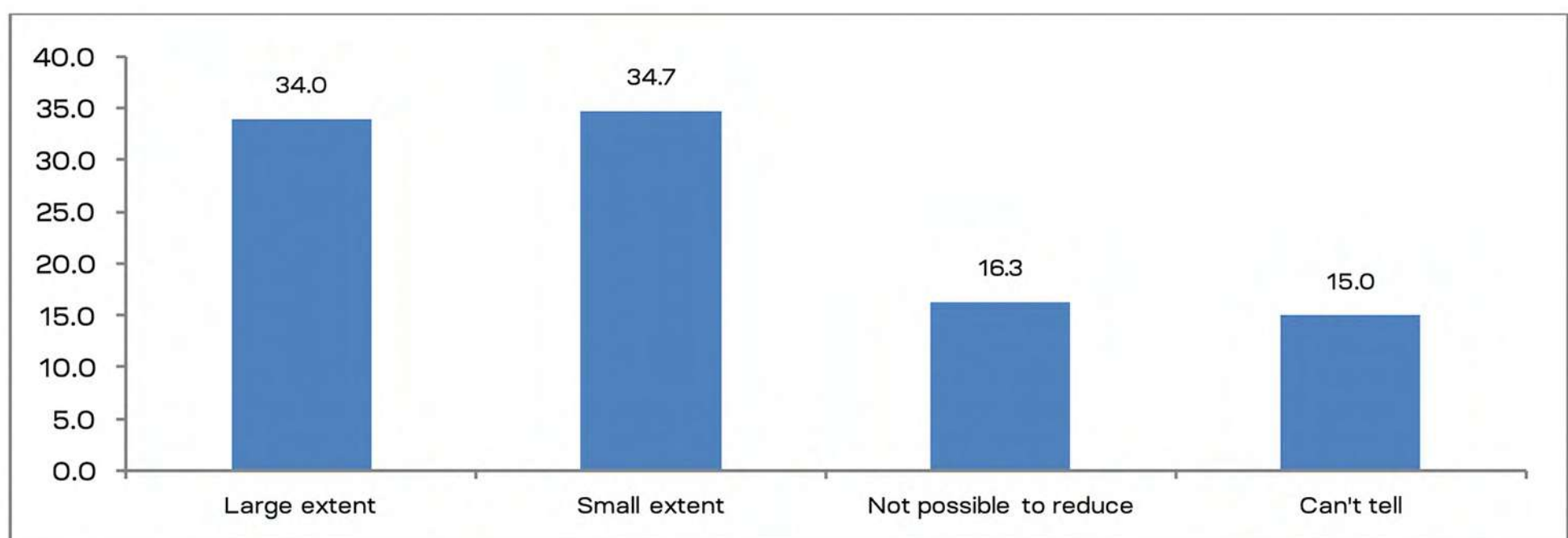
Figure 19: Percentage distribution of respondents by their thoughts on corruption, fear of retaliation from reporting, and inclination to reporting



15.6. Between Hope and Despair

In a society where there is an anti-corruption campaign and corruption is considered rampant, it is important to know whether the people have lost hope that corruption can be reduced or if they are hopeful. In this regard, Figure 20 shows the percentage distribution of the respondents by their perception about the extent to which corruption can be reduced. The figure shows that people are hopeful that corruption can be reduced (a total of 68.7% indicating that it can be reduced by a large or small extent). However, only 34.0% of this are hopeful that it can be reduced to a great extent. This percentage is almost the same as those that indicated that corruption can be reduced to a small extent (34.7%). Only 16.3% indicated that corruption cannot be reduced.

