

# COVID-19 AND THE STATE OF GOVERNANCE: LOCKING DOWN DEMOCRACY?

## A SOCIAL-ECONOMIC-POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON GOVERNANCE IN KENYA.

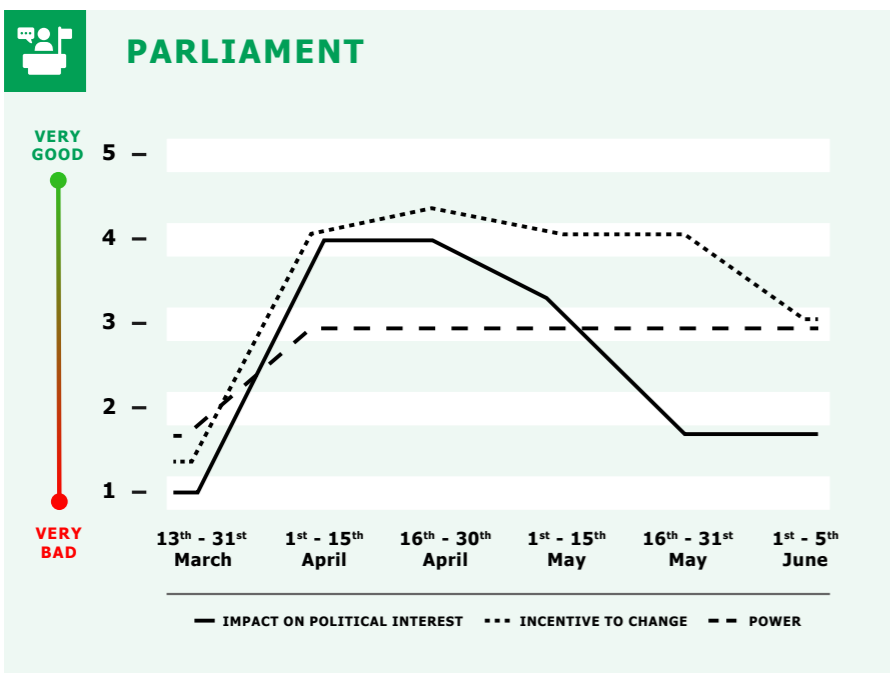
BY MZALENDO TRUST

### INTRODUCTION

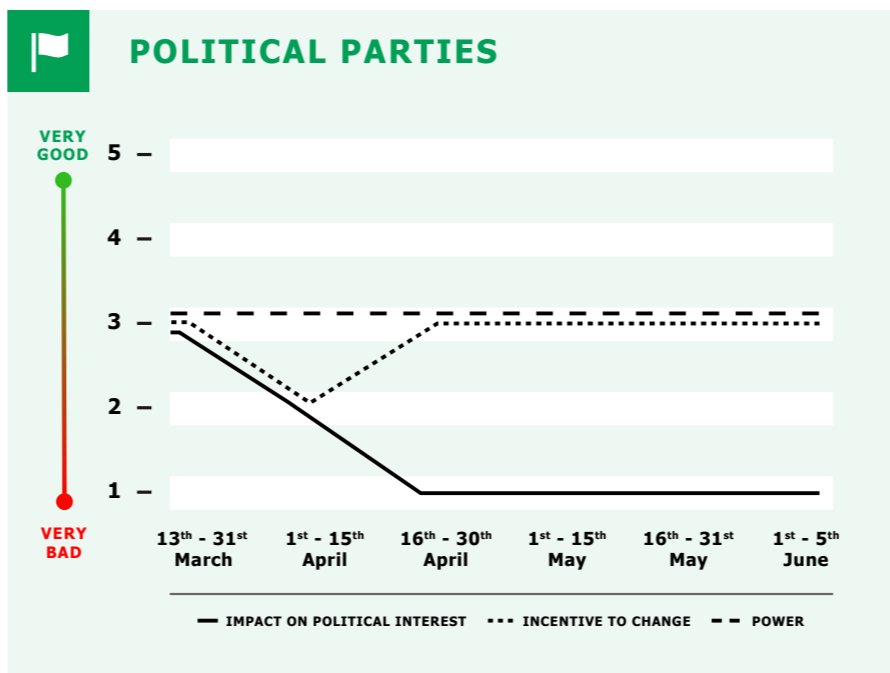
On the 13th of March 2020, Kenya confirmed its first case of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Following this announcement, a series of decisions, regulations and requirements came into effect. These effects of which impacted people, businesses, and society as a whole. In this series of infographics, Mzalendo Trust presents its findings on the impact of COVID-19 on eleven sectors: Parliament, Political Parties, Civil Society Organisations, the Media, Devolved Units, Human Rights, Special Interest Groups, the Judiciary, Independent Commissions, and the Private Sector. Mzalendo Trust created a scoring scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (good) with an explanation for the ratings on the sector. The period evaluated was from the first case of COVID-19 being announced in Kenya in March 2020 to the end of May 2020.

