

The Office of the Ombudsman, in collaboration with the Private Sector Federation (PSF) and Transparency International Rwanda, held a high-level dialogue Thursday with business leaders to discuss their role in fighting corruption and promoting integrity.

Chief Ombudsman Madeleine Nirere said corruption, while still present, has declined significantly in recent years. “During the COVID-19 pandemic, corruption rose to 29 percent. Today, it stands at 14 percent, reflecting the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures across sectors,” she said.

Nirere highlighted the private sector’s key contribution to Rwanda’s economy through taxes, job creation, and the provision of goods and services. “When business is conducted properly, it builds confidence among investors. Corruption, however, undermines trust, distorts markets, and can lead to financial losses for both businesses and the country,” she said.



The Chief Ombudsman emphasized that anti-corruption laws apply equally to public and private actors. Requirements to explain the source of wealth and sanctions against illicit enrichment ensure accountability. “If someone in the private sector requests or gives a bribe, both parties are punishable under the law,” Nirere said.

Deputy CEO of PSF, Callixte Kanamugire, acknowledged that private sector actors have historically appeared among the top actors implicated in bribery, with 8 percent reported to have requested bribes. He noted a positive trend: the numbers are decreasing thanks to strengthened measures and growing awareness.

Kanamugire explained that high figures in the private sector partly reflect frequent interactions with public institutions. “The more institutions you deal with, the more opportunities there are to encounter corrupt practices,” he said, citing processes like obtaining building permits and regulatory approvals.

Participants used the dialogue to examine corruption risks affecting business operations and to share best practices in corporate governance and compliance. They explored ways to strengthen collaboration between companies and oversight institutions, and discussed mechanisms to promote ethical standards, transparency, and safe whistleblowing.

Both the Ombudsman’s office and PSF stressed the importance of sustaining anti-

corruption efforts through continuous partnership and proactive strategies. The event is part of Rwanda's activities leading up to International Anti-Corruption Day on Dec. 9, under the theme **"Uniting with Youth Against Corruption: Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity."**

By fostering transparency and integrity in business, Rwanda aims to enhance investor confidence, protect public resources, and uphold the nation's reputation in international markets.