

Iraq Knowledge Network GOVERNANCE FACTSHEET

December 2011

Introduction

The Iraq Knowledge Network (IKN) survey is part of a Socio-Economic Monitoring System being developed by the Iraqi Ministry of Planning to advance evidence based planning and improve services provided to Iraqi citizens. The IKN survey data was collected in the first quarter of 2011 from 28,875 Iraqi households. This factsheet is a brief analysis of data on important aspects of social life, access to information and public integrity.

Participation in public life and access to information

Traditional social groups and networks play an important role in today's Iraq. Family, religious community, tribe, village and ethnic group are the social entities enjoying higher levels of confidence by citizens, while other social groups such as the 'Arab nation' and political parties are perceived as more distant. The strength of traditional networks is confirmed also by the degree of trust in social and political institutions. Religious and tribal leaders

are the figures enjoying the highest levels of trust, while the army, judiciary and police are the formal institutions most praised by the citizens of Iraq. At the other end of the scale, there are international organizations and multinational security forces, enjoying much lower levels of trust.

Access to information represents an important aspect of public life television is the most frequently used source of information by Iraqi citizens. Both private and state-owned television channels are accessed on a daily basis by a large majority of citizens, respectively by 67 per cent and 58 per cent, followed by other regional channels in Arabic (45%). Newspapers and radio broadcasts play a less important role in Iraq's information market, with respectively 11 percent and 2 percent of the population following these media on a daily basis.

Amidst political instability and persistent security threats, Iraqi society is starting to use new forms of social and political participation. These include participating to a demonstration or a political

rally, signing a petition, contributing money to a social or political activity, contacting a politician to express an opinion or participating in community-level activities. Though these activities are still embryonic, almost one fifth of the population (18.9%) have used at least one of them in the 12 months before the survey, indicating that citizens are aware of a variety of ways to contribute to public life.

The population is also aware of the importance of addressing some of the most important development challenges faced by Iraq, as expressed by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Iraqis identified the need to reduce the country's poverty as the most pressing need (75%). Other challenges indicated by citizens refer to the fight

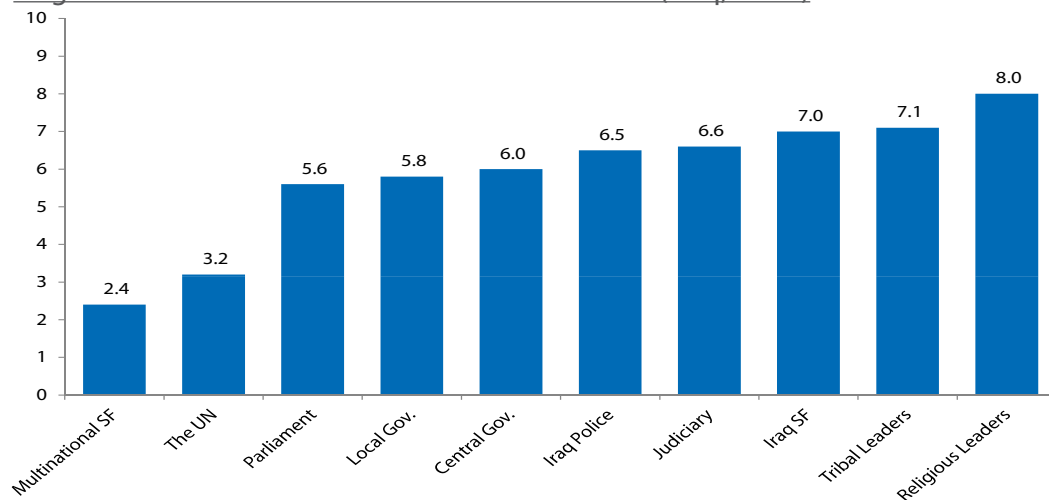
against infant mortality and the importance to ensure primary education for all children of Iraq.

