



Corruption, Accountability and Gender: Understanding the Connections

PRIMERS IN GENDER AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE



5. CORRUPTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND GENDER: UNDERSTANDING THE CONNECTIONS

This primer, jointly commissioned by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now part of UN Women) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is one of five produced by the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy on different aspects of gender and democratic governance (see back cover for additional details). The aim of the series is to support UNIFEM and UNDP staff and partners working on democratic governance issues to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through their programme and policy advice to partner governments and institutions.

Understanding corruption's linkages to gender equality issues and how it impacts women's empowerment is part of the broader process of advancing women's rights and understanding the gender dimensions of democratic governance. This is an ongoing process of reflection and learning by the UNDP Democratic Governance Group in collaboration with the Bureau for Development Policy Gender Team and the Governance, Peace and Security Section of UNIFEM. The work of both UNDP and UNIFEM on gender and democratic governance aims to enhance the effectiveness of women and men, particularly those in public office, in advancing a gender equality agenda.

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Primers in Gender and Democratic Governance Series

There are four other primers in the *Primers in Gender and Democratic Governance Series*, produced by the Democratic Governance Group, Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP:

- No. 1: “Quick Entry Points to Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality in Democratic Governance Clusters” (written by Nadia Hijab), 2007.
- No. 2: “Gender Equality and Justice Programming: Equitable Access to Justice for Women” (written by Sarah Douglas), 2007.
- No. 3: “Electoral Financing to Advance Women’s Political Participation: A Guide for UNDP Support” (written by Gretchen Luchsinger Sidhu and Ruth Meena), 2007.
- No. 4: “Gender Responsive E-Governance: Exploring the Transformative Potential” (written by Nadia Hijab and Raúl Zambrano), 2008.

These resources are framed by the human rights-based approach to development, which now informs the work of the UN development system (see the “Quick Entry Points” primer for a discussion of the approach and how it relates to gender equality and the work of UNDP). UNDP hopes that these primers will contribute to the empowerment of women and the advancement of gender equality through democratic governance. Colleagues are encouraged to continue to share their experience and ideas through dgp-net@groups.undp.org, the electronic discussion network serving democratic governance practitioners in UNDP.

Acronyms and Definitions

Corruption

Commonly defined as the “misuse of entrusted power for private gain” (UNDP, 2008a).¹

Gender

Refers to the social attributes associated with being male or female and the relationships among women, men, girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization. They are context- and time-specific and changeable. Gender is part of the broader sociocultural context. Other important criteria for sociocultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age (UN/OSAGI Web site).²

Gender analysis

Encompasses the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Men and women perform different roles in societies and within institutions. These differing roles lead to women and men having different experiences, knowledge, talents and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so that policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet the differing needs of men and women. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men, which can greatly improve interventions’ long-term sustainability (UNESCO, 2003).³

Gender-based violence

Defined by the UN General Assembly in the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or

psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private” (United Nations, 1993).⁴

Gender equality

Refers to women, men, girls and boys having equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of people (UN/OSAGI Web site).

Gender mainstreaming

“The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes,

ACRONYMS

CRC	Citizen report cards
DGTTF	Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEI	Fundación Mujeres en Igualdad, Argentina
PSLINK	Public Services Labour Independent Confederation, the Philippines
UNCAC	United Nations Convention against Corruption
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of this strategy is to achieve gender equality" (UN/ECOSOC, 1997).

Grand corruption or 'high-level' corruption

Occurs at the policy-formulation end of politics. It refers more to the level at which it takes place than to the amount of money involved: grand corruption is at the top levels of the public sphere, where policies and rules are initially formulated. Grand corruption is usually, but not always, synonymous with political corruption (U4 Corruption Glossary).⁵

Petty corruption

The everyday corruption that takes place at the implementation end of politics (where public officials meet the public), often taking the form of bribery in connection with carrying out existing laws, rules and regulations. Also called 'low-level', 'street-level', 'small-scale', or 'bureaucratic corruption' or 'retail corruption', it refers to the corruption that people may experience in their daily encounters with public administration officials or with services such as hospitals, schools, licensing authorities, police or taxing authorities. Petty corruption refers to the modest sums of money typically involved (U4 Corruption Glossary).⁶

Sex

Distinguished from 'gender', sex refers to women's and men's biological and physiological characteristics (World Health Organization Web site).⁷

“ Gender is defined as the social attributes associated with being male and female and the relationships among women, men, girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. ”

Introduction

Corruption has been high on the governance reform agenda for decades. Corruption constrains development, exacerbates and causes conflict, and is one of the biggest obstacles to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While all of society suffers from corruption's weakening of the efficiency, effectiveness and probity of the public sector, corruption has well-known differential impacts on social groups—with poor people among its greatest victims. Corruption reduces resources for poverty reduction and development and deprives poor people of advancement opportunities.

However, neither research nor policy has paid sufficient attention to corruption's differing impacts on women and men. Unaddressed questions include: Do women suffer more from corruption than men? Do women face different forms of corruption than men? Do women in public office have different propensities to engage in corruption or face different opportunities? Do the answers to these questions support changes in anti-corruption policy or advocacy strategies?

This primer examines the relationship between gender equality and corruption. Section 1 reviews the limited available evidence on how corruption affects women's access to public services and the resulting impacts on their well-being and social status. The data suggests that 'petty' or 'retail' corruption (when basic public services are sold instead of provided by right) affects poor women in particular and that the currency of corruption is frequently sexualized—women and girls are often asked to pay bribes in the form of sexual favours. Women's disempowerment and their dependence on public service delivery mechanisms for access to essential services (e.g., health, water and



education) increases their vulnerability to the consequences of corruption-related service delivery deficits. In addition, women's limited access to public officials and low income levels diminishes their ability to pay bribes, further restricting their access to basic services. Therefore, corruption disproportionately affects poor women because their low levels of economic and political empowerment constrain their ability to change the status quo or to hold states accountable to deliver services that are their right.

“ Building public accountability and governance systems that are responsive to women’s needs is important to reducing the gendered impacts of corruption.”

Section 2 reflects on women’s relative propensity to engage in corrupt activities, as expressed in commonly held assumptions that women in public office are less corrupt than men. This section reviews surveys of women’s and men’s perceptions of corruption, as well as broader social perceptions of the relative corruptibility of women and men. The section concludes that there is very little to be gained from assuming that women’s gender generates higher probity. It argues that building public accountability and governance systems that are responsive to women’s needs is more important in reducing

the gendered impacts of corruption. Although women politicians and public officials are not necessarily any less corrupt than men, increasing the number of women is likely to improve the gender responsiveness of governments, which is critical in order to alleviate the effects of corruption on women.

