



TRANSPARENCY  
INTERNATIONAL  
ZAMBIA



# **2024 CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX**

## **HIGHLIGHTS REPORT**

**FEBRUARY 2025**

## **Analytical Brief: 2024 Corruption Perception Index Highlights Report**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) released by Transparency International reveals that most countries have made little to no progress in tackling public sector corruption in more than a decade, as 56% of countries are scoring below the global average of 43/100. For the seventh year in a row, Denmark leads the CPI with a score of 90/100 while Finland and Singapore take the second and third positions with respective scores of 88/100 and 84/100. Unfortunately, New Zealand, with a score of 83/100, leaves the top three performers this year for the first time since 2012.

As the world grapples with the climate crisis, corruption poses a huge obstacle and is a silent threat to addressing and redressing the climate crisis. The inadequacy of transparency and accountability mechanisms increases corruption risks in climate finance, as climate funds for mitigation or adaptation may be misused or embezzled. Climate corruption also takes the form of undue influence, revolving doors between the public and private sectors, and regulatory capture by the private sector. In most developed countries, undue influence in climate policy undermines climate global progress while the influence of lobbying presents challenges, which include watering down of regulations, stalling transition to renewables and fossil fuel phasing out, and comprising actions in attaining international climate commitments.

In the 2024 CPI, Africa as a continent has an average score of 32/100, while the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) as a region has an average score of 33/100. Despite scoring below the SSA regional average, **Zambia's CPI score has increased by 2 points from 37/100 in 2023 to 39/100 in 2024 and the**

**rank has improved by 6-places from 98/180 in 2023 to 92/180 in 2024.** Our analysis reveals that Zambia's CPI score increased largely due to reduced bribery in business operations, as triggered by electronic government service reforms, such as the digitalization of the mining licence application process, enhanced beneficial ownership requirements in procurement, and the increase in the number of public institutions promulgating service charters.

However, **it is also notable that the 2-point improvement in 2024 as compared to the 4-point improvement in 2023 implies that efforts aimed at combating public sector corruption are on a declining trend as opposed to accelerating.** Therefore, if government takes no corrective action to reignite the anti-corruption fight, the CPI score is likely to be maintain or to decline during the year 2025. In light of these findings, Transparency International Zambia calls on the Zambian Government to:

- Accelerate efforts aimed at combating public sector corruption in order to secure future improvements in the CPI score for Zambia.
- Place integrity at the centre of climate efforts, as this is key to achieving real impact in effectively combatting the climate crisis.
- Finalize the guidelines and rules for the full operationalization of the Access to Information Act in order to ensure transparency, accountability and effective media scrutiny.
- Address the growing perception of corruption in Courts, unfair dispensing of justice and the abuse of public funds through out of court settlements managed through the State Chambers.

# 1 - GLOBAL AND REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

## 1.1 Global Trends

- The 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) released by Transparency International reveals that most countries have made little to no progress in tackling public sector corruption in more than a decade.
- **Two-thirds** of countries score **below 50/100** on the 2024 CPI, with a **global average score of 43/100** and 56% of countries scoring below the global average.
- For the seventh year in a row, **Denmark** leads the CPI with a score of **90/100**. **Finland** and **Singapore** take the second and third positions with respective scores of **88/100** and **84/100**. **New Zealand** with a score of **83/100** leaves the top three performers this year for the first time since 2012.
- **Luxembourg (81), Norway (81), Switzerland (81), Sweden (80), the Netherlands (78), Australia (77), Iceland (77), and Ireland (77)** are among the top ten performers on the 2024 CPI.
- However, while countries with high CPI scores may appear to have low levels of corruption, among these countries are financial hubs that are often magnets for corrupt officials and actors seeking to launder and safeguard illicit wealth. Further, despite recent progress – these countries are not doing enough to tackle transnational corruption.
- On the other hand, countries experiencing conflict or with highly restricted freedoms and weak democracies rank at the bottom of the Index. Specifically, **South Sudan (8), Somalia (9), Venezuela (10), Syria (12), Equatorial Guinea (13), Eritrea (13), Libya (13), Yemen (130), Nicaragua**

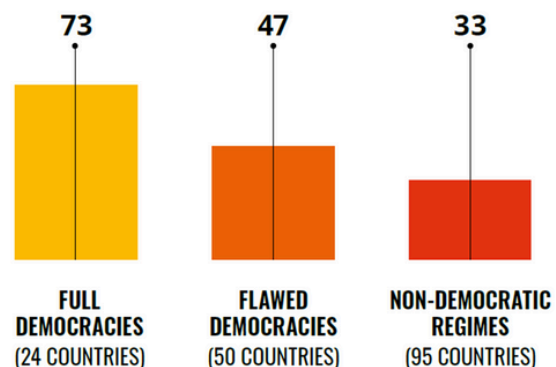
**(140), Sudan (15) and North Korea (15)** are the ten least scoring countries on the 2024 CPI.