- PARLIAMENT
- POLITICAL PARTIES
- CIVIL SOCIETIES
- MEDIA
- DEVOLVED UNITS
- EDUCATION SECTOR
- HUMAN RIGHTS
- SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
- JUDICIARY
- INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONS
- PRIVATE SECTOR

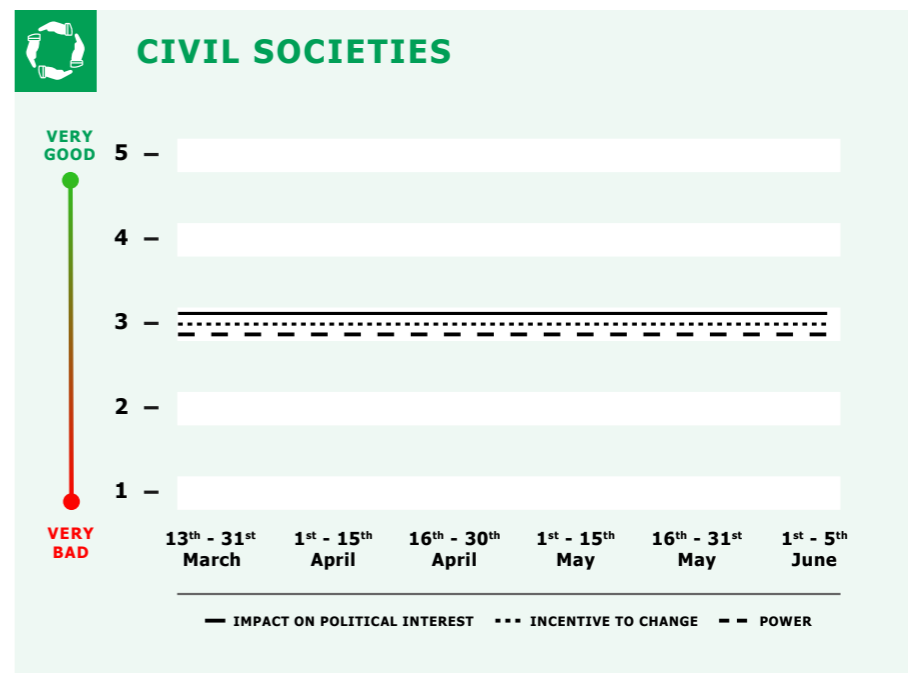
### MZALENDO STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS



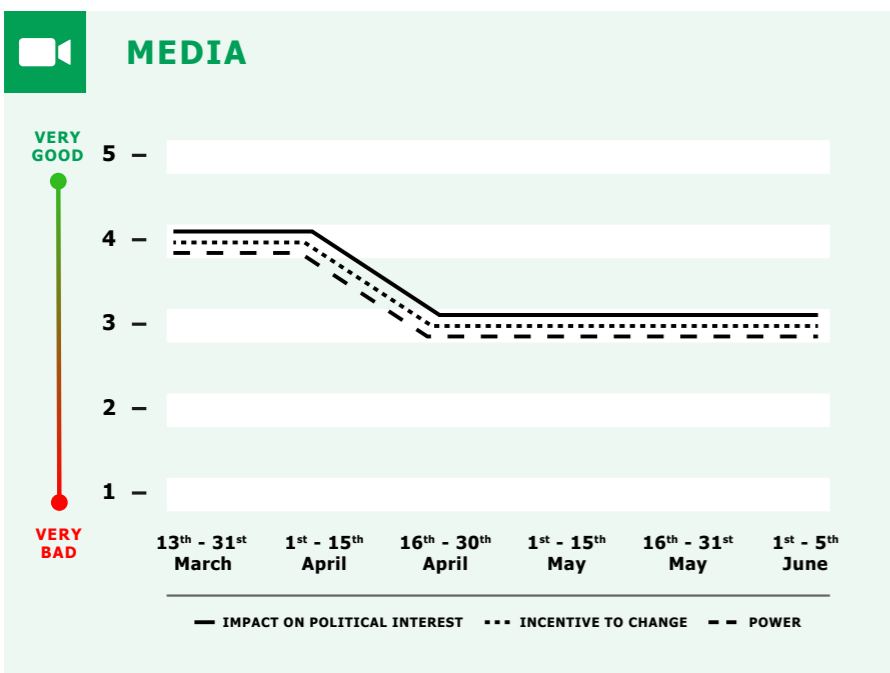
**SUMMARY**  
Parliamentary sittings were suspended following the confirmation of the first case of COVID-19 in Kenya. This suspension is the reason for the low rating to start the period in review. With the resumption of parliament in response to the pandemic, the performance rating rose. Not long after, parliamentary duties experienced interference with party politics, party wrangles, and party restricting leading to a lower rating.