Corruption and bribery

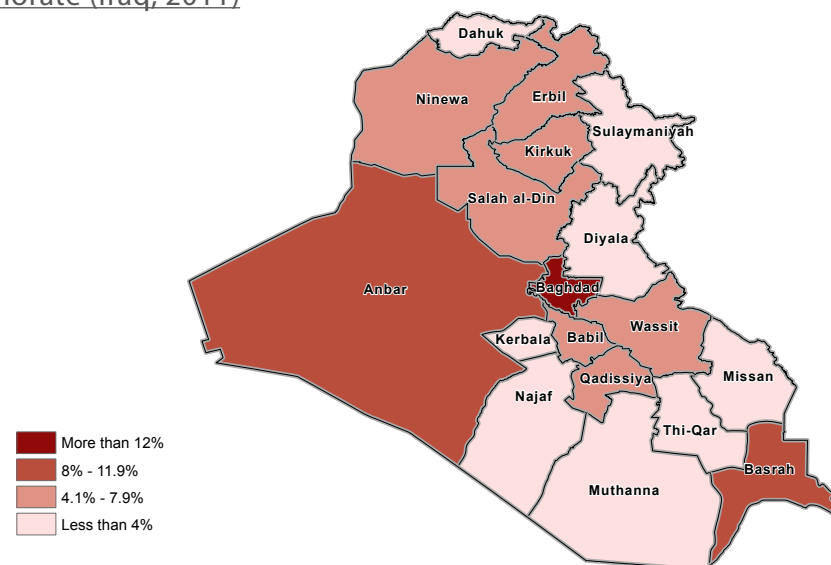
Corruption is a phenomenon difficult to quantify yet it remains an issue worldwide, including for Iraq. A specific type of corruption is represented by administrative bribery, which ordinary citizens are confronted with when dealing with public officials. In accordance with the United Nations Convention against Corruption, Iraqi legislation considers this practice as a criminal offence. Data collected focus on actual experience of administrative corruption as reported Iraqi citizens

Extent of Bribery: in this survey the focus is on bribes given to public officials by citizens in the

Degree of Confidence in selected social entities (Iraq, 2011)



Percent of population with direct or indirect experience of bribery, by governorate (Iraq, 2011)



Source: IKN 2011

Percent of population with direct or indirect experience of bribery is the number of citizens (age 18-64) who directly gave a public official a bribe or reported that another member of the household did on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percent of all population (yrs.18-64).

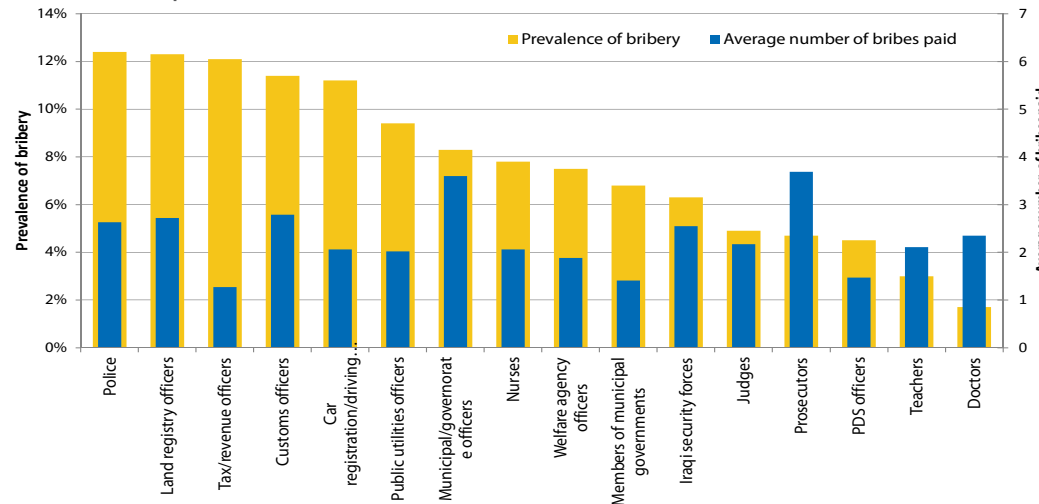
form of extra-payments or gifts. In 2011, 8 percent of all Iraqis had a direct or indirect experience of bribery, that is, paid a bribe to a civil servant themselves or reported that a member of their household did.

A more refined measure is the prevalence of bribery, which is calculated only on citizens who have contacts with civil servants and are thus exposed to the risk of bribery. The prevalence of bribery stands at 11.6 percent, while there are considerable differences between the various sectors of the public administration. Citizens are most likely to give bribes to officers from police, land registry, tax authority, customs and car registration when they interact with them. Slightly lower prevalence rates are observed for officers of public utilities, municipalities and for nurses. By contrast, doctors and teachers are the public officials for which citizens report low levels of bribe requests.

