



THE AFGHAN EXPERIENCE OF CORRUPTION: A CITIZEN JOURNEY MAPPING RESEARCH REPORT

February 2019



“

“As I left a middleman came up to me and asked me if I was new, and if I wanted to get a Tazkera or confirm my Tazkera. I answered that I wanted to get my Tazkera confirmed, and he assured me that in order to not lose time and avoid being dragged from one office to another I should pay him 400 AFN and get my Tazkera confirmed. I agreed to pay him tomorrow after I get my Tazkera back confirmed, because I had no time to go through the process and also because the middleman asked for less money than the government official.”

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A TAZKERA, KABUL

A citizen journey mapping research report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
INTRODUCTION	8
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS	8
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES & QUESTIONS	10
HYPOTHESES	12
METHODOLOGY	14
LITERATURE REVIEW & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS	15
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS	17
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS	17
QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS	19
KEY FINDINGS: CITIZENS’ EXPERIENCES & CHALLENGES ACCESSING SERVICES	21
AWARENESS & UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROCESS	21
EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE PROCESS	22
EXPERIENCE OF THE JOURNEY	23
<i>Overall Experience of the Journey</i>	23
<i>Treatment by Public Servants</i>	24
<i>Perception of Differences in Treatment Between Men and Women</i>	30
<i>Accompaniment</i>	32
<i>Expectations vs Reality</i>	33
KEY FINDINGS: CITIZENS’ UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCES OF CORRUPTION	34
HOW CITIZENS DEFINE CORRUPTION	34
CITIZENS’ EXPERIENCES OF CORRUPTION	35
<i>Hotspots for Corruption</i>	36
<i>How Corruption Manifests</i>	38
<i>Main Drivers of Paying a Bribe</i>	40
<i>Psychological Factors</i>	40
<i>Sociological Factors</i>	41
<i>Expectations Regarding Corruption</i>	42

<i>Attitudes About Reporting Corruption</i>	44
PERCEPTIONS & EMOTIONS RELATED TO CORRUPTION	45
<i>Opinions of Corrupt Public Servants and Petty Corruption</i>	48
<i>Frequency</i>	48
<i>Perceived Reasons Behind Public Servants' Bribery</i>	49
<i>Situations in Which Petty Corruption Deserves Condemnation</i>	49

CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS 50

CONCLUSIONS 51

KEY INSIGHTS	51
REVISITING THE HYPOTHESES	52
NEXT STEPS	54

GLOSSARY 55

ANNEX 1 56

ANNEX 2 62

A citizen journey mapping research report

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As an organisation committed to the long-term peace and prosperity of Afghanistan, it was a privilege for Magenta to be able to carry out this behavioural research on petty corruption, an issue so critical to the Afghan people. This study opens up new avenues for us to think about addressing corruption. It explores the ways a tailored and culturally-sensitive social behavioural change based approach can induce positive changes in citizens' participation in corruption from the bottom-up.

Magenta would like to express its appreciation and gratitude to the team responsible for the production of this report. This unique research was made possible with the financial resources and vision of UNDP Afghanistan and in partnership with Integrity Watch Afghanistan, an Afghan organisation that has been committed to fighting corruption in Afghanistan since 2005. Magenta extends its appreciation to the report's primary author Elizabeth Robinson, a social behavioural change specialist at Magenta, our local data collection team, NOMA, the researcher leading on the methodology design, Sophie Mestchersky, and Jaimie Vaughan who designed the report. Magenta would like to acknowledge the Afghan government authorities for their cooperation during data collection. Finally Magenta would also like to thank Sarah-Jean Cunningham and Mary Ivancic and all other reviewers who reviewed, edited and commented on initial drafts of the report.

Magenta urges policymakers and donors to utilise this research and encourages them to consider social and behavioural change approaches to addressing systemic corruption in Afghanistan.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS



ACCRA

Afghanistan Civil Registration Authority

AFN

Afghani (currency in Afghanistan)

GDP

Gross Domestic Product

GIRoA

Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

FGD

Focus Group Discussion

IWA

Integrity Watch Afghanistan

MOI

Ministry of the Interior

MOJ

Ministry of Justice

NGO

Non-Governmental Organization

PIP

Project Implementation Plan

SBC

Social and Behavioural Change

UN

United Nations

UNDP

United Nations Development Programme

UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main findings from the research largely confirmed the initial hypotheses: Afghan citizens engage in corruption because the benefits of doing so (in terms of more efficient service provision) outweigh the costs (in terms of financial costs for citizens and the consequences of social sanctions). In many cases, citizens are—for all intents and purposes—required to pay a bribe in order to complete the service process; public servants often refuse to provide the service unless they receive a bribe. Citizens' ignorance about the service procedure also increases their vulnerability to corruption. In such instances, the necessity of the service almost always overrides citizens' qualms about paying a bribe; the research identified very few instances of citizens refusing to pay a bribe (and sticking with that decision).

However, citizens also willingly take advantage of opportunities to use corruption to their advantage, bypassing the official procedure if it seems too burdensome. Afghans do have a strong understanding of what sort of behaviour constitutes corruption, and generally agree that even small bribes and minor instances of nepotism are considered corruption. Moreover, Afghans are aware that corruption is detrimental to their country, and openly acknowledge that public servants should be punished for engaging in corruption. Yet, few mechanisms for such punishment exist, for either service providers or citizens, in terms of practical consequences and, importantly, social sanctions. Corruption has largely become normalised in Afghanistan, which reduces the costs of corruption and, in turn, increases its prevalence.

The findings indicate a large degree of cognitive dissonance on the part of citizens. They are aware that corruption is harmful, counter to their religion, and damaging to their country, but nevertheless often pursue opportunities to pay bribes or use personal connections when they stand to benefit from such practices.²

While acknowledging that public servants should be condemned for corruption, citizens fail to apply the same logic to their own behaviour. This is also reflected in citizens' comments about how they were treated by public servants; citizens often maintained that public servants were respectful and professional even if they engaged in corruption. In this way, citizens implicitly recognize that even individuals who take part in nefarious practices can still be good people—a perspective that citizens also apply to themselves, in part to justify their own corrupt behaviour and in order to maintain the belief that they themselves are still fundamentally good people.

¹ "National Corruption Survey 2018." IWA, 2018.

² Whether Afghan citizens recognize this cognitive dissonance is a separate matter; such honest self-reflection is often difficult for anyone to engage in.

Afghanistan's **protracted instability** has given way to **high levels of corruption**, which in turn contribute to **insecurity** in a self-perpetuating cycle.¹

This widespread corruption has a severe effect on the **quality and timeliness of public service delivery** in the country, to the point where access to services is determined by the extent to which citizens engage in corruption.

To better understand citizens' experience accessing public services & how corruption manifests in these processes, Magenta conducted a **Citizen Journey Mapping of six government services** in the security and justice sectors in Kabul and Herat.

"The study took an in-depth look at citizens' emotions and reactions during each step of the process, examining if and when they experienced corruption and if so, what that experience was like. Additionally, Magenta examined the specific process citizens went through to access the services. To gather this information, a total of **24 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** were conducted in Kabul and Herat with both men & women."

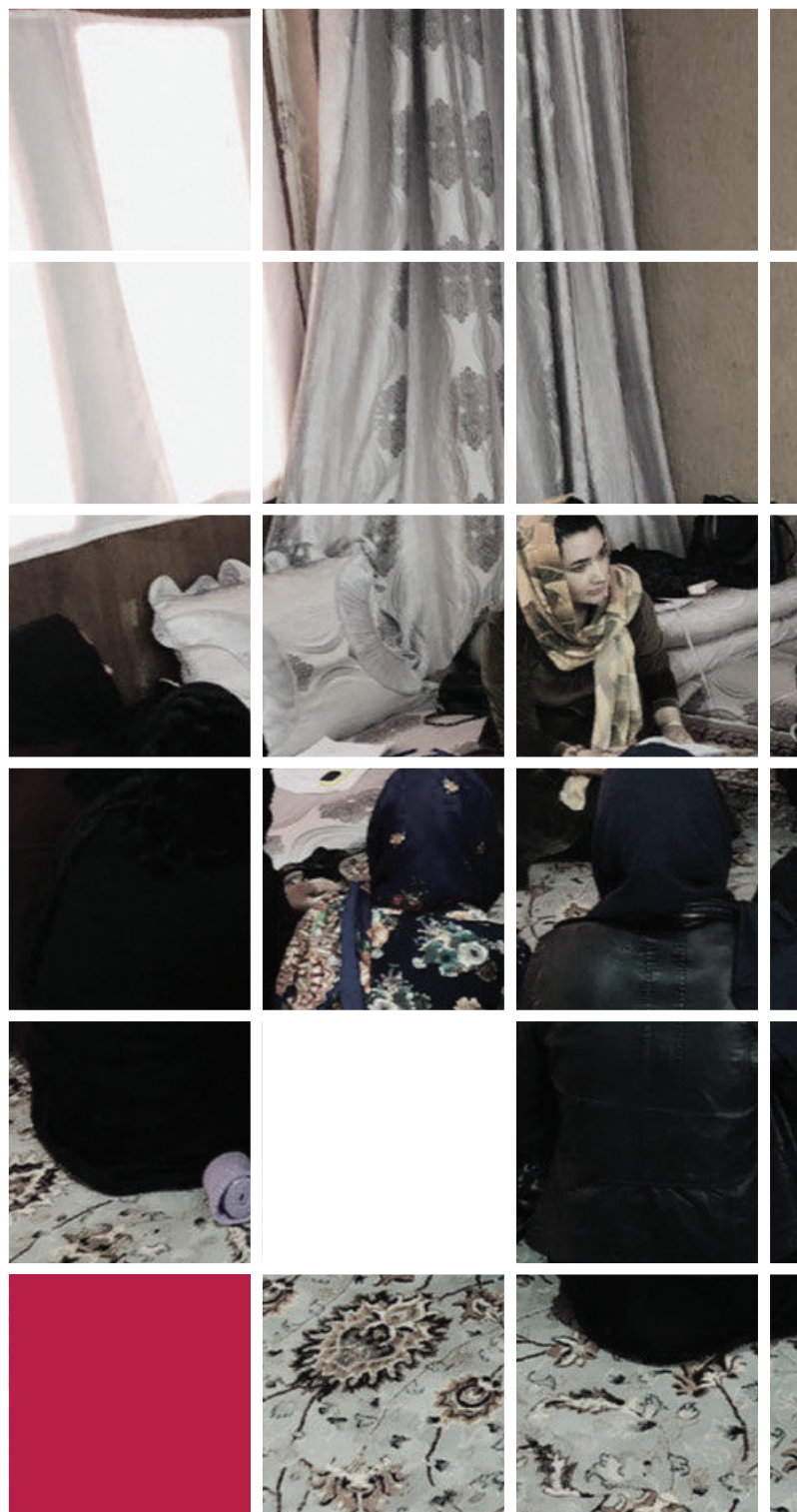
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INTRODUCTION

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Afghanistan is a country with a strong cultural sense of justice and is shaped by influences from Islam, such as good governance and the rule of law.³ Forty years of conflict, however, have left Afghans in survival mode, which is apparent in most aspects of everyday life in Afghanistan. Despite improvements in life expectancy, infant mortality and school enrolment rates and gross domestic product (GDP), poverty and unemployment rates have increased along with unprecedented levels of displacement due to conflict and natural disasters.⁴ At one time regarded as a post-conflict state, Afghanistan has recently seen civilian casualties at their highest levels since 2002, reinforcing the reality that it is a country undergoing conflict with little sign of relief.^{5,6}

Protracted instability and insecurity have given way to high levels of corruption in Afghanistan, which in turn contribute to instability and insecurity in a self-perpetuating cycle.⁷ Corruption in Afghanistan exists in both grand and petty forms, and 70.6% of Afghans report that corruption is a major problem in their daily life,⁸ with administrative corruption the most keenly felt. This includes limited and distorted access to essential public services, as well as to justice and the rule of law. According to the most recent National Corruption Survey conducted by Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) and the Corruption Barometer from Transparency International, the justice and security sectors are the top two most corrupt institutions in the country.



³"National Corruption Survey 2018." IWA, 2018.

⁴'Afghanistan Country Snapshot: Overview', The World Bank, October 2017.

⁵'Special report on the strategic review of the United Nations Mission in Afghanistan', General Assembly Security Council, August 2017.

⁶ At the time of this writing, in February 2019, peace talks are underway between the Taliban and international actors, though the result is still highly uncertain.

⁷"National Corruption Survey 2018." IWA, 2018.

⁸The Asia Foundation, "A Survey of the Afghan People," 2018.

This widespread corruption has a severe effect on the quality and timeliness of public service delivery in Afghanistan, to the point where access to state resources and services is now determined by citizens' ability and willingness to pay bribes. To better understand this challenge and how to address it, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has developed a Project Initiation Plan (PIP) for Anti-Corruption: "Development Plan for a Nation-Wide Anti-Corruption Project." The PIP is an instrument for UNDP to initiate programmatic engagement on anti-corruption, while developing a multi-year Anti-Corruption Project.

The PIP has the following three outputs:

1

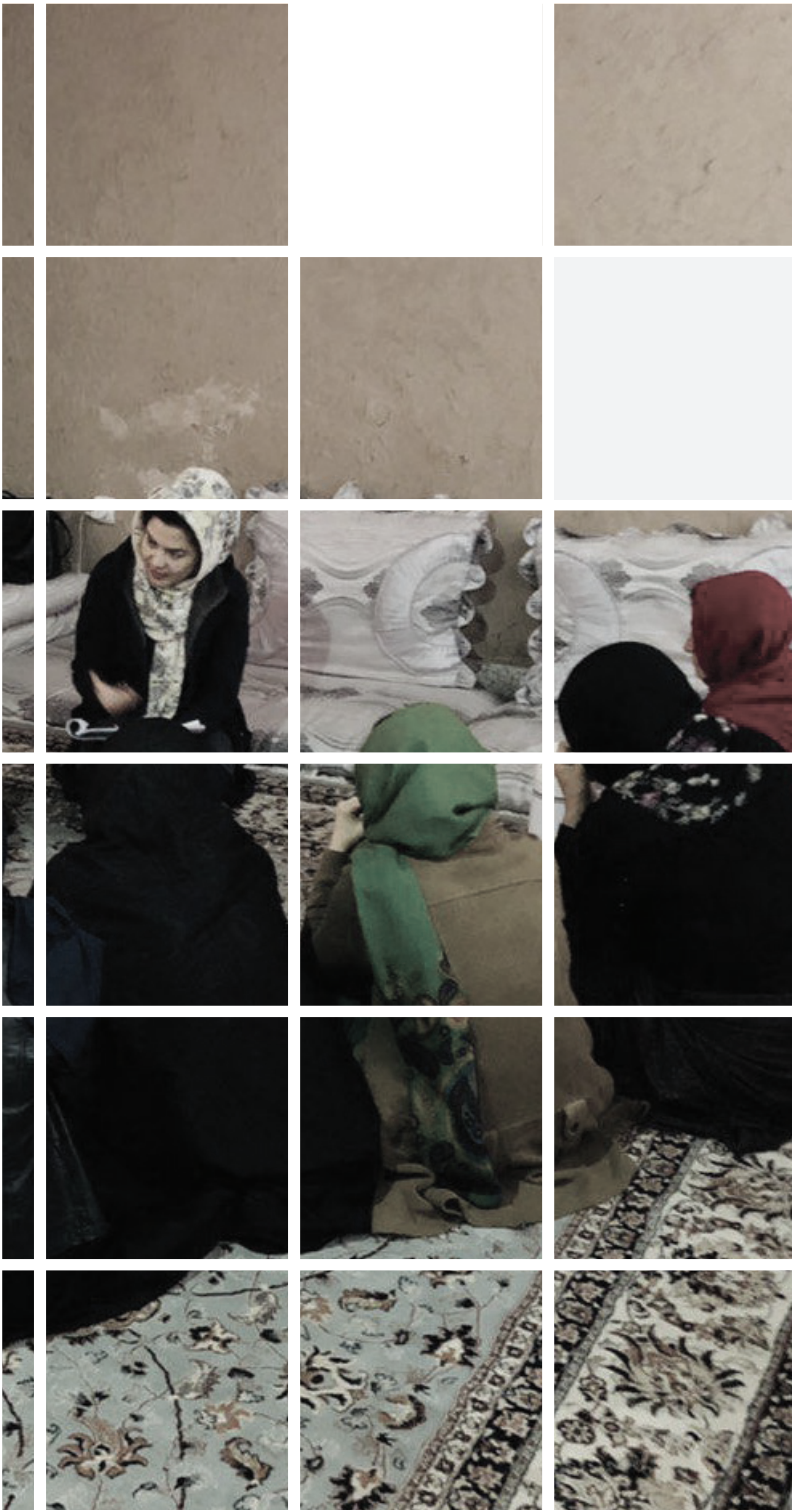
Evidence-base established to inform UNDP's anti-corruption programming in Afghanistan in the security and justice sectors.

