

A LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION IN JAMAICA



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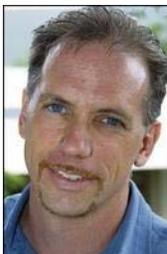
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The Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CaPRI) is a Caribbean think tank, the first in the region. CaPRI promotes evidence-based policymaking in the Caribbean. CaPRI espouses a methodology, built on the values of multi-disciplinary work, team work and the utilization of the Diaspora in our search for evidence. CaPRI is deeply committed to the idea of an involved academic community and has strong linkages with the private sector and civil society, as well as the academic community



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LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION IN JAMAICA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From an economic perspective, corruption inhibits private investment and growth, distorts public investment, subverts the merit principle, rewards those who do not play by the rules, and contributes to undermining sustainable livelihoods in an economy, especially for the poor. This, Transparency International argues, are costs which are normally shouldered by those who can least afford to bear the burden (Transparency International, 2000).

According to international organizations such as Transparency International and the World Bank, understanding the dynamics of corruption through, among other things, perceptions of (1) how it is defined by a society; (2) its presence and prevalence in a society; (3) whether or not the people problematize it; (4) its causes; (5) its impact on development; and (6) the effectiveness of detection mechanisms. An awareness of these issues plays an important role in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of governments, engender good governance, and promote development. Although there has been much work done on various aspects of corruption in Jamaica by local, regional and international bodies, not many research projects have sought to address these issues empirically. This study attempts to address this gap. The study presents the findings of a national survey on perceptions of corruption in Jamaica.

This research employed a descriptive research design, the survey research methodology, and sampled 1140 individuals residing in all 14 Parishes across Jamaica. From the data analyzed it was found that most persons interviewed (1) defined corruption as the misuse of public office for private gain; (2) believed that corruption was prevalent in all government institutions but more so in the Customs Department, Police Force and the Parish Council Offices; (3) were of the opinion that corruption is a serious problem in the country and negatively impacts on development; (4) were of the opinion that personal graft and greed were the primary causes of corruption in Jamaica; and (5) strongly believed that the anti-corruption rules are adequate, but Government agencies are too weak to enforce them and that these anti-corruption rules are adequate, but they are intentionally not enforced.

It is hoped that the findings from this research will help us to better understand corruption and, in particular, how it impacts on the economic development of the country.

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- WORLD BANK
- COBB FAMILY FOUNDATION
- AIR JAMAICA
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- COK CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT UNION
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1. INTRODUCING THIS TEXT

In March 2006, in her inaugural address, the Most Honourable Portia Lucretia Simpson-Miller, Jamaica's first female Prime Minister, made the following oath "I want to pledge to the Jamaican people to work tirelessly to eradicate corruption and extortion. I am committed to their eradication" (Jamaica Information Service, 2003: 1). This assurance was the second of several goals she outlined to "facilitate change" in Jamaica (Ibid).

It should therefore come as no surprise, neither to the novice nor the schooled Jamaican criminologist, that corruption claimed high priority on the new Prime Minister's agenda. On the 2005 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), which measures corruption among public officials and politicians within countries around the world, Jamaica received a score of 3.6 out of 10. A score of 10 designates an almost clean slate where corruption is concerned, while 0 signifies a highly corrupt country. Jamaica's score of 3.6 placed the country 64th among the 158 countries surveyed. Within the Caribbean, Jamaica was fourth behind Barbados (which scored 6.9), Trinidad and Tobago and Cuba (which both scored 3.8).

"I want to pledge to the Jamaican people to work tirelessly to eradicate corruption and extortion. I am committed to their eradication" (Portia Simpson-Miller, Prime Minister of Jamaica, 2006)

“Many Jamaicans have been witnesses, through the popular media, of claims (but rarely convictions) of bribery, extortion, fraud, nepotism and cronyism”

The island was however ranked higher - meaning less corrupt - than other Caribbean countries such as the Dominican Republic (3.0) and Haiti (1.8).

Jamaican scholarship upholds some of these allegations of corruption (see Charles, 2003; Harriott, 2000; Munroe, 1999). So, too, do sections of the Jamaican public, many of which often display a curiosity about the discourse of corruption, particularly via radio talk show programmes. This curiosity seems justified. Many Jamaicans have been witnesses, through the popular media, of claims (but rarely convictions) of bribery, extortion, fraud, nepotism and cronyism.

Persistent assertions in this regard appear to indicate a lack of integrity or honesty on the part of elected officials, the misuse of public office for private gain and other forms of kleptocracy (an informal, pejorative term used to describe a highly corrupt government or one which is ruled by thugs and thieves). Such an environment – a kleptocratic environment – is perhaps the most problematic for nation states, especially developing countries.

This is best highlighted by Dr. Lloyd Barnett, a scholar on law and legality in Jamaica, who argues that:

Over the 50 years of representative government in Jamaica, it has been generally alleged and often assumed, without the substantiation of specific allegations and proven cases that a considerable amount of corruption exists in national affairs. The political experience is that the parties in opposition have usually accused the party in power of conducting a corrupt administration. Historically, when the accusing party has gained power and established Commissions of Inquiry to conduct a widespread investigation of the previous administration very little has been unearthed to substantiate the allegations ... The rumors are, however, too persistent and the statements made in private by reliable persons too frequent to ignore the allegations (Barnett, The Carter Centre, 1999).

The present reality of Jamaica is that the laws governing acts of political corruption – the Jamaica Constitution, The Corruption Prevention Act of 1931 and the Representation of the People’s Act of 1944 – are weak in some instances and/or not enforced in others. However, recent amendments to the Corruption Prevention Act are indications of possible strengthening of corruption laws. This is even while some of the main entities monitoring corruption in Jamaica, such as the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, have encountered challenges in pursuance of this duty. For instance, countless complaints by civil society on various radio talk-show programmes often suggest that some of these challenges include political victimization and poor support from the Jamaican public. We explore some of these issues in this study.

International organizations such as Transparency International argue that corruption is directly inhibiting private investment and growth in developing and lesser developed countries. Corruption also distorts public investment, undermines the democratic process and contributes to undermining sustainable livelihoods in these economies, especially for the poor. Furthermore, it is believed that corruption can have a particularly negative effect on the functioning of a nation and on the ability of institutions in society to attain stated objectives.

Where a society is perceived to be highly corrupt, risks and hence unpredictability are heightened, trust may be reduced and economic and social relations become more complex and costly. Potentially, these can have negative consequences for societal relations: insofar as citizen confidence is reduced, collective action and governance becomes difficult.

Not many empirical studies have been undertaken in Jamaica to substantiate these hypotheses and assumptions. Certainly, lack of awareness among policy makers and development planners regarding how Jamaicans perceive corruption is problematic, especially where effective and targeted policy making is concerned (sensitization and awareness, capacity building, transparency strategies, introducing or amending legislation, and so on).

This study attempts to address this gap. It presents the findings of a national survey, conducted in Jamaica in September of 2006, which sought to review the Jamaican political culture and economy since independence, and make policy recommendations.

The survey is an interdisciplinary study which utilizes quantitative methodologies and methods of data collection and analysis. The goal of the study is to capture current perceptions on corruption in Jamaica for the purpose of developing better policy solutions to enhance good governance and development.

“The goal of the study is to capture current perceptions on corruption in Jamaica for the purpose of developing better policy solutions to enhance good governance and development”

Research Design

The **Research Design** used for this study was both descriptive and exploratory. The Survey Research Methodology along with the Case Study Methodology was used. A total of 1140 persons were interviewed for this research – **The Sample**. They were proportionally selected from Jamaica's 14 parishes as a part of a multi-stage sampling technique.