Section 3 suggests strategic entry points for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now part of UN Women)⁸ staff to address gender issues throughout their anti-corruption and governance work.



The Gendered Impacts of Corruption

Corruption occurs with impunity in places where the systems that hold those in power accountable for their actions or that enforce sanctions against wrongdoing are weak, either because duty-bearers are inaccessible or because the state has withdrawn altogether.

Women's relative lack of political and economic leverage reduces their ability to demand accountability or to highlight their specific experiences of and concerns about corruption.

This section examines how corruption affects women and men differently and how it exacerbates gender-based asymmetries in empowerment, access to resources and enjoyment of rights.

“ Because women make up the majority of the world’s poor, corruption disproportionately affects women and girls and impedes progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. ”



Does corruption affect women differently than men?

Development and aid agencies have only begun to conduct research and inquire into the relationship between gender equality issues and corruption in the last ten years.⁹ Initially focused on perceived gender differences in propensities to engage in corrupt activities, there has been increasing attention paid to corruption’s differential impacts on the well-being and human capabilities of women and men. This shift occurred in the wake of emerging evidence that corruption can disproportionately affect poor women and girls, particularly in their access to essential public services, justice, and security and in their capacity to engage in public decision-making. In growing recognition of how corruption affects women and girls,

development practitioners are expanding traditional definitions of corruption to include actions that are disproportionately experienced by women, such as sexual extortion and human trafficking.

One reason for corruption’s disproportionately negative impact on women is because women form the majority of the global poor. The poor, reliant on publicly provided services, disproportionately suffer when corruption depletes the amount of resources available to those services (Schimmel and Pech, 2004; Khadiagala, 2001). In contexts where bribery has become a prerequisite to accessing services, rights and resources, women’s relatively weaker access to and control of personal resources has meant that they are more frequently denied access to these services (Nyamu-Musembi, 2007). Women’s statistically lower literacy levels, which often result in a relative lack of knowledge of rights and entitlements to services and public programmes, leaves them more vulnerable to extortion and abuse of laws (UNDP 2008a).

However, evidence of the incidence and cost of corruption to women—and poor women in particular—is rare; only about one fifth of the tools commonly used to measure corruption explicitly take gender and poverty into account (Transparency International, 2008). For example, data on bribe payments is generally not sex-disaggregated and therefore

does not demonstrate that women pay more bribes than men or are more frequently targeted for bribe payments. The issue of measurement is discussed in more detail in Box 1.

Most research on the gender-differential effects of corruption addresses three areas of women's and men's relationships to public officials:

1. Access to public services and financial resources;
2. Application of the rule of law in advancing rights and providing protection from abuse; and
3. Access to decision-making, including political participation as citizens and as legislators and civil servants (Transparency International, 2008).

BOX 1. THE CHALLENGES OF MEASURING THE GENDERED IMPACTS OF CORRUPTION

Most anti-corruption strategies are based on internationally recognized aggregate measures of corruption. These measures review existing rules against corruption and measure perceptions of corruption, but do not examine corruption's direct impact on citizens. In addition, because these measures fail to disaggregate by sex or income group, they are unable to capture corruption's gender or poverty dimensions. For example, standard tools do not measure the frequency with which poor women versus poor men pay bribes to access services or measure the impacts of corruption-related service unavailability. Current measures are inadequate to generate the evidence required to formulate policy responses that address women's and men's different experiences of corruption (or are responsive to the needs of subgroups of women and men).

There are four commonly used and internationally accepted corruption measurement tools, all of which are gender-blind—none include gender (or sex) as a relevant element. The tools are: public opinion surveys (methods to measure perceptions of corruption, such as the 'Afrobarometer', Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index); public-sector diagnostics (studies that measure strengths and weaknesses of various governance institutions, sometimes based on citizen perception data); private-sector surveys (studies of bribery in private firms); and multi-country tools (rankings of countries according to how they fared in addressing corruption, using both perception data and the presence or absence of laws against corruption, such as the New Partnership for African Development's African Peer Review Mechanism) (UNDP, 2008b).

New indicators are needed to capture the gender dimensions of corruption and that are developed and used at the national level. These could be generated rather easily using existing data sources to capture the specific experiences of poorer groups of women and men. For example, an indicator such as 'level of trust in the police',¹⁰ easily measured using a household survey, could be made gender-sensitive by adding questions about respondents' sex and economic status.

In addition to collecting data on the incidence of corruption, tools also need to improve measurements of corruption's impacts. Because of women's generally higher poverty levels, paying the same amount in bribes as men may have a more severe impact—though the amount is the same, the relative percentage of available income can be quite different. Merely estimating the leakage of funds in different sectors and the amount of bribes that women have to pay in these sectors will not correctly estimate the differential impact that corruption has on poor women. Corruption measures need to capture women's loss of well-being stemming from the disproportionate loss of income due to bribe payments and unavailability of publicly provided services.

Local stakeholders can also use citizen report cards (CRCs) to capture the incidence of corruption on women and other groups. CRCs gather experience-based data to determine the percentage of service-users that encounter corruption or to determine the average bribe paid. Disaggregating this information by sex or income level will give a clearer picture of how women and men differ in the average amount of bribes paid or requested and the frequency in which they encounter corruption.

However, as some researchers have pointed out, unlike public audits—which expose corruption and then pursue channels to recover the stolen money—CRCs merely report on where corruption has occurred with the expectation that public authorities will rectify the situation (Goetz and Jenkins 1999). Unfortunately, this rectification often fails to occur.

Access to public services and financial resources

There is conflicting evidence as to whether women pay more than men in bribes or pay bribes more frequently to access public services. Some evidence shows that women tend to be the target of corrupt officials more often than men, possibly because service providers consider women to be more susceptible to coercion, violence or threats, or less aware of where or how to file a complaint (UNDP, 2008c).

Depending on the extent of the government's failure to be accountable to women citizens, corruption may impact women's access to resources and public services in a number of ways. Some of these impacts include findings that corruption creates barriers to accessing basic public services; that corruption takes the form of sexual extortion; that corruption reduces women's access to markets and credits; and that corruption reinforces women's social and economic marginalization.

A) CORRUPTION CREATES BARRIERS TO ACCESSING BASIC PUBLIC SERVICES AND RESOURCES

Because poor women are the primary users of basic public services (e.g., health, education, water and sanitation), they disproportionately pay for corruption in service delivery. Furthermore, bribe payments tend to make up a larger percentage of poor women's

limited income, leaving little left to pay for basic necessities (further impoverishing poor families).