2

Implementation strategies developed for prioritized anti-corruption measures with a focus on supporting the implementation of the Anti-Corruption Strategy in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

3

Advocacy, public-outreach and awareness-raising campaigns developed and implemented in target areas.



OBJECTIVE 1:**Better understand citizens' personal experience of corruption**

during service provision in the security and justice sectors.

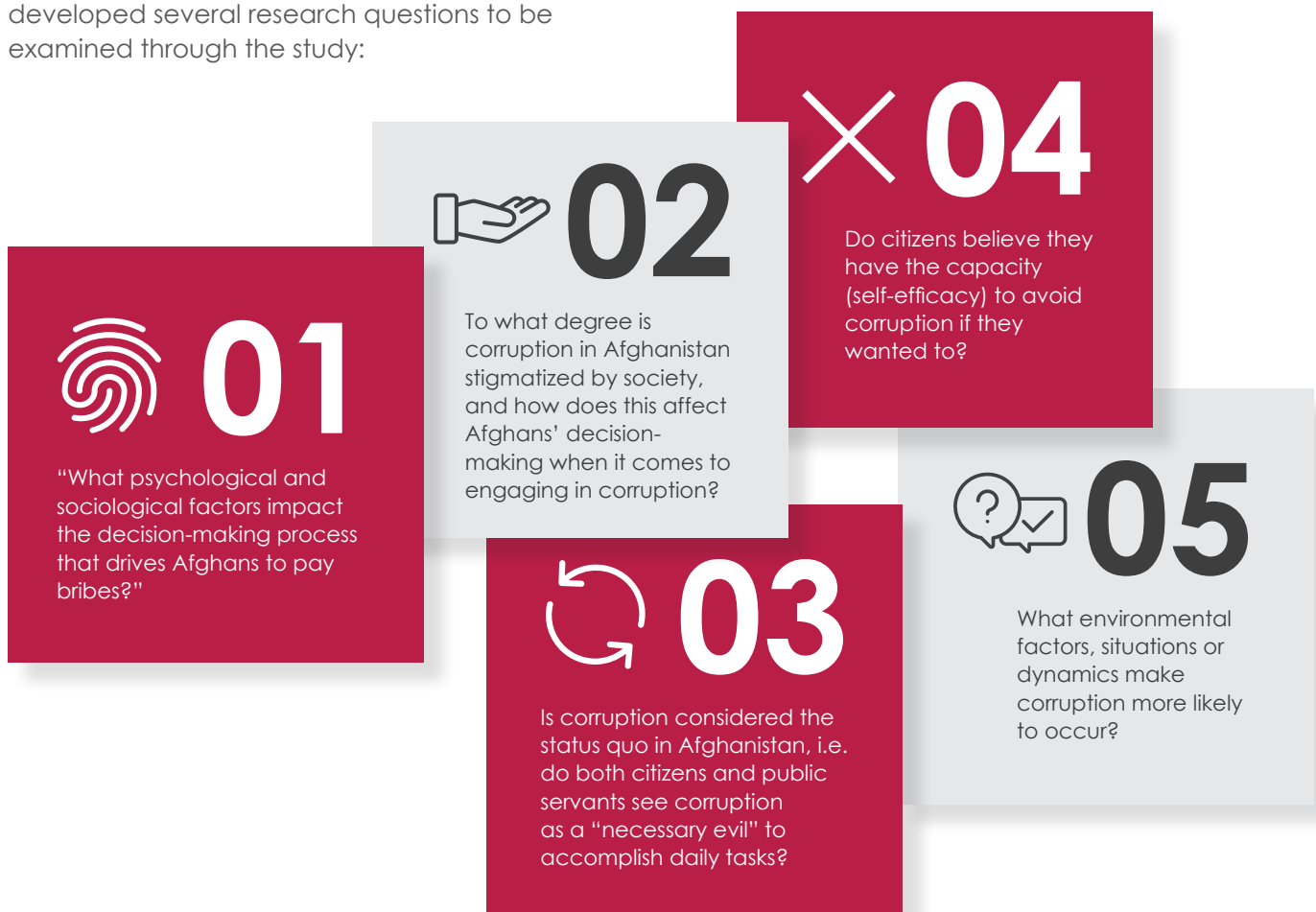
OBJECTIVE 2:**Identify touchpoints for corruption**

i.e. parts of the service provision process where citizens are most vulnerable to corruption.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES & QUESTIONS 

Working under the first output—and in collaboration with IWA and UNDP's partner Think Clarity—Magenta undertook a research study from October 2018 – February 2019 to better understand Afghan citizens' experiences of government service provision in the justice and security sectors, and specifically their experience with corruption. The specific objectives of the research study are summarized on the left.

Following a literature review and stakeholder consultations (the full methodology for the research is detailed in the next section), Magenta developed several research questions to be examined through the study:



HYPOTHESES

To investigate these research questions in a structured manner, Magenta established five hypotheses to be tested during the research process:

1. Afghan citizens engage in corruption because the benefits of doing so (in terms of more efficient service provision for citizens), outweigh the costs (in terms of financial cost for citizens, and the consequences of social sanctions).
2. Citizens have low self-efficacy to resist corruption, due to lack of information about their rights and “correct” service provision and the perception that complaint mechanisms are non-functional or could lead to retribution.
3. Small bribes under a certain threshold and certain types of specific behaviours (such as mild forms of nepotism) are not considered corruption by Afghans.
4. Afghans are aware of what corruption is and recognize that it is a problem, but the fact that they engage in corruption nevertheless indicates that there are psychological and sociological factors at play.
5. Most citizens are not aware of the correct service process for most government services in the security and justice sectors.

In sum, we hypothesized that **Afghans tolerate corruption because they benefit from it, because they don't have the self-efficacy (in terms of information and mindset) needed to resist corruption even if they wanted to and because there are no social sanctions currently in place to stigmatize corruption.**

In order to test these hypotheses and answer the research questions, Magenta conducted a **Citizen Journey Mapping study that examined citizens' experiences while accessing government services in the security and justice sectors in Kabul and Herat.**

The study took an in-depth look into citizens' emotions and reactions during each step of the process; if and when they experienced corruption, and if so, what that experience was like; and the process they went through to access six specific services. The Citizen Journey Mapping consisted of four phases:

1

Literature review and stakeholder consultations to develop the research hypotheses and research questions, and to select the six services included in the Mapping;

2

Identification of the “official” service delivery process, provided and certified by a relevant government official;

3

Focus group discussions (FGDs) with citizens who had utilised one of the six services;

4

Qualitative analysis of the FGD transcripts to identify hot spots where citizens are most likely to experience corruption. The methodology of each phase is detailed in the next section.



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METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the Citizen Journey Mapping included four steps, the outputs of which are diagrammed in Figure 1:



Figure 1. Outputs from each phase of the research

LITERATURE REVIEW & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

To better understand corruption in the context of Afghanistan, Magenta consulted relevant literature from the United Nations (UN), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) including IWA, academic papers, social and behavioural change (SBC) models and case studies from other countries. Concurrently, Magenta consulted with key stakeholders and Afghan and international subject matter experts to identify the most important dynamics vis-à-vis corruption to be examined further in the research process.

Following this research and consultations, Magenta developed the hypotheses to be tested and research questions, as well as selected the six services to be included in the Citizen Journey Mapping. The services were selected based on the following criteria: (1) high relevance to Afghans; (2) high level of corruption; (3) common service for Afghans to access; (4) high potential to provide relevant research insights. The six selected services are as follows:

1

Obtaining/Confirming a Tazkera (Ministry of Interior [MOI]):

The process of obtaining a *Tazkera* (national ID card) is one of the most commonly used service pathways, with 1.2 million Afghans a year accessing the service. It is also reportedly a highly corrupt service.⁹ A *Tazkera* is necessary for Afghans to access a number of other services, making this procedure critical for citizens' daily lives. For the purposes of this research this service also includes the process of confirming the *Tazkera*, which the government has recently required of every Afghan in order to address the prevalence of fraudulent *Tazkeras*.¹⁰ This service pathway only includes the paper *Tazkera*, and not the e-*Tazkera*. Throughout this report, this service will be referred to as "Obtaining a *Tazkera*."

2

Obtaining a Driver's License (Mol):

This service pathway is also very commonly used, with 250,000 – 300,000 Afghans visiting the Mol to obtain a driver's license every year. This service is also plagued by high levels of corruption: reportedly only 40% of driver's licenses are obtained legitimately.¹¹ The process of renewing a driver's license is also included in this pathway; Afghans must renew their license every three years, which creates a large administrative burden on both citizens and public servants, potentially opening the door to corruption.

⁹ "Monthly Report: Advancing Effective Reforms for Civic Accountability." USAID and Democracy International, April 2016. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00MQR3.pdf

¹⁰ Discussion with NOMA staff, 17 November 2018.

¹¹ "Monthly Report: Advancing Effective Reforms for Civic Accountability." USAID and Democracy International.

3

Obtaining a Passport (Mol):

This service pathway has been recently reformed in order to reduce the level of corruption, and efforts have reportedly been successful.¹² In 2012-2013 the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) began to issue computerized passports to reduce fraud and corruption, as passports had previously been filled out manually.¹³ However, this service pathway was included nevertheless to use as a benchmark against which to compare the other pathways, which were expected to be more corrupt.

4

Obtaining a Marriage Certificate (Courts):

IWA has noted that processing marriage documentation is one of the most common reasons why an Afghan citizen will interact with the court system, and that the courts are a highly corrupt institution in Afghanistan.¹⁴ According to IWA's 2018 National Corruption Survey, the courts and judges are considered to be the most corrupt institutions by a plurality of respondents (14%).¹⁵

5

Obtaining a Land Deed (Courts):

Processing documentation related to land ownership or beneficial ownership (proxy ownership) is another common procedure accessed by citizens.¹⁶ Land disputes can also be a main source of tension within Afghan communities, given the high proportion of unregistered plots, potentially providing opportunities for corruption. As noted above, the courts are also seen as a particularly corrupt institution in Afghanistan.

6

Filing a Complaint and Receiving a Judgement (Ministry of Justice [MoJ]):

This final service procedure encompasses the entire process from filing a complaint/offense with the police, to receiving a judgement from the courts on the matter. This service pathway was selected due to its comprehensive nature, and the involvement of several different justice sector actors. Throughout this report this service will be referred to as "Filing a Complaint."

It is important to note that these service pathways functioned as tools to gather data about citizens' experiences with corruption; the goal was not to conduct a mapping of the precise business procedure, but rather use the services as windows into the nature of corruption in Afghanistan.

¹² Discussion with IWA, 19 November 2018.

¹³ "Access to Tazkera and Other Civil Documentation in Afghanistan." NRC and Samuel Hall. https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/af_civil-documentation-study_081116.pdf

¹⁴ Discussion with IWA, 19 November 2018.

¹⁵ "National Corruption Survey 2018." IWA, 2018. <https://iwaweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/National-Corruption-Survey-2018.pdf>

¹⁶ Discussion with IWA, 19 November 2018.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

In order to determine the official service delivery procedure for the six selected services, Magenta interviewed officials in the appropriate ministry or department, in both Herat and Kabul, and asked them to describe the process by which a citizen would access the service. This included:

- which offices the citizens should visit,
- what information and paperwork the citizens should provide,
- what information should be provided by the office in order to advance the process, and
- the duration and (official) cost of each step. This information was compiled into a single document, which, when possible, was signed by a senior official;¹⁷ an example can be found in Annex 1.

Based on this information, maps of each service procedure were developed (i.e. a step by step outline of the processes citizens must go through to complete the service), which was incorporated into the tool for the FGDs and used to facilitate those discussions. As noted above, the aim of gathering this information was not to compare the official procedures described by the government officials to the actual procedures experienced by citizens, but rather to create a tool to extract insights about corruption.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

After establishing the official processes for the six selected services, Magenta conducted 24 FGDs with citizens in Herat and Kabul in order to understand their experiences throughout each of the service pathways. Two FGDs were conducted per service in each location (four FGDs total per service); for four of the services, two of the FGDs for that service were conducted with men and the other two conducted with women; for the services of Obtaining a Land Deed and Filing a Complaint, all four FGDs for each service were conducted with men, as women very rarely access these services (Figure 2). Each FGD lasted three to four hours and included six to eight respondents; the FGDs were held in a safe, appropriate and mutually accessible location. The FGDs were conducted by a trained data collection team, with a facilitator and note taker in each group. Male FGDs were conducted by a male team, and vice versa.

An example tool from the FGDs can be found in Annex 2 (when needed, the tools were adjusted to reflect the specific service process). The topics covered during the FGDs included:

- citizens' awareness and experience of the journey, in general and at each step in the process;
- instances of corruption and emotions felt, again in general and at each step in the process;
- actions taken in response to corruption; and
- the community's perception of people who refuse to pay a bribe.

¹⁷ Not all officials were willing to sign the document. Half (six) of the pathways were signed, and the other half unsigned.

Service Pathway	Province	Male/Female	# of FGDs
Obtaining a Tazkera	Herat	Male	1
		Female	1
	Kabul	Male	1
		Female	1
Obtaining a Driver's License	Herat	Male	1
		Female	1
	Kabul	Male	1
		Female	1
Obtaining a Passport	Herat	Male	1
		Female	1
	Kabul	Male	1
		Female	1
Obtaining a Marriage Certificate	Herat	Male	1
		Female	1
	Kabul	Male	1
		Female	1
Obtaining a Land Deed	Herat	Male	2
	Kabul	Male	2
Filing a Complaint	Herat	Male	2
	Kabul	Male	2
TOTAL:			24 FGDs

FGD respondents were selected using a snowballing technique, with the data collection team identifying potential respondents through friends and family; as such, the sample is not representative (though this was not the aim). Given the sensitive nature of corruption in Afghanistan, a personal connection between the data collection team and the respondents was often needed to encourage the latter to participate in the FGDs (this is further discussed in the section “Challenges and Limitations”).

Figure 2. FGD Breakdown

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Following the FGDs, the transcripts from the sessions were translated from Dari into English and analysed using Nvivo, a qualitative data analysis software. Nvivo allows the user to create a set of tags unique to each project, and then code the data according to the tags (Figure 3).

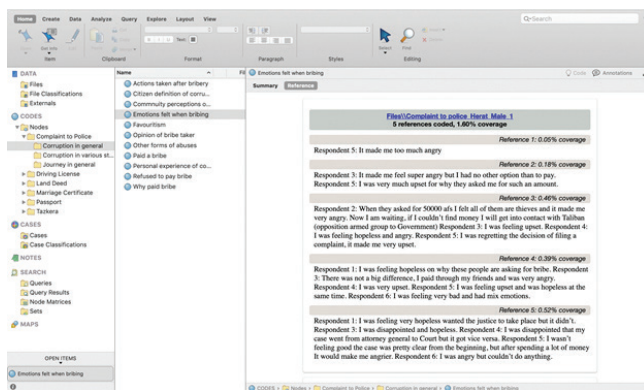


Figure 3. Nvivo screenshot

For this analysis, some of the tags included “Emotions felt while bribing,” and “Opinion of bribe taker.” These tags were applied to quotations from the FGD transcripts as relevant, to organize the information and facilitate analysis. Tags were also sorted by service pathway, such that quotations from transcripts related to obtaining a *Tazkera*, for example, were sorted into a folder specific to that service. This enabled analysis by service pathway, in addition to analysis by gender and location (each FGD encompassed respondents of only one gender and from only one location). While Nvivo provides a structure for tagging and sorting information, decisions about what to tag, and with which tags, are made by the user.