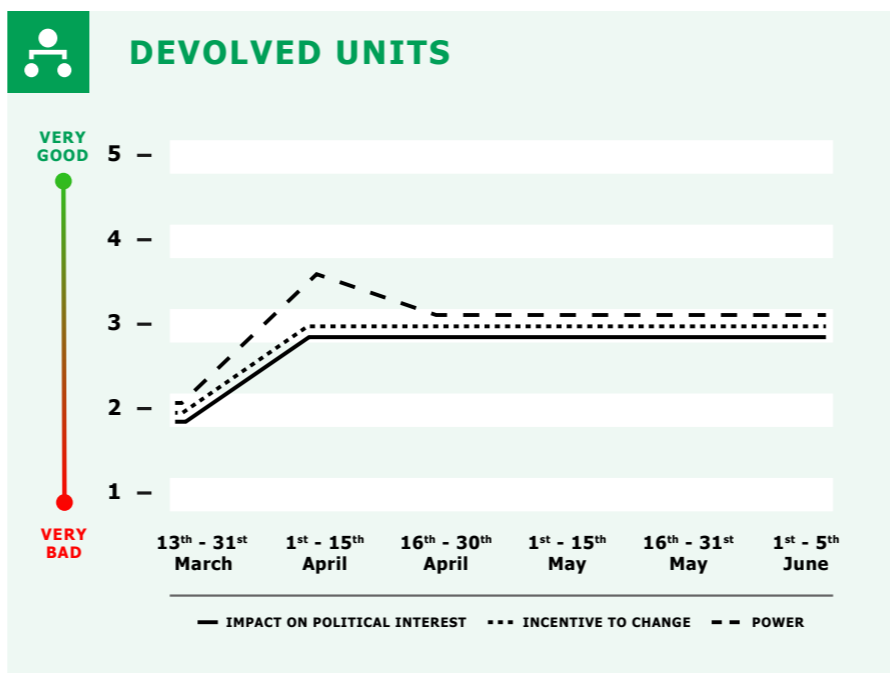
**SUMMARY**  
Political parties displayed a common pattern in the three categories evaluated - Impact on Political Interest, Incentive to Change, and Power. The rating of political parties decreased during the period of evaluation. Kenya's political atmosphere has featured the consolidation of power through coalition building. In addition to this, COVID-19 restrictions did limit their roles during the period of review.



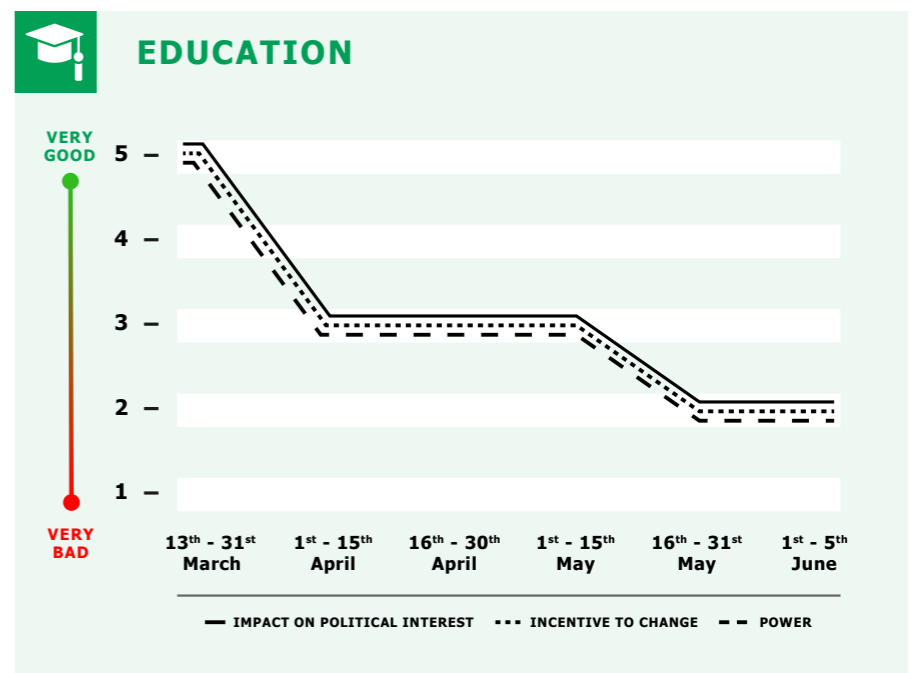
**SUMMARY**  
With Kenya preoccupied with regional politics and political campaigns such as the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI), civil societies were evaluated to be silent and less active during COVID-19. Civil society missed a larger opportunity to raise their collective voices to hold the government accountable for its performance in service delivery to citizens.