Poor women, dependent on goods and services, disproportionately feel the impacts of high-level or 'grand' corruption. Grand corruption often occurs in the form of illicit commissions at the point of procurement, which reduce the overall amount of public resources available for distribution and affects the equitable distribution among different population segments. Evidence and analytical work suggest that 'leakages' of this kind are more common with resources earmarked for marginalized groups, as these groups often lack the political power to protest corruption (Goetz and Jenkins, 2005).

In addition to reducing resources available to fund public services, corruption imposes informal 'fees' for services. These fees can affect women more than men, particularly in sectors in which women comprise the majority of clients. This role often places women in the position of having to pay bribes, increasing their vulnerability to corruption and increasing its impacts. For example, as primary caretakers of family members, women are often in the position of seeking services or resources not only for themselves, but also for other family or community members. A study on corruption in the Nicaraguan health-care system found that two thirds of patients over 10 years of

“Measurements of corruption need to be sex-disaggregated and need to measure the forms of corruption that are predominantly experienced by women (e.g., sexual exploitation).”

age obtaining public-sector health care services were female. A statistical analysis implies that corruption would affect women and children more than men. In addition, beyond the statistically higher numbers of bribes paid by women for specific services, women's higher poverty levels also means that the same amounts or frequency will have a greater impact. (Seppänen and Virtanen, 2008).

Women's dependence on public services also means that corruption can have debilitating impacts on their lives. For example, case study evidence shows that poor women are often forced to pay bribes to health-care personnel even in life-threatening situations, such as complicated birth delivery. UNIFEM (2008) cites a study conducted on maternity clinics in Georgia that found that it was common for women to agree to pay the doctor directly, even though the services were supposed to be free. A study in Ghana found that women who were unable to pay bribes for medical care sometimes did not receive any (Alolo 2007). Pregnant women denied access to a doctor tended to deliver at home, which increased the likelihood of complications and maternal and child mortality (*ibid*). A study of maternity hospitals in Kenya found that women about to give birth were reportedly abused and even detained by medical personnel for not paying their bills (Center for Reproductive Rights and FIDA, 2007).

Another form of corruption in the health sector is the embezzlement of medical supplies from public hospitals that are then sold to private clinics that can charge more for drugs and supplies. This makes some basic medications inaccessible to poor women and creates shortages in government facilities. In Bangladesh, for example, a public expenditure tracking survey found that though



most drugs were adequately available in the government clinics predominantly used by the poor, stocks of maternity drugs were suspiciously low—indicating a form of corruption that solely disadvantages women (FMRP, 2006).

In many countries, gender roles prescribe water-gathering responsibilities to women and girls. Responsibility for water provision has been shown to decrease women's productive capacity and therefore lower household income, in addition to leaving little or no time for women and girls to study, participate in decision-making at all levels or to engage in sport and leisure activities. Corruption in large-scale infrastructure projects can mean that labour-saving water technology is never or improperly installed in poorer communities, leading to inadequate coverage and unsafe water availability (Alolo 2007). Women and girls are often forced to bribe water officials to connect them to the water grid or, if they lack the resources, they may face unhygienic water sources or water sources that are distant from their homes. This can increase their vulnerability to water-borne diseases, their time burdens and

BOX 2. EXAMPLES OF THE EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION ON GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

A study conducted in Botswana in 2001 revealed that 67 percent of the women surveyed reported having been sexually harassed by their male professors; 10 percent of the women agreed to have sexual relations out of fear that their grades would be affected (U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, 2006b). In some contexts, where sexual extortion has resulted in pregnancy, a common administration response is to expel the pregnant girl rather than to punish the teacher who is the perpetrator. This doubles the impact of sexual extortion: girls are not only required to pay bribes in the form of sex, they also run the risk of being excluded from an education for doing so (UNESCO, 2003; Leach, Dunne and Humphreys 2006).

can expose them to greater risks of gender-based violence (ibid.). There is, therefore, ample evidence that while both men and women will suffer from poor water quality and accessibility issues, women will be more negatively affected by corruption due to the high opportunity costs that an insufficient water supply will have on their livelihoods.

B) CORRUPTION THAT TAKES THE FORM OF SEXUAL EXTORTION

Corruption's impact on women is greater than men's when the currency of bribes is sexual. Sexual extortion can involve various types of sexual assault against women, ranging from sexual harassment to forced sex (UNIFEM, 2008). When exacted by public officials in exchange for the performance of a public duty, this form of corruption falls well within the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) definition of abuse of power and influence.

However, despite its disproportionate affect on women, corruption involving sexual exploitation or extortion generally escapes measurement in standard corruption analyses and sexual exploitation or extortion is less likely to be reported than other forms

of corruption. In many contexts, the nature of these offences—and the fear, shame and stigma associated with being a victim of sexual extortion—means that evidence on its prevalence and the forms it takes is usually anecdotal rather than systematically recorded. In addition, because of the nature and stigma associated with sexual exploitation or extortion, it is harder to pursue as a corruption case in law courts, leading to misleading statistical analysis of court dockets.

Some of the evidence recorded on sexual extortion relates to sexual violence in schools, where male teachers have demanded sex from female students in exchange for supplying books or educational supplies, fair examinations or access to higher schooling (including enrolment) (Schimmel and Pech, 2004). When faced with bribery demands, resource-scarce households typically spend available monies for male children's scholastic opportunities. Unfortunately, this often means that girls are forced to either drop out for lack of resources or to offer transactional sex to remain in school (see Box 2).

Furthermore, sexual exploitation of girls may prevent them from going to school altogether, may lead to infection with sexually transmitted diseases, and can result in the many consequences associated with early and unwanted pregnancies, including higher maternal mortality rates and being expelled from school, homes, and communities. These factors all hinder the achievement of development goals, MDG 2 (universal primary education), MDG 3 (gender equality), MDG 5 (improve maternal health) and MDG 6 (halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS).

C) CORRUPTION REDUCES WOMEN'S ACCESS TO MARKETS AND CREDIT

Corruption in the business regulation sector disproportionately affects women entrepreneurs by distorting access to credit or by

making it more difficult to obtain the necessary licenses and permits to start a business (U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, 2006a). A 2006 World Bank study on gender and growth in Uganda cites data¹¹ that showed even though women owned a minority of registered businesses, they reported government officials' "interference" with their businesses at much higher rates than Ugandan businesses as a whole—43 percent of women business owners reported harassment versus 25 percent among all business owners. Such interference included threats to close them down, demands for bribes and illegally collected taxes (Ellis and Blackden, 2006). In informal trading, which is dominated by women in many developing countries, women report having been the victims of petty corruption from municipal and urban council representatives who exact bribes or harass them in exchange for licenses and permits (U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, 2006a).