The aim of the qualitative analysis was to extract certain findings from the FGD transcripts, broadly including:"

01

Hot spots of corruption within the service delivery pathway;

02

Citizens' experience in the pathways overall;

03

Citizens experience with corruption in these pathways. This is shown in more detail in Figure 4.

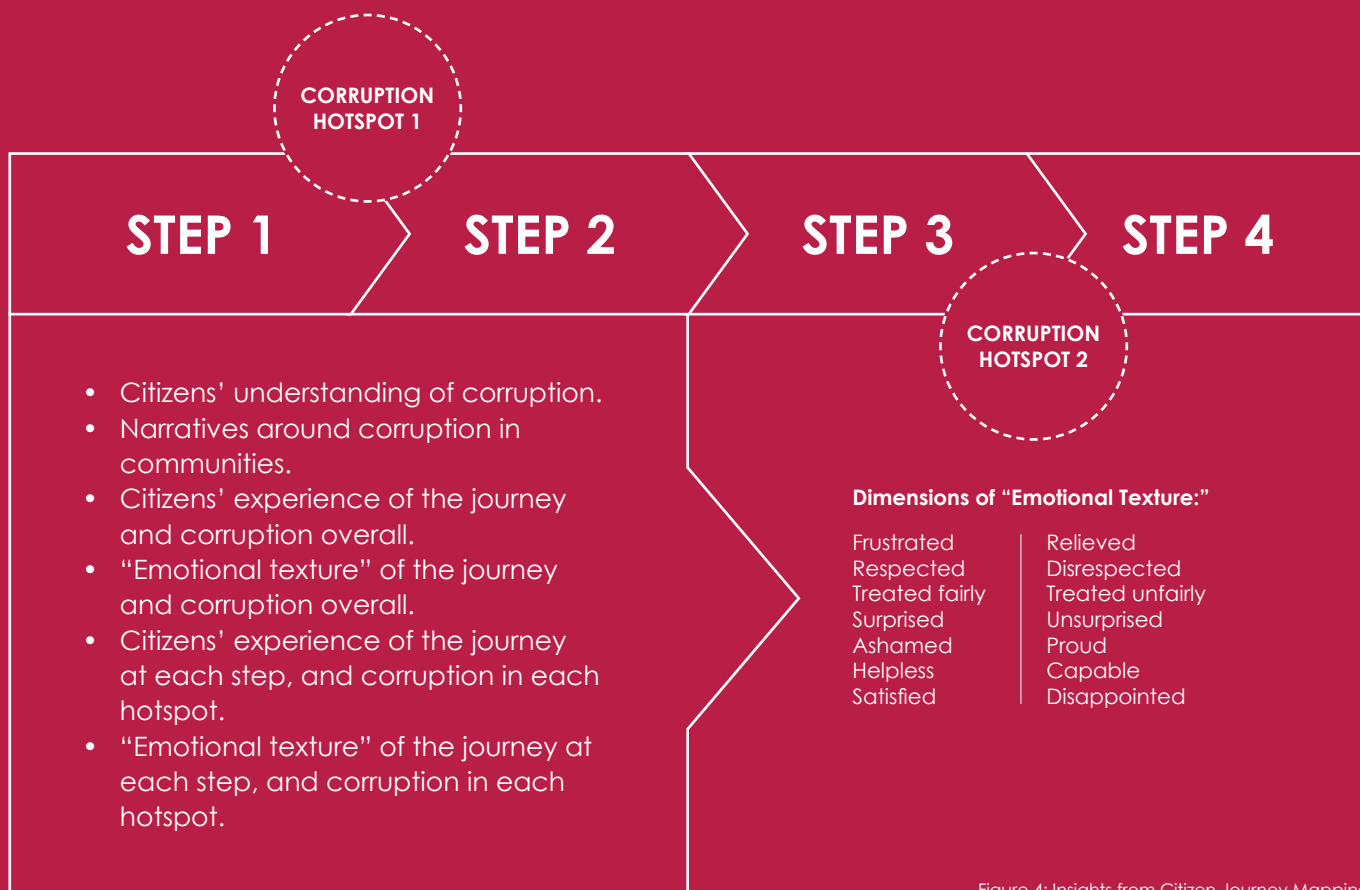


Figure 4: Insights from Citizen Journey Mapping

KEY FINDINGS: CITIZENS' EXPERIENCES & CHALLENGES ACCESSING SERVICES

AWARENESS & UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROCESS

The FGDs began with a series of questions about respondents' prior knowledge of the service processes. In most cases, **respondents were not familiar with the process beforehand, and instead relied on friends and family who had previously gone through the process to guide them, or used a middleman.**¹⁸ Some respondents also received information from colleagues and neighbours. In a few cases, respondents received assistance from staff in the government offices: women in Kabul who obtained a driver's license reported receiving information from the institute where they took the written exam; men seeking a land deed received advice from the *Amlak* office and from their counterparts selling the land; a few women in Herat reported that the public servant who wrote the letter of request for their passport also assisted them; several men in Kabul reported that the staff in the *Tazkera* office assisted them, but others reported that the staff either suggested they get a middleman or did not provide information, leading the respondent to work with a middleman anyway (text box above). In this case, the respondent's lack of prior knowledge about the service procedure and the inability of the government staff to assist led the respondent to seek out a middleman, thus increasing the cost of completing the service.

Middlemen were most frequently used by men seeking a driver's license in Herat, men seeking a passport in Herat, both men and women applying for a *Tazkera* in Kabul, and less



"There was no one to advise me regarding the process of confirming a *Tazkera*. The official in charge in the ACCRA was busy and had no time to guide someone for the process which resulted in me finding a middleman to complete the process for me."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A TAZKERA, KABUL

frequently for other services; the only process for which no respondents mentioned using a middleman was Filing a Complaint. In light of social norms in Afghanistan, it is not surprising that men would be more likely than women to use middlemen. Generally, it is seen as inappropriate for Afghan men and women to interact with people of the opposite sex outside of their family, and women are typically not responsible for administrative tasks such as liaising with a middleman. Indeed, it is possible that women's male relatives who were responsible for completing the procedures on their behalf did use a middleman, but without the knowledge of the women.



"If we had money and connections they would have done the process [faster], but I didn't have anything and the process took so long."

FEMALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A TAZKERA, HERAT

The amount paid to the middleman depended on the service procedure, and likely included the required bribes to the public servants. Not all respondents mentioned how much they paid the middleman, but, anecdotally, among those who did provide this information: a man in Herat seeking a marriage certificate paid 2000 Afghani (AFN) to the middleman; a man in Kabul applying for a passport paid 900 AFN; and another man in

¹⁸ "My brother was with me and he had all the information because he had taken his passport before." (Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Kabul).

Kabul applying for a *Tazkera* paid 450 AFN. One male respondent in Kabul who was obtaining a land deed mentioned that after he completed the process, *"I narrated the entire story back for the middleman, who asked for 60,000 AFN, and I told him that I finished the entire process for 37,000 AFN."*¹⁹ Overall Obtaining a Land Deed was one of the most expensive processes for respondents to complete, so a higher fee for the middleman is not surprising, but this quote also suggests that, as expected, the middlemen themselves are also profiting.

In only a few cases did respondents report that they knew about the process beforehand and did not need assistance. This included most men applying for a marriage certificate in Herat and a few men in Kabul; men applying for a *Tazkera* in Herat; and a few women applying for a *Tazkera* in Kabul. As a *Tazkera* is one of the most common documents that Afghans must have, it makes sense that citizens would be familiar with this process.

EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE PROCESS

Citizens' expectations regarding how long the process would take and how much it should nominally cost (i.e. without bribes) generally differed significantly from their actual experiences. Respondents within the same FGDs also often had very different expectations and different experiences relative to each other, highlighting the non-standardized nature of the service procedures. For example, within one FGD with men in Herat regarding Obtaining a Land Deed, estimates of how much the process should nominally cost ranged from 300 AFN to 700 AFN, and respondents expected that the process should take ten days. In reality, the same respondents reported that the process cost them between 5000 AFN and 15,000 AFN, and took between 18 days and six weeks. The exception to this was the process for Filing a Complaint, for which respondents said there is neither a fee nor a standard timeframe.²⁰ However, in the end, many ended up paying bribes.



"It was a negative experience because there was so much disorder and the process took too long and the staff were not qualified and wanted to just waste our time."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A LAND DEED, HERAT

The data collection team noted that nearly all respondents had a very precise answer to these questions, though in some cases the figures provided may have been more of an estimate. This is especially true for respondents who completed the process a long time ago (though all respondents had completed the process in the past 18 months). Respondents who expected

¹⁹ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Kabul.

²⁰ As this process often involves an investigation, the duration depends on how difficult the case is to solve (or whether it is solved at all).

to pay or actually paid a small bribe and women who may have not completed the process themselves, but instead relied on the help of a male family member.

The disparity among respondents' experiences—in terms of how long the process took and how much they paid—is due to a number of variables, including whether they had connections within the government office (more connections made the process easier); whether they paid a bribe (paying a bribe sped up the process, or facilitated it in the first place); whether they used a middleman (middlemen expedited the process; text box above); and the efficacy of the public servants on a particular day (this was not explicitly mentioned by respondents, but given the unregulated nature of the processes described throughout the FGDs it can be assumed that this is relevant).

The lack of a standard procedure that is well-known among citizens and adhered to by public servants likely makes the service delivery processes more difficult for citizens to navigate, increasing their frustration and the time it takes to complete the process. As discussed more below, these are key factors that often lead citizens to pay a bribe.

EXPERIENCE OF THE JOURNEY

Overall Experience of the Journey

In almost all cases, respondents were dissatisfied and frustrated by at least some part of the process, though satisfaction or neutral feelings were also frequently expressed at various points.

Respondents' frustration was most often caused by slow and inefficient processes and poor treatment by public servants (text box below). Corruption was also mentioned as a contributing factor to the dissatisfaction,²¹ but not as often as might be expected, and not more often than the general inefficiency and time-consuming nature of the processes. However, as explained in more depth below, some public servants may deliberately slow down the process in order to solicit bribes from citizens.



"I spent two weeks being dragged from one office to another without any result, but after meeting the middleman he completed [the process] in two days."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A TAZKERA, KABUL

Satisfaction and positive feelings were most often tied to a fast and well-managed process,²² as well as finally obtaining the desired documentation.²³ **Some respondents did mention that they relied on corruption to expediate the process, and were satisfied and relieved as a result, despite the corruption:** "*[The experience was] positive – as I was wearing my army suit, I got the bank tariff payment very easily.*"²⁴ This is an important point, as it highlights that **citizens frequently and willingly use corruption as a mechanism to reduce the costs of the process, i.e. by reducing the time and effort spent to**

²¹ "This step was a negative experience because they indirectly asked for money from my father to proceed our work." (Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Kabul).

²² "This was a positive experience because they did my job as quickly as they could." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Kabul).

²³ "It was a positive experience because finally I could get a driving license." (Female FGD respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Herat).

²⁴ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Kabul.

complete the service. This point is discussed further below.

Some respondents also reported neutral feelings about the process, often without giving a specific reason, though some alluded to their inability to influence the outcome: *"I was neutral since I knew the day will come to its end anyway."*²⁵ Several respondents also mentioned they had a neutral experience because they did not have to pay a bribe.²⁶

Treatment by Public Servants

As mentioned above, treatment by public servants was a key factor that shaped respondents' overall experience of the journey. To better understand this dynamic, FGD respondents were asked how they were treated by public servants at each step during the service delivery process. In absolute terms, at any given step of the process respondents were likely to be treated well by public servants, or at least not have any complaints. However, poor treatment in even one or two steps of the process (in our methodology each process was broken down into five steps) left a strong impression on citizens, and citizens deserve to receive proper treatment in *all* steps of the process, not just most of them. Respondents generally discussed the treatment they received from public servants along three dimensions (Figure 5):



"He had very good behaviour, but he asked for money."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE STEP 2, KABUL

Importantly, **respondents did not consider these three types of poor behaviour to be interdependent.** For example, a public servant could act disrespectfully to citizens, but would still be considered to have "technically" good behaviour, i.e. in terms of their capacity to perform the tasks required for their job. Similarly, a public servant could ask for a bribe or be "partial," but still be seen as acting politely towards citizens (text box on left). These distinctions are also confirmed by the fact that the steps in the processes where citizens reported corruption are not necessarily the steps where citizens reported poor treatment by public servants – i.e. corruption does not necessarily correlate directly with how citizens felt they were treated. The data collection team noted that some of the contradictions in respondents' comments were due to the fact that respondents simply had mixed feelings about the process or didn't fully remember how they felt at the time. This leads to an important caveat for the analysis below: often citizens' description of their treatment by public servants included somewhat contradictory comments, and judgement calls had to be made on whether experiences were on the whole positive or negative.

The analysis of how public servants treated citizens was conducted by determining whether the respondents in each FGD generally thought that the public servants behaved well or poorly at each of the five steps of the process, for a total of 20 data points of public servants' behaviour for each service (Figure 6);³⁰ i.e., if the majority of respondents in a given FGD experienced poor treatment during a specific step of the process, that data point would be negative.³¹

²⁵ Male FGD Respondent, Filing a Complaint, Herat

²⁶ "It was a neutral experience for me because I didn't have to pay the county counsellor." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Kabul)

²⁷ "The public servants were busy in their phones and therefore the work process was slow." (Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Step 4, Kabul)

²⁸ "The ACCRA staff members were not professional because they didn't have good behaviour with the applicants in the queue, they would push them, shout at them but they were unbiased as I did not see any biased behaviour at that day." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Step 1, Kabul)

²⁹ "They didn't respect me well, and they reacted partially." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Step 4, Herat)

³⁰ It is important to note that this analysis was qualitative, was conducted by analyzing the data in aggregate, and involved drawing broad conclusions about citizens' average experiences. A FGD was only considered to have experienced poor behaviour if the majority of respondents reported such behaviour; the fact that a FGD was considered to have experienced poor behaviour overall does not mean that all respondents in the FGD necessarily had a negative experience—and vice versa.

³¹ Additional analysis is planned to evaluate citizens' experiences in a quantitative manner. The stakeholders of this report will be updated as needed regarding any new findings from that further analysis.

Overall, public servants' behaviour was roughly similar across all service pathways, i.e. in any given service pathway public servants did not have significantly better or worse behaviour than in other service pathways. The process of Obtaining a Marriage Certificate had the best public servant behaviour, with three data points (out of the 20 possible data points) showing poor public servant behaviour; Obtaining a Land Deed and Obtaining a Passport had the worst public servant behaviour, with six data points showing poor behaviour. However, at other points in all service pathways, citizens also had mixed experiences (i.e. within a given FGD there was not a clear majority of respondents who had experienced positive or poor treatment), which are not included in the above count.

Many respondents did have a positive experience and cited no issues with the behaviour of public servants and/or used terms such as "respectful," and "polite" to describe their interactions.³² A few respondents explained that the good behaviour was only a result of corruption; in these cases, corruption was a mechanism to induce positive behaviour, not a manifestation of poor behaviour: "*They were behaving rudely until I introduced myself as Secretary to a Parliament Member and then they became humble.*"³³ One woman in Kabul also implied that in her experience corrupt behaviour was very normal, and seemed to have no problem with this: "*The behaviour was very normal as they were taking money and in return for money they behave well.*"³⁴ Another female respondent in Kabul also acknowledged that while the public servants were behaving poorly, they were being forced to do so by circumstances outside of their control: "*The public servants were behaving very bad because there was a lot of rush in this department and people wouldn't stand in line so the servants are*

³² "[The public servants] were professional, impartial and behaved respectfully with all the applicants." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Step 4, Kabul), and "They were professional and behaved very well. The process was quick and efficient without any prejudice or nepotism; however, it was very crowded." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Step 2, Kabul).

