

section

I

# About this Report

---

# About this Report

Strengthening the rule of law is an important objective for citizens, governments, donors, and civil society organizations around the world. To be effective, however, strengthening the rule of law requires clarity about the fundamental features of the rule of law as well as a sound methodology for its evaluation and measurement. This report presents select findings from two World Justice Project surveys: the Pakistan Justice Sector Survey, conducted in Pakistan in May and June 2016, and an extended General Population Poll, conducted in Pakistan in August and September 2016.

The General Population Poll was conducted through face-to-face interviews in 2,100 urban households distributed proportionally across the five urban areas of Faisalabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, and Quetta. This poll was designed to capture data on the experiences and perceptions of ordinary people on a variety of themes related to the rule of law, including government accountability, bribery and corruption, crime, and access to justice. The Justice Sector Survey polled 2,000 people using the same methodology as the General Population Poll and was designed to capture data on Pakistanis' views and experiences related to dispute resolution, legal awareness, legal identity, household dynamics, and gender issues.

Overall, this report represents the voices of over 4,000 people in Pakistan and their experiences with the rule of law in their country.

The data derived from both surveys is presented in this report as 11 thematic briefs, each one highlighting a different facet of the rule of law as it is experienced by the population in Pakistan. These briefs touch upon issues of accountability, corruption, fundamental rights, crime, justice – criminal, civil, and informal – as well as the role of women in Pakistani society. The thematic briefs are designed to call attention to Pakistan's situation from a national perspective, while simultaneously illuminating key changes over time, comparisons to South Asian peer countries, as well as the unique perspectives of various sub-populations of interest, such as women, low-income households, and respondents across five selected cities in Pakistan.

# Executive Findings

- 01. Perceptions of Government Accountability:** There is a high perception of impunity in Pakistan. Less than one in five Pakistanis (18%) think that a high ranking government officer publicly known to be embezzling government funds would be prosecuted and punished. At the national level, there has been a slight increase in the number of respondents who believe an investigation would be opened without reaching a conclusion. Overall perceptions of government accountability vary across cities in Pakistan, however, with Lahore having the most positive perception of accountability (23%) and Faisalabad having the least positive perception (7%). Perceptions of accountability in Pakistan are the lowest in South Asia, worse than Nepal (49%), Bangladesh (45%), Sri Lanka (42%), Afghanistan (24%), and India (19%).
- 02. Corruption Across Institutions:** Pakistanis believe that a significant number of authorities are involved in corrupt practices. Police are viewed as the most corrupt authorities by respondents (82%) and judges and magistrates are perceived to be the least corrupt (47%). Since 2013, there has been a moderate decrease in perceived levels of police corruption, and an increase in perceived levels of corruption among judges and magistrates. Since 2014, there has been a moderate increase in perceived levels of corruption among local government officers, members of parliament, and national government officers.
- 03. Bribery Victimization:** Petty bribery is pervasive in Pakistan. More than three quarters of Pakistanis have paid a bribe to process a government permit (78%), and approximately three quarters have paid a bribe to receive assistance from the police (74%). Since 2014, there has been a moderate increase in the percentage of people that have paid a bribe to a police officer and to receive medical attention at a public hospital, and a large increase in the percentage of people that have paid a bribe to process a government permit. As compared to South Asian peer countries, more Pakistanis report paying a bribe to process government permits and to receive assistance from the police.
- 04. Fundamental Freedoms:** Pakistanis have moderate views on their fundamental freedoms. While a large majority (69%) of respondents agree or strongly agree that people can join together to draw attention to an issue or sign a petition, less than half (48%) agree or strongly agree that people are free to join any unforbidden political organization. Since 2013, there has been a decline in Pakistanis' perceptions of political, media, and religious freedoms in the country. Despite these declines, Pakistanis' views of their freedoms are average compared to perceptions in other South Asian countries.
- 05. Crime Victimization:** Households in Pakistan experience high rates of crime. In the last three years, 16% of households have experienced an armed robbery, and 16% a burglary. There are large differences in victimization rates across the five selected cities in Pakistan, with the highest armed robbery (29%), burglary (25%), and murder (5%) rates reported in Karachi. Meanwhile, respondents in Peshawar reported the lowest rates of burglary and murder, and respondents in Lahore and Peshawar reported the lowest rates of armed robbery (1%). Nationally, there has been a slight decline in reported rates of murder since 2013. Since 2014, there has been a slight decline in reported rates of armed robbery and a slight increase in reported rates of burglary nationally.
- 06. Criminal Justice:** Incompetent investigators and inadequate resources were cited as the most serious problems facing criminal investigative services in Pakistan. Inadequate alternative dispute resolution was cited as the most serious problem facing criminal courts in Pakistan. Since 2013, there has been a moderate decrease in the percentage of respondents who believe that most or all police are involved in corrupt practices (82%), and an increase in the percentage of respondents who believe that most or all judges and magistrates are involved in corrupt practices (47%). In terms of overall accountability in the criminal justice system, perceptions of the police and courts are mixed. While respondents' views since