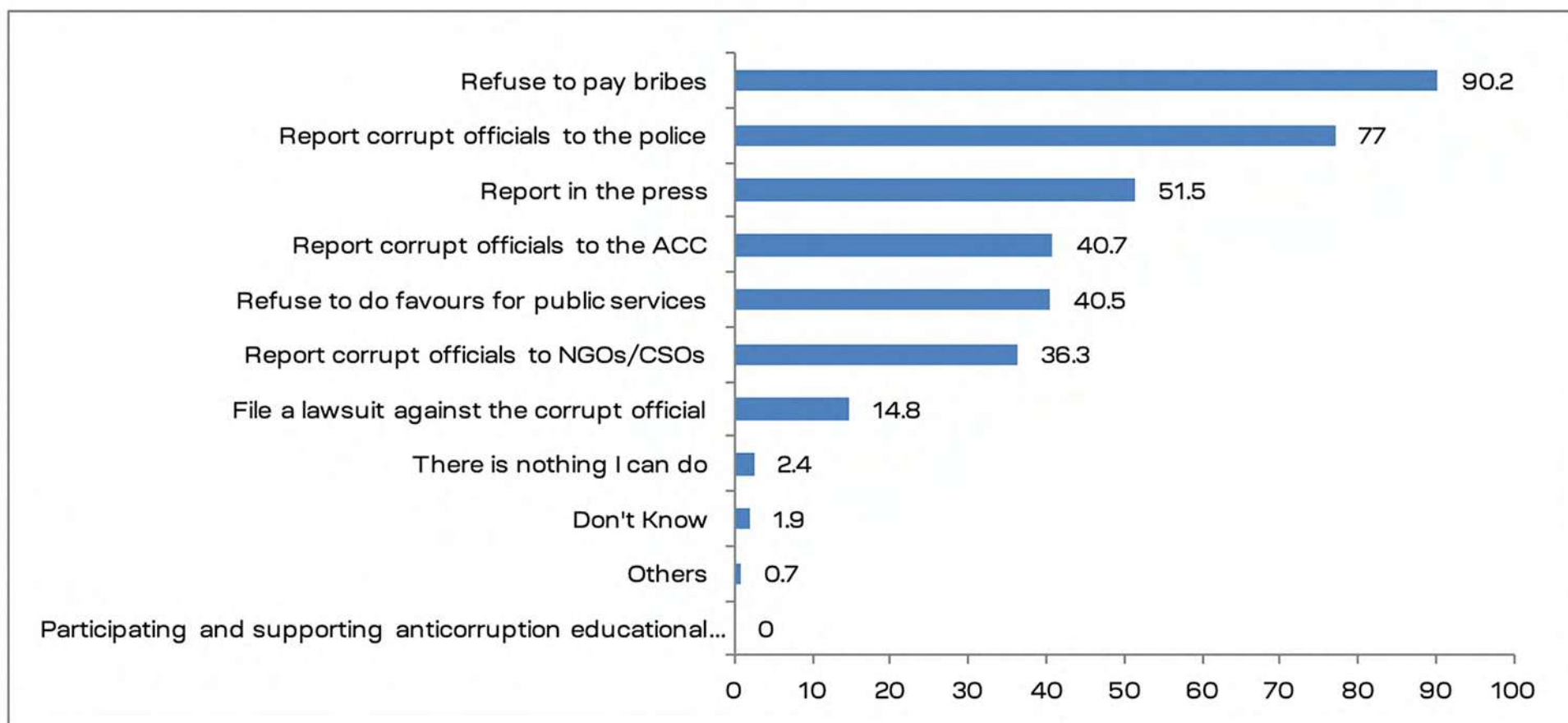
Figure 20: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their perceptions about the extent to which corruption can be reduced



15.7 What ordinary people can do to reduce corruption, by age Group

Figure 21 shows the percentage distribution of respondents by their perceptions about what the ordinary people can do to reduce corruption, based on the options provided. The figure shows that a significant percentage of respondents indicated that the ordinary people should refuse to pay bribe, with 90.2%. It is followed by the perception indicating that corruption cases should be reported to the police, with 77%, and reporting in the press follows with 51.5%. Reporting corruption cases to the ACC and filing lawsuit against corrupt officials carry less than half of respondents, at 40.7% and 40.5% respectively. The preference for reporting corruption cases to the police may have been influenced by the availability and accessibility of police posts across the country.

