

1591





TOGETHER AS ONE VOICE



1591 WHISTLE BLOWERS

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

A report celebrating the people brave enough
to stand up against corruption.



ACTION IS POWER



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BACKGROUND

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s we internalise the accounts that detail the suffering of the 1 591 whistle-blowers who approached Corruption Watch in the first half of 2019, we need to bear in mind, that though we received fewer corruption reports compared to the same period last year, corruption is a corrosive disease. Its mere presence eats away our moral fabric, undermines our law and order, and leaves, in its wake, devastation in the lives of ordinary men and women in our society. Our country's story is that of a patient with a malignant illness who is fighting for survival, but teetering on the edge of the abyss.

That is the story of corruption and it's reflected in the third edition of the Analysis of Corruption Trends (ACT) report.

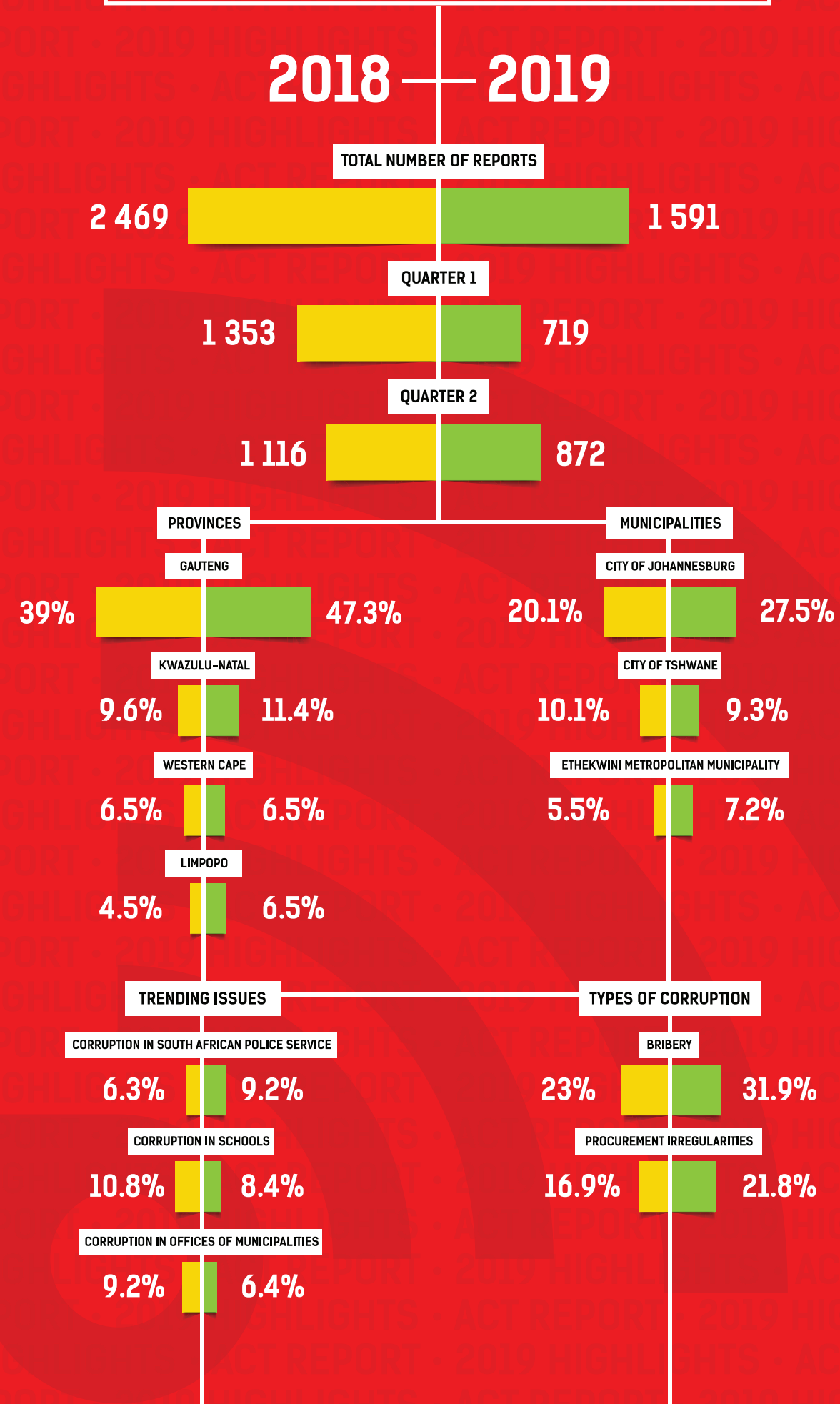
As we have done in previous publications, in this year's ACT report we present our statistics of people who disclosed corruption that they witnessed across several focus areas. This analysis merely touches on the areas most reported on and seeks to provide a general overview of the types of cases in which we intervened, with our minimal resources. Some of these trends, based on previous and continuous data analyses, compelled us to mount a police campaign, where among other activities, we engage with officials in the South African Police Service and hold dialogues with community members.