D) CORRUPTION REINFORCES WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC MARGINALIZATION

Ironically, women's remoteness from some corruption networks reinforces their social and economic marginalization. In addition to other barriers women may face as entrepreneurs, corruption imposes restrictions on their ability to conduct business. Onerous 'speed money' payments can allow entrepreneurs to bypass regulations for obtaining business licenses or evade complex legal requirements for forming companies—yet women often lack the resources necessary to make these payments, lack information about business services available or knowledge of the means of negotiating corrupt networks (Ellis and Blackden, 2006). A study by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe on the gender sensitivity of Armenia's 2008–2012 Anti-Corruption Strategy examined how women business owners were being affected by corruption in the city of Kapan (Iskandarian 2008). It



“With women’s rights already restricted because of gender inequalities, corruption creates additional obstacles for them to access public goods and rights and to participate in politics and governance processes.”

Source: Transparency International, 2008

found that the Taxation Department did not ask women for bribes because tax officials assumed they were not making enough money to pay them (ibid.). This is not an argument, of course, for women’s engagement in corruption, but is illustrative of how corruption in the business sector can exacerbate women’s economic marginality.

This marginalization also has implications for women’s perceptions and awareness of corruption and for their engagement in anti-corruption efforts. In contexts where the state does not provide services, including those most needed by poor women (as in certain parts of sub-Saharan Africa), women may be less aware of corruption’s prevalence than men and how it impacts service delivery. This suggests that in some contexts, it is necessary to build women’s awareness of basic governance concepts and challenges. It is important to note that this conclusion will vary according to women’s social status. It applies most directly to poor women, women in remote rural areas and women belonging to socially excluded categories such as low castes, racial, ethnic or linguistic minorities that tend to be excluded from networks through which they can leverage greater resources and access to services. Regardless of corruption’s impact on economic and social marginalization, women still continue to experience grand corruption which reduces public resources and services and significantly impacts women’s development.

Application of the rule of law in advancing rights and providing protection from abuse

When women most need their rights to be protected they are often least able to demand accountability from public officials—such as when women seek security and protection from violence. One of the public institutions widely associated with corruption and abuses in a diverse range of contexts is the police. While police corruption has negative impacts on the rule of law, and therefore on society and security in general, there are specific gender dimensions to both police and judicial corruption.

Gender inequalities often result in poor protection of women’s civil and political rights. For example, in many countries women have unequal access to property and inheritance (even where the law mandates equal rights), unequal rights before, during and after marriage, or lack access to fair trials, particularly for gender-based offences. These are problems not just of corruption in the judiciary, but of marked and unaddressed gender biases and discrimination in the scope, mandate and application of laws. In many cases, in addition to laws and statutes that discriminate against women, corrupt judicial procedures and the prevalence of ‘old boys’ networks makes it impossible for women to win legal battles in a transparent manner.

Trafficking in human beings is another instance when women are severely disadvan-

tagged by judicial corruption. Bribery of officials and political corruption reaching up to the highest levels of the executive, legislative and judiciary in the home, transit and destination countries are crucial for the success of human traffickers (Schimmel and Pech, 2004). Police are often in positions of authority to either deny women's rights (e.g., by failing to provide women with appropriate security) or to directly perpetrate crimes against women (e.g., rape in police custody). Although sexual exploitation of women by security-sector actors happens in many contexts (including in times of peace), women are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation by the police, military or other security-sector actors in conflict and post-conflict situations where the rule of law is often very weak. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where rebel factions have used sexual violence as a war tactic, there is evidence that the police and army have also been major perpetrators of sexual violence (United Nations General Assembly Report, 2005). In this context, as in other conflict and post-conflict situations, not only are protections weak or non-existent, investigation and prosecution of sexual violence crimes are also often woefully inadequate, not only because of resource constraints, but also because of a lack of authorities' conviction and commitment.

Regrettably, the use of positions of power in security-sector roles to abuse women's rights has also been reported in international peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. There have been "sex-for-food" scandals: in return for food and other resources, refugees and vulnerable women and children have been forced to perform sexual favours for peacekeeping forces and aid workers (UNDP, 2008a; UNIFEM, 2008). Progress is being made in addressing this form of corruption, including disseminating a code of

conduct, investigating complaints and enforcing disciplinary measures for UN employees, appointing high-level conduct and discipline teams in all UN missions, and in 2008, introducing a victim compensation policy (Dahrendorf, 2006 cited in UNIFEM, 2008). However, the United Nations cannot extend its disciplinary procedures to the military, police and civilian peacekeepers contributed by Member States. Instead, it must rely on these countries' domestic accountability systems to prosecute perpetrators of sexual crimes (ibid.).

Access to decision-making, including political participation as citizens and as legislators and civil servants

Debates about the relationship between gender and corruption in politics often focus on whether having more women in public office curbs corruption. Those that support this theory argue that women are less prone to corruption because they are either innately or socialized to be less corrupt than men. Some of these debates are reviewed in the next section.

Reviewing the causal relationship in reverse, little has been written on corruption's impact





on women's political participation or whether corruption causes or contributes to women's lower levels of political participation. There is some evidence to indicate that corruption blocks women's access to politics in both parliaments and senior public administration or acts as a deterrent to women contemplating entering these domains. Women's under-representation in politics is not necessarily because they are less disposed to politics, but because they often lack access to the important (and often corrupt) networks that mediate entry into politics. This compounds factors such as gender stereotypes that men, not women, should be leaders and decision-makers.

The methods that political parties use to select candidates tend to be crucial: where parties have not been formalized or lack internal democratic mechanisms, candidates are often selected on the basis of their ability to mobilize patron-client (or other typically all-male) networks and to collect the resources needed to finance an election campaign. In addition, bringing large resources to a party may result in candidates being placed in more favourable or winnable positions on party lists, essentially 'buying' their positions. Women attempting to enter politics may also face demands for sex from male party members in exchange for opportunities to run for office—a sexualized form of corruption or extortion that women are more likely to encounter than men (Goetz 2007; Iwanaga, 2005).

Similarly, candidates with access to money and power (typically men), have the advantage of being able to bribe voters directly with food, cash and clothing—or in the case of incumbents and power-holders, threats to withhold basic services if people do not vote for them. Such threats were one of the foundations of Alberto Fujimori's re-election strategy in Peru in 2000: beneficiaries of the national programme of food assistance, Pronaa, were pressured into giving their vote to Fujimori, attending his campaign events and wearing stickers that promoted his party (Transparency International, 2004).

