

Vietnamese citizens against corruption

Data in this post is extracted from the Global Corruption Barometer 2013 carried out by Transparency International through the coordination of its national contact in Vietnam – Towards Transparency (TT). You can read full report here.

People's willingness to get involved

In 2013, 60% of Vietnamese respondents believe that ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption.

Rural respondents are the most positive, with 65% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that ordinary people can make a difference compared to only 47% of urban respondents.

Figure 1: Ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption: Vietnamese respondents (%)



Vietnamese urban citizens appear to be becoming more pessimistic over time. A comparison of findings from the urban population of the five cities surveyed in 2013 and 2010 show that consistently less respondents in 2013 agree or strongly agree that ordinary people can make a difference while consistently more respondents disagree or strongly disagree that ordinary people can make a difference.

Figure 2: Ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption: urban respondents (%), 2010 vs. 2013



The increasing pessimism over whether ordinary people can make a difference against corruption also appears to translate into

a limited willingness amongst respondents to personally become involved in the fight against corruption. While 60% of respondents are ready to sign a petition asking the government to do more against corruption, less than half of respondents are willing to participate in any other form of action against corruption.

The proportion of Vietnamese respondents willing to get involved was categorically lower for every single form of action when compared to the Southeast Asia regional average.

In each case, Vietnamese respondents are either the least or second least willing (after Indonesia) to get involved in an action against corruption.

Figure 3: Willingness to get involved in the fight against corruption: Vietnam and South East Asia Averages (%)



Reporting Corruption

Vietnamese citizens appear to be highly reluctant to report a case of corruption: Only 38% of respondents are willing to report a case of corruption.

When comparing the findings from 2010, urban respondents have become markedly more reluctant to report a case of corruption. In 2013, only 34% of respondents from the urban population of the five cities surveyed in both years are willing to report and 63% of respondents are not willing to report. In 2010, the case was the inverse: 65% of respondents were willing to report, while only 35% of respondents were not willing to report.

In Southeast Asia, Vietnamese respondents are the least willing out of all countries surveyed to report an incident of corruption.

On average, 63% of respondents from Southeast Asia are willing

to report – with respondents from Malaysia being the most willing (79%).

Figure 4: Willingness to report an incident of corruption: South East Asian Countries (%)



For those who are willing to report corruption, most respondents elect to report to a general government institution or hotline (40%) followed by directly to the institution involved (36%). 15% would report to the news media and only 6% would report to an independent non-profit organisation.

It shows that ordinary citizens continue to select official government mechanisms as the first channel to report.

Table 1: Where people would report an incident of corruption?



Reasons for not reporting corruption

A cross tabulation of the findings shows that: The stronger a respondent agrees that *ordinary people can make a difference* the more willing they are to report an incidence of corruption.

It appears that Vietnamese citizens first need to believe that ordinary citizens can make a difference in the fight against corruption, before they are willing to become personally involved in taking action against corruption.

More than half of respondents indicated that they didn't report because "*it wouldn't make any difference*". This appears to support the findings of the 2012 Government Inspectorate (GI) and World Bank (WB) survey, which found that the two most common reasons given by citizens for not reporting corruption was because (1) those responsible for

handling complaints were related to the corrupt person(s) and (2) they had no trust in those responsible to handle complaints [1].

The second most common reason given by Vietnamese respondents was because they are “afraid of the consequences”. In the GI and WB survey, while fear of retaliation was only the third highest reason for not reporting corruption, 62% of respondents still indicated that this was a factor which made them more hesitant in reporting corruption [2].

Refusing Corruption

While 13% of Vietnamese respondents have ever been asked to pay a bribe, they are less likely to refuse paying a bribe than their peers in other Southeast Asian countries.

Only 27% of Vietnamese respondents who had been asked for a bribe had ever refused to pay the bribe, strikingly fewer than any other country surveyed in the region. In contrast, 71% of Indonesian respondents had ever reported refusing to pay a bribe and between 41-52% of respondents from Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand have all refused to pay a bribe.

Figure 5: People refusing to pay a bribe: Southeast Asian Countries (%)



Out of those who reported refusing to pay a bribe, 60% of respondents noted that despite refusing to pay the bribe they were still able to obtain the service, but faced additional problems like longer waiting times. A smaller proportion of respondents (17%) were unable to obtain the service, whilst the same proportion faced no adverse consequences from their refusal to pay the bribe. Very few respondents faced any severe problems like threats or reprisals (6%).

Table 2: Consequences of refusing to pay a bribe



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[1] Government Inspectorate and World Bank, Corruption from the Perspective of Citizens, Firms and Public Officials, 2013, p.75.

[2] Government Inspectorate and World Bank, Corruption from the Perspective of Citizens, Firms and Public Officials, 2013, p.70.