We are working on issues of open contracting in the health sector as part of our broader health campaign, and we also have ongoing projects looking at the effects of graft in the mining and land sectors. These are just a few of many initiatives we have embarked on as part of our war on corruption in South Africa and across its borders.

However, none of this would be possible but for the resilience of the almost 1 591 people who were not deterred by the threat of violence when a police officer insisted on a bribe or sexual favours, or who didn't fear the risk of failing a driver's license test when an overbearing official made it known that he/she holds their future in his/her hands, or who understood the injustice of an elderly person not receiving medication because it was stolen, or who protested when learners were short-changed in their education in schools.

We draw our inspiration from these people. They are the authors of this report and the rest of us should heed them as they make a damning pronouncement on our society at large. In receiving their message, it should urge us all to act.

ACT REPORT 2019 HIGHLIGHTS





A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE DATA

Trending Forms of Corruption and Areas of Concern

We have adopted the Transparency International definition of corruption –that is, the abuse of entrusted power for personal or private gain. This is an understanding that cuts across both the public and private sectors for we believe, as indicated in previous editions of this report, that corruption generally intersects these sectors. Where an individual or entity is in charge of public resources including money, and he/she/it somehow fails in his/her/its duty to ensure that the resources are used to benefit the intended recipients, instead working with others to loot the kitty or misuse resources, that is corruption.

It is in this light that we assess the five trending areas below:



South African Police Service (SAPS)