When evaluating the extent of bribery, it is important to consider the frequency of bribe paying, i.e. the number of times that bribe-payers have given an extra payment to public officials. While 45 percent of bribe-payers give bribes on only one occasion, more than half do so on multiple occasions. Thus, on average Iraqis bribe-payers had to give almost four bribes in a year and citizens who paid bribes to customs, land registry and police officers on average paid bribes to such officials once every four to five months during the 12 months prior to the survey.

Also geographically, there is considerable diversity in terms of experiences of bribes reported by citizens. If in Baghdad governorate the prevalence of bribery reaches 29.3 percent, in the Kurdistan region it is as low as 3.7 percent and in the rest of the country it stands at 10.2 percent. Moreover, bribery is more frequent in urban contexts than in rural areas (12.5% vs. 9.7%), indicating that bribery is a concern in cities and particularly in the capital. It is noteworthy that while men (13.3%) pay bribes

Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid, by selected public officials (Iraq, 2011)



Prevalence of bribery is the no. of citizens (18-64 yrs) who gave an official a bribe on at least once in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a % of citizens who had at least one contact with an official. The av. no. of bribes refers to av. no. of bribes given by bribe-payers

more often than women (9.9%), the difference is not remarkable. Data indicate that women deal with public officials as frequently as men and, accordingly, they become involved in bribery episodes to a similar extent.

Nature of bribery: In the large majority of cases bribes are requested by civil servants, either in an explicit manner (41.2%), or by letting citizens understand in an implicit way (23.4%) or even indirectly through a third person (14%). In less than 20 percent of cases citizens initiate the payment without a request from the civil servant. This indicates that in Iraq, the conditions are such that a civil servant can request a bribe and citizens understand that if they are to receive that service to a certain standard, they should and do pay.

These extra payments are often made to speed up a procedure (46%) or to receive a better service (27%), thus suggesting that bottlenecks in administrative processes foster an environment that promotes corruption. In almost 90 percent of

cases, bribes are paid in cash and sometimes they are accompanied by other goods such as valuables or food.

Fight against corruption: While more than 80 percent of the population believe that bribery is not an acceptable practice, only in very few cases (4.5%) do they report the payment to some public authority, such as the judiciary, the police or the supervisor of the official requesting the bribe. This means that more than 95 percent of bribery incidents go unreported. When asked if in the future they would report a case of bribery, almost one third of citizens state that they would not report it. If they were to report an incident of bribery, Iraqis are more likely to turn to the police, the Commission of Integrity and the supervisors of the official requesting the bribe rather than courts, inspectors generals, members of local authorities or local and religious leaders.

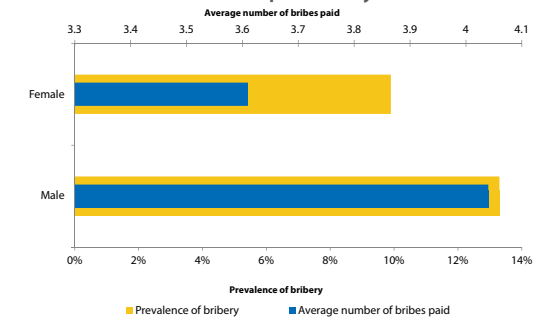
Perceptions on corruption: It is important to explore people's perception on corruption because

if it is anticipated that the payment of a bribe is required to get something done, it is more likely that the bribe will be either requested or offered.

Iraqis' perceptions about a selected number of institutions indicate that political parties and civil servants from local authorities are believed to be heavily affected by corruption, while media and the judiciary are perceived to be less affected.

When asked about the trends of corruption prevalence in the country, more than half of the population (54%) believes that the situation has deteriorated during the last two years before the survey. In the same vein, many citizens do not give a positive assessment of anti-corruption measures put in place by the government during the last two years. Forty eight percent of the population assesses such policies to have been ineffective, 28 percent think that they have been effective and the rest (almost one quarter) does not express a clear opinion. Negative opinions by Iraqi citizens are also expressed on international organizations and international NGOs: more than half of Iraqis (54%) perceives that both international organizations and international NGOs are corrupt.

Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid (by Gender)



Prevalence of bribery is the no. of citizens (18-64 yrs) who gave an official a bribe on at least once in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a % of citizens who had at least one contact with an official. The av. no. of bribes refers to av. no. of bribes given by bribe-payers