³³ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate, Step 4, Kabul.

³⁴ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Step 2, Kabul.

01 BEING TECHNICAL

This refers to the degree to which public servants correctly conducted their work. It is important to note that citizens did not use the term "technical" to describe public servants' attitude or demeanour, but rather simply whether they had the right skills to carry out their jobs.

02 RESPECT

Citizens often noted whether or not public servants treated them respectfully or rudely. Examples of disrespectful behaviour included talking on their phones when they were supposed to be working and forcing citizens to wait a long time. Respectful behaviour included completing the work in a timely manner and treating citizens well.²⁸

03 CORRUPTION OR BEING "PARTIAL"

This includes both soliciting bribes and relying on nepotism. Respondents often described public servants as either "partial,"²⁹ (i.e. they were biased and corrupt) or "impartial" (i.e. they were unbiased and not corrupt).

Figure 5. Dimensions of public servants' treatment of citizens

Service Pat

Question: What did you think of the pu

MALE FGD KABUL					MALE FGD HERAT					
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	St
Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Re
Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Re
Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Re
Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Re
Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Re
Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Re
Data point 1	Data point 2	Data point 3	Data point 4	Data point 5	Data point 6	Data point 7	Data point 8	Data point 9	Data point 10	Data point 11

4 out of 20 possible instances of po

Figure 6. Visualization of the analysis of public servants' treatment towards citizens. Text in light blue blocks represents positive treatment, text in red blocks represents negative treatment, and text in dark blue blocks represents mixed or neutral treatment. This is an example and does not reflect actual data.

Pathway A

How many public servants you interacted with?

5	FEMALE FGD KABUL					FEMALE FGD KABUL				
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1
2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2
3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3
4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4
5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5
6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6
10	Data point 11	Data point 12	Data point 13	Data point 14	Data point 15	Data point 16	Data point 17	Data point 18	Data point 19	Data point 20

How many public servants you interacted with? (continued)

5	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1	Resp 1
2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2	Resp 2
3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3	Resp 3
4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4	Resp 4
5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5	Resp 5
6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6	Resp 6
10	Data point 11	Data point 12	Data point 13	Data point 14	Data point 15	Data point 16	Data point 17	Data point 18	Data point 19	Data point 20

not to be blamed."³⁵

Indeed, the data collection team also explained that sometimes public servants are asked by their supervisors to deviate from the standard procedure; for example, a supervisor may give their employees a task to complete immediately (likely due to the desire to fast-track certain paperwork for citizens with personal connections), regardless of the resulting delays for others in line. Citizens may interpret such behaviour as rude and biased, though in reality the public servants likely have little recourse to refuse their boss's wishes.

In general, **women reported better treatment from public servants than men** (see the next section below for more detail on perceptions of how citizens' gender affects treatment by public servants), and **respondents in Kabul reported better treatment overall than respondents in Herat**. It is possible that in Kabul public servants are more qualified and educated, or they feel more of a sense of responsibility being in the capital, though these questions were not specifically investigated during the course of the research. In some cases, men and women, and/or respondents in Herat and Kabul, experienced poor treatment from public servants during the same steps of the process, but this pattern did not always hold true. Indeed, citizens' experiences with public servants depend on the individual staff working that day/time as well as citizens' expectations of the process.

Below is a summary of public servants' behaviour by service pathway:

- **Obtaining a Tazkera:** Overall, respondents had roughly similar reports of public servants' behaviour in both Kabul and Herat, though in Herat women reported more concerns than men, while in Kabul men reported more concerns than women. In Herat, women reported poor treatment by public servants during the first step (obtaining and completing the Tazkera application form) and second steps (obtaining the councillor's confirmation of personal details), while men reported mixed treatment only during the first step. In Kabul, women experienced difficulties in the second step, while men reported poor treatment in the second and third steps (verifying nationality through the archive).
- **Driver's License:** Respondents in Kabul reported better treatment by public servants than in Herat, though in Kabul men still experienced poor treatment during the last two steps of the process (taking the driving test, and submitting a bank receipt to obtain the driver's license at the Directorate of Traffic). Women in Kabul had no complaints about the public servants throughout the process. In Herat, women reported far more problems, and were only entirely satisfied with the treatment by public servants in the third step of the process (taking the theoretical class and exam at the Directorate of Traffic). Men encountered the worst treatment in the fourth step, and to some extent the third step.
- **Obtaining a Passport:** Respondents in Kabul reported slightly better treatment overall than respondents in Herat, though overall women were treated better than men. In Kabul, men reported poor treatment during the first step (visiting the Passport Directorate with a request letter) and the fourth step (submitting the bank receipt and visiting the Biometric Department), while women had no complaints. In Herat,

³⁵ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Step 1, Kabul.

men reported issues during the second (obtaining a payment tariff for the bank at the Finance Department), fourth, and fifth steps (receiving the passport from the Post Office). Women in Herat also complained about the public servants' behaviour in the fourth step.

- **Obtaining a Marriage Certificate:** Respondents in Kabul reported better treatment than respondents in Herat—particularly women, who had no issues with the public servants in Kabul (though women did not participate in two of the steps due to social customs). Men in Kabul reported a few complaints only during the fourth step (submitting the documents to the court with two witnesses). In Herat, women complained that during the second step (obtaining the signature of the County Councillor on the marriage certificate form), the Councillor was difficult to locate and asked for a bribe, and that during the fourth step the public servants were not treating citizens well. Men in Herat noted that during the third step (obtaining the Mullah Imam's confirmation of the marriage), the Mullah treated them all poorly.
- **Obtaining a Land Deed:** Respondents (all men) in Kabul were treated poorly during the second step of the process, (assessment by the Amlak delegation) but they had no complaints during the other steps. In Herat, respondents reported poor treatment during the fourth step of the process (providing completed documents and bringing witnesses to court), and some had complaints during the first step of the process (writing a request letter to the Court of Guaranty).
- **Filing a Complaint:** In Kabul, respondents (all men) received the worse treatment during the fourth step of the process (visiting the Attorney's Office), and in Herat respondents had the most complaints about public servants in the second (visiting the control office in the Police District to provide a

detailed statement) and fourth steps. Public servants were slightly better behaved in Kabul than Herat.

Finally, in the male FGD in Kabul for Obtaining a Land Deed, all the respondents mentioned that during the last step in the process: "*[The public servants] were behaving nice, since they were expecting sweets (shirini) and they were trying to satisfy the applicants to ask for more money.*"³⁶ While still technically corruption, this was perceived as positive, "tipping" behaviour—an important point that could be utilised to encourage more positive behaviour among public servants.

³⁶ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Kabul

Perception of Differences in Treatment Between Men and Women

In addition to asking respondents how they were treated by public servants, we also asked if they thought that men and women were treated differently by public servants. Throughout all FGDs, the vast majority of both female and male respondents reported many differences between how they thought women and men were treated during the processes and provided several explanations for these disparities. Figure 7 below summarizes these comments; boxes in red indicate reasons why women were treated worse than men, while boxes in light grey indicate reasons why women were treated better than men.

Most respondents (both men and women) claimed that women were treated better than men and often given priority—a perception that is in line with respondents' own reports of how they were treated by public servants.

Most male respondents, with a few exceptions,³⁷ did not complain that women were often treated better. Indeed, it is worth noting that such disparities between the treatment of men and women in Afghanistan are highly expected given social norms in the country. Respondents who reported that women were treated better by public servants gave several potential explanations, including because women are highly respected in society,³⁸ because women are vulnerable,³⁹ because women have children to take care of and housework to do (and therefore need to finish the process quickly)⁴⁰ and because of Afghanistan's "Islamic society." A few respondents also suggested that public servants treated women better simply because women were better behaved compared to men. This view was expressed by both women and men (text box below).

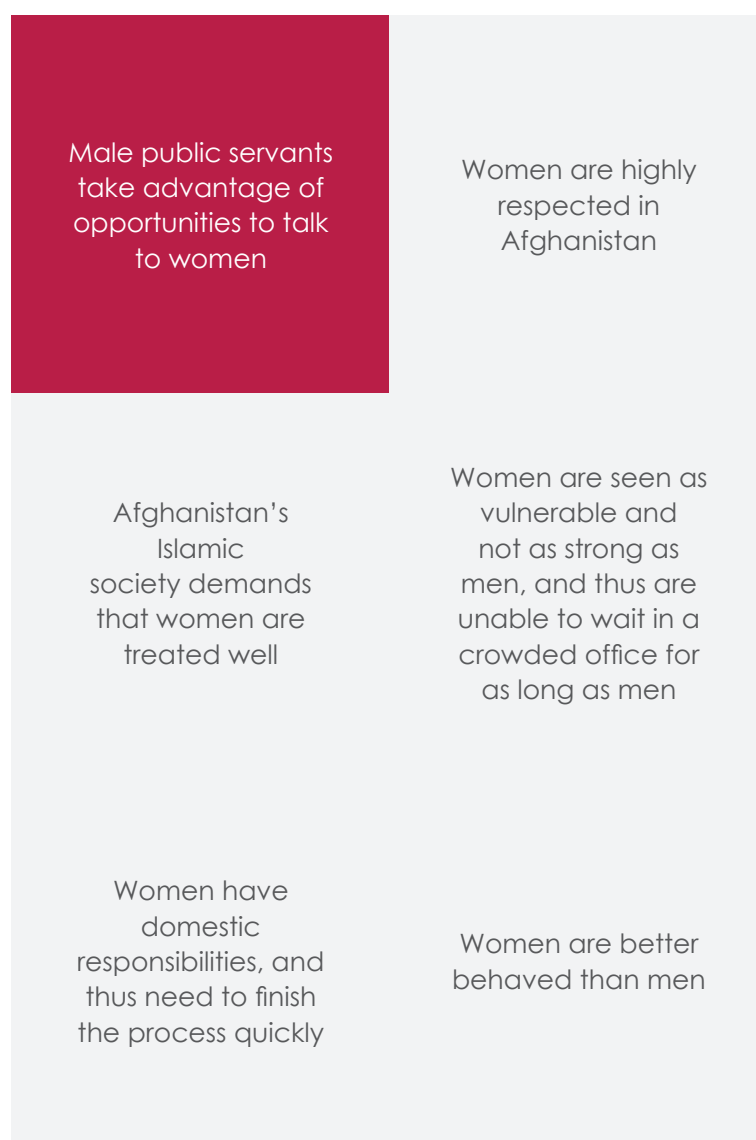


Figure 7. Main explanations for perceived differences in treatment between men and women

³⁷ "I have negative feelings because they shouldn't differentiate between men and women." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Herat).

³⁸ "At the traffic department during the distribution of forms they gave priority to women, maybe because they respect women." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Herat).

³⁹ "I expected that he gives the priority to women rather than men, because they are not strong." (Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Herat).

On the other hand, respondents (both men and women) also mentioned that women were sometimes sexually harassed by public servants,⁴¹ or that public servants purposely delayed women's paperwork so they would have more opportunities to speak with the women (it can be rare in Afghanistan for men and women who are not from the same family to speak and interact at length): *"If a woman is beautiful they ask her different questions out of the blue just to keep the conversation with her and be in contact with her."*⁴² The data collection team also noted that harassment was particularly common when women obtain a driver's license, and specifically during the practical driving exam, as the instructors frequently take advantage of the opportunity to be alone with women (women are sometimes not allowed to have a mahram—a chaperone—with them during the exam, contrary to social custom). For that reason, many women avoid this step, and/or others in the process, altogether by paying a bribe or relying on nepotism.

One female respondent did suggest that female public servants also engage in harassment: *"I think male public servants were good with female applicants and female public servants were good with male applicants. And I think it was because of having interest to the opposite sex."*⁴³ Furthermore, how women dressed was perceived to play a role, as several respondents mentioned that women who were better dressed or who were wearing less conservative clothing received better treatment and service.⁴⁴ A few respondents noted that women were sometimes subjected to less corruption than men,⁴⁵ though this may depend on the circumstances of the woman,⁴⁶ and one respondent pointed out that

even if women experience less abuse in the form of corruption, sexual harassment is still a form of gender-specific abuse.⁴⁷

In the FGDs, harassment was mentioned in response to this question (about perceptions of treatment towards men and women) more often than it was mentioned when respondents were asked directly about how they were treated. This is not surprising, given that harassment of women—especially of a sexual nature—may be taboo for women to discuss in the context of their personal experiences.

Respondents also mentioned that in general women with connections and those who were educated had an easier time completing the process than women who did not have connections and who were uneducated, though this pattern likely also applies to men.

It was less common for respondents to explicitly say that men were treated better than women, though this was the implication of some of the comments; a minority of respondents said that men and women were treated equally.

While the overall consensus was that women were treated better than men, the reasons for this—as seen above—typically do not reflect a society in which women are treated equitably. For example, the rationale that women are more vulnerable and weaker than men stems from a perception of women as “less than” men, and deserving of special treatment not because of merit, but because of inherent inequalities between men and women that leave women and girls in a subordinate position in society compared to men. Even the comment that

⁴⁰ “Because women have so many jobs to do at home and in this case, they should give them the priority.” (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Herat).

⁴¹ “Women are sexually abused, asked for their phone numbers, especially young women.” (Male FGD Respondent, Driver's License, Kabul).

⁴² Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate, Kabul.

⁴³ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Kabul.

⁴⁴ “They were categorizing women according to their dress up and facial appearance. Those who came in a burqa were disrespected, as they believed those women are uneducated. On the other hand, women with a better appearance were treated respectfully and guided well.” (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Kabul).

⁴⁵ “They prioritize women and they don't ask her to visit every other office for no reason. Positive discrimination.” (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate, Kabul).

⁴⁶ “There is a difference, women who are not accompanied with men have their applications proceed without any bribe, while women who are in better shape and have a good appearance are approached for misuse.” (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Kabul).

⁴⁷ “They don't ask women for bribe but they are harassed sexually and, in a way, they ask for her contact number to further create challenge for her.” (Male FGD Respondent, Filing a Complaint/Receiving a Decision, Kabul).

women are treated better because they are more respected in Afghan society is likely derived from a world view in which women are expected to occupy different spaces and behave in different ways that fundamentally deprive them of human rights.

Accompaniment

FGD respondents were also asked about whether they were accompanied when they accessed the service process, or whether they went alone. **In most cases when women accessed services, they were accompanied by a male relative**, often their father, husband or brother, and in some cases their son. A small but not negligible minority of women in Kabul and Herat did, however, complete the process by themselves; in one case the woman explained she went by herself because she was the head of the household. In many cases, the women themselves were not present at various steps during the process, when presumably their male family member was going through the process on their behalf.

Men typically completed the process by themselves, though were sometimes accompanied by a family member or friend who was familiar with the process. As discussed above, citizens are usually unfamiliar with how to complete the process, so they rely on others for guidance. In the case of Obtaining a Land Deed, the buyer was accompanied by the seller and/or the witnesses when they were required to be present. In Kabul, all men used a middleman when applying for a Tazkera; one woman in Kabul mentioned doing the same.

This pattern reflects social norms in Afghanistan, whereby women often need, or are perceived as needing, a male relative to accompany them, for either practical reasons (a higher percentage of women are illiterate and uneducated compared to men) and/or social reasons (it is often seen as inappropriate for women to be in public without a male guardian, and processing paperwork may be seen as a task for men, not women).

Expectations vs Reality

In many cases, citizens' expectations about the process—in terms of the behaviour of public servants, the efficacy of the process, etc.—were met, though some citizens had very low expectations to begin with: "As expected, they created problems regarding the National ID of the witness and we found another witness but it took time."⁴⁸ Figure 8 summarizes the main types of citizens' experiences vis-à-vis expectations.