Data Collection occurred over a 40-day period. A team of approximately 30 surveyors were used to collect the information from across the island. In addition to this, several Focus Group Sessions and Elite Interviews were conducted with various public sector workers to further explore and thus understand the findings from the survey.

Two different **Data Analysis** Strategies were used for this research. At one level – a **Quantitative** level – Descriptive Univariate Statistical Analytical techniques (analyzing the responses to one particular question) were used to analyze the quantitative data collected for this research.

At a more **Qualitative** level, the contents of the Focus Group Sessions and the Elite Interviews were constantly compared to identify patterns and themes.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The popularization of the connection between governance and development highlighted in the 2002 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report “*Deepening democracy in a fragmented world*” brought to the forefront the long-standing issue of political corruption (henceforth – corruption) to policy-makers and academics around the globe. The frenzy surrounding the report, the focus on corruption as a development-inhibiting phenomenon, and reports of other international bodies such as the World Bank, the International Chamber of Commerce, the International Federation of Accounts, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Transparency International (TI) in the late 1990s to early 2000s had already existed in many spaces around the world for decades.

Although people have been writing on corruption since Plato (Wilson, 1989; Onuf, 1998; Warren, 2004;) it was Huntington (1968), Leff (1964), Nye (1967) and Bayley (1966) who, as far back as the 1960s, had highlighted and drawn attention to the existence, prevalence, causes and consequences of corruption in many different types of societies, ranging from pre-industrial to post-industrial ones, and brought the issue to the modern scholarly and policy podium.

Since then, there have been many other studies conducted to either deepen or expand their analyses (See, for example, Theobald, 1990; Charap and Haram, 1999; World Bank, 1997; Rose-Ackerman, 1999; Olson, 1993; Johnson, 1982; Transparency International, 2000-2007). This chapter explores many of the assumptions about the causes and consequences of corruption that have been put forward over the years, particularly those which we believe relate to the Jamaican society and political economy.

This literature review, looks at some of these articulations, especially those which we believe will provide a platform from which to contextualize the findings of this

The Forms and Causes of Corruption

Transparency International (2000) identifies several forms of corruption. These include: treason, misappropriation of funds; abuse of power; deceit and fraud; perversion of justice; non-performance of duties; extortion, bribery and graft; nepotism, election tampering; misuse of inside knowledge and confidential information; unauthorized sale of public offices, public property and public licences; manipulation of regulation; purchases and supplies, contracts and loans; tax evasion; acceptance of improper gifts, fees, speed money and entertainment; black market operations; cronyism; illegal surveillance; misuse of office seals and stationery; public officials linking with criminal actors (Transparency International, 2000).

Although the literature on corruption suggests that it exists in all states, this literature concedes that there are some countries, societies and states, which are more prone to corruption than others. This very structural approach (as opposed to an approach which focuses on agency, like that of Rose-Ackerman, 1978 and Klitgaard, 1988, or the call for a more dialectic approach by some such as Collier, 2000) assumes that corruption comes about as a result of various economic, political and cultural/sociological, historical variables which influence human behaviour (Huntington, 1968; Theobald, 1990). According to Deborah Stokes (1997) for example, much of these forms of corruption thrive in societies which are predominantly poor, have fragile systems of accountability, display a political will that is weak, and have poor monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. In these societies, the state plays a significant role in economic activities, and there exists a weak private sector and a weak democratic system.

Charap and Haram (1999) have further argued that stable functioning democracies normally have lower levels of corruption. Similar arguments have been promoted by Transparency International, whose Corruption Perception Index (CPI) has demonstrated a correlation between corruption prevalence and functioning democracies (Transparency International, 2000–2007).

Located within these discussions on the types of societies which are likely to encourage corruption, are articulations regarding the causes of corruption. Many assumptions abound. The most dominant of these seem to suggest that corruption is often caused by over-bureaucratic structures, poverty and inequality, cultural configurations, inadequate remuneration for public officials, personal graft and greed, low risk of detection, low risk of punishment, political patronage, weak enforcement mechanisms, absence of an ethical framework – in the individual or in the company or agency, low levels of transparency, low levels of public accountability, weak management systems, powerful networks of ‘secret’ organizations (cronyism) and societal pressures. Many of these causes are as a result of many of the conditions (present in certain societies) outlined by Stokes (1997) above.

The work of Lipset and Lenz (in Harrison and Huntington 2000) is, however, highlighted here. The main themes present in their work can easily be used to describe the configurations of the Jamaican society. Expanding on Merton’s work on deviance in the United States of America and drawing on global cross-national socio-economic data and models, Lipset and Lenz find support in Merton’s assumption that “corruption is motivated behaviour stemming from social pressures that result in norm violations” (2000: 116). According to the authors, many societies have social goals which people aspire to achieve – institutionalized norms. Not all persons have the knowledge, skills nor – generally speaking – opportunities to do so legally, as many societies either directly or indirectly restrict access to resources (what they refer to as the “opportunity structure”). This is largely as a result of class, race, ethnicity, gender, lack of capital, skills and so on. In such instances, many people seek alternative – often illegal – means to achieve their goals. In other words what Lipset and Lenz posit is that in societies that “stress economic success as an important goal but nevertheless strongly restrict access to opportunities” (p. 117) people will “reject the rules of the game and try to succeed by unconventional (innovative or criminal) means. This, they argue, is atypical.

Lipset and Lenz tested this hypothesis using data from the cross-national 1990–1993 World Values Survey and found that “the less affluent countries with high achievement motivation” were found to be the “most corrupt” (Ibid). These included countries such as Russia, South Korea and Turkey, which were at that time deemed the most corrupt. By contrast, those societies with low achievement motivation and high access to resources such as Denmark, Norway and Sweden had lower levels of corruption. Lipset and Lenz also undertook a multiple regression analysis using data from the 1990 World Values Survey. From the findings they concluded:

As noted, Merton’s theoretical analysis implies that serious corruption will plague countries with high levels of achievement orientation and low access to means (Lipset and Lenz, 2000: p. 118)

They further concluded that:

the availability of institutionalized means to achieve desired ends lowers levels of corruption (Lipset and Lenz, 2000: p. 118).

“The less affluent countries with high achievement motivation were found to be the most corrupt”

“Those societies with low achievement motivation and high access to resources had lower levels of corruption”

Consequences of Political Corruption

From an economic perspective, corruption, it is argued, inhibits growth in a number of ways (Johnson, 1982; Steligson, 2006; Olson, 1996; Paulo, 1995; Bardhab, 1997; Transparency International, 2000). Beyond the well-documented and well-talked-about link between the prevalence of corruption in a nation state and foreign investment (See in Wei, 2000 various nuanced discourses), there are many local configurative elements as well. According to Transparency International, citing the work of Dieter Frisch former Director-General of Development at the European Commission, corruption

...raises the cost of goods and service; it increases the debt of a country (and carries with it recurring debt-servicing costs in the future; it leads to lowering of standards, as substandard goals are provided and inappropriate or unnecessary technology is acquired; and it results in project choices being made based more on capital (because it is more rewarding for the perpetrator of corruption) than on manpower, which would be the more useful for development (Transparency International, 2000: 3).

This can occur in instances where the widely recognized norms, legal arrangements and standards which govern economic transactions are violated (Olson, 1996; North, 1981 and 1990). Corruption thus also distorts private and public investment (for example channels funds into highly corrupt sectors such as construction). It subverts the merit principle and rewards those who do not play by the rules (thereby reducing competition), weakens the authority of the rules/law and the methods and processes that lay at the heart of the democratic process, and contributes to undermining sustainable livelihoods in these economies, especially for the poor. These 'corruption stimuli's, Transparency International argues, are costs which are normally shouldered by those who can least afford to bear the burden (Transparency International, 2000).