- As in previous years, **Western Europe** remains the highest scoring region with an average of **64/100**. **Sub-Saharan Africa (33/100)**, and **Eastern Europe and Central Asia (35/100)** continue to trail as the lowest scoring regions on the CPI.
- The CPI highlights the stark contrast between nations with strong institutions and free and fair elections, and those with repressive authoritarian regimes.
- Full democracies have a CPI average of **73/100**, while flawed democracies average CPI score is **47/100**, and non-democratic regimes – an average CPI score of **33/100**. Highlighting that, with exception of some outliers, and more broadly – democracy and strong institutions are crucial for combatting corruption robustly and effectively.
- Likewise, countries with guaranteed civic space are shown to typically control corruption better.

**Figure 1: Average CPI 2024 score for different types of government**

### AVERAGE CPI 2024 SCORE FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF GOVERNMENT\*

Strong democracies vastly outperform flawed ones and authoritarian regimes in control of corruption.



\* Based on the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) democracy classification for the year 2023. The total number of countries covered here is lower than the number covered by the CPI, as the EIU does not provide data for 13 of the countries in our sample. Data available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/political-regime-eiu>.

“ No nation is immune, and ignoring corruption comes at a cost we can no longer afford. ”  
 Transparency International

## 1.2 Unpacking the 2024 CPI Theme

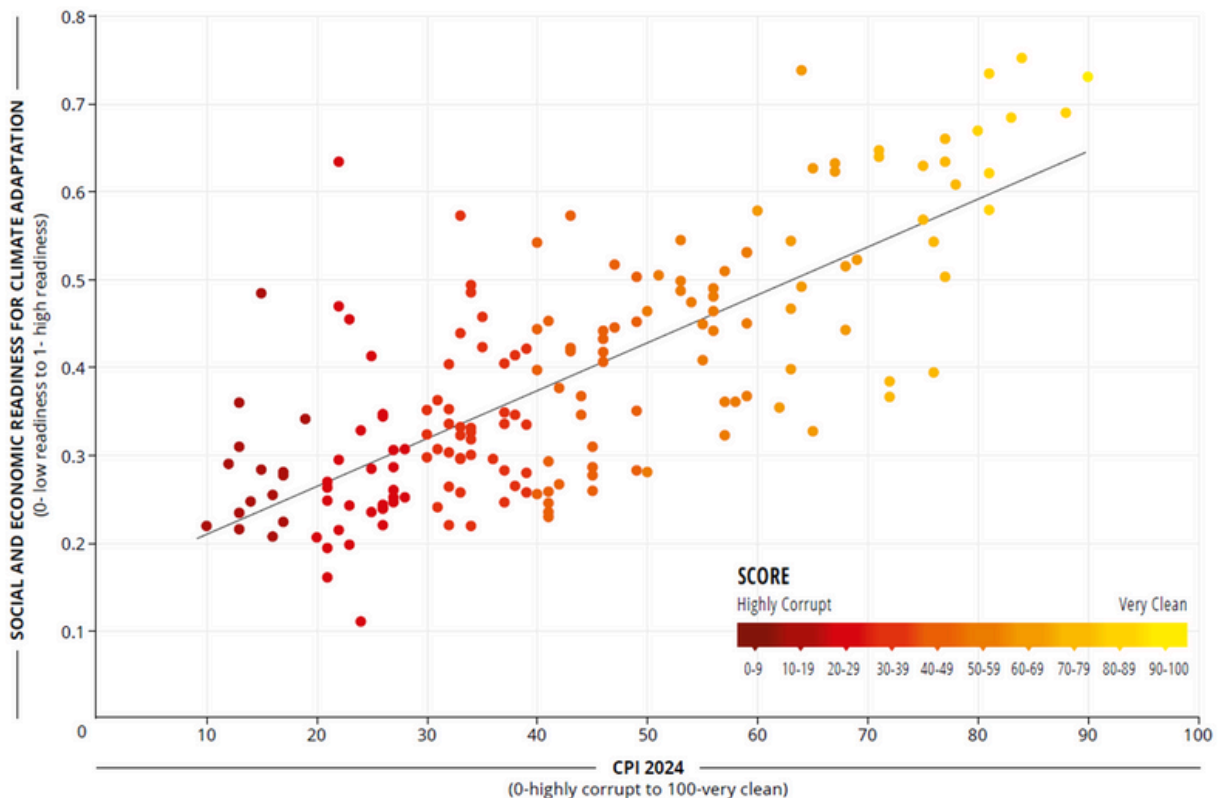
- As the world grapples with the climate crisis, corruption poses a huge obstacle and is a silent threat to addressing and redressing the climate crisis.
- The inadequacy of transparency and accountability mechanisms increases corruption risks in climate finance, including that, climate funds for