Schools



Health Centres



Municipalities



Licensing Centres

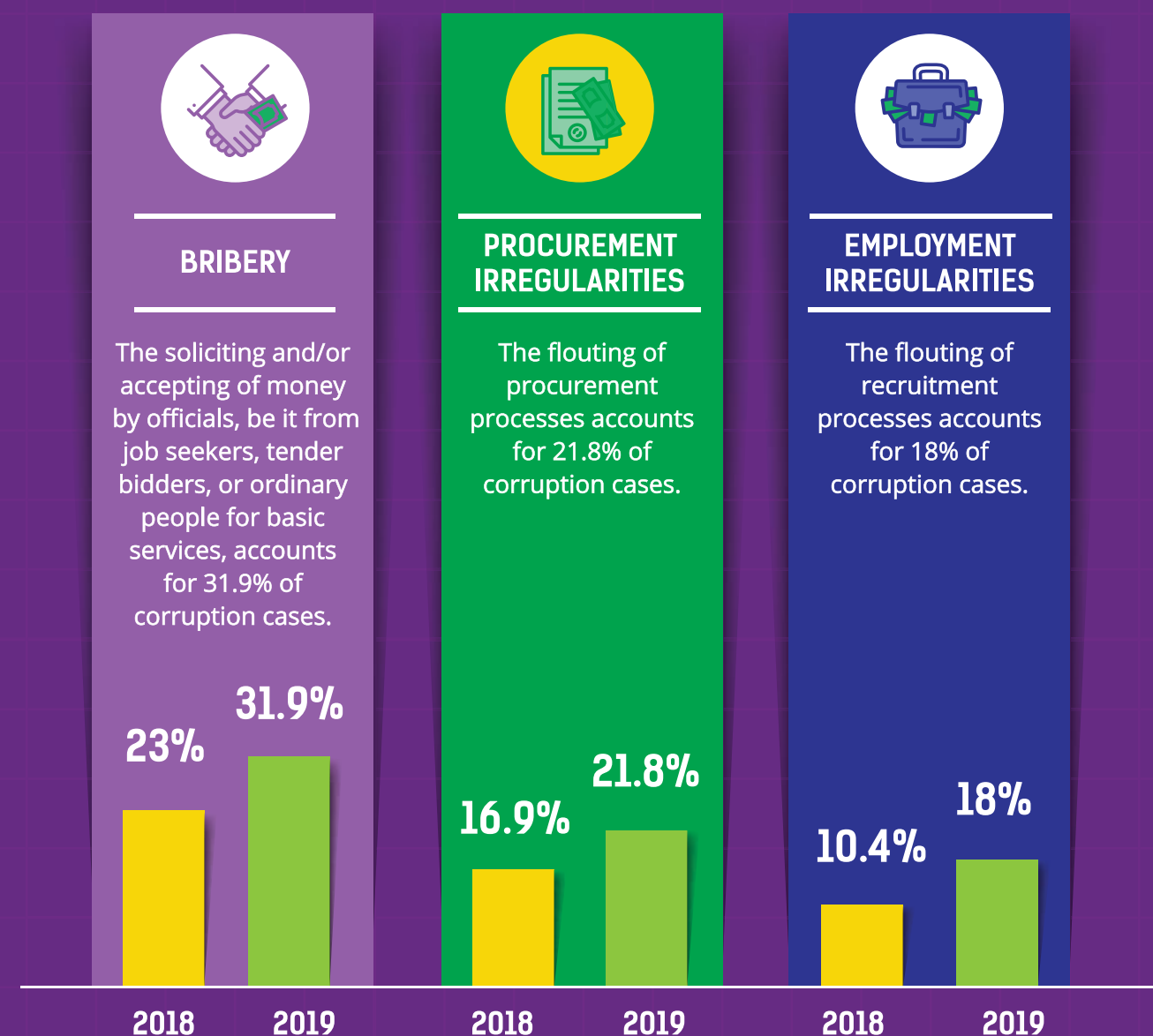
	2018	2019
SAPS	6.3%	9.2%
SCHOOLS	10.8%	8.4%
MUNICIPALITIES	9.2%	6.4%
HEALTH CENTRES	2.7%	3.6%
LICENSING CENTRES	3.3%	3.4%

Collectively these account for almost 31% of reports of corruption received between 1 January and 30 June 2019.



Corruption in the SAPS constituted the highest number of reports received in 2019, accounting for 9.2% of the total.

In all the areas where impropriety is alleged to have occurred, the leading forms of corruption are:



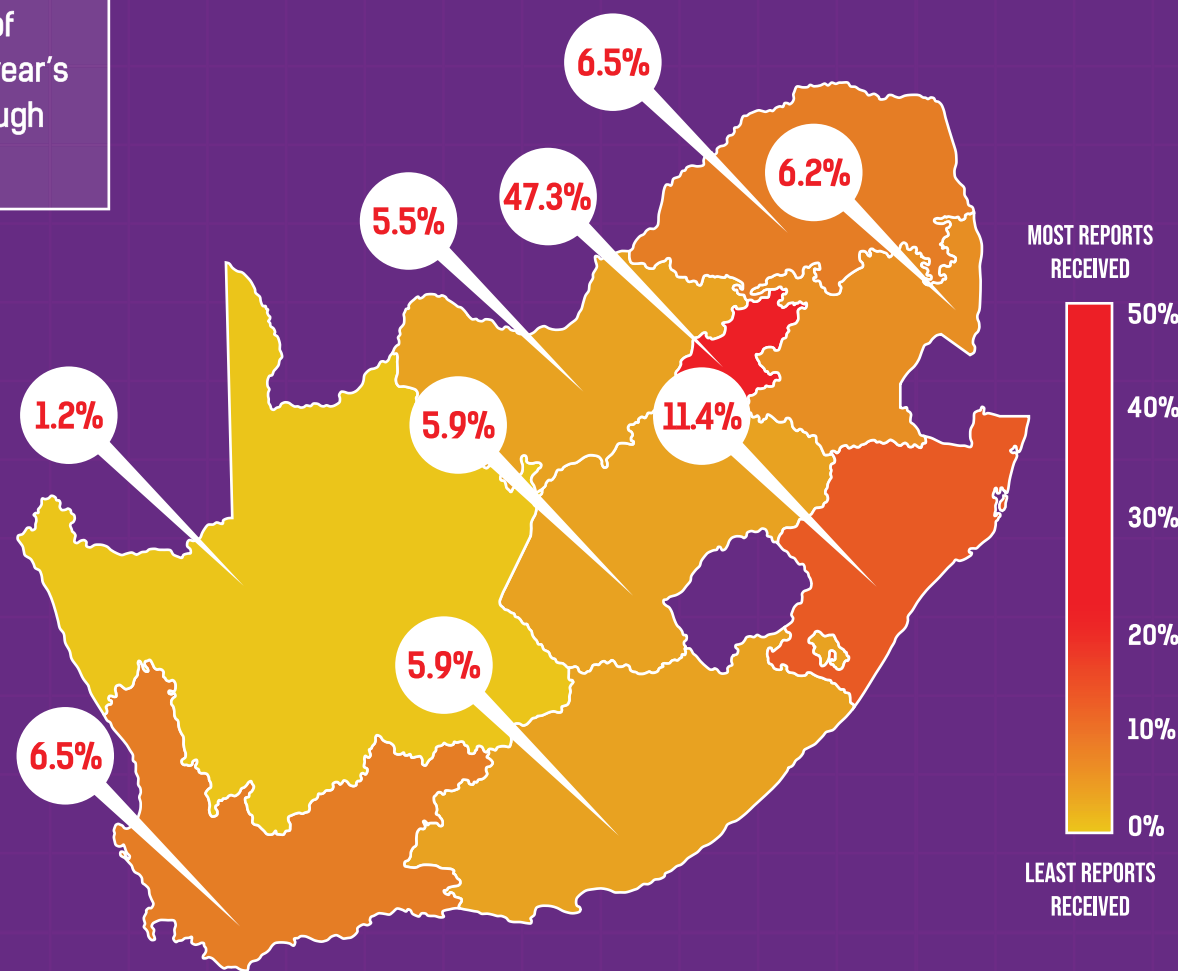
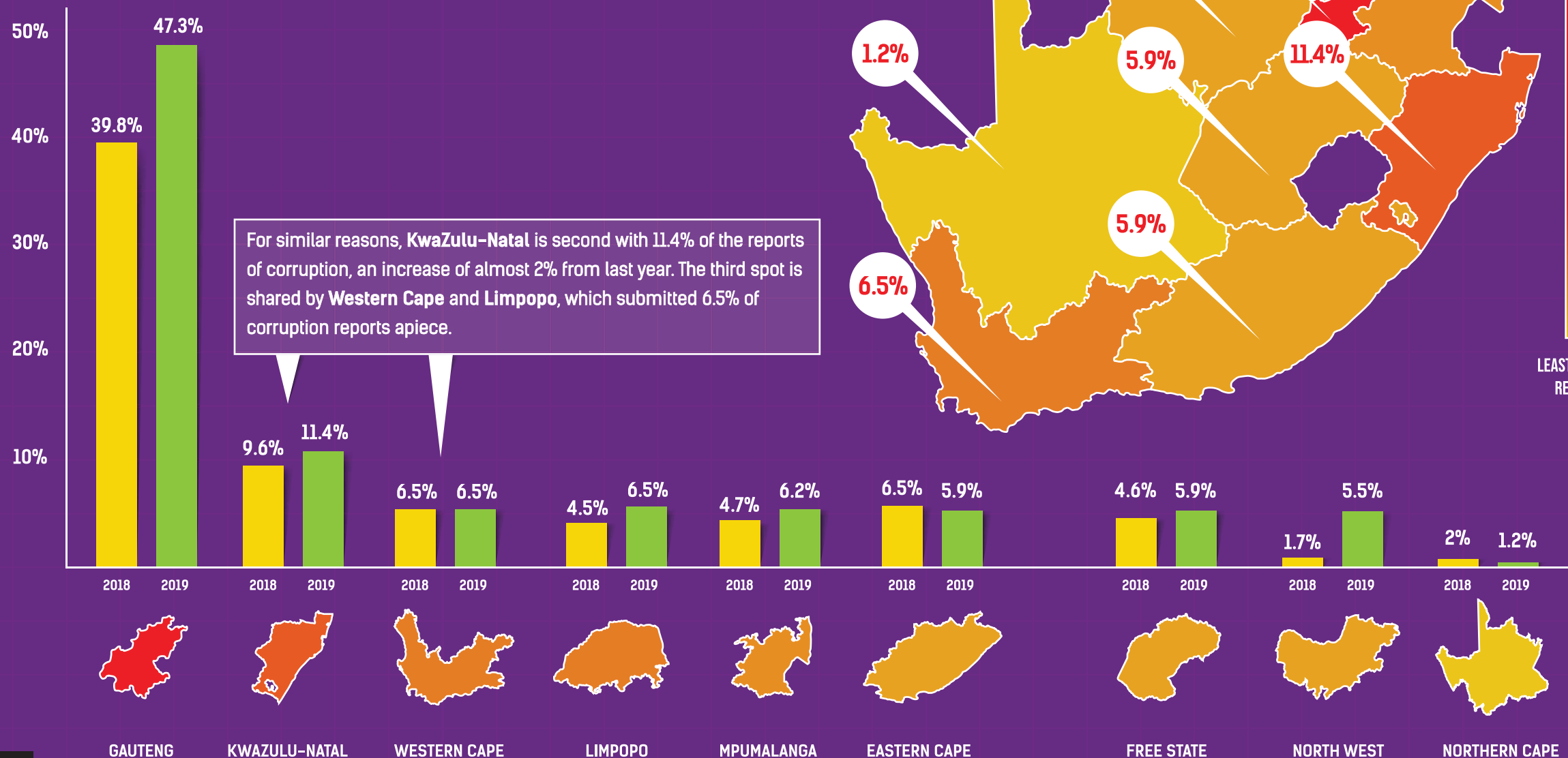