The livelihoods of the poor are particularly at risk (Johnston, 1982; Whelan and Murin, 1979; Nice, 1986).

Resources needed to address the needs of the poor are siphoned off to meet the needs of an individual, a political party or another group. Nice (1986) explains:

When parties and politicians are primarily interested in material rewards of office, in jobs and contracts, and personal enrichment, their concern for policies, for promoting fundamental changes, and for promoting ideological and class conflict are correspondingly reduced ... Corruption diverts the attention of the public, the parties, and the politicians away from ideological and policy concerns, a situation which tends to discourage change (Nice, 1986: p. 288).

What this essentially means then is that corruption may in some instances help to perpetuate the status quo by strengthening the hands of people seeking to “protect advantages they already have” (Ibid) at the expense of others. It is important to note that there are counter arguments.

From a socio-political perspective, corruption “breaks the link between collective decision-making and people’s powers to influence, through speaking and voting, the vey link that defines democracy” (Warren, 2004; Johnson, 2005; della Porta, 1996). In essence, it both undermines the culture, and shrinks the domains of democracy. Corruption can also have a particularly negative effect on the functioning of a nation and on the ability of institutions in society to attain stated objectives. Among these, the administrative system, political institutions and the judiciary are key concerns. It inhibits upward social mobility, innovation and creativity.

How is this possible? Corruption, frustrates the formation of social capital. Further to this, according to the World Bank (1997), corruption “violates the public trust [and confidence] and corrodes social capital (pp. 102–104). The Bank further states that “[u]nchecked, the creeping accumulation of seemingly minor infractions can slowly erode political legitimacy.” (pp. 102–104). In other words, the legitimacy of a government (and ultimately the state) is undermined.

Nice (1986) best says it when he stated:

When public funds are squandered in unproductive ways or public officials abuse the authority with which they have been entrusted, citizens will naturally be reluctant to permit expansion in government operations. This situation will be particularly important to people looking to government for assistance (p. 278)

Such conditions, it is argued, puts a strain on governance, and in the end has wider implications for development (Warren, 2004). Issues such as corruption and how the public perceive the state tend to be wrapped up with how the citizenry view and relate to key institutions of the public sector – departments and ministries, statutory bodies and government agencies. It also influences how they perceive themselves. According to Warren (2004):

...when people are mistrustful of government, they are also cynical about their own capacities to act on public goods and purposes and will prefer to attend to narrow domains of self interest they can control (p. 328-329).

Olson (1993 and 1996) also maintains the importance of institutions in building the trust, stability and consensus needed for the development of a thriving democracy. They are also key in fostering cooperation among firms as well as among citizens and its rulers. Development planning cannot be successful without trustworthy government organizations.

3. THE PROBLEM OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION IN JAMAICA

Defining Corruption in Jamaica

Defining corruption has always been a source of contention in the literature. This has often led to much confusion by many scholars, policy makers as well as research projects with objects of addressing corruption. The focus of this research is essentially on political corruption, which was defined earlier as the misuse of public office for private gain.

“The findings suggest that most Jamaicans define corruption as the misuse of public office for private gain”

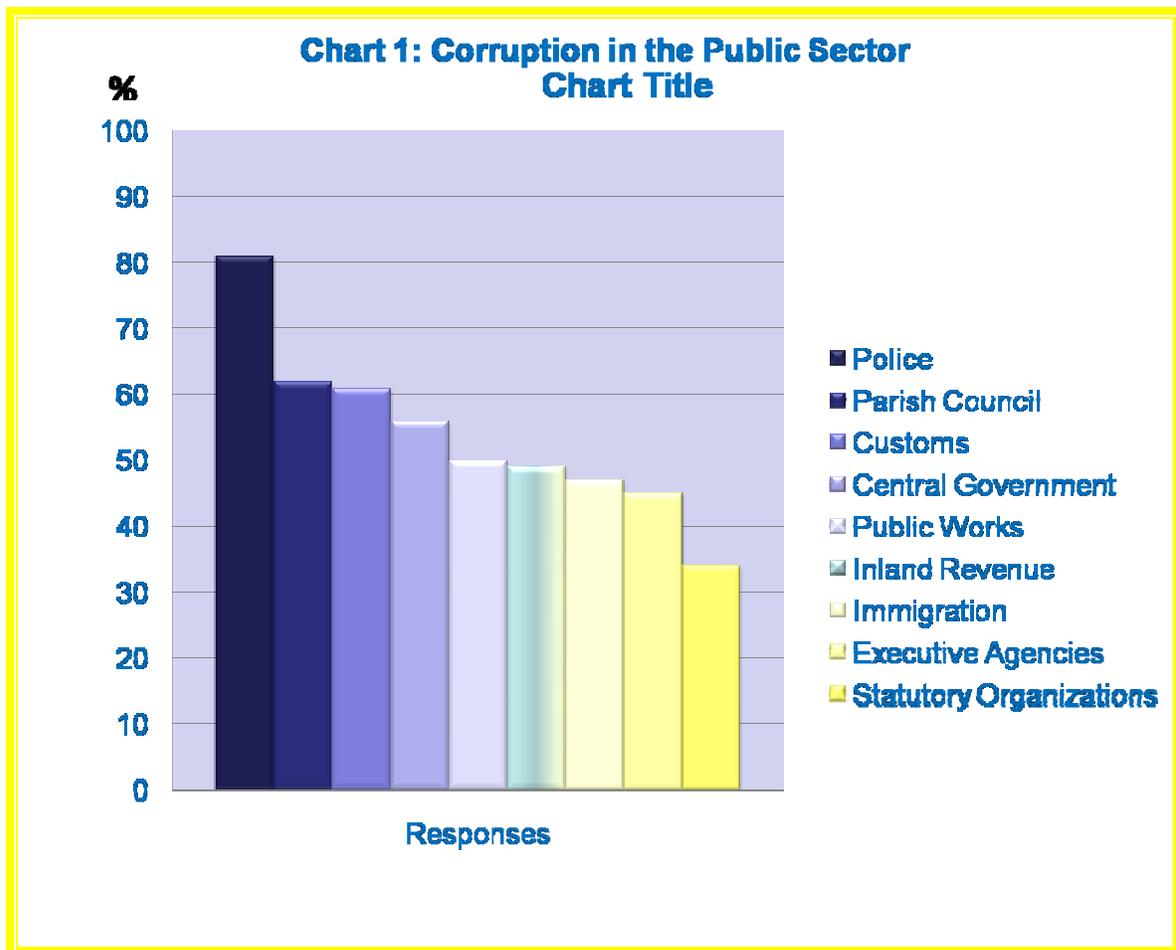
Table 1: Which of the following statements matches closest YOUR understanding of what 'corruption' is?	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Misuse of public office for private gain	515	45
Mismanagement of government funds	217	19
Cost overruns	95	9
Poor management practices	164	14
Other	69	6
No Answer	80	7
Total	1140	100

We wanted to get a sense of how Jamaicans defined corruption. Therefore the following question was posed to the respondents: “Which of the following statements matches closest YOUR understanding of what ‘corruption’ is? Table 1 above outlines the findings.

The majority of the respondents (45%) selected ‘misuse of public office for private gain’. The findings suggest that most Jamaicans define corruption as the misuse of public office for private gain. Other responses included ‘mis-management of government funds’ (19%), ‘poor management practices’ (14%) and ‘cost overruns’ (9%).