Once in office, winning candidates are often expected to reimburse the party for costs of campaign financing. This is frequently only possible if the candidate is willing and able to exact bribes. The capacity to repay borrowed money for campaign costs is often taken into account by party leadership during candidate selection processes. In such contexts, women's entry into politics depends

on whether they can leverage patronage and finance resources from historically male-dominated networks. These financial requirements help explain how elite South Asian women have been able to inherit political leadership from husbands and fathers, as well as why in the same countries non-elite women are found in minuscule numbers and in the lower ranks of party hierarchies.

Corruption creates opportunities for organized crime that often intensifies violence against women, often deterring women's political involvement and their capacity and willingness to run for elected bodies (International IDEA, 2002). For women in a growing number of countries, participating in politics and contesting elections could literally mean death for them and any of their supporters. In the past few years, women in several countries, including Afghanistan, Guinea, Kenya, Philippines and Zambia, experienced rape, physical beatings, kidnappings, threats of gang rape and death. These incidents signal to women that it is unsafe to consider participating in politics. They prevent women candidates from reaching out to their potential constituencies and increase campaign costs for women.

In certain countries, social norms that restrict interactions between female and male public officials—including voter registration officials—also facilitates proxy voting and other forms of electoral fraud. In such countries or countries where electoral codes are not well defined, women are particularly susceptible to identity fraud in voter regis-

tration processes and distortions of their real electoral participation. This has implications for women's ability to hold governments accountable. As Fabrice Lehoucq argues, “[electoral] fraud undermines [citizens'] ability to constrain the actions of state officials. ... To the extent that public officials can corrupt the electoral process, they are less accountable to the electorate” (Lehoucq 2002).

Corruption along the route to power reinforces the dominance of those already in power—and in most contexts where corruption is prevalent, those in power are men (Bjarnegård, E. referred to in Wängnerud, 2008). Similarly, unaccountable, corrupt and predominantly male networks shape decisions around recruitment and promotion within bureaucracies. Corruption in recruitment processes for public service positions may also take the form of sexual extortion where women candidates are promised positions in return for sexual favours. Where corrupt practices are embedded within bureaucracies, women public officials may find promotions or job security elusive. For example, public expenditure tracking surveys from Bangladesh show that women officials were more vulnerable to demands for informal speed payments from government accounting clerks in charge of processing women's pay and allowances because women were considered to be easier targets than men. Women seeking maternity or sickness pay were most likely to face demands for speed money payments because corrupt officials knew that women were usually in too weak a position to object (FMRP, 2007).

“Corruption along the route to power reinforces the dominance of those already in power—and in most contexts where corruption is prevalent, those in power are men.”



Gender Differences in Attitudes to and Opportunities for Corruption

Attitudes towards corruption: do women and men perceive corruption differently?

Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, which compiles public opinion surveys from approximately 54,000 individuals in 69 countries, asks citizens how corruption affects their lives and businesses. Responses are scored according to people's perceptions of corruption in public services and in political, judicial and market institutions (Transparency International, 2005). UNIFEM's 2008 analysis of this data explored gender differences in perceptions and found a statistically signifi-

cant difference between women and men in almost all regions of the world, with women generally perceiving higher levels of corruption than men.

Differences in perceptions are most significant in the area of service provision—notably for education, medical services and utilities. One of the more striking results is the ratio of women to men (1.3 to 1) in developed countries who perceive high levels of corruption in education. There were regional differences, with women in the poorer countries of South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa

somewhat less likely than men to perceive high levels of corruption (see Box 3). These findings suggest that women are more intolerant of and are more affected by corruption in public services, particularly in developed regions and established democracies (UNIFEM, 2008).

Other evidence supports the finding that women may perceive the problem of corruption to be more acute than men do. Analysing gender differences in attitudinal data about the acceptability of different forms of corruption, Swamy et al. conclude that there is a worldwide “gender difference in tolerance for corruption” (2000).

Feminizing public space as an anti-corruption strategy

Findings that show gender differences in tolerance for corruption have been folded into discussions about the causes of corruption, and have been used to argue that higher levels of women’s public and political participation can lead to lower levels of corruption.

Debate on the issue began in 1999 with the publication of a report that, drawing inspiration from psychological and other analyses of gender differences in selfishness, found a correlation between low levels of corruption and more women in government (Dollar et al., 1999). Swamy et al. also concluded that at least in the short- to medium-term, more women in public life would lower the level of tolerance for corruption (2000). The theme was taken up in the World Bank’s 2001 report ‘Engendering Development through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources and Voice’, which suggested that women were more likely than men to condemn bribery and express altruistic values in attitudinal surveys. In addition, data analysis referenced in the report showed that firms owned or managed by men were more likely to give bribes than those owned or managed by women, and cross-national comparisons showed that having more women in parliaments or private management was correlated to lower levels of corruption. While depicting these findings as merely

BOX 3. GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION BY REGION AND SECTOR

Figure A. Gendered Perceptions of Corruption by Region: Service Provision Institutions

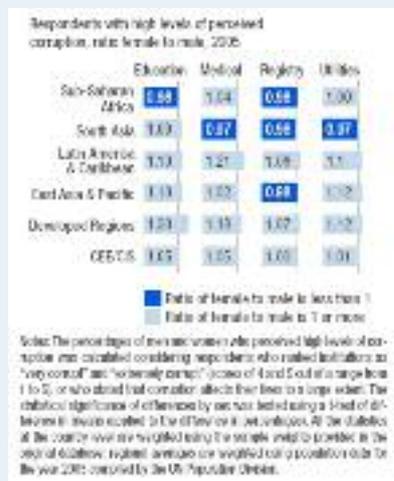


Figure B. Gendered Perceptions of Corruption by Region: Political, Judicial and Security Sector Institutions



Figure C. Gendered Perceptions of Corruption by Region: Market-Related Institutions



Source: UNIFEM, 2008: 8–9. UNIFEM analysis of Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer database (2005)

“ Gender roles and relations mean that women, more than men, have restricted access to the resources, information and connections they need to avoid paying bribes—or to benefit from paying them. ”

Source: Transparency International, 2008

suggestive, ‘Engendering Development’ called for “having more women in politics and in the labor force—since they could be an effective force for good government and business trust” (World Bank 2001). Although cautious making a generic policy prescription, Torgler and Valev (2006) also conclude that increasing the number of women in the government or public administration may help reduce level of corruption.

The idea that women inherently possess greater integrity than men and that there is therefore less corruption under their leadership has been challenged by an alternate hypothesis put forward by the researcher Hung-en Sung (2003). He argued that a “fairer system,” characterized by liberal democracies that provide equal rights for women and better governance, explains why corruption is lower when more women are in government (see Box 4). Similarly, Kaufmann (1998) shows a correlation between corruption and an index of women’s rights.