A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE DATA

Geographical Breakdown

Gauteng remains the province which generates the highest number of reports of corruption. We attribute this year's increased figure of 47.3%, compared to last year's 39.8%, to greater population density than other provinces, and our footprint, though national, is largely in this province because of our ongoing activities.

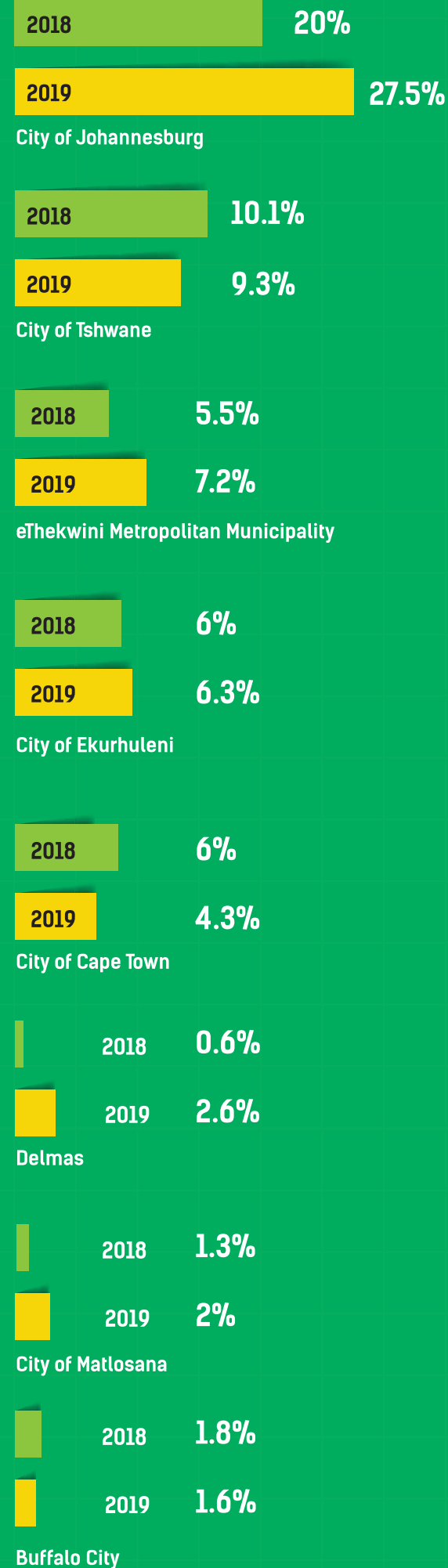
For similar reasons, KwaZulu-Natal is second with 11.4% of the reports of corruption, an increase of almost 2% from last year. The third spot is shared by Western Cape and Limpopo, which submitted 6.5% of corruption reports apiece.



