

*A recent report by Transparency International Rwanda (TI-Rwanda) has raised alarms about persistent corruption in the country.*

The 2024 Rwanda Bribery Index, based on a survey of 2,400 individuals, reveals that 3.6% of respondents reported being asked for bribes. The Private Sector Federation (PSF) emerged as the sector most affected, accounting for 13% of reported bribery cases. This high prevalence is primarily attributed to corruption within the construction industry, where workers are often required to surrender a portion of their wages to secure employment opportunities.

The *Rwanda Bribery Index 2024*, launched on December 11, 2024, shows some progress in reducing corruption in the private sector. Corruption dropped from 21.2% in 2022 to 15.6% in 2023, and now stands at 13%. Despite this improvement, bribery remains a significant issue, particularly in construction.

The Rwanda National Police reported a 9.4% corruption rate, mainly related to driving license exams. Bribery is also common in traffic schools, where students pay for easier access to licenses. However, TI-Rwanda notes a slight reduction in police corruption, thanks to the installation of surveillance cameras and the dismissal of officers caught accepting bribes.



Corruption is also prevalent in the energy and water sectors. The Rwanda Energy Group (REG) reported a 7.8% bribery rate, while the Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) had a 7.2% rate. Bribes are often linked to the distribution of water meters, where people must pay to receive service.

Ingabire Marie Immaculée, the Chairperson of TI-Rwanda explains that bribery benefits both parties. “The person seeking a job or service feels they gain something, and the one accepting the bribe does too,” she says. However, reporting bribery remains a challenge. Only 8% of those who encountered bribery were able to report it, as many fear retaliation. “People avoid speaking up because they believe it will only make things worse,” Ingabire adds.

The report also highlights bribery in the judiciary and healthcare sectors. In local government offices, 39.1% of respondents reported bribery related to issuing construction permits. Police corruption related to driving licenses stands at 36.6%, while judges have been found accepting bribes ranging from 500,000 to 600,000

RWF.



In 2024, Rwandans paid a total of 17,041,203 RWF in bribes, down from 22,814,500 RWF in 2023. The majority of bribes came from local government offices (56%), followed by the police (18%) and the judiciary (11%).

TI-Rwanda calls for stronger efforts to combat corruption, especially at the grassroots level. “While there is political will to fight corruption at the top, it diminishes lower down,” says Ingabire. Transparency International Rwanda urges both public and private sectors to be held accountable to ensure that bribery is eliminated.