Other researchers support findings that it is a country’s political and governance system rather than policy makers’ gender that determines corruption levels. The authors of a UNDP report on corruption in the Asia-Pacific region found no discernible reduction in corruption levels in countries that have been run by female presidents or prime ministers (UNDP, 2008a). Evidence from

Tanzania indicates that merely bringing more women into key decision-making roles in public service does not tangibly improve the situation if accountability structures and systems are not also reformed (Seppänen and Virtanen, 2008).

The debate regarding women’s relative propensities to engage in corruption is far from resolved and needs further research to understand women’s contributions to curbing corruption. Though increasing women’s political participation remains an important goal and right on its own, the implication of this debate is that policies that increase the women’s roles in organizations and public decision-making and that simultaneously address other determinants of good governance (e.g., transparency, political accountability, separation of powers or rule of law), might be better able to reduce corruption.

Gender equality in governance is an essential feature of anti-corruption strategies. It is unrealistic to rely on women’s gender to act as a sanitizing force in contexts where corruption is systemic or where the few women that attain power are often from the same elite circles or use the same compromised party systems as men. Individual women parliamentarians may find it difficult to have an impact on the prevalence of corruption or anti-corruption policies because they are marginalized in a male-dominated environ-

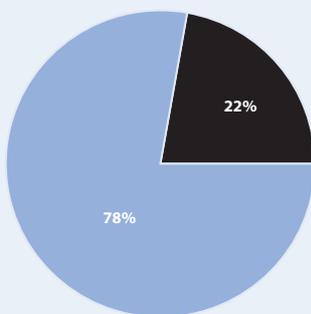
ment. It is, therefore, unlikely that the few women working in male-dominated parliaments around the world will have found both the cure for combating corruption and the power to implement it (Bjarnegård, 2008). However, evidence is emerging that suggests that when a significant portion—at least 30 percent—of public office holders are women, gender equality issues are brought into public deliberations (Dahlerup, 1988). These deliberations often included anti-corruption agendas.

These changes are the result of achieving a critical mass—a group previously in the minority is able to begin taking actions in their interests once it makes up about 30 percent

of an institution's composition (Dahlerup, 1988). Findings on the difference that women can make to the responsiveness of public institutions to women's needs (and possibly to corruption levels) when they exceed 30 percent of staff strongly supports arguments for engaging large numbers of women—particularly at the front-line of public service delivery. This policy is increasingly being recognized as important to achieving the Millennium Development Goals that rely upon women and girls' access to services. However, policy must also recognize that effective accountability and oversight systems are more important than the gender of public-sector officials to ensuring responsive and non-corrupt service delivery.

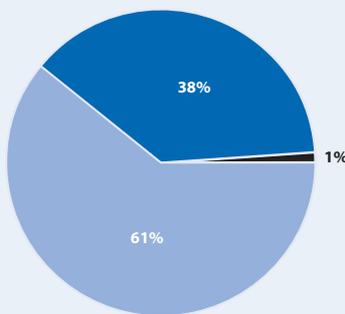
BOX 4. GENDER, POWER AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Figure A. Proportion of variance in corruption explained by women in government before controlling for liberal democracy



■ Women in government
■ Control variables

Figure B. Proportion of variance in corruption explained by women in government after controlling for liberal democracy



■ Women in government
■ Control variables
■ Liberal democracy

Alexis de Tocqueville observed that expanded opportunities for women went along with a society that was more participatory and, hence, more democratic. Could both women in government and low corruption depend on a liberal democratic polity? In other words, more women in politics are not the *cause* of low corruption, but rather, democratic and transparent politics goes along *with* low corruption, and the two create an enabling environment for more women to participate in politics. In such a society characterized by free elections, rule of law and separa-

tion of powers, the protection of basic liberties facilitates women's entry into government. At the same time, more competitive and transparent politics minimizes opportunities for widespread corruption.

A 2003 study pitted indicators of the "fair sex" hypothesis (i.e., women in parliament, women in ministerial positions, and women in sub-ministerial positions) against measures of liberal democracy (i.e., rule of law, press freedom, and elections) for a sample of 99 countries. Results showed that both women in government and liberal democracy were significantly and inversely related to corruption when they were isolated from each other (figure A). But when put into the same model, the effects of women's political presence on corruption became insignificant, whereas liberal institutions remained very powerful predictors of low corruption (figure B). Freedom of the press showed the strongest influence on corruption, followed by the rule of law. All in all, the gender-corruption link was refuted in this test as a largely spurious relationship, and the liberal democracy hypothesis received very strong empirical support.

The surge of over one million women into local councils in India since the 1993 policy of reserving 30 percent of its seats for women has produced changes in local spending patterns that divert resources, such as employment opportunities, to women (Duflo and Topalova 2004). The increased presence of women also seems to have had an impact on the levels of financial corruption within the Panchayats (Kudva, 2006). Another study of corruption in public-sector institutions in six developing and transition countries found that when women make up less than 30 percent of public organizations, increasing the percentage of females reduces the severity of corruption. However, after a certain threshold (70 percent), increasing the proportion of females is counterproductive as it tends to further increase corruption (Gokcekus and Mukherjee, 2002).

In countries with strong social movements that include transparency and anti-corruption groups, women politicians are increasingly recognizing the constituency appeal of anti-corruption political platforms and participating in efforts to challenge the established party patronage systems that fuel corruption. In this sense, involving women politicians and women's civil society groups are an important part of efforts to tackle corruption.

Gendered opportunities to participate in corruption

The gendered opportunity structure of corruption provides an alternative explanation for lower observed levels of corruption among women in public office—and lower levels of overall corruption in institutions in which women have attained critical mass. Corrupt activities may run in networks (typically all male), formed on patronage relationships or based on long-established political ties. Women may be excluded from opportunities to engage in or benefit from corrupt activities, whether due to being relative newcomers to these relationships and networks, due to cultural limitations against women interacting with non-kin men, or due to their having less access to the networks and arenas through which corrupt dealings are organized. In addition, it is possible that the influx of new, outside non-participants sufficiently perturbs the networks so as to have corruption-disrupting effects. This may account for lower levels of corruption among institutions as a whole in which women's representation has increased.

Evidence from a corruption scandal in a female-dominated bureaucracy providing infant and maternal health services in Karnataka, India in the 1990s illustrates the

“ In all the excitement about the potential of exploiting supposed feminine virtues in the fight against corruption (what can women do for good governance?), we might overlook the challenge of combating corruption in ways that respond to women's concerns (what governments should be doing for women). ”

Source: (Goetz 2007:102)

notion that women's participation in corrupt activities may not be limited by gender-based propensities for probity, but rather by opportunities for corruption. Despite beliefs that women were less likely to skim resources from the programme, a serious procurement scandal around contracts to supply baby food occurred involving top-ranking women officials (Sengupta, 1998). When occasions present themselves, women in public office may be equally susceptible to add to their meagre incomes through illicit means.