In terms of municipalities, the highest number of corruption cases were received from the big metropolitan areas in **Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape.**

City of Johannesburg accounts for 27.5% of reports of corruption received, followed by **City of Tshwane** on 9.3%.

eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality and **City of Ekurhuleni** count for 7.2% and 6.3% respectively, while **City of Cape Town** counts for 4.3% of reports of corruption received.





UNPACKING THE TRENDING AREAS:

CORRUPTION IN THE SAPS

We discuss at length the manifestation of corruption in this crucial institution of our democracy in our recent sectoral report, Corruption in Uniform. But where we note 1 442 cases of corruption over a period of seven years in that report, which is exclusively about the rot in SAPS, what we have learnt in this mid-year report is that Corruption Watch has received the equivalent of almost a tenth of those cases in the first six months of 2019. Nevertheless, as far as this dataset is concerned, cases alleging corruption in SAPS account for 9.2% of the total number of reports received in the period under review. The most common forms of corruption in this focus area are bribery and abuse of power, which stand at 30.6% and 35.7% respectively.

As for the allegations of abuse of power, whistle-blowers have informed us that the SAPS network of patronage protects the corrupt but punishes those striving to blow the whistle on graft, or members of the public seeking assistance after filing a case.

In one instance it is claimed that a group of police officers were suspended by the brass after highlighting the corrupt activities of another officer who was highly favoured by senior officials. In another case, a civilian alleges that after opening a murder case at a police station, the docket was tampered with because the accused was related to a senior official at the station.

Meanwhile, with regards to allegations of bribery, it is said that police officers solicit and accept bribes from known criminals.

In some cases, we were told that police officers make random stops and searches of pedestrians or motorists for reasons of extortion rather than public duty.

In one case, officers allegedly demanded hundreds of rands from persons who carried drugs; in another case, similar amounts of money were demanded from a motorist who drove a vehicle which apparently was flagged for roadworthiness. Whistle-blowers also allege that investigating officers ask for hundreds of thousands of rands to remove suspects from warrant of arrest lists.

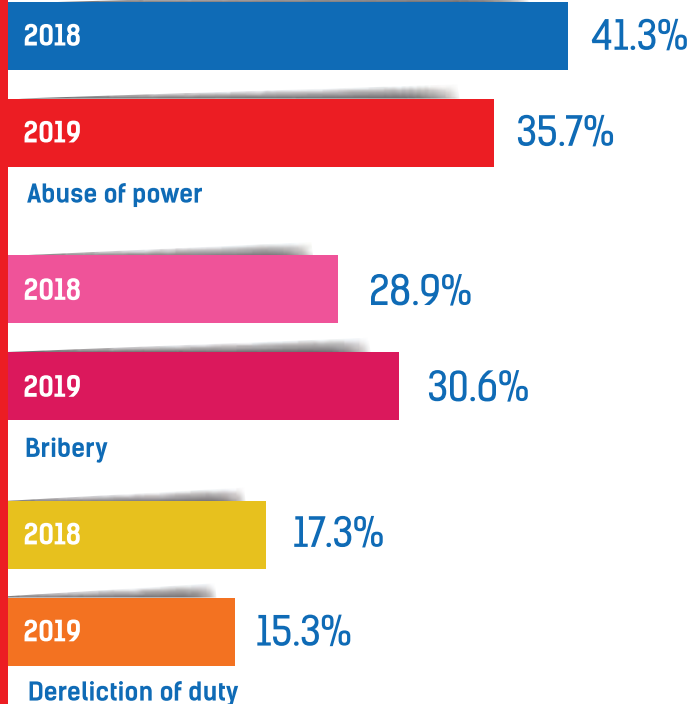


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**CORRUPTION
TAKES AWAY
OUR BASIC
HUMAN
RIGHTS**

UNPACKING THE TRENDING AREAS:

CORRUPTION IN SCHOOLS

With 8.1% of the reports of corruption received in the six-month period, this focus area bears testament to the importance of our flagship campaign that has run for almost seven years, addressing corruption issues in schools.

The prevalent forms of corruption highlight the abuse of learners' rights to education; at the helm of this abuse of power are principals, school governing body members, and school officials.

The most commonly alleged forms of corruption are embezzlement of funds and theft of resources, and employment irregularities – counting for 30.6% and 15.9% respectively.