Other respondents mentioned that the process did not meet their expectations. A common narrative was that citizens expected to be treated well by public servants, but were treated poorly;⁴⁹ or that the process was slow and inefficient. Some respondents also noted that they were asked to pay a bribe when they were not expecting to.⁵⁰ Some respondents mentioned that the building and facilities did not meet their expectations.⁵¹

On a few occasions, FGD respondents said that the actual experience exceeded their expectations—both in terms of the experience overall and corruption (i.e. they expected to pay a bribe, but did not need to)—though, as above, respondents often had low expectations to begin with: "Since I knew him I was expecting to pay less, but I paid even less than I had expected."⁵² Other times, citizens did not have any specific expectations.

There was a similar spectrum of opinions regarding expectations specifically about corruption and paying bribes: some expected to be asked for a bribe, while others did not. In the end, most respondents paid a bribe.



Figure 8. Summary of citizens' expectations of service delivery vs reality

⁴⁸ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Step 4, Kabul.

⁴⁹ "I was expecting them to treat me respectfully, but this expectation wasn't met." (Male FGD Respondent, Filing a Complaint, Step 3, Herat).

⁵⁰ "I didn't think he would ask me for money in this department, but by asking for sweets (shirini) they asked for money." (Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Step 5, Kabul)

⁵¹ "I expected all the basic facilities should have been there like separate and hygienic wash-rooms, organized systems and clean environment which weren't present at all." (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Step 2, Kabul).

⁵² Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate, Step 2, Kabul.

NEXT STEPS

In early 2019, Magenta will conduct a separate research study to further investigate the drivers and context of corruption in Afghanistan, which will include quantitative and qualitative components. Magenta will share all research findings with UNDP, IWA and other stakeholders, as a step towards crafting potential pilot interventions that citizens can implement as part of local anti-corruption efforts.

A citizen journey mapping research report

KEY FINDINGS: CITIZENS' UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCES OF CORRUPTION

HOW CITIZENS DEFINE CORRUPTION

When asked what they perceived as being “corruption,” the FGD respondents overwhelmingly included a broad range of public servant behaviours. Respondents were very clear that, in their view, corruption was not limited to bribery. They generally believed that: “Every single action that contributes to the disruption of a formal legal process, be it money or nepotism, greases the wheel of corruption,”⁵³ and that **any type of abuse of power is corruption**: “any actions impacting citizens negatively while they are under the authority of an official counts as corruption, be it asking for bribe or delaying someone's work on purpose.”⁵⁴ While this moderately contradicts some of the initial hypotheses—i.e. the hypothesis **Afghans would not consider small bribes under a certain amount to be corruption—this finding nevertheless reinforces another fundamental hypothesis of this research: that Afghans are aware of what corruption is and recognize that it's a problem, but the fact that they engage in corruption nevertheless indicates that there are psychological and sociological factors at play**; i.e. the problem is not simply due to a lack of information or understanding.

The behaviours mentioned by respondents as forms of corruption included:

- **Creating difficulties** in order to request a bribe. The most common form of abuse of power reported during the FGDs was when public servants refused to perform an official task in an appropriate time frame (i.e. delay of service), thus complicating the process on purpose or even refusing to perform their tasks in order to obtain a bribe.⁵⁵ These behaviours are sometimes accompanied by verbal abuse or direct threats in case citizens refuse to pay. A large share of FGD respondents were confronted with these types of issues and often referred to them as “making difficulties” (*mushkiltarashi*) or “wasting time.”
- **Direct bribery**: When a public servant asks directly for money or a gift from citizens. FGD respondents almost unanimously included an extensive range of activities under the definition of “bribery.” To them, it encompasses the payment of money, requests for gifts, meals or phone cards and *shirini* regardless of the sums involved.⁵⁶ Indeed, when asked whether petty corruption (or very small bribes) should be considered a separate category of corruption, respondents were very clear that this was not the case: “Getting little money is also corruption;”⁵⁷ “Asking for cash which is out of your legal pay is corruption. Any amount between 10 and 500 AFN should also be considered as

⁵³ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driving License, Kabul.

⁵⁴ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining or Confirming a Tazkera, Kabul.

⁵⁵ “Creating problems can be corruption.” (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Herat); “Creating obstacles and delaying the work is corruption.” (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Herat); “not performing a task within the normal time line is part of corruption” (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Kabul).

⁵⁶ A survey carried out by Think Clarity in November 2018 confirms this finding: the analysis of the amount paid by respondents who said they had to pay a bribe against their perception of what a large bribe might be does not provide clear indications on respondents' perceptions of what a large vs small bribe is. We observe a similar distribution of responses for those who paid bribes of 100 AFN and those who paid 10,000 AFN when asked of the public officials they interacted with asked for large or small bribes.

⁵⁷ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driving License, Kabul.

corruption;⁵⁸ “Sweets (*shirini*) requested by the public servants is corruption.”⁵⁹

- **Nepotism:** Though it is often recognised that nepotism is rampant at all levels of service provision in Afghanistan,⁶⁰ respondents overwhelmingly agreed that using personal connections is a form of corruption,⁶¹ while at the same time recognising that it was often very difficult to obtain anything without relying on nepotism in Afghanistan: “without nepotism you cannot do anything in this country.”⁶² These actions are rarely considered as “ordinary loyalty” by our respondents, though the line between helping one’s people and nepotism can be hard to define.⁶³ Indeed, the findings also show that when respondents had personal connections with an official, they found it natural to use that relationship to obtain faster service delivery. As mentioned above, respondents often refer to this behaviour (on the part of public servants) as “being partial.”
- **Simplifying the process** for bribe givers or “solving their problems” in exchange for a bribe also counted as corruption. This includes behaviours such as not requesting a citizen’s presence at some stages of the process (such as taking the practical exam to obtain a driver’s license) or issuing a certificate even though the respondent did not share all the necessary legal documents to complete the procedure.

CITIZENS’ EXPERIENCES OF CORRUPTION

A large majority of FGD respondents were directly exposed to corruption or witnessed acts of corruption or nepotism while completing the service processes. The findings from the analysis of respondents’ experiences also confirm one of the main hypotheses of the study, i.e. that Afghan citizens often engage in corruption because the benefits of doing so (in terms of more efficient service provision), outweigh the costs (in terms of social sanctions and potential legal punishment).

While nepotism seems to be rather common when it comes to obtaining certain advantages (such as faster processing, less queueing, etc.), the most frequent forms of corruption encountered were “making difficulties” to obtain money and asking directly for money. Corruption in this section most often refers to such payments, unless otherwise specified.

After providing an overview of the specific hotspots for corruption within the six services, this sub-section focuses on the general patterns observed regarding:

- How corruption occurs
- The main drivers for deciding to pay a bribe
- Community perceptions of bribe givers and non-bribe givers
- Attitudes towards reporting corruption

⁵⁸ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driving License, Kabul.

⁵⁹ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Kabul.

⁶⁰ National Corruption Survey, Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2016.

⁶¹ During the IWA 2016 National Corruption Survey, 18% of respondents said they had been victims of nepotism. Our sample broadly reflects this finding.

⁶² Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Kabul.

⁶³ Ibid.

Hotspots for Corruption

The following subsection analyses the specific hotspots for corruption within the six selected services:

■ **Obtaining a Tazkera:** The most common issues found during this journey were at the County Councillor's Office and at the Afghanistan Civil Registration Authority (ACCRA), in order to obtain the application form. Respondents generally paid 10 to 200 AFN to obtain the form.⁶⁴ One respondent also paid 700 AFN at the Age Determination Department⁶⁵ and another paid 1,200 AFN at the Archive Department in Kabul. The main hotspots for corruption by location were the following:

- Kabul: Men reported being asked for bribes during all the steps of the process, except at the Age Determination Office. Places where respondents experienced the most problems were: ACCRA (men only), the County Councillor's Office (both genders) and the Archive Section (men only). During the final step (collecting the Tazkera), almost all the respondents were asked to pay more than the official 20 AFN fee (from 40 to 100 AFN).
- Herat: All the offices except the Archive Department asked for bribes and/or the public servants there acted partially. As in Kabul, the respondents ran into the most problems at ACCRA and the County Councillor's Office.

■ **Obtaining a Driver's License:** Instances of corruption within this journey varied between Kabul and Herat. Generally, most of the issues in both locations took place during the practical driving exam, but male respondents in Kabul reported very few incidents compared to those in Herat, where male and female respondents experienced multiple issues and instances of bribery:

- At the Traffic Directorate, respondents were often required to pay bribes in order to obtain the form or pass the theoretical exam;
- At the clinic, most respondents used personal connections to process their documentation faster;
- During the practical driving exam, many respondents paid the examiners in order to pass the exam. They frequently reported that the examiners were "creating difficulties" to coerce them into pay. Most respondents thought this step of the process could only be made smoother by using a middleman.

■ **Obtaining a Passport:** Men and women had different experiences within this journey, with women reporting significantly fewer instances of corruption than men. The main hotspots for corruption were the following:

- In Kabul, corruption was more common at the Passport Directorate and the Biometric Department. Men reported having to bribe the security guards or public servants in order to either secure a spot in the line or go through the height determination process. The data collection team, however, pointed out that all the female respondents knowingly or unknowingly paid bribes while completing the bank payment.
- In Herat, men experienced corruption at all the offices they visited, i.e. the Passport Directorate, the Finance Department, Da Afghanistan Bank, the Biometric Department and even at the Post Office (with employees keeping the passports until they paid a bribe). Working with a middleman simplified the process in Herat. Women only mentioned facing corruption within the Biometric Department, which respondents noted was highly disorganised and susceptible to bribery and nepotism.

⁶⁴ "I paid cash during different steps of the process, such as 150 AFN to the county councillor and 1,200 AFN at the archive department" (Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Kabul)

⁶⁵ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Kabul; Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Herat; Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Herat.

During the initial stakeholder consultations, several of the experts mentioned that the process to obtain a passport had recently been reformed in order to reduce corruption—an effort that had reportedly been successful. However, these findings show that corruption is still rife throughout the passport service process—at least as common as in the other processes examined.⁶⁶ This is a valuable insight for government officials and international actors working to reduce corruption in the security and justice sectors, though more research is needed to determine the exact effect (and specific shortcomings) of the reforms.

■ **Obtaining a Marriage Certificate:** Instances of corruption were mainly observed at the County Councillor's Office and in the Court.

- In Kabul, male respondents were particularly upset when they submitted the documents to the Court with two witnesses, either because the staff were “creating problems” with regards to the choice of witnesses or because the witnesses themselves asked for money in return for their cooperation.
- In Herat, men reported having to pay bribes while processing the marriage certificate request letter, obtaining the County Councillor's signature and submitting the documents to the court. Overall, respondents in Herat seem to have faced more issues and frustrations during this process than those in Kabul.

■ **Obtaining a Land Deed:** Almost all respondents who were involved in this process experienced several instances of bribery and paid particularly large bribes. This is because a land deed is quite valuable, as it is tied to a high-value piece of land. Therefore, citizens are both prepared to pay a large bribe to obtain the land deed, and public servants

assume that citizens who are seeking a land deed likely have enough money to pay substantial bribes.⁶⁷ The only public servants within this journey who asked for bribes less frequently were the judges and the bank employees.

- In Kabul, corruption was most common during the Amlak assessment process and during the final step for the final registration of the land. Almost all the respondents had to pay multiple very large bribes during the Amlak assessment (up to 100,000 AFN in total).
- In Herat, corruption was most common when filing the land deed application form (up to 1,500 AFN in order to either obtain the form itself or the County Councillor's signature), going through the Amlak assessment process (from 800 AFN to 8,000 AFN) and submitting the finalised documents with witnesses in court (from 500 AFN to 8,000 AFN, including the fees requested by witnesses in some cases). Similarly, almost all respondents reported paying multiple bribes during the Amlak assessment, although the amounts reported in Herat were much lower than in Kabul.

■ **Filing a Complaint:** Bribes paid during this process were higher than for most other processes, with the exception of Obtaining a Land Deed. Some respondents in Herat reported paying bribes of up to 50,000 AFN. The larger than average bribes paid in this service procedure may be linked to the seriousness of the complaint reported: one respondent paid 50,000 AFN to receive a decision in his favour regarding a case in which a female family member was being abused by her husband and needed a divorce; another respondent paid 30,000 AFN to convict a robber who had been stealing

⁶⁶ Without a proper baseline and end line evaluation it is difficult to determine the exact effect of the reforms—perhaps corruption in the passport process had been even worse previously, and has in fact improved—but there was more corruption in this process than was expected, given what had been said about the reform process.

⁶⁷ Conversation with data collection team, 6 February 2019.

from several neighbours; another respondent also paid 30,000 AFN in a case regarding his stolen motorcycle.

- In Kabul, corruption was most common when citizens visited the Control Office at the police station to provide a detailed statement, and when citizens received a judgement from the court (though most respondents did not proceed to this final step). In the first case, citizens paid between 250 AFN – 8000 AFN, which also in some cases included buying breakfast for the staff (i.e. giving them a gift). In the second case, respondents paid 25,000 AFN and 50,000 AFN.
- In Herat, respondents experienced corruption in the second, third, fourth and fifth steps of the process in the form of being asked to buy phone credit, nepotism, being asked to buy a carpet as a gift and direct bribery. Bribes were as high as 50,000 AFN in the later stages of the process. Most respondents in Herat proceeded to the final stages of the process (most in Kabul did not).

How Corruption Manifests

Most common situations in which respondents felt they had to pay a bribe were the following:

- **A public servant asked them to pay directly.** This situation occurred very often with either Court staff or the County Councillors. In some cases, public servants simply did not return the change when citizens paid for a form. In other cases, public servants falsified or damaged documents to obtain a bribe: *“The next day I went with my father to the age determination department where they were going to change the wrong gender they had put on the Tazkera but again they didn't accept to do it and asked my father for money;”* *“I got very upset when the County Councillor tore my letter and I had to go through the procedure for the second time.”*⁶⁸
- **The respondents expected that paying a bribe would help the process** go more smoothly for one or several of the following reasons:
 - A public servant was making it more difficult to obtain documentation than it should be.
 - Someone else had warned them they wouldn't be able to carry out the process without paying a bribe.
 - Respondents assumed that paying a bribe was compulsory for any service process in Afghanistan.
 - Respondents witnessed other citizens paying bribes while going through the process.
 - Citizens thought that paying a bribe would ensure that their case was addressed first/earlier, as the standard process was taking too long due to overcrowding in the office.⁶⁹
- **Respondents used a middleman to support them with the process** (and pay bribes where needed) from the beginning. Relying on a

⁶⁸ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Kabul.

⁶⁹ Conversation with data collection team, 6 February 2019.

middleman seemed to occur most often in processes related to obtaining or confirming civil documentation such as a *Tazkera*, passport or driver's license.

Generally, **bribery happened in the open:**

even the respondents who did not pay a bribe themselves or were not expecting corruption to occur witnessed acts of nepotism or bribery while going through the process. Bribery was more likely to take place when the journey:

- Involved interactions with multiple departments (e.g. Obtaining a Land Deed)
- Involved opaque procedures (e.g. Obtaining a Land Deed)
- Required several signatures. For instance, within the process of Obtaining a *Tazkera*, there were many cases where respondents could not obtain a required signature until they paid a bribe.
- Took place in Herat instead of Kabul. It is possible that in the capital there are more layers of oversight and controls—or staff are more qualified—relative to Herat.
- Was conducted by a man instead of a woman, likely because public servants felt the need to be more respectful towards women—though women were more likely to experience other forms of mistreatment, such as sexual harassment.
- Was conducted by someone who was not familiar with the procedures. One respondent explained: *"Yes, I saw people asking for bribes, but they didn't create problems for me. Those who don't have enough information regarding the process often encounter such problems, especially those who are coming from villages. Officials take money from the villagers because they think that these people are illiterates and more credulous."*⁷⁰

- Took place in offices that were crowded, which prompted citizens to seek out opportunities to pay bribes to expediate the process.