This reinforces the proposition that corruption may thrive in networks that are formed around social constructs upon which trust is built—whether gender, class, caste or other categories. Just as with men, it will be the inter-linkages between these social constructs and the institutional mechanisms that influence them that will be most important in shaping whether women in public office engage in corruption. There are two key implications. First, as noted by Gokcekus and Mukherjee (2002), an infusion of women public officials may breach these networks, making them more open and thereby reducing corruption. Second, there is a need to establish adequate incentive mechanisms that influence these cliques of elite public officials to be more open and more transparent. This can be done by instituting participatory planning and monitoring mechanisms with active engagement of civil society organizations, as well as appropriate performance management systems within the public sector. Civil society organizations (including women's organizations) have a key role to play in fighting corruption, from monitoring public services, denouncing bribery and raising awareness, to contributing to the implementation of international anti-corruption instruments such as the UNCAC (U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, 2008). There are several

examples of initiatives aimed at empowering NGOs to promote the implementation of the UNCAC that demonstrate that NGOs can be instrumental in advocating for anti-corruption reforms. The UNCAC itself contains mandatory provisions that promote civil society organization participation in the fight against corruption. Some of these civil society initiatives are explained in detail in Section 3.

A gendered experience of and engagement in corruption implies a need for gender-specific approaches to fighting corruption

Corruption affects women differently from men. Women's relatively low socio-economic status means that they generally engage in corrupt exchanges in different institutions than men—for example, paying bribes for the provision of basic public services rather than for business opportunities and licences. To the extent that women—especially poor and socially excluded women—have lower incomes and weaker property and other rights than men, the direct per-transaction



cost of corruption may be lower, yet the amount they pay may represent a larger share of their income. Furthermore, the cost of transactions paid in sexual services is exceptionally high for women's equal rights as citizens, their health, and their basic human dignity. In addition, though women may not pay directly in some cases, grand corruption can result in drastically reduced resources and can exacerbate pre-existing burdens.

There is little evidence that women in public office are necessarily less corrupt than men, but there is growing evidence that corruption operates through specific social and political networks to which women do not usually have access—at least not when they

are newcomers to positions of power in political, social or economic institutions. All of these observations have implications for the design of policies to combat corruption, to strengthen public accountability systems, and to advance gender equality.

Women's groups are important allies in anti-corruption efforts. Furthermore, corruption that increases the marginality of women—especially poor women—to public institutions can only be addressed by increasing women's effective engagement in good governance efforts. Building women's engagement in anti-corruption efforts should contribute not only to public probity, but also to building public accountability and governance systems that are more responsive to women's needs and that promote gender equality.

Strategies are needed to prevent corruption in the financing and delivery of the basic public services upon which women depend, with a particular focus on combating the abuses that take advantage of women's lack of knowledge of their rights and lack of power to protest. Particular effort is needed to combat sexual exploitation and extortion, bearing in mind the extent of these violations is often much greater than is known due to low reporting rates.





Strategies to Mainstream Gender into Existing UNIFEM and UNDP Programmes on Anti-Corruption

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC, adopted in 2003) was the first global legally binding anti-corruption instrument.

It obliges its 144 State Parties¹² to adopt preventative measures, criminalize corruption offences, ensure international cooperation around anti-corruption programming and conduct asset recovery. Issues of inequality, human rights and fairness are integrated throughout the Convention, reaffirming the

core values of honesty, respect for the rule of law, accountability and transparency in development assistance. These are all values that promote non-discrimination, gender equality and equal opportunities for all. However, though UNCAC addresses a number of forms of corruption, it does not

“While UNDP and UNIFEM both have track records of involving women and integrating gender into governance and political reforms, integrating gender into anti-corruption programming is an emerging area.”

specifically address the relationship between gender and corruption or the associated potential policy and programming implications.

This primer highlights the gendered impacts of and opportunities for corruption in order to assist in a gender-aware interpretation of the Convention's articles.

Both UNDP and UNIFEM are committed to building good governance systems that prevent corruption and advance gender equality. UNDP and UNIFEM are mandated to promote gender equality through the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action, the landmark outcome document of the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Gender equality is understood not only as critical to achieving women's human rights, but also to the achievement of a wide range of anti-poverty and developmental goals, including the MDGs. Likewise, 'quality governance'—represented by effective, efficient and equitable resource generation, allocation and management—is a precondition for achieving the MDGs. Gender-sensitive good governance would ensure that public resources are spent effectively and efficiently on public services that build human capital in a gender-equal way, reduce corruption (in particular sexual extortion), and prevent other abuses of women's human rights.

In order to achieve the MDGs, UNDP and UNIFEM promote gender equality and democratic governance through programming that strengthens public accountability and transparency for all men and women, thus ensuring equality in access to political participation, rule of law and publicly provided social services.

Programming priorities

While UNDP and UNIFEM both have track records of involving women and integrating gender into governance and political reforms, integrating gender into anti-corruption programming is an emerging area. A number of governance initiatives are beginning to address the gendered impacts of corruption. There are two challenges in developing gender-sensitive anti-corruption policies. The first challenge is to ensure that anti-corruption initiatives address the forms of corruption that affect women more or in different ways than men. For example, some anti-corruption initiatives do not address sexual extortion, failing to recognize its prevalence or effects. The second challenge is to ensure that women are fully included and engaged in anti-corruption and good governance efforts, whether within civil society or within the public sector.

The programming entry points for anti-corruption efforts with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment fall into many of the demand- and supply-side

governance reform areas in which UNDP and UNIFEM have traditionally been engaged. Supply-side interventions strengthen the public administration's capacities to deliver services in an accountable, efficient and equitable manner. On the supply-side, both organizations work with public-sector management and service delivery institutions to ensure better assessments of and responses to citizens' needs, and to build adequate oversight over government functions, roles and responsibilities.

Demand-side interventions strengthen citizens' capacities to become active 'watch-dogs' over the conduct and outcomes of government decision-making. Both organizations have supported efforts to ensure that women's concerns receive fair representation in political processes; that women—as voters and candidates—effectively engage in political decision-making and processes at national and local levels; that women's civil society organizations effectively advocate for women's issues; and that media is engaged in challenging gender stereotypes about women's roles and rights. Above all, both organizations have supported legislative changes to eliminate impunity for violations of women's rights.