Figure 21: Percentage distribution of respondents by their perceptions about what the ordinary people can do to reduce corruption



PART FOUR

RECOMMENDATIONS

REFERENCES

RECOMMENDATIONS

The prevalence and persistence of corruption in the country may lead people to want to take the fight against corruption to every institution and region and at every stage. However, a targeted strategy rather than a generalized one. There are key institutions, processes and patterns of corruption (systemic issues) which come up persistently in the literature and in people's perception of corruption throughout the years, and it would be better to target these institutions, processes and persons. The institutions to be targeted are the police, health and education services, the judiciary and the public accounts committee of parliament. The processes that could be targeted are bail, handling of traffic offenses, school expenses done within schools, and hospital fees. The systemic issues relate to rent seeking mostly in contacts for public goods and services and in mining agreements; and patronage in inefficient recruitment, impunity for sacred cows, and contracts. The recommendations below list what could be specifically done:

- **Target Institutions that Ordinary People interact with most:**

The institutions most people interact with are the police, health and education sectors. With police, traffic offences and issues relating to bail are amongst the prominent issues over which ordinary persons engage them. To reduce the burden of corruption when ordinary persons engage the police, bail and traffic issues should be robustly targeted with anti-corruption prevention, detection and enforcement strategies. With schools, the major opportunities for corruption are found at the start of the school year or the commencement of terms, and involves issues relating to admission payments, uniforms and other school materials. Corruption opportunities also increase during processing of candidate forms for the government sponsored BECE and WASSCE exams. These are moments and processes that should be targeted. Some of the major hospitals should also be targeted with anti-corruption interventions.

- **Decrease points where cash changes hands:**

Continue to implement measures that decrease points at which monies physically change hands between citizens and public officials. The free healthcare and free quality education programmes are decreasing these points of contacts, use of electronic payments systems, banks and other strategies that further decrease these contacts or enhance their transparency could be very impactful. This could also include a review of traffic laws in order to make a clear distinction between arrestable and non-arrestable offences and communicate actions that incur charges to motorists. This would give greater awareness of the offences for which they can be arrested and detained versus those that would only attract on-the-spot fines and reduce payment of bribes.

- **Target specific key political institutions/offices/officers:**

To rebuild confidence in political institutions and decrease the reality and perception of sacred cows and impunity, target ministers, parliamentarians, mayors and chairpersons of district councils with anti-corruption strategies. Already, the amendments to the Anti-Corruption Act has moved towards this direction by stipulating a more manageable declaration of assets process targeted at these political office holders.

- **Target specific key bureaucratic offices/officers:**

As with the targeting of political institutions that are geared towards eliminating or reducing political corruption, the same measures should also be instituted with key bureaucrats, including permanent secretaries and professional heads of government ministries, departments and agencies. One of the ways to do this is to strengthen Integrity Management Committees (IMCs) within the Ministries, Departments and Agencies. The Committees, which are charged with the responsibility of implementing the National Anti-Corruption Strategy within MDAs, would support in terms of developing and implementing anti-corruption and transparency initiatives within MDAs. Linked to this is the role that the leadership of the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Human Resource Management Office can play in rewarding probity as well as punishing malfeasance. One of the concrete measures that both offices can take in promoting integrity in the public service would be to include clear and measurable integrity-related performance targets in the Individual Performance Appraisal System, which is used for making promotions. This is based on the general consensus that the fight against corruption cannot be won only by prosecution; there is need for administrative sanctions and rewards to incentivize good conduct and punish bad or criminal conduct.

- **Utilize religious leaders to campaign and pass messages relating to corruption:**

Religious leaders, traditional leaders, and civil society activists may be seen as authentic carriers of anti-corruption messages, given that they are generally considered the least corrupt.