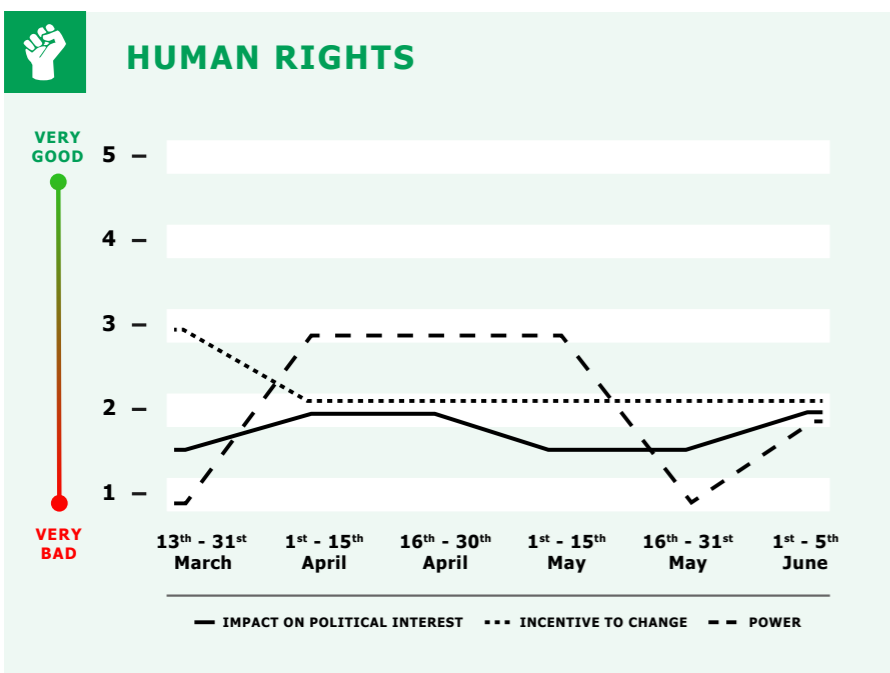
**SUMMARY**  
The media's performance has been affected negatively by COVID-19. Advertiser revenue has dwindled, forcing some broadcasters to put staff on unpaid leave or restructure operations. In addition, limited inter-county movement, curfews, and restricted gatherings have affected members of the fourth estate. The press has covered police brutality and even had media professionals undergoing harm even after identifying themselves.