The Prevalence of Corruption in Jamaica

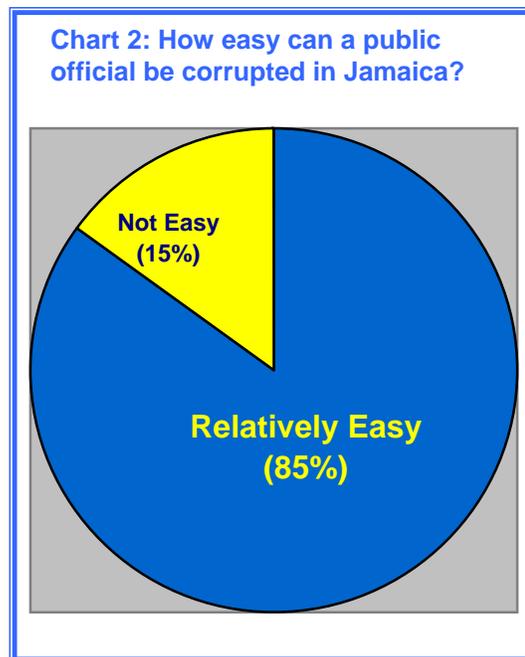
Respondents were also asked several questions regarding their perspectives of the prevalence of corruption in the Jamaican public sector. Respondents were given a list of government agencies and asked to indicate how corrupt they felt that agency was. These agencies included the following agencies/institutions/department: Customs; Immigration; Internal Revenue; Public Works; Police; Parish Councils; Central Ministries; Executive Agencies, and Statutory Organizations. Most of these agencies have, at some time or the other, been identified as offenders in the Jamaican media – some more so than others, and some, in many instances, as repeat offenders.



First of all, Chart 1 above suggests that all government organizations in Jamaica are perceived as being corrupt. It was found that the three agencies perceived to be the most corrupt in Jamaica were the Police Force, the Parish Council Offices and the Customs Department respectively.

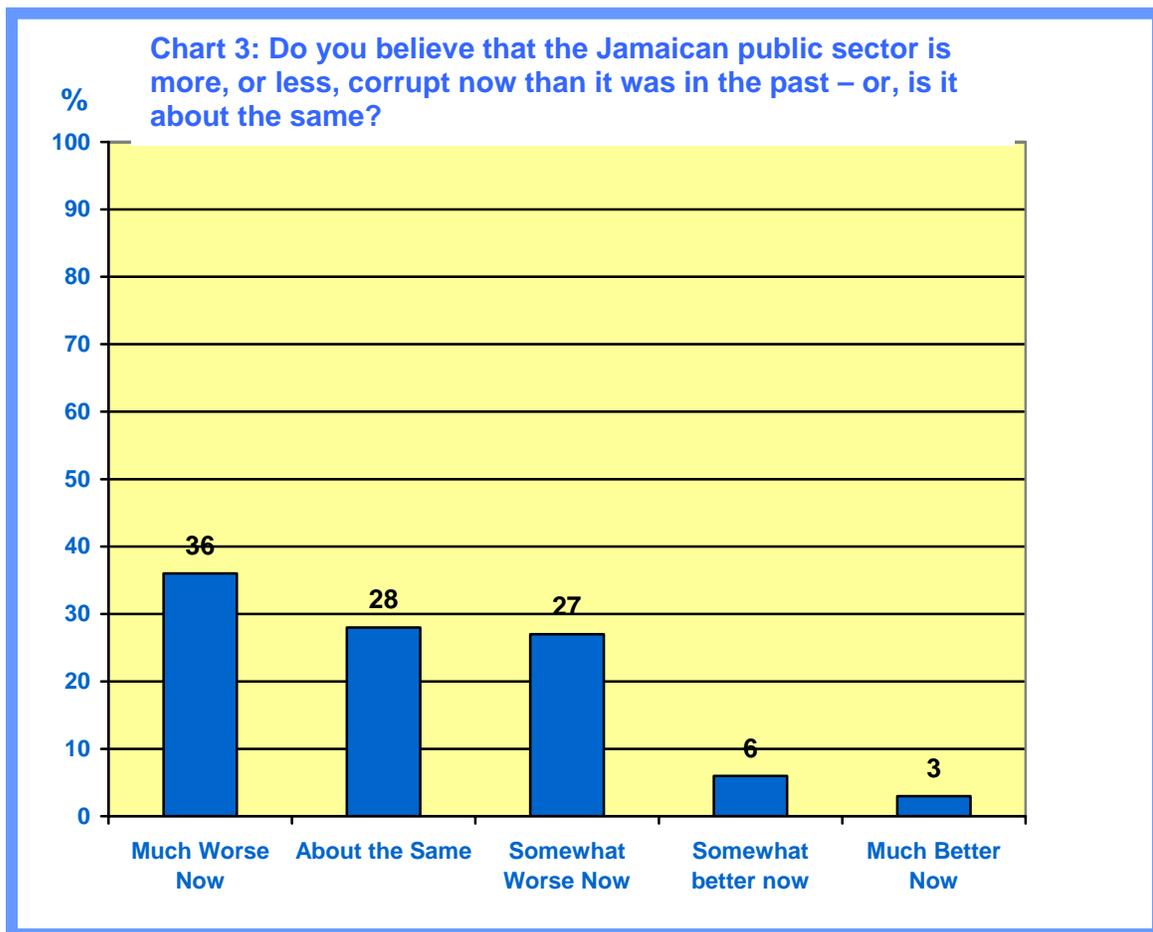
More specifically, it was also discovered that 81% of the persons interviewed believed that the Police Force was either corrupt, very corrupt or somewhat corrupt; 62% believed that the Parish Council Offices were either corrupt, very corrupt or somewhat corrupt and 61% believed that the Customs Department were either corrupt, very corrupt or somewhat corrupt.

Respondents were also asked the question, ‘How easily can a public official be corrupted in Jamaica’? Most respondents (43%) reported that it was ‘easy’ to corrupt a public official in Jamaica and 42% stated that it was ‘very easily’ compared to 15% who believed that it was ‘not easy’. Generally speaking then, more respondents (85%) believed that it was relatively easy to corrupt a public official in Jamaica. This is presented in Chart 2,



We had also attempted to get a sense of the prevalence of corruption which the individual perceives to exist in the public sector today when compared to the past. The ‘past’ was left open – qualitative. This allowed for some flexibility by not tying individuals to a particular time or space. What we were really interested in knowing was whether they believed that corruption was increasing or declining. The specific question that was asked in this regard was: “Do you believe that the Jamaican public sector is more, or less, corrupt now than it was in the past – or, is it about the same?”

When the respondents were asked this question, only 95% gave a response to this question. Of this 95%, marginally more of the respondents (36%) reported that corruption was 'much worse now', and 28% indicated 'about the same', while 27% indicated 'somewhat worse now' compared to a scanty 6% who stated 'somewhat better now' and 3% who believed that it was 'much better now'. The responses are depicted below in Chart 3.



A few factors may account for this seeming disparity. Namely, corruption and corrupt incidents may be more visible now than ever before in the nation's history. This may be due to the increased rate of reporting, the availability of more information, as well as the increase in the number of avenues for spreading such information (the Internet, for example).

The suggestion here is that the public may be more aware of the existence of corruption, given its currency in the media as well as the introduction of more legislation and regulatory institutions specific to the topic (e.g. National Contracts Committee (NCC)¹, the Corruption Prevention Act and its accompanying Commission for the Prevention of Corruption formed in 2003).