mitigation or adaption maybe misused or embezzled.

- Climate corruption also takes the form of undue influence, revolving doors between the public and private sectors, and regulatory capture by the private sector.
- Undue influence in climate policy undermines climate global progress the most in developed countries while the influence of lobbying, in countries with relatively low perceived corruption, presents challenges, which include watering down of regulations, stalling transition to renewables and fossil fuel phasing out, and comprising actions in attaining international climate commitments.

**Figure 2: Corruption and Readiness to adapt to climate change**

Countries with lower corruption levels generally show better readiness to face the challenges posed by climate change. However, that is not enough – many are still not adopting the ambitious measures necessary to tackle the climate crisis, due in part to undue influence by businesses.



Source: Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative Country Index (ND-GAIN, 2024) and Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2024 (2025)

“ For decades, lobbyists from powerful industries, especially fossil fuel companies and car manufacturers, have unduly influenced politicians to derail efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. ”

Transparency International

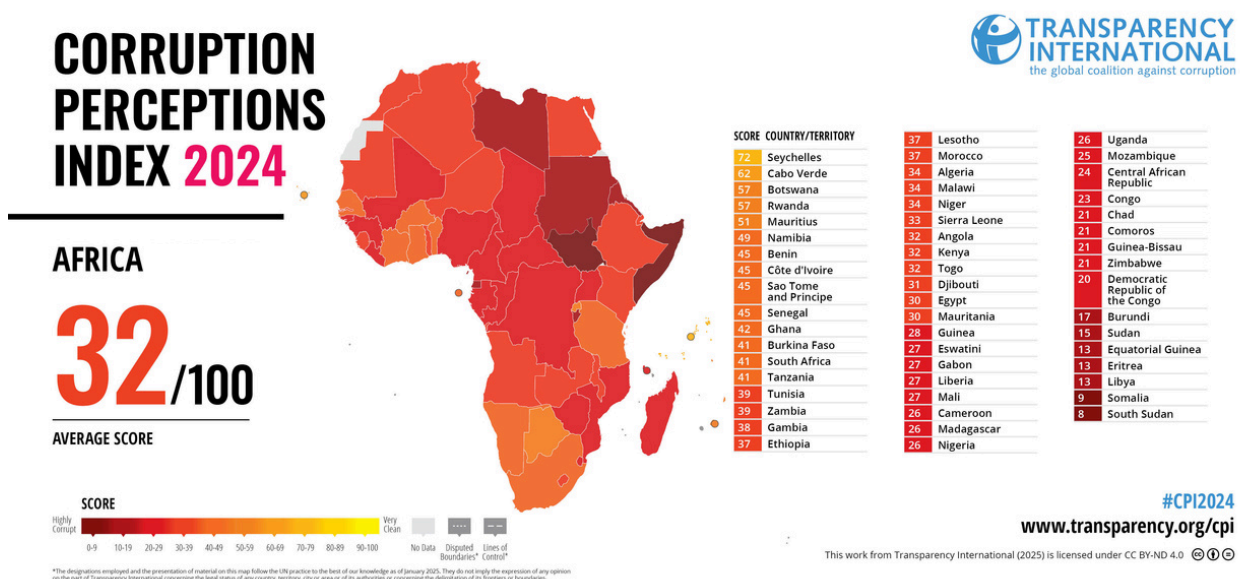
- Further, in countries or jurisdictions where corruption is pervasive, corruption also severely undermines the enforcement of environmental laws and policies, leading to compromised decision-making that results in unfair and undesired outcomes socially and environmentally.
- Combatting corruption is critical in tackling environmental crime, which is now the fourth largest form of organised crime, generating annual profits for criminal networks at estimates between US\$82 billion and US\$238 billion.<sup>1</sup>
- In countries with perceived high corruption levels, environmental defenders are at far higher risk of