The corruption cases involving embezzlement of funds and theft of resources highlight elaborate schemes devised by some school officials, for example teachers, to steal funds from the National Schools Nutrition Programme. We are informed of officials purchasing food items from shops only to return them for cash once they have submitted the necessary paperwork to prove that the items were bought.

With regard to allegations of employment irregularities, we have received complaints of processes being flouted to favour individuals who are close to senior officials. In one example, the whistle-blower claimed that an employee was wrongfully appointed to multiple posts, earning salaries from both the school governing body and Department of Basic Education – yet the person fails to fulfil the tasks and responsibilities that come with the positions.

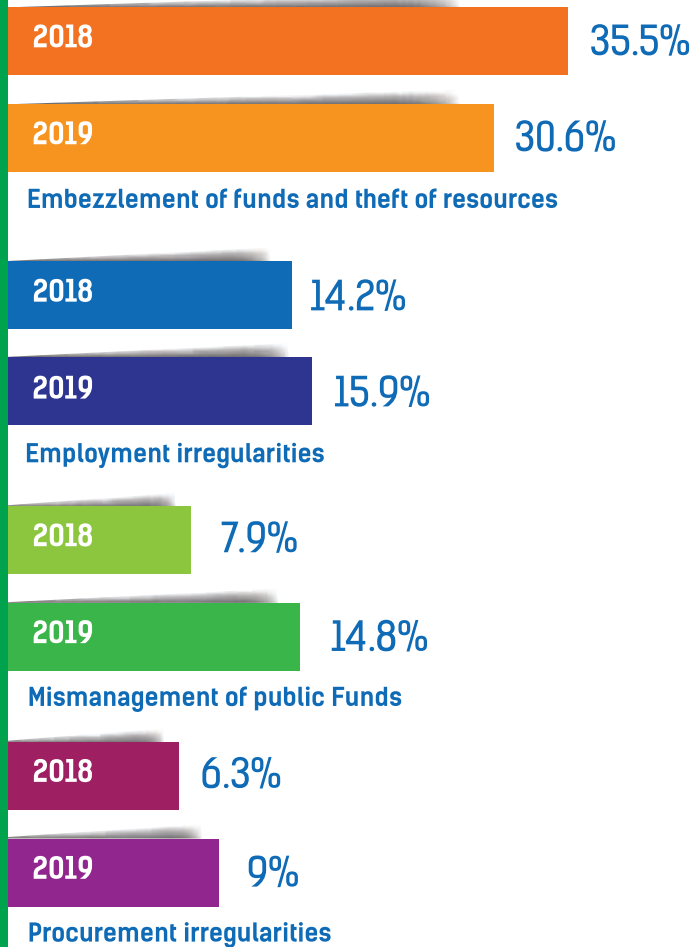


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UNPACKING THE TRENDING AREAS:

CORRUPTION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Corruption in the local offices of government – the municipalities – counts for 6.6% of all reports of corruption collected in this half-year period. In addition, 3.4% of reports highlight impropriety in licence centres, which is another function of government that is managed and administered at the local level.

Procurement irregularities in municipalities continues to be widely reported, with 35.5% of the corruption cases speaking to this fact. It is alleged by whistle-blowers that officials, including municipal managers at times, rig procurement processes with the clear intention to exclude some bidders so that their friends and relatives can score tenders. The claims go as far as to allege that bidders who collude with officials are encouraged to inflate their prices and this is how kickbacks are calculated into the pricing component of tender documents. Municipalities are said to lose tens of millions of rands to such craftiness, with one municipality purportedly failing to account for almost half a billion rand. Yet, officials are able to maintain lavish lifestyles.

Bribery, the second highest form of corruption at 22.3%, contributes to the corruption problems faced by municipalities. It manifests in a myriad ways, but most common are allegations of job seekers being asked to pay a fee to secure a job in municipal offices. Other whistle-blowers say that officials accept bribes for the sale of municipal properties –especially houses.

Whistle-blowers say that officials accept bribes for the sale of municipal properties –especially houses.

2018 45.3%

2019 35.5%

Procurement irregularities

2018 15.2%

2019 22.3%

Bribery

2018 14.7%

2019 11.8%

Employment irregularities

Finally, with regards to corruption in licence centres, bribery is reportedly the main form of corruption with 82.3% of the corruption cases attesting to this fact. The bribes solicited by officials relate to the ever-increasing price for a driver's licence (+R4 000), hundreds of rands to pass a learner's test, and the renewal of licence discs for vehicles.