"He told me that the head of department wouldn't sign unless I paid 3000 AFN."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A PASSPORT, HERAT



"In order for the process to go ahead, the examiner asked my brother directly to pay money."

FEMALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENCE, KABUL



"I paid him because he wanted to postpone my work unless I did."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENCE, HERAT



"I passed the exam but they didn't give me the license. When I asked them why, they told me to come later many times. Instead I found a middleman and got my licence through him."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENCE, HERAT



"I knew I was supposed to pay him because he told me to wait one month to get the passport. I paid him 2500 AFN and got it on time."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A PASSPORT, HERAT



"I waited a lot and I got very tired. If I didn't pay that amount of money, they would have delayed my work for many tomorrows."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A PASSPORT, KABUL

⁷⁰ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate, Herat.

Main Drivers of Paying a Bribe

As noted in IWA's 2016 National Corruption Survey,⁷¹ "Afghans pay bribes because they feel there is no alternative." Indeed, even those who were strongly opposed to corruption had no choice but to comply with the request for a bribe, and felt there was no alternative if they wanted to complete the process.

To better understand what drives citizens to pay a bribe, it is useful to examine three types of factors: psychological (factors relating to the individual), sociological (factors relating to the community and social relations), and environmental (factors relating to the broader environment and context). Given the scope of this research, the next sections will look at the first two categories (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Types of behavioural drivers. The scope of this research focused on psychological and sociological drivers

Psychological Factors

Citizens decide to pay a bribe because that is the only way to achieve their own interests, either because there is a risk of not completing the service without a bribe, or because they want to expedite the process. Paying a bribe also reflects citizens' focus on the short-term benefits of engaging in corruption, rather than the long-term (and societal) benefits of refusing to acquiesce to corruption.

In many cases, respondents paid a bribe simply to obtain an application form from the public servant or to secure a place (or a better place) in the line to obtain the form. Respondents often felt compelled to pay this bribe because they had no personal connections within these institutions.⁷² In other cases, citizens realised they wouldn't be able to complete the process unless they paid a bribe after facing, as described above, either a direct request from the public servant, or that the public servants were "creating problems" to ask for money. The main driver for paying a bribe in those cases is the fact that respondents cannot afford to spend more time trying to obtain the document in question due to personal constraints (such as child care, jobs, needing a passport to leave the country for medical or professional reasons) or because they had to come a long way to obtain their documentation).

Paying a bribe was also a mechanism to expedite service delivery. This was sometimes initiated by the citizens themselves or induced by public servants: "There was someone who shouted at me to pay money."⁷³ or was initiated by citizens themselves. In instances where respondents paid a bribe to expedite the process, it is often unclear whether this meant completing the procedure within the legal time frame, or sooner than within the legal time frame. In most cases, it is likely to be the former but in others, **citizens openly admitted to paying**

⁷¹ National Corruption Survey, Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2016.

⁷² "People who know officials in the government do not stand in line and take other people's time." (Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate, Kabul)

⁷³ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Herat.

a bribe to overcome situations where they themselves were not compliant with the rules of the procedure. For instance, sometimes citizens were not present during a compulsory step of the process (such as the theoretical or practical exams to obtain a driver's license, or at the Age Determination Department) or did not have the necessary witnesses to obtain a marriage agreement and paid a bribe to proceed with the process nevertheless.

During the FGDs, and later in a conversation with the data collection team, it was also noted that the over-crowdedness of some offices prompted citizens to pay a bribe to expediate the process simply because there were too many people to be served and waiting for their turn would have taken too long: *"I want to go to Iran and was supposed to get a marriage certificate, so when I went there it was so crowded and I paid them to do the process sooner."*⁷⁴ This practice of citizens bribing public servants in order to obtain preferential treatment has been documented previously in Afghanistan,⁷⁵ but "compliance" with official procedures is difficult to define as public servants themselves may be purposefully interfering in the process in order to obtain a bribe. For instance, within the driver's license procedure the examiners often failed applicants until they paid a bribe: *"All the people failed the exam but then they paid money to the traffic manager and he gave the license to them."*⁷⁶

In some rarer cases, respondents thought paying a bribe was part of the procedure,⁷⁷ which confirms the initial hypothesis that (some) citizens do not know the correct service procedure. However, more frequently, even if respondents did not know the correct procedure, they still understood that the bribe was not part of the official process and simply regarded it as a normal and expected deviation.

Sociological Factors

Corruption is considered a standard part of interactions with public servants in Afghanistan, and there are few meaningful social sanctions or social repercussions against either bribe seekers or bribe payers, indicating that **bribery has become socially accepted**. As mentioned above, citizens are very cognizant that all forms of corruption are wrong, and strongly condemned public servants who engaged in corruption. However, there were no practical consequences for public servants who asked for bribes, nor were there any legitimate negative social effects for citizens who paid bribes. Many respondents noted that their friends and family supported their decision to pay a bribe, commiserated with them vis-à-vis the lack of an alternative and even chastised them in cases when the respondent initially refused to pay a bribe. While one respondent did mention that "others were angry because I paid money,"⁷⁸ this was not frequently repeated in the FGDs.



"The practice test examiner asked me to pay bribe, but I was very rude to him and left the entire exam without paying a single Afghani."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENSE, KABUL



"I had to pay 500 AFN but I refused to."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A TAZKERA, KABUL

⁷⁴ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate, Herat.

⁷⁵ Afghans' Experience of Corruption: A study across eight provinces, Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2007.

⁷⁶ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Herat.

⁷⁷ "Everyone who paid money thought that this is part of the normal process and that they should pay the amount (100 Afghani) they have been asked for." (Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera Kabul).

⁷⁸ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Herat.

However, despite the lack of social sanctions, citizens were still aware that bribery is wrong and regretted paying a bribe, or acknowledged that they were harming others by doing so: *"I paid them because they told me we would do your job sooner, but I stepped on others' rights by doing it."*⁷⁹ Additionally, some respondents stated that citizens in general should not give bribes: *"I think we should not pay money to them. By paying money we are creating the problems."*⁸⁰ Another noted: *"In Islam, both the giver and taker of bribes, and corrupt individuals, are sinners."*⁸¹

In a few instances, respondents reported having refused to pay a bribe. Of the total sample of around 150 respondents, there were about five cases of refusing to pay a bribe. In most of these cases, the consequences for not paying resulted in a delay in the delivery of the service at a minimum. In one case when a respondent refused to pay a bribe, her family later encouraged her to go back and do so in order to complete the service process: *"The Councillor asked me for money in return for [his signature]. I told him I am not giving money so [he] tore my letter. I told the [him] that I will complain against them and they said until I pay them money, he will not sign on my request letter so I left his office with anger. I went home so the family members told me to pay money otherwise they will not do my work."*⁸²

FGD respondents were also asked whether they knew of other citizens within their communities who had refused to pay a bribe and how non-bribe givers were perceived by the community. Around ten such cases were reported during the FGDs. They mainly occurred during the process of Obtaining a *Tazkera* or a Driver's License, but other situations were mentioned, such as that of a young man refusing to pay a bribe to a General to pass his exam at the Academy of Police, or two citizens refusing to pay bribes at the

Water Supply Department to get their water bills or open a new meter. The reasons for not paying a bribe varied from one case to another. Some seemed to reject the very principle of paying a bribe, some said they were too poor to pay a bribe and others argued it was condemned by the Quran: *"Allah has condemned the payer and the receiver of bribe."*⁸³ The large majority of **those who refused to pay a bribe faced harsh consequences.** Only three of them managed to complete the process after many delays (*Tazkera* and Police Academy applicants), and others had not yet completed the process.

Community perceptions of non-bribe payers appear to be mixed. Many respondents reported negative judgements from the community because non-bribe payers were not able to complete the process or it took longer than it would have otherwise, if they had paid a bribe. However, in every community there are both supporters and critics of non-bribe payers, and some supported the non-bribe payers. In the case of a local Imam refusing to pay a bribe to obtain his *Tazkera* in Kabul, the community was widely supportive of his choice: *"My family and the local residents strongly support and appreciate his stand against bribe and corruption as a religious figure."*⁸⁴

Expectations Regarding Corruption

When asked whether they had expected to pay a bribe, respondents provided mixed answers. For procedures related to civil documentation, especially Obtaining a *Tazkera* and Obtaining a Driver's License, a majority of respondents replied that they had expected to pay a bribe. Within other processes, aggregated answers show an equal split between those who expected to pay a bribe and those who didn't. Respondents who were not expecting to pay a bribe usually felt that way either because they

⁷⁹ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a *Tazkera*, Herat.

⁸⁰ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Herat.

⁸¹ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Kabul.

⁸² Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a *Tazkera*, Kabul.

⁸³ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Passport, Herat.

⁸⁴ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a *Tazkera*, Kabul.



"I was expecting it since bribing is trend in the country now (...) paying bribe is normal in every office."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A LAND DEED, KABUL.



"It is very normal in Afghanistan now to use personal connections or pay money so I was expecting it."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A LAND DEED, KABUL



"No institutions do any work without any money...in Afghanistan your work will not get done until you pay something."

FEMALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING OR CONFIRMING A TAZKERA, KABUL

were in compliance with the process (i.e. had the legal documents needed) or they believed that there were no justifications for public servants to ask for more money on top of their regular pay.⁸⁵ Those who expected to pay a bribe had heard by word of mouth that corruption was common, or they believed that **bribery was standard practice in Afghanistan** (text box above).

Women and Men's Experiences of Corruption

Though answers were rather homogenous across genders in relation to perceptions and instances of corruption, there were a few noteworthy differences between the experiences of women and men. During the process of Obtaining a Passport for instance, women faced very few instances of corruption compared to men, and found it easier to queue or obtain application forms without having to pay a bribe. Women also faced fewer problems obtaining a Tazkera (whereas men reported paying up to 500AFN to obtain the application form), but reported paying more than the official fee to obtain the final Tazkera without knowing it at the time (100 vs 20 AFN).

Female respondents, however, reported cases of harassment in the Traffic Department and during the process of Obtaining a Driver's License in general. Women were also less aware of the processes or less exposed to public servants, as their male relatives often carried out the process for them (e.g. Obtaining a Tazkera, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate). However, women's opinions on corruption were often stronger than men's, and they almost unanimously condemned any form of abuse of power.

⁸⁵ "No – Since the employees are paid and don't need an extra money."
(Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Kabul).

Attitudes About Reporting Corruption

FGD respondents were asked whether they discussed the fact that they faced corruption with people around them, as well as whether they filed (or attempted to file) an official complaint.

A large majority of FGD respondents (especially female respondents) discussed the corruption openly with their families and friends.⁸⁶ They generally either talked about it because they were upset or to warn their friends and families in case they had to go through a similar process. The reactions from their families and friends were usually characterized by disillusionment, but the families and friends also comforted them in their decision to pay a bribe, as they wouldn't have been able to complete the process if they hadn't paid it. Those who didn't discuss the corruption with their acquaintances usually said it was because corruption was a very common issue in Afghanistan,⁸⁷ and they didn't feel the need to talk about it, or they preferred that people not know about it. There was also a general consensus among all respondents that **reporting stories about corruption to friends and family was inconsequential**, either because bribery is so common that it doesn't warrant a specific conversation or because no one can do anything about it.

Only a handful of respondents complained to officials about the fact that they faced problems with public servants, but their complaints were mostly ignored. One official advised the respondent to negotiate the amount of the bribe and, in another case, the police just helped the individual get the driver's license directly instead of confronting the officials in charge. For the vast majority of respondents, the most common reasons for not filing an official report were:

- **A general lack of trust in all official institutions**, which are generally considered to be unreliable and untrustworthy, and the feeling that their demands would be ignored.
- **A lack of awareness of formal institutions** where corruption can be reported.
- The belief that officials **working on anti-corruption efforts are also corrupt**.
- The fear that it would **cause them more problems**, such as having to pay more money, being blamed for paying a bribe or getting into more trouble with the authorities.

These findings demonstrate that **citizens feel low self-efficacy** (i.e. do not believe that their actions can make a difference) and have **little confidence in their leaders' ability to protect their interests**.

⁸⁶ One respondent also mentioned it to the mullah who promised to discuss it during the Friday prayer.

⁸⁷ Example of response: "We did not talk to our families or friends because nowadays it is a routine part of life. In general, we should pay bribe one way or another in all governmental offices. If we don't pay we face issues such as delays in the process". Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Kabul, December 2018

PERCEPTIONS & EMOTIONS RELATED TO CORRUPTION

According to a UNODC survey carried out in 2010, a significant portion of the adult population in Afghanistan views paying a bribe and being asked to pay a bribe as acceptable:⁸⁸

- 38% of citizens consider it acceptable for public servants to ask for gifts of money to speed up administrative procedures.
- 42% consider it acceptable that a public servant request extra payments because of his/her low salary.
- 13% of respondents accept bribery as a “common practice” in their daily lives that does not require any remedial action.



“Corruption means destroying a country...be it bribery or nepotism.”

FEMALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENSE, HERAT



“Corruption is a factor for disruption.”

FEMALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENSE, HERAT



“Corruption is a violation of human rights.”

FEMALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A PASSPORT, HERAT

Though social norms largely dictate Afghans' perception and though **there is a normative expectation that citizens will pay bribes** (i.e. citizens believe that other citizens will expect them to pay), FGD respondents also expressed critical opinions of bribery and a large majority condemned bribery as well as those who asked for bribes. **The hypothesis that Afghans tolerate corruption because the benefits outweigh the costs is largely accurate**; in fact, it seems the only reason that Afghans pay bribes is because of the practical and logistical benefits (i.e. completing the service) that cannot be obtained through any other means. Indeed, FGD respondents considered bribery to be an almost unavoidable precondition to completing government processes.

However, at the same time, FGD respondents had little tolerance for the fact that bribery occurs and that they are forced to pay bribes, notably because bribe giving is condemned by the Quran. Generally, respondents felt that **any form of corruption has a highly negative impact on society** as a whole, was a violation of their rights as citizens and was a threat to social cohesion (text box above).

The following subsections explore citizens' emotions when confronted with the necessity of paying a bribe as well as their opinions of bribe takers.

⁸⁸ UNODC. Corruption in Afghanistan: Bribery as reported by the victims. January 2010.

Emotions Reported by Bribe Payers

The majority of citizens showed a normal range of emotions when confronted with the necessity of paying a bribe, describing it as a very negative experience, but most were not overly affected by it (Figure 10). They were aware that asking for and paying bribes is reprehensible, but many also adopted a pragmatic outlook in the face of bribery.

Indeed, a portion of respondents openly admitted they felt either neutral or satisfied with the process, as they managed to secure the document they were seeking, even if the process had entailed paying a bribe. This can be because either paying a bribe allowed them to obtain their documentation sooner, or they were expecting to pay a bribe but did not have to in the end: "I had no feelings because my only goal was to get the license."⁹⁰ The relief of completing the process often outweighed the negative emotions related to paying a bribe, but the general sentiment amongst all respondents remained negative nevertheless.

Overall, female respondents expressed negative feelings more frequently than their male counterparts, who tended to have more nuanced feelings (and who were possibly more accustomed to dealing with the system). Additionally, when a middleman was used or when citizens expected to pay from the outset, more neutral or detached feelings were expressed.

The few respondents who expressed more specific negative emotions mentioned those in (Figure 11).

1. Shame

In the context of reporting corruption, some respondents did not want to discuss the fact that they paid a bribe because they preferred others not to know.

2. Frustration

that despite trying to follow the proper procedure, there was no alternative to paying a bribe if they wanted to complete the process. Respondents who reported such feelings usually tried to avoid paying a bribe but, ended up do anyway after encountering many roadblocks and delays.

3. Discomfort & unfairness

"I wasn't feeling good since those who knew how to drive and those who didn't would equally pass the test and get their license if they paid money."⁹⁰

4. Disappointment and or sadness

over the fact that the process did not take place as it legally should have: "I was disappointed and couldn't see any other way to solve it;"⁹¹ "I felt very bad because this was my legal right to receive a Tazkera without paying for it."⁹²

Figure 10. Word cloud representing words associated with emotions citizens felt when paying a bribe



⁹⁰ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Kabul

⁹¹ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Kabul.