2013 on whether courts guarantee everyone a fair trial have decreased (39%), there has been a moderate increase in the percentage who believe that police respect the basic rights of suspects (18%). Since 2014, respondents' views on whether police are punished for violating the law have increased (34%), and there has been a moderate decrease in the percentage of respondents who believe that police act according to the law (28%).

- 07. Legal Awareness:** Pakistanis have a moderate amount of legal knowledge. Out of 10 true or false statements about legal rights, the average respondent answered 6 correctly. The greatest percentage of respondents were able to correctly answer questions related to children's legal rights, with between 84% and 95% responding correctly depending on the question. The smallest percentage of respondents identified the correct answer for questions related to due process and rights of the accused, with as few as 11% responding correctly depending on the question. Women have slightly higher levels of legal awareness as compared to men. However, higher levels of educational attainment did not correlate with better legal knowledge.
- 08. Paths to Justice:** Just over 40% of Pakistanis experienced a dispute in the last 12 months, with water disputes, neighbor disputes, disputes relating to ID cards or birth certificates, and family disputes being the most common. Among Pakistanis that reported experiencing a dispute in the previous 12 months, only one third took any action to resolve their dispute. Of those that did take action, most (72%) chose to take their dispute to a traditional, customary, or local leader – such as a Jirga, Biradari, or mullah – for resolution. The remaining 28% that took their dispute to a formal mechanism went to the police (16%), court (7%), or a government office (5%). On average, respondents that took their dispute to a traditional, customary, or local leader reported the most positive experience in terms of speed and cost of the dispute resolution process. On the other hand, those that took their dispute to court were the most satisfied with the fairness of the process and were the most likely to use that mechanism again, despite being the least satisfied on average with the speed and cost of resolving their dispute in court. Twenty-nine percent of respondents reported obtaining legal aid or advice, primarily from family and friends (44%) or a local leader (37%). For the 71% that

did not receive legal assistance, the most common reasons cited were not needing assistance (70%) and not knowing who to contact (15%).

- 09. Women in Pakistani Society:** There are minor differences in men and women's views regarding the rights of women when it comes to inheritance and divorce, but the perception gap grows for questions related to women's role in the community and household dynamics. For example, 52% of female respondents agreed that women should be able to work outside of the home, whereas only 30% of men shared this view. Similarly, 57% of women agreed that a man does not have the right to hit his wife and should be stopped, while only 41% of men agreed with this statement. Finally, 30% of women agreed that women should engage in local dispute resolution, whereas only 14% of men agreed with this statement. When asked about legal identification and literacy, 96% of male respondents reported possessing a National ID card and 83% were able to read and write. For female respondents, 88% possess a National ID card and 74% could read and write.<sup>1</sup>
- 10. Trust in Pakistan:** Pakistanis have a high degree of trust in fellow citizens, with 73% reporting that they have a lot or some trust in other people living in Pakistan. Across institutions, Pakistanis have the most trust in the courts (56%) and the least trust in the police (17%). Since 2013, there has been a moderate decline in respondents' reported level of trust in the courts, and a moderate increase in respondents' reported level of trust in the police. Since 2014, there has been a decrease in respondents' reported level of trust in officers working in the local and the national governments.
- 11. Rule of Law & Governance Priorities:** Pakistanis consider corruption to be the most important issue facing the country. When asked what the most important aims for Pakistan should be over the course of the next ten years, 27% cited reducing corruption, followed by reducing crime (26%) and reducing poverty (23%).

<sup>1</sup> The Pakistani Government reports slightly lower literacy rates of 82% for urban men and 69% for urban women. For additional details, see: [http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters\\_16/10\\_Education.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_16/10_Education.pdf).