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UNPACKING THE TRENDING AREAS:

CORRUPTION IN THE HEALTH SECTOR

Whistle-blowers continue to inform Corruption Watch of a number of corrupt acts that are plaguing health facilities across the country. Of the corruption reports we received in the first six months of this year, 3.6% are attributed to this focus area. We are still receiving information of nepotistic appointments and other related improper conduct related to employment, and the flouting of procurement processes. The most common forms of corruption in this area are employment irregularities at 33.3%, and procurement irregularities which account for 15.1% of corruption cases.

From these allegations, we have learnt that employees of clinics and hospitals are at the centre of both forms of graft and there is little to no external influence. Take the claims of procurement irregularities, for instance – it is reported that employees in procurement offices will award various tenders to companies which are owned and headed by those very same employees. As for the cases alleging employment irregularities, recruitment opportunities are based on a person's closeness to those in authority. As a result, friends and family members of officials are given positions and promotions at the expense of others who are just as qualified, if not better.

In another form of employment irregularity, doctors are claiming for work not done and/or conducting private business with state resources and time.

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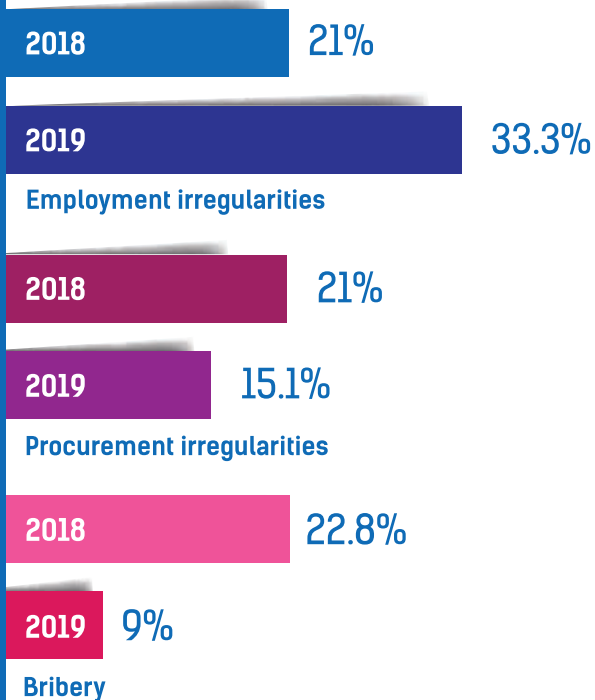


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CONCLUSION

THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY IS IN OUR HANDS

REPORT CORRUPTION TO
0800 023 456
(TOLL FREE FROM LANDLINES)

Is corruption on the rise or is it declining? That is one of the challenging questions to grapple with – but although it's a good question (and thankfully there are research reports that attempt to gauge our progress in this respect), there are equally important questions to ask in relation to efforts to combat graft. Some of those questions are asked and answered by a report such as this one, which is by no coincidence called ACT.

In the 2019 edition of the Global Corruption Barometer, titled *Africa: Citizens' Views and Experiences of Corruption*, participants were quizzed on whether they believed ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption. Encouragingly, almost three-fifths of South Africans answered in the affirmative – despite two-thirds of all surveyed persons fearing to report corruption and 70% of South Africans holding the view that government is 'doing a bad job' of addressing corruption.

Therefore, this report certainly shows that men, women and children across the length and breadth of this country did not only believe that they can do something to combat graft, but they took the initiative to blow the whistle on corrupt activities. In their own small, but powerful way, they helped to tell the story of a neighbour's child who goes hungry at school; they gave context to a community's plight regarding poor service delivery; and they drew a portrait of a nation confronted by corruption that contributes to social issues of inequality and poverty.

More importantly, though there may be trepidation to report occurrences of corruption, another crucial question was answered – the 1 591 whistle-blowers rallied to tell those in authority that 'it is time to clean up your act.'



SPEAK UP



OUR CORRUPTION HOTLINE

0800 023 456

(toll-free from landlines)

REPORT VIA WHATSAPP

072013 5569

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treated with outmost
care and security.

www.corruptionwatch.org.za



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