violence, intimidation and murder. Of more than the 1,000 environmental defenders killed since 2019, almost all of them were in countries with CPI scores below 50.

### 1.3 Regional Trends - Africa

- **Africa** as a continent has an average score of **32/100**, while the **Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)** as a region has an average score of **33/100**. The SSA region continues to be the lowest performing region.
- **Seychelles** continues to lead the region on the CPI, with a score of **72/100**, followed by **Cabo Verde**, **62/100**. **Botswana and Rwanda** are both in third place, scoring **57/100**, while **Mauritius** rounds up the top five on the continent with a score of **51/100**.
- The bottom performers in the region are **South Sudan (8/100)**, **Somalia (9/100)**, and **Libya, Eritrea and Equatorial Guinea** are the third least scorers in the region, with all of them scoring **13/100**.

Figure 3: 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index Results for Africa

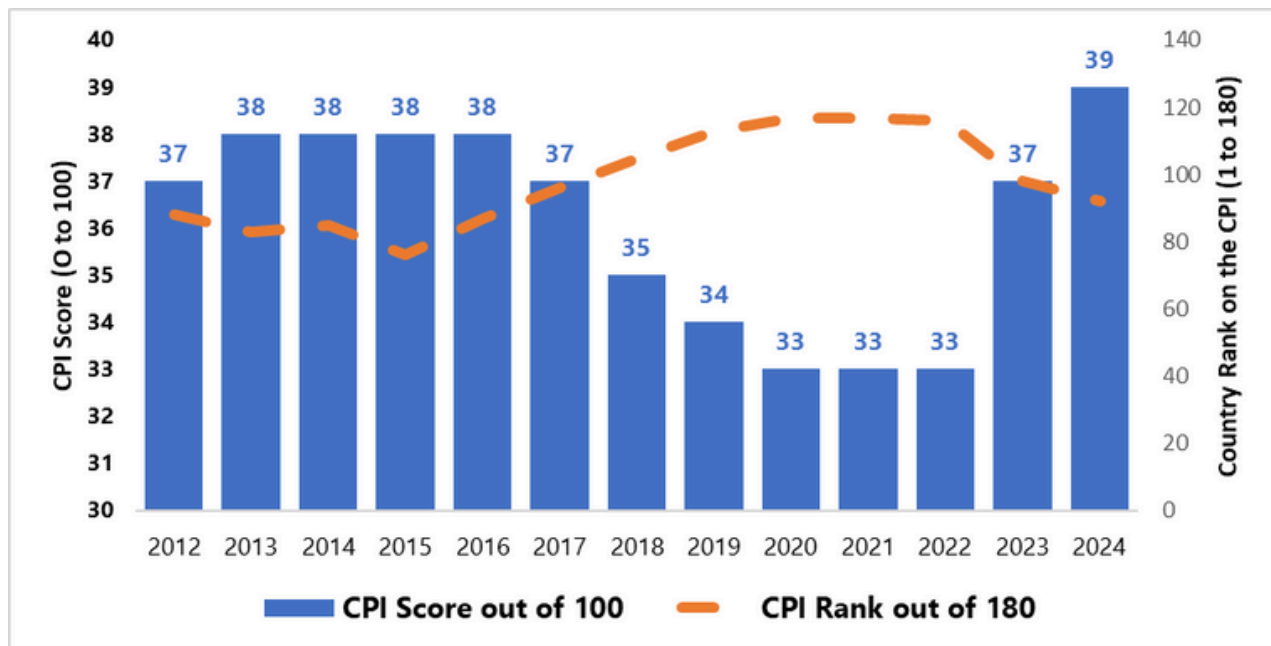


[1] European Commission, “Environmental Crime Directive” - [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/law-and-governance/environmental-compliance-assurance/environmental-crime-directive\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/law-and-governance/environmental-compliance-assurance/environmental-crime-directive_en)