These points substantiate that made by Collins in his review of corruption in the Irish Republic (1999: 81). His proposition is that the appearance of an increase in corruption in countries such as Ireland may be more about heightened exposure and awareness than about any real increase. This seems to be borne out in the Jamaican case where the relative opening up and increasing knowledge of government processes, facilitated by public sector reform programmes over the past decade or two, have served to raise citizen awareness of government and governance.

The liberalization of the Jamaican communications sector since the late 1990s has also seen citizens having more scope for participating in government processes and accessing (comparative) information on the performance of agencies and more awareness of 'acceptable' standards and behaviour. Additionally, the proliferation of interest/human rights groups and talk shows has also provided a medium for citizen participation by making 'voice'¹ mechanisms more available and accessible.

Information flux on the government and its procedures are therefore more visible and fluent. With this opening has come more transparency, making bureaucratic and political blunders more obvious, and doing so much more quickly. This heightened transparency has also been a feature of some public sector agencies, including Executive Agencies, which are now more open about their activities (including achievements and, increasingly, failures). Additionally, legislative reform has seen the introduction of a Freedom of Information Act and Anti-Corruption legislation which also received wide-spread coverage in the media.

There are, therefore, more avenues for citizens to access information and to communicate on matters relating to corruption, leading to the perception of an increase. The suggestion here is that the public may be more aware of the existence of corruption given its currency in the media as well as the introduction of more legislation and regulatory institutions specific to the topic (e.g. National Contracts Committee (NCC)¹, the Corruption Prevention Act and its accompanying Commission for the Prevention of Corruption formed in 2003).

The liberalization of the Jamaican communications sector since the late 1990s has also seen citizens having more scope for participating in government processes and accessing (comparative) information on the performance of agencies and more awareness of 'acceptable' standards and behaviour. Additionally, the proliferation of interest/human rights groups and talk shows has also provided a medium for citizen participation by making 'voice'¹ mechanisms more available and accessible. Information flux on the government and its procedures are therefore more visible and fluent. With this opening has come more transparency, making bureaucratic and political blunders more obvious, and doing so much quicker.

What is interesting as well is that this perception of an increase in corruption in the public sector comes in the wake of an international report from the UN which suggests that there has been a reduction in corruption locally. It is possible to argue that this has been a result of improvements made in heightening transparency within the island. But the fact that this survey took place at a time of heightened public sensitivity and when disclosures were being made about acts of corruption in the present administration may be one factor explaining the view that corruption has in fact increased.

It is possible to argue that the actual incidents or number of times a corrupt act occurs may not be as essential as the extent or depth of those corrupt acts that actually become public. This would explain the difference between actual knowledge and perception, especially where the recent actual incidents recalled were held to be more extensive and far-reaching than those in the past.

Again, a rejoinder could be that the more recent events may be more familiar and hence appear to be more important, only to lose their prominence as time passes.

“Where this perception is as high as it seems to be in Jamaica, then, this can have a devastating effect on citizen trust and willingness to participate constructively in society. This is arguably already demonstrated in an unwillingness of some individuals to engage in democratic processes such as voting”

The suggestion here is not that this increased intervention, coverage and transparency is a bad thing because it leads to a heightened perception of corruption. Rather, heightened awareness and sensitivity demonstrated by increased coverage is positive, in that it has helped to focus attention on an area of Jamaican society which is largely in need of attention. It is, however, the extent to which it is perceived to exist which is argued to be important. Where this perception is as high as it seems to be in Jamaica, then, this can have a devastating effect on citizen trust and willingness to participate constructively in society.

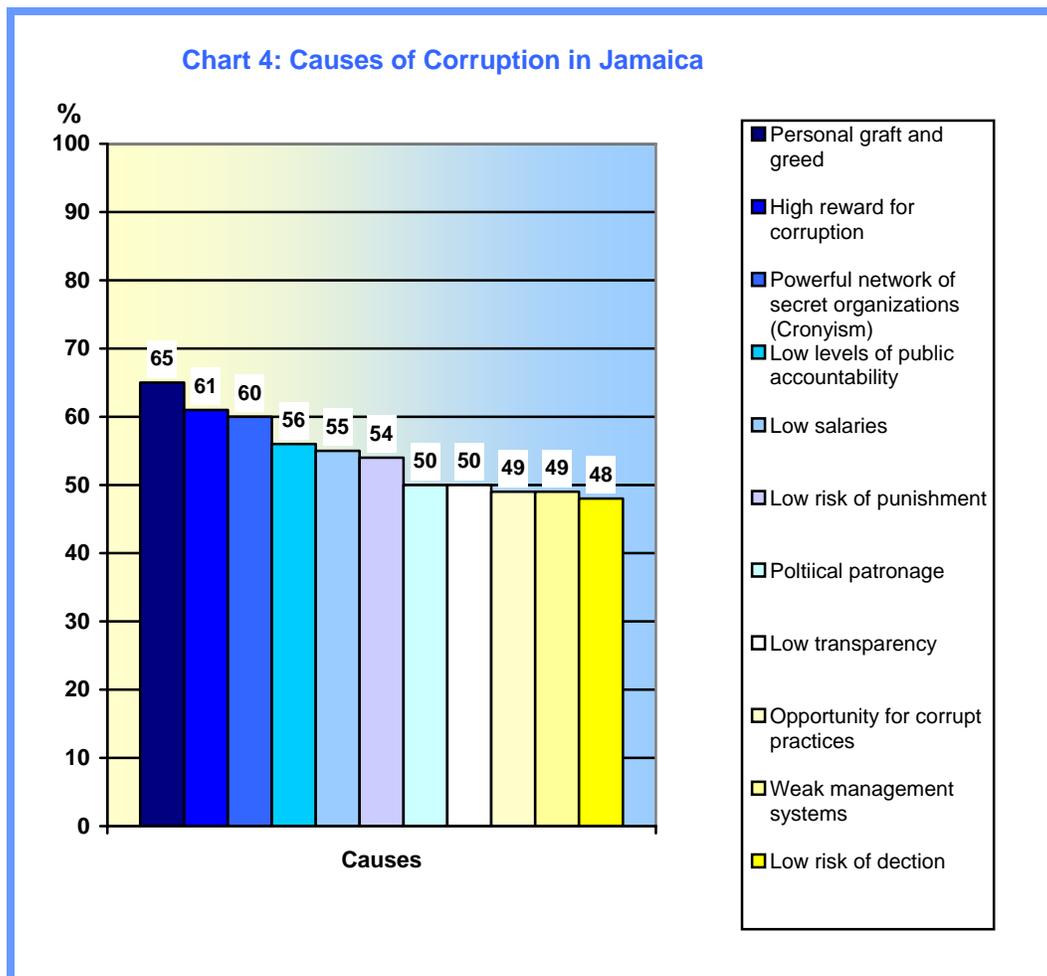
This is arguably already demonstrated in an unwillingness of some individuals to engage in democratic processes such as voting or even paying for public services like utilities. Thus the low voter turn-out, incidents of free-riding, and difficulty in achieving collective action beyond sporadic mass movements are held to be the result.

Causes of Corruption in Jamaica

Respondents were asked “What do you think are the causes of corruption”. The question was specific to corruption in the Jamaican public sector. They were given a list of possible answers. Below are the options that were provided. They are listed in the order of relevance to the respondents.