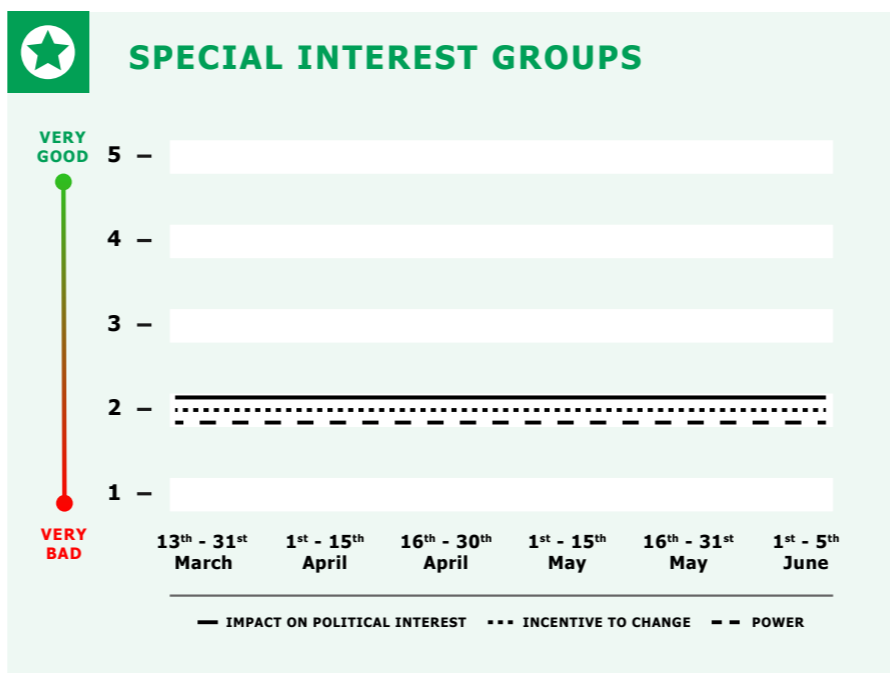
**SUMMARY**  
The overall performance of devolved units moved from bad to fair during the period under review. This can be attributed to the increased responsibilities, trust, and increased resources availed to county governments to prepare for the onset and spread of COVID-19. Counties stagnated following disruption stemming from national politics and party wrangles.



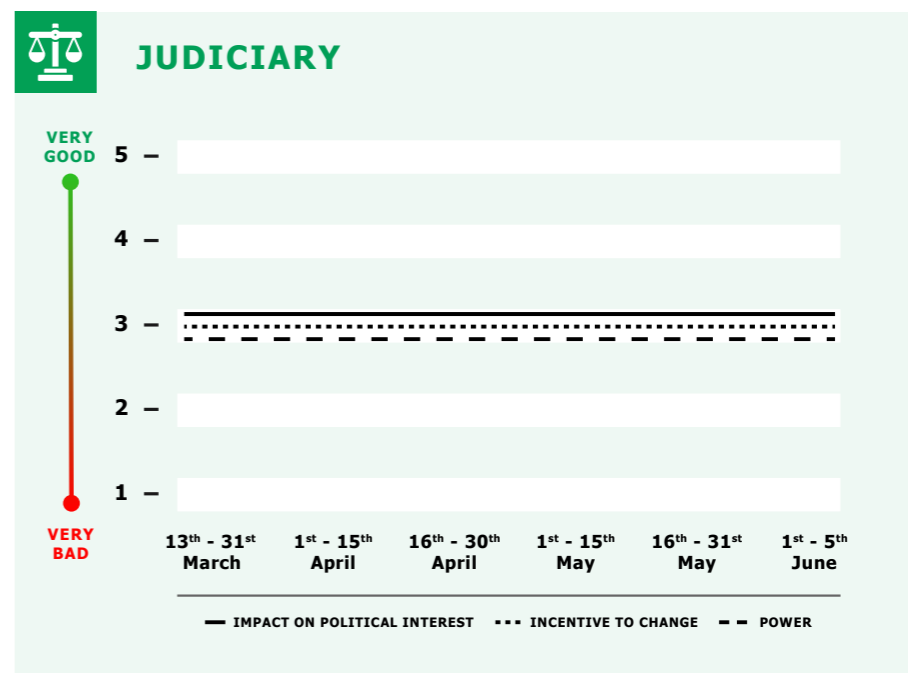
**SUMMARY**  
The education sector was among the first to experience total disruption. Following a country-wide shutdown of learning institutions, the education sector will take a long time to recover. The lack of internet affordability and accessibility registers a challenge for learners in underprivileged areas. As the school calendar lapses month after month, the extent of disruption continues to multiply during the pandemic.