- **Draw out credible links between corruption, poverty and conspicuous consumption elites:**

Anti-corruption campaigns should utilize data and insights showing that corruption is unproductive and mostly benefits conspicuous consumption habits of elites. Also, that corruption is regressive – it benefits the powerful more than it does the poor (for example even in cases of bribery where it seems like they benefit the poor in the short term to access services, it ultimately hurts the poor). Data and surveys like this one, from independent civil society, help to provide independent and credible information to inform campaigns and strategies in the fight against corruption'

- **Look into corruption in certain key private sector operations, including real estate, transport and communication.**

This because these sectors were rated by respondents as highly corrupt out of the private sector institutions.

- **Strengthen relationships with and build capacity of the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC):**

Though perceptions that parliamentarians are corrupt are high, most respondents indicate that parliament could play a leading role in the fight against corruption. Parliamentary oversight, especially by the PAC, which is constitutionally mandated to follow up on audit reports must be targeted to help them carry out these oversight functions. This could include increasing media spotlight on the work of the PAC, increasing engagements between the Committee and accountability-based CSOs, supporting the Committee with research and MDA oversight, building the capacity of members to conduct investigations and hold public hearings on the audit reports. There is also need to strengthen the secretariat of the PAC, including by providing additional equipment, hiring and training of more staff, including researchers.

There is also need for the PAC to develop and adopt guidelines that regulate their work. Such guidelines would include timeframes within which inquiries must be held and concluded, among others.

- **Target the mining sector:**

A key area for anti-corruption work is the mining sector, which is an important revenue-generating sector for the state, but also a sector with historic connections to the shadow state and corrupt practices (as revealed through many of the key informant interviews and desk research). The efforts of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives are recognized, but there is need for the Anti-Corruption Commission and civil society to pay more attention to transparency in contracting. Many reports show that some of the mining contracts were signed with little participation of locals and in utter disregard of the country's mining laws. Some mining deals have been found to be inconsistent with the country's tax laws, and there are allegations that the contracts fail to recognize the right of local communities to a reasonable compensation.

- **Ensure stronger but fairer punitive measures.**

Most people want stronger punitive measures rather than just fines alone. However, people want this to be done across the board, and not just those perceived to be "small fishes". This situation was brought into particular focus in relation to the parading of teachers at the cotton tree for alleged involvement in examination fraud, whilst others alleged to have committed other or perhaps more serious corruption offenses are not paraded during investigations of their alleged offense. This is fuelling a sense of a two-tier model of dealing with persons accused/suspected of corruption. But the number of persons holding these negative perceptions could be reduced and more confidence placed in the anti-corruption fight if the strong punitive measures are implemented across board.

- **Contracts and Procurements:**

Information from the desk review and discussions during the in-depth interviews reveal that a key area for diversion of public funds to private use by senior political and bureaucratic officials is through the award of procurement contracts. Cognizant of this, there have been key reforms of the procurement process including the creation of a National Public Procurement Authority (NPPA), the recruitment and placement of procurement officers and the establishment of procurement committees in ministries. However, issues relating to flawed procurement and non-compliance with procurement regulations are still staples of the corruption narrative in the country as could be found in several reports of the Auditor-General and from other sources, including from in-depth interviews during this study. The 2019 amendments to the Anti-Corruption Act give the ACC Commissioner the mandate to intervene in procurement and contracts deemed to be against the interest of the people of Sierra Leone. However, care must be taken to build capacities of the ACC to do justice to these new powers. The NPPA is also seeking to introduce an electronic procurement system aimed at promoting efficiency, transparency, equity and fairness in public procurement. This process is a step forward in the country's involvement in the Open Contracting Partnership and needs to be actively supported by both international partners and the Government of Sierra Leone. Legal reforms relating to public finance management should seek to strengthen the National Public Procurement Authority. To ensure that procurement rules are not circumvented, especially for high value contracts, it is important to enforce guidelines that limit the application of waivers to avoid competitive bidding or tendering. The recent review of the Public Finance Management Act that allows for the decentralization of procurement may be well-intentioned, but it is susceptible to abuse and corruption. There is need to ensure NPPA oversight of all procurement across all sectors and at all levels.

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