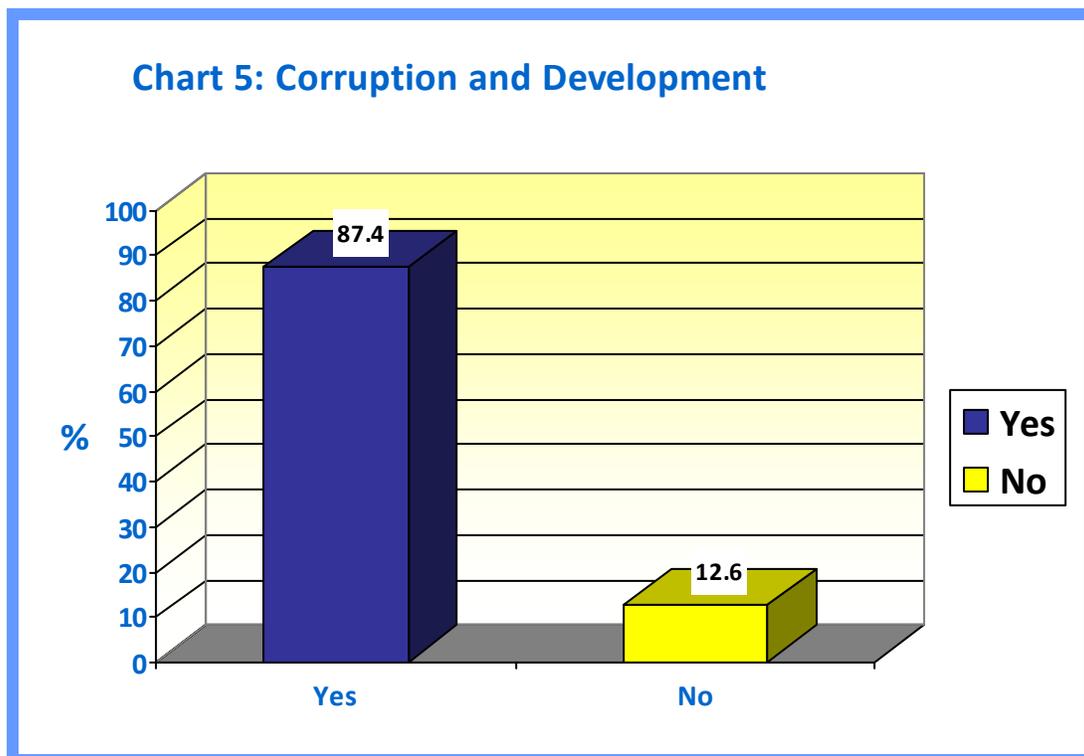
1. Personal graft and greed.
2. High reward of corruption.
3. Powerful networks of ‘secret’ organizations (Cronyism).
4. Low levels of public accountability.
5. Low salaries.
6. Low risk of punishment.
7. Political patronage.
8. Low levels of transparency.
9. Opportunities for corrupt practices.
10. Weak management systems
11. Low risk of detection.

The findings are outlined below in Chart 4.



The Impact of Corruption on Development

Earlier in the text we spoke of the well-established discourse that corruption can undermine the development of nation states, particularly non-industrialized countries. In this research we wanted to find out whether or not the Jamaican people were aware of this particular consequence of corruption. Thus we asked the question, “Do you believe that corruption has hindered Jamaica’s development?” Collectively, 87% of the respondents reported that corruption has hindered Jamaica’s development while 11% of the respondents stated ‘no’, the remaining 2% did not answer the question. This is outlined below in Chart 5.

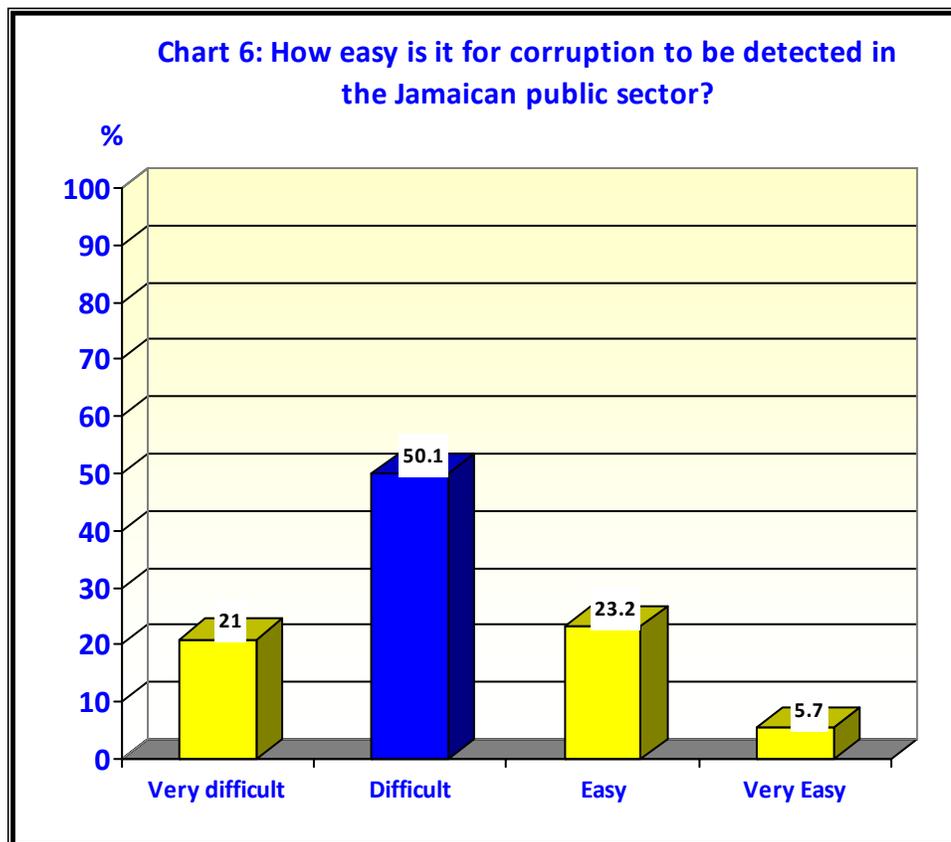


The Effectiveness of Corruption Detection Mechanisms

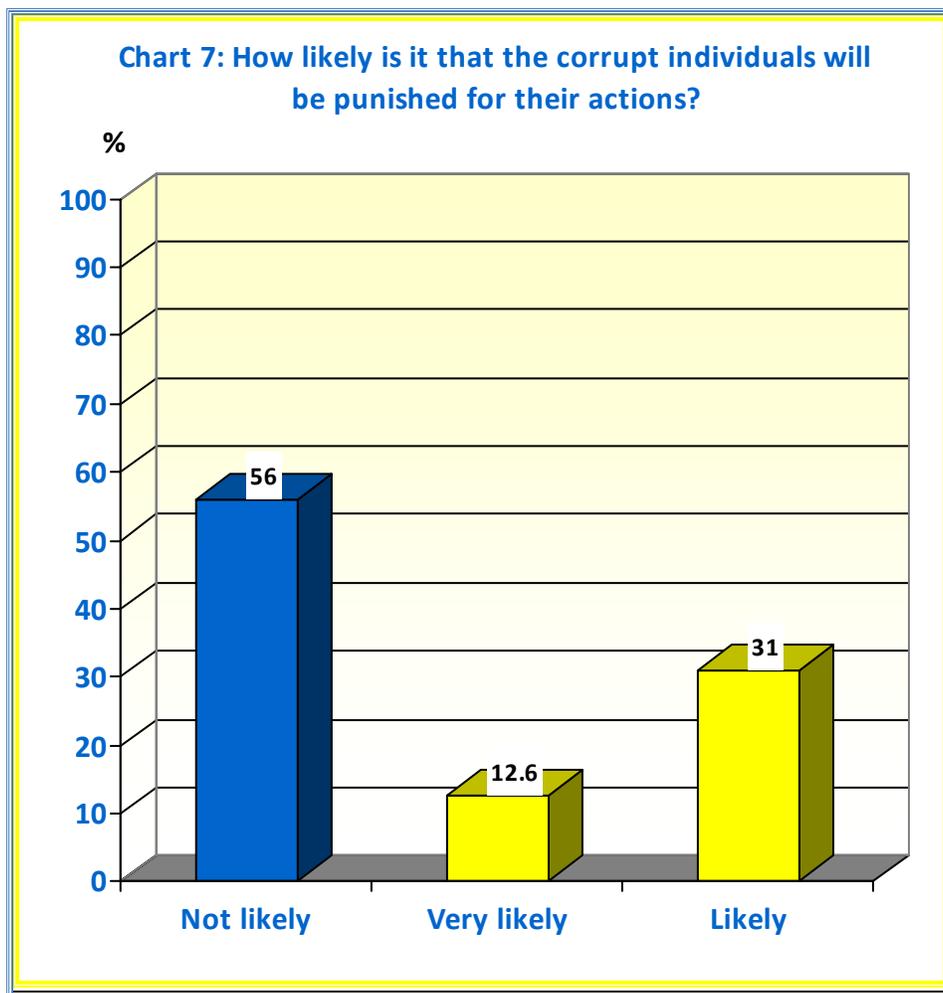
This research also sought to ascertain how Jamaicans felt about corruption detection, the likelihood of corrupt individuals being punished for their actions as well as factors which prevent corrupt individuals from being punished. Two questions were developed to capture these views:

1. How easy is it for corruption to be detected in the Jamaican public sector?
2. How likely is it that the corrupt individuals will be punished for their actions?

With regard to the question, '**How easy is it for corruption to be detected in the Jamaican public sector?**', it was found that 71% believed that it was 'difficult to detect', of which 21% said that it would be 'very difficult', 50% said that it would be difficult and 23% said it would be easy. This is as compared to 6% who believe that it is 'very easily detected'. This is outlined below in Chart 7.



With regard to the question, ‘**How likely is it that the corrupt individuals will be punished for their actions?**’ it was found that 56% believed that it was ‘not likely’, whereas 13% said very likely and 31% said likely. Chart 8 outlines these findings.

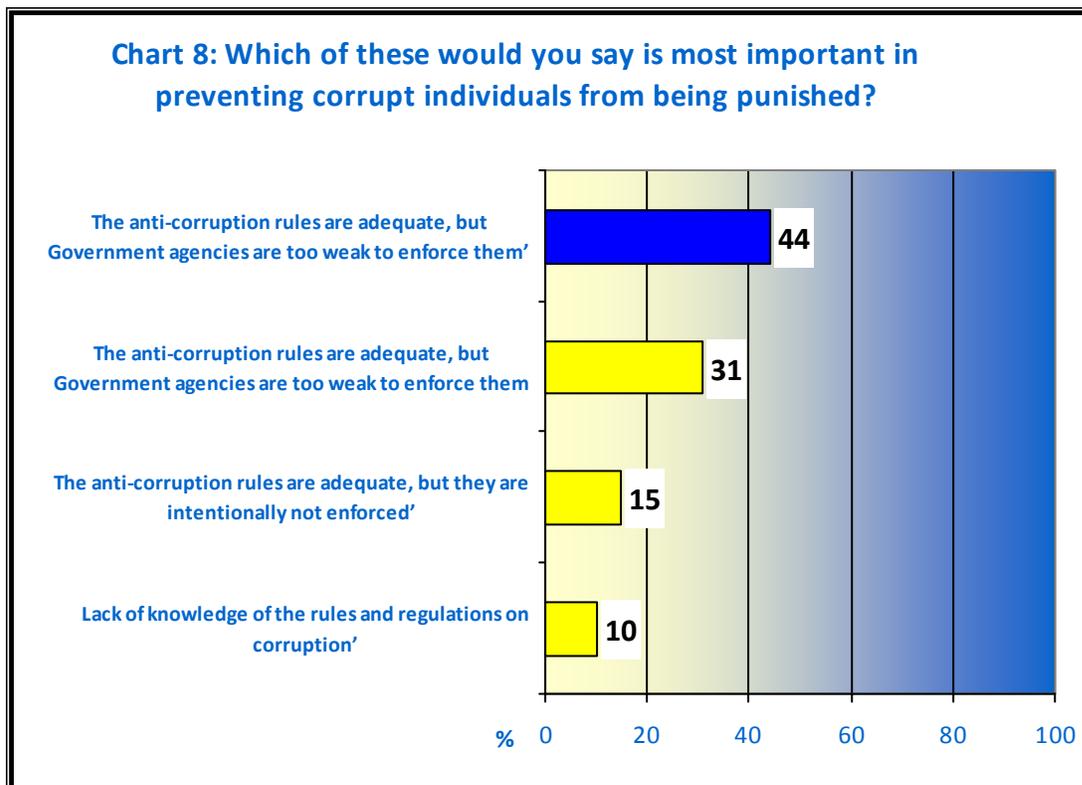


Factors Preventing Corrupt Individuals from Being Punished

We were also interested in finding out what possible mechanisms prevent corrupt individuals from being punished. The four main elements present in the literature reviewed were:

- That 'anti-corruption rules are adequate, but Government agencies are too weak to enforce them'
- That 'anti-corruption rules are adequate, but they are intentionally not enforced'
- That anti-corruption rules and regulations are inadequate
- That there is a general lack of knowledge of the rules and regulations on corruption.

These options were presented to the respondents. It was discovered that 44% of persons believed that, 'The anti-corruption rules are adequate, but Government agencies are too weak to enforce them'; 31% stated that, 'The anti-corruption rules are adequate, but they are intentionally not enforced'; 15% stated that 'Anti-corruption rules and regulations are inadequate' and 10% believed that there was a general 'Lack of knowledge of the rules and regulations on corruption'. See the findings in Chart 8 below



4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

Perception is the process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment. And people's behaviour is essentially influenced by their perception of what they believe reality is, not by reality itself. Despite the many anti-corruption measures which have been implemented over the years, generally speaking, the critical findings of this CaPRI Taking Responsibility Survey revealed that there exists a broad consensus among many Jamaicans that corruption is still prevalent and persistent in all government institutions. The study also revealed that corruption is a serious problem in the country and negatively impacts on development. People strongly believe that the anti-corruption rules are adequate, but Government agencies are too weak to enforce them and that these anti-corruption rules are adequate, but they are intentionally not enforced.

Such a perception helps in eroding the trust and confidence citizens have in the state, in diminishing the extent to which collective action and harmony can be fostered in society, and in raising transaction costs and unpredictability. These appear to be the main issues for Jamaica. This is not to suggest that the level of corruption which presently exists is acceptable or should be excused. Rather, an understanding of the dynamics of corruption and its impact on the nation, and hence the economy, offers a better understanding of what is indeed a very complex issue. Such an approach, which underscores the variety of levels and effects of corruption, offers much in the way of designing more effective and responsive strategies for combating this problem.

Since the publication of this concept paper, CaPRI has undertaken several qualitative consultations in the form of Focus Group Sessions and Policy Forums. The aim of this was , as stated earlier in this report, to address the problem of political corruption in Jamaica through an understanding of the configurations of corruption in Jamaica. The participants have included individuals from various governmental, civil society and business related spaces operating at different levels. Below are the more dominant recurring recommendations which have been suggested by these participants. It must be noted that all these recommendations are inherently dependent on the commitment of political leaders, the buy-in of the public and support from civil society and the international community.