- In the SSA region, weak corruption measures undermine climate action.
- Notwithstanding the very low regional performance in 2024, there were African countries that invested in anti-corruption and made remarkable progress.
- **South Africa (41)** demonstrates a worrying trend; the country has dropped three points since 2019. In 2025, South Africa is poised to host the G20 Leaders’ Summit, giving it an opportunity for increased climate finance commitment

## 2 - ZAMBIA’S PERFORMANCE IN 2024

Figure 4: Zambia’s CPI Performance, 2012–2024

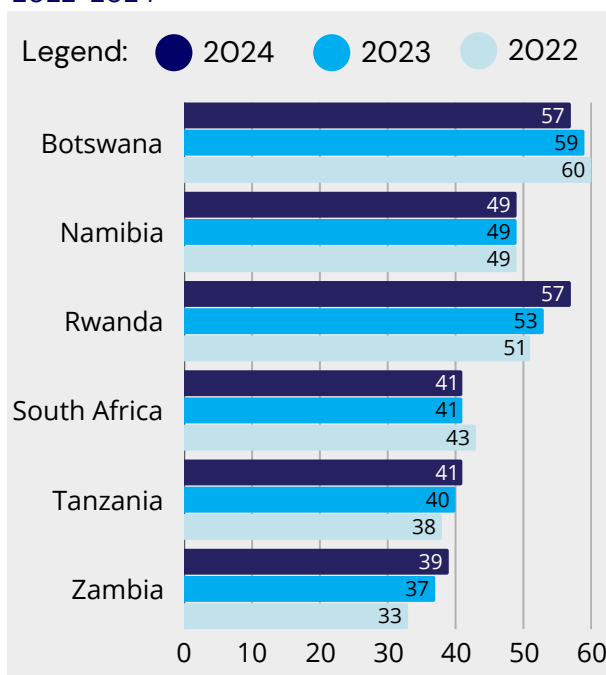


Zambia’s CPI score has increased by **2 points** from **37/100** in 2023 to **39/100** in 2024 and the rank has improved by **6-places** from **98/180** in 2023 to **92/180** in 2024. This means that **91 countries performed better than Zambia** in 2024 as compared to **97 countries** in 2023. Further, **this is the second time that the CPI score for Zambia has increased within the past decade, after increasing by 4 points in 2023.**

### 2.1 Zambia’s Comparative Performance

In 2024, **Rwanda’s** score increased by **4 points** to **57/100**, while **Tanzania’s** score increased by 1 point to **41/100**. **South Africa**

Figure 5: Zambia’s comparative performance, 2022–2024





and **Namibia's** scores were maintained at **41/100** and **49/100** respectively, while **Botswana's** score dropped by 2 points to **57/100**.

## 2.2 Analysis of data sources

In 2024, Transparency International used **9 data sources to compute Zambia's CPI**. Out of the 9 data sources, only the World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey indicated a significant change, while the rest

of the changes were not significant. **Table 1** presents a summary of the changes in the underlying data sources in 2024 as compared to 2023.

The analysis of data sources implies that Zambia's CPI score increased from 37/100 in 2023 to 39/100 in 2024, due to the +23 improvement in the World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey, as all the other data sources recorded insignificant changes.

**Table 1: Summary of results by Data Sources, 2022–2024**

DATA SOURCE	2022	2023	2024	CHANGES
The African Development Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment	34	32	34	+2
The Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index	21	33	34	+1
Economist Intelligence Unit Country Risk Service Ratings	37	37	35	-2
The Global Insight Country Risk Ratings	35	47	46	-1
The PRS Group International Country Risk Guide	32	32	33	+1
The World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment	27	27	27	0
World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey	30	-	53	+23*
World Justice Project Rule of Law Index	36	36	35	-1
The Varieties of Democracy Project	49	54	53	-1
<b>Corruption Perceptions Index (Average)</b>	<b>33.44</b>	<b>37.25</b>	<b>38.89</b>	