⁹² Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Kabul.

Figure 11. Citizens' negative emotions while paying bribes.



⁹³ The word 'angry' came out most frequently regarding the Tazkera, land deed and driver's license journeys according to the qualitative analysis (Nvivo).

⁹⁴ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Kabul.

⁹⁵ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Marriage Certificate, Kabul.

⁹⁶ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Tazkera, Herat.

⁹⁷ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Kabul.

Opinions of Corrupt Public Servants and Petty Corruption

IWA's 2007 study of Afghans' experience of corruption confirms the finding discussed above: "Both bribe taking and giving is largely condemned by Afghans on moral grounds based on the rules of Islam."⁹⁸ The study, however, also found that:

*"There is a certain degree of tolerance towards corrupt practices, in particular when used as survival strategies by public officials at the lower end of the salary scales and as long as certain limits in demanding 'decent' or 'affordable' 'tea-moneys' are not overstepped. It is the observance of these limits that appears to determine the social acceptability of both bribe giving and taking. Thus, bribe takers are mostly viewed as the more immoral partner in the exchange, but there is widespread sympathy for bribe taking public servants who are struggling on very low salaries but less tolerance and social justification for those involved in larger scale scams."*⁹⁹

Though, as seen above, some respondents did express a certain level of indifference, neutrality or relief during the process despite paying a bribe. **FGD respondents almost unanimously condemned the actions of bribe takers**, regardless of the amounts involved, finding little reason to excuse their behaviour.

Frequency

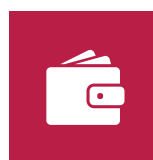
When asked whether they thought asking for a bribe was widespread amongst public servants, most respondents replied that bribery occurred at every level of the office, and that there were "very few civil servants who didn't ask for bribes."¹⁰⁰

Low Salaries



Respondents generally acknowledged the financial difficulties public servants may face (with low and irregular salaries) and recognised that officials usually sought to collect bribes in order to compensate for their low incomes. Some respondents believed that if public servants had higher and more regular wages, bribery would be less frequent, but this was not the dominant sentiment. Rather, most respondents thought that because public servants are paid to do a job that they knowingly accepted, they should not try to collect additional income illegally, especially because other public servants do not resort to such measures. Lower-level public servants were also suspected of being under pressure from their managers, who either took a cut of their salary or expected to receive a portion of the bribes: "About 90% of ACCRA staff asks for bribe from applicants and if a staff member refuses to ask for bribes, there are high chances of him losing his job."¹⁰¹

Greed



Some respondents simply cited cupidity: "they are used to it; they want luxurious life and 90% of the people are involved in this."¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Afghans' Experience of Corruption: A study across eight provinces, Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2007.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Herat.

¹⁰¹ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Taskera, Kabul.

¹⁰³ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Kabul.

Perceived Reasons Behind Public Servants' Bribery

When asked why they thought public servants may have asked them to pay a bribe, respondents made a variety of assumptions. The existence of numerous middlemen was also seen as an aggravating factor that enabled corruption.

Culture of corruption



While respondents acknowledged that corruption may have started due to low and irregular salaries, many believed that taking bribes has, above all, turned into a habit.

For public servants, taking bribes is now entirely part of the culture, with some public servants even believing they have a right to ask for extra money: *"He started asking for bribes because of his low salary, and this has now become a routine activity."*¹⁰²

Lack of oversight



A majority of respondents believed that the current context also induces such behaviours: *"The bad economic situation encourages them to ask for money, because there is no organization to question them and they also maximize their profit;"*¹⁰⁴ *"They ask for bribe because there are no rules and regulations to stop them."*¹⁰⁵

Situations in Which Petty Corruption Deserves Condemnation

There was a **very large consensus amongst respondents that corruption of any type or amount deserved condemnation** by the government.¹⁰⁶ The main justifications for wishing to see public servants condemned for petty corruption were that:



"If a government employee is comfortable taking 1 Afghani today, tomorrow he will be comfortable taking thousands of Afghanis. One of the ways for the government to combat this would be to punish them accordingly."

MALE FGD RESPONDENT, OBTAINING A MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE, KABUL

1. bribe taking is a crime under Islamic law;
2. officials create a habit of asking for money by asking for small amounts and nothing will stop them from asking for more later on;
3. punishing these public servants would serve as an example for other corrupt public servants and prevent a further extension of the 'corruption culture' in Afghanistan (text box above).

However, most respondents were **sceptical that such actions would actually take place or have any effect**: *"They will not be arrested or punished because high officials are also in corruption."*¹³⁵

¹⁰² Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Herat.

¹⁰⁴ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Driver's License, Herat.

¹⁰⁵ Male FGD Respondent, Obtaining a Land Deed, Herat.

¹⁰⁶ Only a handful of respondents (five) thought that low bribes didn't deserve condemnation.

¹³⁵ Female FGD Respondent, Obtaining and Marriage Certificate, Kabul.

CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS



The largest challenge faced in this research was the difficulty finding FGD respondents. As corruption and bribery can be sensitive topics in Afghanistan, many potential respondents were hesitant to participate at first, and only agreed to in the end because they had personal connections to the data collection team (snowball sampling was used to identify respondents). This sensitivity was still a concern during the FGDs, as the data collection team reported that many respondents were nervous that their personal information and responses would not be kept anonymous, despite the procedures and policies put in place for exactly this purpose. As a result, it is possible that respondents may have withheld information or censored what they said during the FGDs. The one exception to this, as noted by the data collection team, was respondents who were well-connected; presumably they felt a certain immunity and were not afraid of potential repercussions if their comments hypothetically became public.

As part of the respondent selection criteria, it was decided that only citizens who completed the service pathways in the past 18 months would be eligible to participate, in an effort to ensure that their memories were relatively fresh. However, the data collection team noted that in some cases—for example, when recalling the exact amount of the bribe paid—respondents' answers may have been more of an estimate rather than an exact figure, because of the time elapsed between the FGD and when they had gone through the process.

The FGDs also lasted longer than expected, with some sessions extending for three or four hours, rather than the anticipated two hours. This may have led some respondents to give shorter and more general answers later on in the FGDs, as they became more tired. The data collection team also noted that some of the questions ended up being rather repetitive; while the aim of the questionnaire was to capture nuanced and detailed information, the questions that were very similar may have been confusing to respondents, especially when asked towards the end of the FGDs.

Regarding the KIs with government officials at the beginning of the research, the data collection team mentioned that the lack of a complete set of authorization letters (and letters with the signature of an Afghan, instead of a foreigner) at the start of the project made it more difficult to arrange meetings with government officials and receive their signature on the confirmed procedures.

CONCLUSIONS

KEY INSIGHTS

By way of conclusion, this section summarizes the key social and behavioural insights gleaned from the research.

- **Having information about the processes reduces the need to use a middleman.** As seen above, one contributing factor to the use of a middleman was not knowing how the process worked, and therefore needing to rely on a middleman to complete the process. While some citizens did rely on friends and family (who presumably did not request payment for their help) to assist them, it seems that not everyone was able or willing to use this option.¹⁰⁷ Given the lack of publicly available information about the service procedures, it is not surprising that many citizens are unfamiliar with the steps in each process, and therefore rely on a middleman.
 - **Citizens seek ways to avoid required steps of the process.** One of the circumstances in which citizens paid bribes was if they wanted to simplify the process beyond what was considered standard, i.e. skip certain requirements because they felt that the official procedure would take too long, and they knew there was a relatively easy way around this (i.e. corruption).¹⁰⁸ However, there was little explicit acknowledgement amongst FGD participants of the role they themselves played in perpetuating corruption.
 - **The business environment in government buildings affects citizens' willingness to engage in corruption.** Citizens often cited the chaotic and crowded nature of government
- offices as a reason to engage in corruption. It is likely that citizens were legitimately frustrated by the environment and agreed to engage in corruption in order to simplify or shorten what would have been an unnecessarily difficult process. Alternatively, it is also possible that citizens used the chaotic environment as an excuse or cover for offering a bribe, either because they felt the offer would be less conspicuous in a chaotic office, or because they intended to pay a bribe all long regardless of the nature of the office but, the disorganization presented a convenient justification.¹⁰⁹
- **It often makes economic sense for citizens to pay bribes.** Citizens benefited from paying bribes in terms of faster service provision, the ease of the process and in some instances (such as resolving a case in the courts) a more favourable outcome. Citizens were aware of this, and considered corruption to be one of the tools in their tool kit, so to speak, when they engaged in a service process.
 - **Citizens expect there to be social sanctions for reporting corruption.** As mentioned above, respondents were hesitant to agree to participate in the FGDs, because they feared that their comments and personal information might somehow be accessed by those in power and that they would experience reprisals, essentially for reporting corruption to the data collection team.¹¹⁰ This is interesting to consider as another source of information about citizens' perceptions and emotions surrounding corruption. As noted above, the vast majority of FGD respondents acknowledged that corruption is wrong and is detrimental to Afghanistan. However, with

¹⁰⁷ Given the highly socially connected nature of Afghan society, it is somewhat unlikely that an individual would not be able to identify someone in their extended social network who is familiar with the process. However, there may be other dynamics at play, such as not wanting to admit that one does not know how to complete the service process, or the feeling of pride from being able to complete the process without obvious assistance.

¹⁰⁸ This section is referring to citizens' use of corruption to avoid requirements of the official procedure, or to shorten the processes beyond the official time frame, not citizens engaging in corruption in order to be able to access the service in the first place, or to compensate for an unfairly extended or difficult procedure as a result of service providers' incompetence or desire to solicit bribes.

¹⁰⁹ Other findings from this research show that paying a bribe is largely socially acceptable. Therefore, on the surface, citizens would have no incentive to hide or disguise this behaviour; however, it is still possible that there is a still a culture of pretending to hide the behaviour or wanting to be seen as reluctant to pay a bribe, though these dynamics were not investigated in the research.

¹¹⁰ Participants and potential participants were assured that all information would be kept anonymous, and their personal details would not be shared outside of Magenta. All necessary quality assurance and data protection procedures were closely followed during the FGDs.

only a few exceptions, Afghans frequently engage in corrupt behaviours, due to the lack of an alternative (if they want to complete a service) and the benefits they derive from these behaviours. One driver of these behaviours is the lack of social sanctions levied against those who participate in corruption, including both citizens and service providers. Meanwhile, the experience of recruiting participants for this study confirms that citizens actually expect and fear some sort of punishment for speaking out against corruption—i.e. essentially for engaging in a behaviour to fight corruption. This exemplifies the entrenched nature of corruption in Afghanistan; citizens widely understand that corruption is harmful, but the balance of power between citizens and the government is such that they feel unable to do anything about it.

REVISITING THE HYPOTHESES

At the start of this report we established five hypotheses to guide our research:

1

Initial hypothesis: Afghan citizens engage in corruption because the benefits of doing so (in terms of more efficient service provision for citizens), outweigh the costs (in terms of financial cost for citizens, and the consequences of social sanctions).

The first hypothesis was proven correct by the research. In fact, Afghan citizens concede to engaging in corruption for highly practical and logistical reasons. As mentioned throughout this report, it is nearly impossible for citizens to complete basic service processes without paying bribes. The benefits of corruption for citizens are massive, the costs of corruption are small (with the most significant cost often being the cost of the bribe) and the risks of not engaging in corruption are prohibitively high for most citizens.

2

Initial hypothesis: Citizens have low self-efficacy to resist corruption, due to lack of information about their rights and “correct” service provision, and the perception that complaint mechanisms are non-functional or could lead to retribution.

The second hypothesis was somewhat disproved by the research. First, paying bribes is not always a result of low self-efficacy, but can sometimes be a manifestation of citizens’ self-efficacy. That is, often citizens utilise corruption to benefit themselves and to complete their tasks quicker, in the face of a system that is largely dysfunctional. It is important to note that this is sometimes but not always the case; indeed, there are some instances in which citizens described themselves

as incapable of resisting corruption—in line with this hypothesis—but it was not initially expected that many citizens would describe corruption as a tool they use to achieve their own aims.

The second part of the hypothesis was confirmed by the research: citizens' lack of information was a contributing factor to paying a bribe. In some cases, citizens did not realize that they were paying a bribe due to their lack of knowledge about the process, and in some cases citizens realized they were paying a bribe but acknowledged that they didn't have sufficient information about the official process to resist.

Third, the research did confirm that citizens do not trust complaint mechanisms to function properly, which is likely a contributing factor to citizens' willingness to pay bribes; that is, if the complaint mechanisms were fully functional and citizens knew that they could rectify the situation by submitting a complaint, citizens would likely pay bribes less often."

3

Initial hypothesis: Small bribes under a certain threshold and certain types of specific behaviours (such as mild forms of nepotism) are not considered corruption by Afghans.

This was largely disproven by the research, which showed clearly that Afghans know that even very small bribes and minor acts of nepotism are forms of corruption.

4

Initial hypothesis: Afghans are aware of what corruption is and recognize that it's a problem, but the fact that they engage in corruption nevertheless indicates that there are psychological and sociological factors at play.

This hypothesis was verified by the research. The fact that the third hypothesis was disproven actually strengthens the case for this hypothesis. That is, if Afghans recognise that bribes of all

amounts count as corruption, then the problem of corruption is not related to information or understanding, but rather related to psychological and sociological dynamics.

5

Initial hypothesis: Most citizens are not aware of the correct service process for most government services in the security and justice sectors.

This hypothesis was confirmed by the research; with the exception of the process to obtain a Tazkera, the vast majority of respondents were not familiar with the service procedures. In addition, lack of knowledge about the service procedure did seem to affect citizens' willingness to pay a bribe, as mentioned above. Not having information made citizens less aware of when they were paying a bribe (especially among women), and less able/willing to speak up even when they did realize they were paying a bribe.

Taken together, the findings indicate a large degree of cognitive dissonance on the part of citizens. They are aware that corruption is harmful, counter to their religion, and damaging to their country, but nevertheless often pursue opportunities to pay bribes or use personal connections when they stand to benefit from such practices. While acknowledging that public servants should be condemned for corruption, citizens fail to apply the same logic to their own behaviour. This is also reflected in citizens' comments about how they were treated by public servants: citizens often maintained that public servants were respectful and professional even if they engaged in corruption. In this way, citizens are implicitly recognising that even individuals who take part in nefarious practices can still be good people—a perspective that citizens also apply to themselves, in part to justify their own corrupt behaviour and in order to maintain the conviction that they themselves are still fundamentally good people.

GLOSSARY



Amlak

Land property office

Mahram

Chaperone/escort for Afghan women

Mushkiltarashi

Making difficulties (verb)

Shirini

"Sweets," or a small bribe

Tazkera

National ID of Afghanistan; required by Afghans to access most public services

ANNEX 1

1 - DRIVING LICENSE PATHWAY HERAT

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this exercise is to develop an official, approved map of each service delivery pathway. This map should be as detailed as possible, and should ideally be approved by a senior official in a relevant ministry (see next page).

KEY POINTS TO COVER

- **What offices does a citizen need to visit?**

License office within the Traffic department – public health department – traffic education department for the course registration and Bank (New Kabul Bank)

- **What paperwork does a citizen need for each step of the process?**

Filling of the form and receiving the health form for obtaining the confirmation on his health situation on physical and mental condition.

- **What other information does a citizen need to provide? (signatures, witnesses, etc)**

Receiving the guarantee form/letter and providing the information on the guarantee form. The guarantee form is a new procedure it is to make sure the person is reachable and not involve in illegal activities and to find him easier when an accident is occurred. Colour copy of Tazkira and 4 passport size photos.

- **What are the fees for each step of the process? (This should only include official fees)**

Applicant will be paying 10 AFN for health condition form, 510 AFN for license that is payable to the new Kabul bank.