- **Develop a more indigenous/tailor-made anti-corruption approach.** It is believed that most of the anti-corruption strategies that have been implemented in Jamaica have either been imposed upon us by foreign entities or have been models which have been adopted wholesale. They are not appropriate to the needs of the Jamaican environment. There is a need for a more tailor-made/indigenous approach which is responsive to Jamaica's history and culture. The aforementioned [WHERE - don't recall this] Cultural Probe will help us to identify these historical and cultural elements so that we can develop appropriate corruption mitigation strategies. Many of the recommendations here are based on such an approach.
- **Devise a 'One-at-a-time' Strategy to deal with the problem of political corruption in Jamaica.** From the Taking Responsibility Survey, we have identified what is perceived by many Jamaicans as the main causes of corruption in Jamaica. From the focus groups conducted, it is suggested that strategies be devised to deal with each one individually. The approach can either be a 'high-hanging fruit' one (addressing the most pressing problems first – personal graft and greed,

high reward for corruption or cronyism) or a ‘low-hanging fruit’ one (devising strategies to deal with the easy-to-fix corruption problem first – low risk of detection, weak management systems or the opportunities for corrupt practices). Whichever approach is used, it is suggested that a few big violators (those who give and receive) should be targeted and highlighted in the public media once evidence exists. Similarly, the Taking Responsibility Survey has identified the most corrupt agencies in Jamaica. It has been suggested that investigations/reforms should start with the most corrupt agency and move on to the next one. It is believed that quick winds would give momentum to further reforms.

- **Develop and promote Public Education Strategy to instill positive beliefs and values and thus change attitude and behaviour.** This can be done in many ways. Some of these include:
 - A comprehensive awareness and sensitization campaign regarding the importance of ethics, morals and standards. Such a project should be done in the schools, at all levels, to extend and consolidate what should be taught by the family unit. This should include activities that help in identifying corruption, demonizing corruption; explaining its implications and possible causes.
 - An identification of texts or conventions which promote deviant behaviour. Such texts should be represented as problematic to livelihood and national development and alternatives developed and promoted.
 - A Cultural Probe to identify other possible cultural devices which may encourage corruption and mitigation strategies should be developed. A few participants had raised some concerns about the discourse of “informa fi dead” as it discourages “Whistle-blowing”.

- **Provide existing anti-corruption structures (laws and institutions) with adequate resources.** As mentioned earlier, there are a number of anti-corruption laws and institutions in Jamaica which place constraints on state institutions and agents. Unarguably, these structures have played a significant part in reducing the opportunities for corruption in Jamaica. However, based on discussions with individuals who have either worked in these institutions or have been involved with their establishment, they essentially “lack teeth”. Specifically, many of these laws are not enforced and the institutions (some of which are the enforcement institutions) lack the resources needed to effectively engender change. It is believed that these institutions can play a more effective role in mitigating corruption in Jamaica if they are provided with sufficient resources and support. Some suggestions to address this problem have included:
 - the need for the Government of Jamaica to allocate more financial resources to these institutions;
 - the inclusion of civil society as well as international development agencies in this process (the provision of financial resources) ;
 - the inclusion of civil society in the operational configurations of these institutions;
 - revision of the bureaucratic structures surrounding investigations into acts of corruption by institutions or states and of the processing of reports so as to allow for a more transparent, accountable, effective and efficient environment.
 -
- **Expand the existing anti-corruption structures (laws and institutions to include “Whistle-blowing” protection laws, rules on political party financing, private sector competition as well as legal changes which enable the press to report more freely on instances of corruption.** The latter of these should focus on the degree to which powerful elites influence decisions and policy-making of the state – state

capture. State capture can hinder development. State capture can, of course, be controlled by regulatory reform, enhancing greater competition, economic policy liberalization and good corporate governance. Some party financing strategies which have been suggested by those interviewed include:

- ensure that all donations and other sources of party revenue are recorded and made public;
 - limit the amount of money that is spent on party politics;
 - ensure that public sector workers are politically neutral and not allowed to make contributions to political parties and;
 - establish a body to monitor these arrangements.
- **Develop/Enhance appropriate sanctions for corrupt acts.** This would involve the establishment of legislation and/or codes of conduct aimed at sanctioning individuals/groups/individuals involved in corrupt acts such as bribery or the leaking of sensitive government information. Or those who fail to be accountable for corrupt activities such as taking decisions that benefit their private interests at the expense of the broader public interest.
 - **Identify one credible visible individual to spearhead the government efforts to fight corruption in Jamaica.** There is a concern among those interviewed for this research that the anti-corruption landscape is chaotic. Successful anti-corruption efforts needs one person ‘in charge’ to coordinate the many agencies involved in fighting corruption. Strong leadership and management is necessary at this level. This individual must receive explicit and verifiable backing for his/her work from the highest arms of the administration. In doing this, and related to the previous two recommended suggestions above, it was further suggested by several persons that in order for this strategy to successfully work, the Government of Jamaica should also:
 - raise the profile of the of the anti-corruption effort to build awareness among the citizens to let them know what officials are accountable

- conduct regular surveys to information regarding possible acts of corruption in government institutions;
- strengthen institutional capacity through training, capacity building, changing systems of information;
- promote incentive related strategies such as :
 - ❖ depoliticizing the civil service;
 - ❖ providing competitive salaries;
 - ❖ implementing appropriate awards and sanctions related to performance; and
 - ❖ promote appointments and promotions based on the principles of meritocracy and not political connections (the latter of which many perceive to be the case).
- **Establish an anti-corruption pressure group to monitor public sector activities and report on corrupt institutions and/or officials.** This should be done by civil society – citizens groups, non-governmental organizations, trade unions, business associations, think-tanks, academia, religious organizations and the media. It is believed that these organizations can have an important role to play in controlling corruption. An anti-corruption pressure group spearheaded by civil society can help to:
 - achieve awareness about the problems associated with corruption;
 - investigate allegations of corruption;
 - formulate and promote action plans to fight corruption;
 - scrutinize/monitor government actions and decisions in an effort to reduce corruption;
 - expose levels of corruption by uncovering abuses;
 - disseminate information about corrupt acts;
 - pressure governments for change; and
 - promote as well as implement the above innovative/creative anti-corruption reforms.

- **Undertake an audit to ascertain precise estimates of economic losses due to corruption.** Some participants downplay the economic impact of corruption. This is believed to be problematic as it runs a risk of dividing the drive towards devising an effective solution to the problem of corruption in Jamaica. There is no precise evidence which indicates that corruption is or is not having a significant impact on development in Jamaica. Therefore, such an audit will help to close the gap between those who support such an assumption and those who do not.
- **Make more use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).** At the global level, ICTs have been successfully used in various public sector (service-related) transactions with the public as well as for monitoring/tracking the activities of public sector agents and institutions. At the local level, ICTs have been used in a similar way. Thus far, they have proven to be useful in limiting the opportunities for corruption among public sector agents and institutions. Good examples of this are the Registrar General Department with regard to use of ICTs for the distribution of birth, death and marriage certificates and the Registrar of Companies in terms of the registration of businesses in Jamaica.
- **Strengthen Institutional Restraints.** The institutional configuration of the state can play an important role in checking corruption. It is believed that the existing configuration which sees no clear separation of powers and checks and balance; but rather cross-cuts oversight responsibilities among state bodies and institutions (the Westminster model) is problematic and conducive to facilitating corruption. Effective constraints on state bodies and institutions can diminish opportunities for the abuse of power and penalize abuses if they occur. Thus there is a call for constitutional reforms which sees clear checks and balances, and particularly an independent and impartial judiciary. According to those interviewed, this would be along the same lines as existing calls for constitutional reforms over the years by political scholars such as Professor Trevor Munroe and by other commissions and committees which have put forward similar proposals over the years.

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