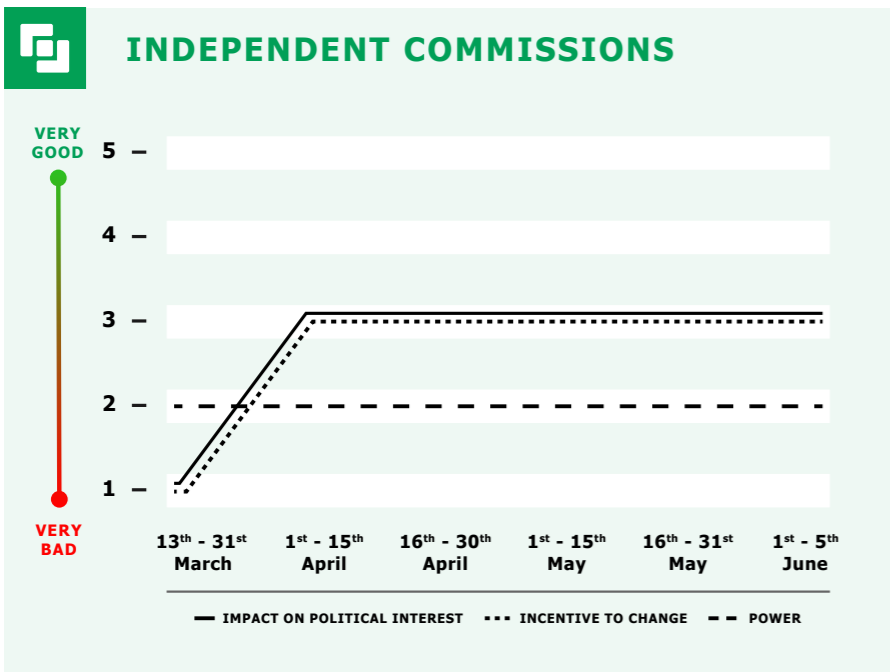
**SUMMARY**  
Human rights have been affected during COVID-19 with enforced curfew, cessation of inter-country movement and social distancing orders for the nation. Gender-based violence has increased with time spent at home in response to the pandemic. Court proceedings, limited to virtual sessions, have seen human rights, gender-based violence and the course of justice adversely affected.



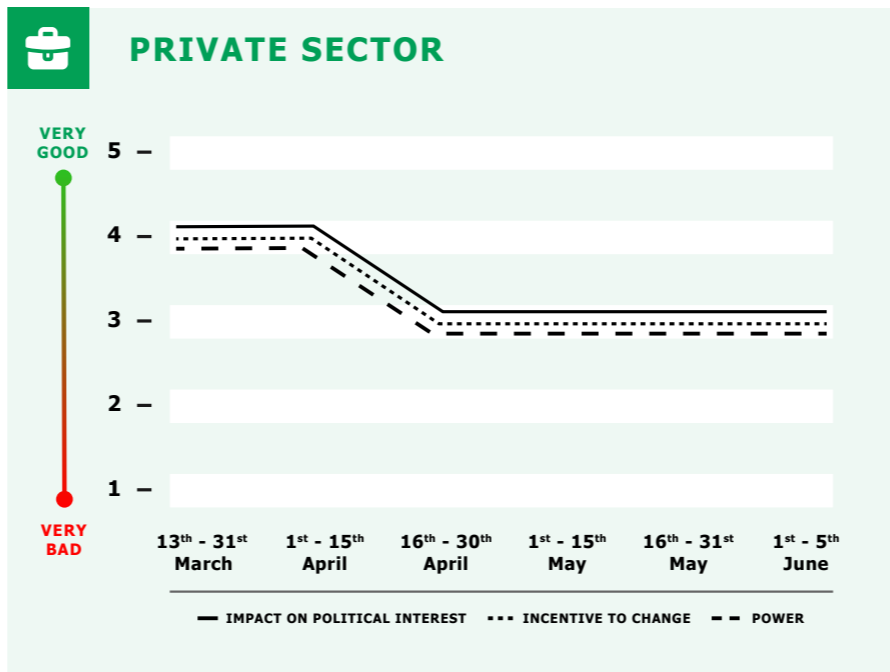
**SUMMARY**  
As government resources and personnel have been directed to handling the pandemic, special interest groups have not fared well, lowering in focus compared to areas considered essential services. The intensified politics and party wrangles have taken the attention of leaders, parliamentarians, and the media.



**SUMMARY**  
With limited movement and limits to gatherings, the pace of the judiciary's discharge of duties has stuttered. With an increase in human rights violations, domestic and police brutality, the justice system has more to deal with despite interrupted operations. Following the adoption of virtual court hearings, technology has not always held up with hitches and other challenges in delivering on judicial duties.



**SUMMARY**  
Following a slow start after the advent of the Coronavirus pandemic, commissions have spurred into action, making proclamations and decisions. Their performance, however, has plateaued over time.



**SUMMARY**  
With government and businesses shutting down, save for essential services, the private sector's rating registered a decline. With a shrinking economy, loss of employment, cessation of international travels and disruption of imports, challenges continue for the private sector.