1

■ **How long does each step take?**

2 to 3 days for processing the documents that includes obtaining signatures from traffic department, public health department and depositing the bank payment. 12 days for the duration of completing the driving course.

■ **Has this process been revised recently? If so, when, in what way, and why (e.g. was the process changed to curb corruption, and if so has this been successful)?**

Not any significant changes made. But, based on the decision made by general attorney since almost one year ago, the person who is applying to get the driving license should prepare a guarantee letter but this is not welcomed by the people. In past such guarantee letter was not in place.

■ **Is this process different for certain demographics (e.g. women)?**

No the process is the same for everybody.

■ **Is information about this process publicly available for citizens? If so, where?**

Yes, it is available on social media and other media at the local and national level and people can get the info.

OTHER GUIDANCE

■ **If possible, have the official describe the entire process start to finish, to the best of their ability, covering the aspects mentioned above.**

The condition for getting a driving license is that the person should have completed 18 years of age and should have his original Tazkira in hand. The person will then receive the health form and be referred to the public health department for check-up. At the public health department they will check his/her eye sight and determine the blood type. After the confirmation of the public health department the person goes back to the traffic department. If the person is new and want to get the driving license for the first time then he will be introduced to the driving course to take the lessons for 12 days. If the person is going to renew his driving license then he will be handed a bank tariff to deposit the license price in to the bank (new Kabul bank). The bank receipt is then going to the audit department of the finance department (Mostaufiat) located inside the traffic department to submit the bank receipt. And the applicant submits all the documents to the driving license office for registration and issuance of the license. That is to say that all of the processes should be done by the applicant/requester.

24 November 2018

Herat, Afghanistan

I hereby certify that the procedure for **Driving License**, as described in the attached document is the official and approved process for accessing this service. I confirm that all the information provided in the attached is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Signed on Dari version by:

Name: Syed Gulab Shah Yousufi

Position: Driving License head herat province

Ministry: Mol - Herat

Date: 24 November 2018

3

NOMA
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MAGENTA
SCALABLE AND SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

رهنمود مصاحبه ها با معلومات دهنده گان کلیدی برای مصاحبه با کارمندان دولتی (اخذ جواز رانندگی)

هدف

هدف این تمرین تهیه نقشه رسمی و منظور شده هر یک از راه های ارائه خدمات میباشد. این نقشه باید تا حد ممکن بطور مفصل تهیه و بهتر است اگر توسط یکی از کارمندان ارشد وزارت خانه مربوطه منظور گردد (به صفحه بعدی توجه نمایید).

نکات کلیدی که باید تحت پوشش قرار گیرند:

- یک شهروند به بازدید نمودن از کدام دفاتر (ادارات) نیاز دارد؟
- آماریت پلیس جواز رانندگی - ریاست صحت عامه - آماریت نسیم و تربیه - بانک

- برای اجرای هر مرحله این روند/پروسه، شهروند به کدام مراحل (اجرائی که روی کاغذ صورت میگیرد) را طی نماید؟
خانم چوری و اخذ فورم صحت عامه و تسهیل ریاست صحت عامه و صحت جسمی و روانی متقاضی.

- شهروند باید کدام معلومات دیگر را تهیه نماید؟ (امضاء ها، شهادت، و غیره)
شامل شدن به کورس قوانین و مقررات ترافیک اخذ و ترتیب فورم ضمانت خوافتوایی راننده تذکره تاجیت چهارچی و قطع کس

- فیس هر مرحله این روند، به چند افغانی بالغ میگردد؟ (این باید صرف شامل فیس های رسمی باشد)
۱۰ افغانی بابت فورم صحت متقاضی مبلغ ۵۱۰ افغانی قیمت جواز راننده گی کم رسماً توسط تسهیل متقاضی تحویل بانک مالگور
نوت تحویل جواز راننده گی در کابل بانک است

- هر مرحله چقدر وقت را در بر میگیرد؟
مدت ۱۲ روز فرایندی کورس ۲ الی ۳ روزه صحت طی مراحل پروسیجر تحویل پول
تجدید وثیت جواز راننده گی به دفاتر انراج مربوطه

1



د افغانستان رویتیا خار دیدمان شفافیت افغانستان
INTEGRITY WATCH AFGHANISTAN

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- آیا این روند درین اواخر بازیابی/اصلاح گردیده است؟ اگر بلی، چه وقت، و به چه ترتیب، و چرا؟ (بطور مثال آیا بمنظور کاهش فساد، در پروسه تغییر ایجاد گردیده بود، اگر بلی، آیا این کار موفق بود؟

خیر هیچ گونه تغییری بوجود نیامده بلکه حسب نروم دیرکردن مالی نوی کاروانال ج ۱۱ از متقاضیان به جهت اخذ ویا تجدید جواز راننده گی خویش بر این اداره مراجع می نمایند و بابت ضمانت خوا نمودن و ترتیب کار این عمل با نام قضای متقاضیان رو برو گردیده است
نقته: در گذشته ضمانت خطا وجود نداشت

- آیا این پروسه برای کنگوری دیگری از اشخاص (مانند زنان) متفاوت بود؟

خیر

- آیا معلومات در رابطه با این پروسه بصورت عامه در دسترس مردم قرار دارد؟ اگر بلی، در کجا؟

بلی از طریق شبکه های اجتماعی و میاژای و سایر رسانه های ملی و عملی از قبیل رادیو و تلویزیون به دسترس عام قرار دارد.

رهنمایی های بیشتر

- اگر ممکن باشند، از کارمند بخواهید تا پروسه را از شروع الی اخیر بصورت مفصل تا حد توانمندی خویش تشریح نماید، طوری که تمام جنبه های که در فوق از آن تذکر بعمل آمد، تحت پوشش قرار گیرد.

سر ایوا اخذ جواز راننده گی طوری است که شخص متقاضی در صورت که سن ۱۸ سالگی را تکمیل کرده باشد با ارائه اصل تذکره - تابعیت خویش نروم صبی اخذ جهت معاینات صبی بریاست مقدم صحت عامه مراجع و بعد از تعرفین ریاست صحت عامه در صورتیکه جدید جواز راننده گی اخذ نماید شامل کورس تعلیم و تربیت در صورت تجدید جواز تعرفین تحویلی اخذ و به بانک مراجع می نماید. سپس به مدیریت کنترل مستوفیت متقیم مدیریت ترافیک جهت ویزه کنترول مراجع نموده و در اخذ جهت تجدید جواز راننده گی وثیقت راجع به آن به این مدیریت اسناد خویش را ارائه میدارد و قابل ذکر است که طی مراحل پروسیجر متذکره صرف توسط شخص متقاضی صورت گرفته می تواند.



... نومبر 2018

هرات افغانستان

بدینوسیله تصدیق مینمایم که پروسیجرهای حاصله از **اداره جوازهای ساختمانی**، طوریکه در سندی که ضمیمه این رهنمود میباشد، تشریح گردیده است، یک پروسه رسمی و منظور شده برای دسترسی به این خدمت میباشد. اینجانب تایید مینمایم تمام معلوماتی که این ضمیمه تا جایی که من میدانم، بصورت دقیق فراهم گردیده است.

امضاء:

اسم: **عمری خان سید علی محمد هراتی**
 وظیفه: **آر جوازهای ساختمانی و جوازهای ترانسپورت**
 وزارت: **امور داخله**
 تاریخ: ... نومبر 2018



ANNEX 2

Focus Group Guide

JOURNEY MAPPING 4

Processing a marriage agreement in the courts

Date:	xxx
Duration:	2 hours
Facilitator:	xxx
Introduction:	<p>Salam! Our names are _____. We are researchers carrying out a research for Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA). The mission of integrity watch is to put corruption under the spotlight through community monitoring, research and advocacy. IWA collaborates with UNDP and is interested in your experiences and perception regarding corruption within the Afghan government. Whilst the results of this study will be public, we will keep confidential your names and your personal identifications.</p>
Format:	<p>This session will last around two hours. First, we will talk about your experience while going through the process of processing your marriage agreement in court. Then, we will ask you if you faced any petty corruption during this process and how you felt about it. Lastly, we will be interested in discussing the communities' perceptions of people who refuse to pay bribes.</p> <p>Equal participation of all is important in these discussions and every opinion and experience matters to us. Discussions will be led by one of us while the other will take notes. Please note that any quotations of this discussion will be anonymised. Your names will not appear on any public report.</p> <p>First, we would like you to confirm your consent to participate in this research by signing this document.</p>

Date:								
Place of Interview:								
FGD reference:	FGD Marriage agreement Kabul 4.A.Male							
Respondent number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Consent to participate in the research (yes/no)								
Signature								

Background questions

- How long have you been living the area?
- Where were you before?

A. Citizens' awareness and experience of the journey

Moderator: "First, we would like to ask you about the procedure you had to go through to process your marriage agreement"

1. When did you go through the process of processing your marriage agreement (within the last 18 months)?
2. What did you need to do exactly to process your marriage agreement? Describe what you did step by step & list the documentation you had to provide
 - *Note to moderator: women should only describe the steps that they personally went through.*
 - *Female FGD: Did a man help you complete the process? If yes, how and why?*
3. How did you find out about how to complete the procedure? Did anyone advise you or help you through the process?
4. Did you go to the Court of Justice by yourself? If not, who came with you?
5. What is the normal official cost of processing a marriage agreement? How long does it normally take to process a marriage agreement?
6. How much did the process cost you personally? How long did it take you personally to process the agreement?
7. Did you face any difficulties getting to the places you needed to go to process the land deed at any point of the process? (*Moderator: we are trying to capture if there were issues during the journey to the courts, bank, etc*)

Moderator: "Now we would like you to describe your experience while completing this procedure and the quality of your interactions with the Court of Justice & County councillor."

8. Overall, how did you feel during your entire experience of processing your marriage agreement?
 - Negative, neutral, positive?
 - Were you satisfied or dissatisfied? Please describe why
 - Did you feel any negative emotions? Please describe why

- *Note to moderator: Please describe what we mean by 'negative emotions' (e.g. frustration, anger, fear, or shame) if you feel the respondents don't understand the question or are hesitant.*
- *Note to moderator: we need to capture if the participants suffered from a delay of services (which is a form of abuse of power)*

9. Do you think women and men get a different treatment when going through the process of obtaining a drivers' license? If yes:
- Why do you think this is the case?
 - When during the procedure of process your marriage agreement are these differences most significant?

10. Step by step narration:

Moderator: "We are now going to go step by step through the process you undertook to process your marriage agreement and ask you more details on your experience during each of these steps. "

Note to moderator: go through the columns step by step.

EXAMPLE:

Step 1. When you visited the Mahkama wasayiq with a marriage request letter:

- How long did you spend in the building during this step? **(record answers in table)**
- Was completing this step a positive, neutral or negative experience? **(record answers in table)**
- What did you think of the public servants you interacted with during this step of the process? (respect, diligence, impartiality, etc.) If not, describe how & why **(record answers in table)**
- Did you have different expectations to this step of the process? If yes, please describe how & why **(record answers in table)**

Step 2. When you visited the County Councillor to obtaining his signature on the marriage certificate form:

- How long did you spend in the building during this step? **(record answers in table)**
- Was completing this step a positive, neutral or negative experience? **(record answers in table)**
- What did you think of the public servants you interacted with during this step of the process? (respect, diligence, impartiality, etc.) If not, describe how & why **(record answers in table)**
- Did you have different expectations to this step of the process? If yes, please describe how & why **(record answers in table)**

Etc. => **Go through the same questions for each step**

B. Instances of corruption & emotions felt

Moderator: "Thank you. Now we would like to ask you about whether you experienced any abuse of power or corruption during the process and how you felt about it"

11. First, how would you define petty corruption in your own words? What are the actions that a public official can take that correspond to corruption? For instance, do small bribes constitute corruption? Or favouritism?
12. Did you personally encounter any petty corruption during the procedure of processing your marriage agreement? *(note to moderator: explain that to us corruption can mean: bribery, abuse of power, nepotism)*
13. Were you expecting to have to pay a bribe during this process before you started it?
14. Why do you think this/these person(s) ask for bribes to people like you? Do you think everyone in this service asks for bribes or only a few? Or only that person?

15. Step by step narration:

Moderator: "We are now going to go step by step through the process you undertook to process your marriage agreement and ask you more details on your experience with corruption at every stage of the process."

- *Note to Moderator: we want to capture the narrative and the emotions of the respondents. If you feel the respondents need prompting regarding the emotions they felt when corruption occurred, please ask the following questions: Were you surprised? Were you frustrated? Were you ashamed? Did it make you feel bad about yourself?*
- **Note to moderator: go through the columns step by step.**

EXAMPLE:

Step 1 When you visited the Mahkama wasayiq with a marriage request letter:

- Were you asked to pay extra money (tchai, shirini, bakshish) to someone while going through this process? (Yes/No by respondent)
- If yes, how did the person make you understand you needed to give him money or provide a service? (asked directly?)
- What exactly did you need to provide him with? Exact amount paid / exact service

- Please describe your feelings when the person asked you for money or made it more difficult for you to go through the procedure.
- Did you encounter any other forms of abuse while completing this step?

Step 2. When you visited the County Councillor to obtaining his signature on the marriage certificate form:

- Were you asked to pay extra money (tchai, shirini, bakshish) to someone while going through this process? (Yes/No by respondent)
- If yes, how did the person make you understand you needed to give him money or provide a service? (asked directly?)
- What exactly did you need to provide him with? Exact amount paid / exact service
- Please describe your feelings when the person asked you for money or made it more difficult for you to go through the procedure.
- Did you encounter any other forms of abuse while completing this step?

⇒ **Go through the same questions for each step**

Etc

C. Actions taken

16. Did you talk about the fact that you had to pay a bribe or provide a favour to anyone when you came back home? If yes, who? (*Moderator: list: family? Friends? Employer?*) If not, why didn't you talk about it?
17. Do you think some of these requests from the civil servants deserve a condemnation? If yes, which ones? Are there practices (such as asking for a small amount, a meal etc) that you think are fair and justified? If yes, which are they: how much money or what type of services?
18. Did you report the fact that this person asked you for a bribe officially to any authorities: elders, shuras, mullahs, community development council, wakil, formal institutions...? If yes, what did they say or do?

D. Community perceptions with regards to people who refuse to pay a bribe

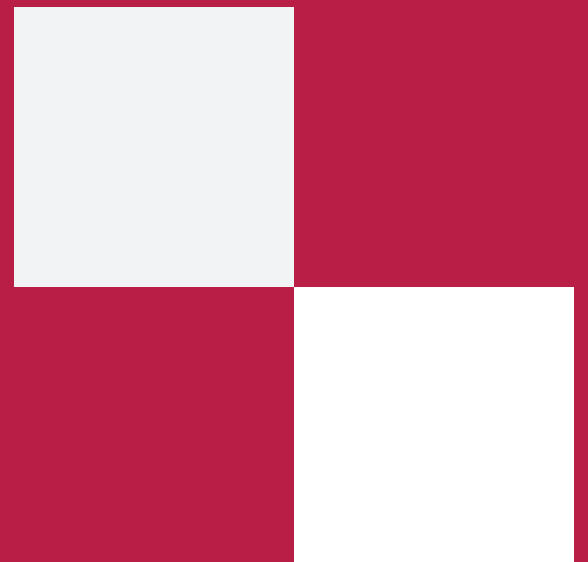
19. Do you know anyone who refused to pay a bribe within your community? If yes, who?
20. If yes, can you tell us what you know about how it happened:
- a) When did the person refuse to pay a bribe? (in which circumstances and to whom)
 - b) What did the person say or do exactly to avoid paying a bribe?
 - c) What happened to this person after they refused to pay a bribe?
21. What did your friends, family and community think about this person's behaviour? Did they think it was good or bad?

Profiles of participants:

Date:								
Place of Interview:								
Respondent number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Name of respondent:								
Place of residence:								
Civil status:								
Age:								
Gender:								
Education:								
Ethnic Group:								
Occupation:								
Tel number:								
Consent to participate in the research (yes/no)								
Signature								

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