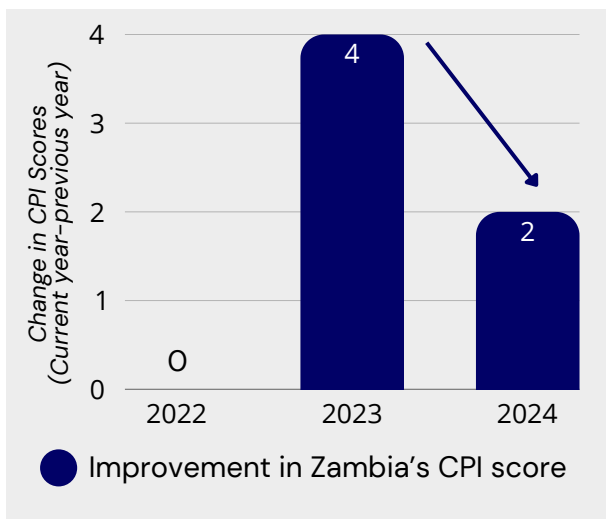
\*Indicates that the change in the data source is greater than 2 points

### 2.3 What caused the changes in the World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey?

The World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey measures the **prevalence of bribery in business operations**, including imports and exports, taxation, procurement and judicial decisions. Further, it also collects perceptions on the level of diversion of public funds to companies, individuals or groups due to corruption. Therefore, we attributed this improvement to reduced bribery in business operations, to **electronic government service reforms**, such as the digitalization of the mining licence application process, **enhanced beneficial ownership requirements** in procurement, and the increase in the number of public institutions **promulgating service charters**.

### 2.4 Assessing the Risk of future decline

Figure 6: Changes in CPI scores, 2022-24



As indicated by **Figure 6**, the 2-point improvement in 2024 as compared to the 4-point improvement in 2023 implies that efforts aimed at combating public sector corruption are on a declining trend as opposed to accelerating. **Therefore, if**

government takes no corrective action to reignite the anti-corruption fight, the CPI score is likely to be maintain or to decline during the year 2025.

## 3 - CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) released by Transparency International reveals that most countries have made little to no progress in tackling public sector corruption in more than a decade, as 56% of countries are scoring below the global average of 43/100. As the world grapples with the climate crisis, corruption poses a huge obstacle and is a silent threat to addressing the climate crisis. In the 2024 CPI, Africa as a continent has an average score of 32/100, while the Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) as a region has an average score of 33/100. It is therefore also notable that as the SSA region continues to be the lowest performing region, the weak corruption measures, underpinning this performance, may undermine climate action.

Zambia's CPI score has increased by 2 points from 37/100 in 2023 to 39/100 in 2024 and the rank has improved by 6-places from 98/180 in 2023 to 92/180 in 2024. The analysis of the data sources reveals that Zambia's CPI score increased largely due to the +23 improvement in the World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey, as all the other data sources recorded insignificant changes. TI-Z attributes this improvement in the CPI score to reduced bribery in business operations, as triggered by electronic government service reforms, such as the digitalization of the mining license application process, enhanced beneficial ownership requirements in procurement, and the

increase in the number of public institutions promulgating service charters. However, the 2-point improvement in 2024 as compared to the 4-point improvement in 2023 implies that efforts aimed at combating public sector corruption are on a declining trend as opposed to accelerating. Therefore, if

government takes no corrective action to reignite the anti-corruption fight, the CPI score is likely to be maintain or to decline during the year 2025.

In light of these findings, Transparency International Zambia makes the following recommendations:

**Table 2: List of Recommendations, divided by Stakeholder**

STAKEHOLDER	RECOMMENDATION
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place integrity at the centre of climate efforts, as this is key to achieving real impact in effectively combatting the climate crisis.</li> <li>• Finalize the guidelines and rules for the full operationalization of the Access to Information Act in order to ensure transparency, accountability and effective media scrutiny.</li> <li>• Address the growing perception of corruption in Courts, unfair dispensing of justice and the abuse of public funds through out of court settlements managed through the State Chambers.</li> </ul>
<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND OVERSIGHT INSTITUTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance investigations, sanctions and protections to combat corruption in order to deter environmental crimes and reduce impunity</li> <li>• Take stronger action following the publication of Auditor General Reports in order to halt the continued trend of abuse of public funds, including in the CDF programme</li> </ul>
<b>INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote transparency in climate policy making and decision making by making information on climate finance, projects and contracts open, accessible and disseminated in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
<b>LOCAL ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTORS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accelerate efforts aimed at combating public sector corruption in order to secure future improvements in the CPI score for Zambia.</li> </ul>



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