The following sections describe several major UNDP and UNIFEM good governance initiatives and entry points for introducing a gender-sensitive approach to reducing corruption.

Mainstreaming gender into anti-corruption policies and programmes

Mainstreaming gender equality into anti-corruption policies and programmes means assessing any planned action's implications for women and men, thereby ensuring the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation

of policies and programmes reflects both their concerns. This, in turn, ensures that both men and women will benefit equally.

One of the key entry points for gender mainstreaming is the UNDP Global Thematic Programme on Anti-Corruption for Development Effectiveness. This programme was developed in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan (2008–2011) to upscale its governance interventions at global, regional and country levels. It is premised on the operating principles of the UNDP Strategic Plan—national ownership, capacity development, effective aid management and South-South cooperation—and falls under one of its key strategic outcomes aimed at supporting national partners to implement democratic governance practices grounded in human rights, gender equality and anti-corruption.

The Programme on Anti-Corruption for Development Effectiveness ensures that gender-sensitive approaches are applied to the design and implementation of major anti-corruption interventions. For example, when developing anti-corruption diagnostic tools, the programme recommends paying attention



BOX 5. UNDP GLOBAL THEMATIC PROGRAMME ON ANTI-CORRUPTION FOR DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS 2008–2011: ENTRY POINTS ON GENDER AND CORRUPTION

- Advisory support for capacity development of government stakeholders on integrating gender into anti-corruption interventions, activities, national plans and strategies;
- Support to develop gender-disaggregated, nationally-owned corruption measurement and diagnostics tools;
- Development of methodology to incorporate both anti-corruption and gender issues in development processes such as United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and MDG-based development strategies, common country assessments, and poverty reduction strategy papers;
- Capacity development of civil society and media, such as supporting community-level women's movements (e.g., women journalist's network and women's network against corruption);
- Gender-balanced awareness-raising campaigns against corruption; and
- Development and dissemination of knowledge products on how corruption affects women and men differently (e.g., corruption in service delivery).

BOX 6. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE THEMATIC TRUST FUND

The Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF) is a funding mechanism managed by UNDP for fostering innovation in democratic governance programming. Since 2001, DGTTF has been geared towards aligning the global, regional and country programmes of UNDP and mobilizing donor resources for innovative and catalytic democratic governance initiatives. Through DGTTF, funds have been dedicated to anti-corruption activities, and a focus on gender has been mainstreamed within many of these initiatives. The Enhancing Democratic Governance and Accountability through the Gender-Sensitive Engagement of Local Communities programme in Thailand, for example, aims to strengthen government capacity to implement anti-corruption initiatives by involving citizens in monitoring activities. This will be achieved by raising awareness among marginalized groups, including women, the poor and the vulnerable on their rights to information and participation in local governance. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the DGTTF supported an anti-corruption programme implemented by civil society and women's organizations, which published anti-corruption messages through the mass media that sensitized policy- and opinion-makers on corruption issues that affect women.

to gender-disaggregated data and detailing the gender dimensions of corruption in key knowledge products. When supporting civil society organizations and media advocacy, the programme encourages UNDP regional service centres and country offices to provide for women's participation in designing and implementing anti-corruption projects such as citizens' committees, which helps ground gender equality and empowerment in UNDP programming. Similarly, all activities aimed at developing the capacity of government officials, UNDP staff, media and civil society organizations are guided by the gender mainstreaming approach (e.g., having representation of women journalists and civil society members in training workshops). The Programme's entry points on gender and corruption are presented in Box 5.

Another method of mainstreaming gender approaches into anti-corruption programming is via increasing the resource allocations for gender-responsive governance programmes in the thematic funds managed by UNDP and UNIFEM (e.g., the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund, the Gender Thematic Trust Fund managed by UNDP, and the Gender Equality Fund managed by UNIFEM (see Box 6).

Access to information

A critical concern with respect to gender and corruption is access to information. Awareness of and information about public spending patterns and availability of public services, knowledge of women's human rights and the impacts of corruption is extremely limited, particularly amongst socially excluded or politically marginalized groups.

Promoting the public's right to information is a strategic entry point for UNDP and UNIFEM gender and corruption programming. Establishing an enforceable right to

BOX 7. ORGANIZING WOMEN AGAINST CORRUPTION IN ARGENTINA

In Argentina, with funding provided by the United Nations Democracy Fund, UNIFEM partnered with the Fundación Mujeres en Igualdad (MEI) to implement the Organizing Women against Corruption project. The project sought to organize and mobilize women in order to raise public awareness of their rights to access public information. MEI produced a toolkit that included materials on the Access to Information Law, along with a road map for individuals and non-governmental organizations on requesting information about the financing and enforcement of gender policies. The project achieved significant results in decreasing corruption and in ensuring greater accountability in the provision of gender-sensitive public services.

In one province, for example, by exercising their right to access information on government expenditures, local women uncovered that the mayor had diverted money intended for a domestic violence programme to building a Malvinas Veterans' House. In this case, funds were secretly diverted by the Executive Branch—without knowledge of the legislature and in clear violation of official procedure. In all such cases that MEI unearthed, public officials and politicians were misusing their positions to divert or reduce funds that were meant to support women's rights and gender-equality programmes in return for political favours. In a number of such instances, MEI has managed to advocate in favour of returning funding to the originally budgeted activity, thereby ensuring that women were not disadvantaged by corruption in the long term.

Also in 2009, MEI produced a documentary film titled "Gender and Corruption" to educate the public on a subject that remains sensitive and rarely discussed in Argentina. The film draws on the knowledge and experience of former and current public servants, members of specialized international agencies and civil society organizations. It shows how women, already disadvantaged, suffer all the more from the loss of resources caused by corruption, how gender inequality can obstruct women's access to justice and information, and how women, as victims of corruption, can even be forced to pay with their bodies.

Source: United Nations Democracy Fund, <http://www.un.org/democracyfund/XNewsArgentinaOWAC.htm>, 2007, and <http://www.un.org/democracyfund/XNewsArgentinaMEI.htm>, 2009

information has been shown to deepen democracy because it exposes corruption, strengthens transparency in political and administrative cultures, and shifts control over information from powerful state actors to citizens (Pope, 2003).

UNDP and UNIFEM can draw on their long histories of successful partnerships with governments to promote and advocate for the passage of right-to-information laws that ensure that women and civil society have equal rights to access information on public spending and public policy decisions.

UNDP and UNIFEM programming can support women to advocate for the right to information and can build women's capacities to use information as it becomes available. Right-to-information laws reduce corruption by opening governance to public participation and scrutiny. However, mere public scrutiny



BOX 8. BRIDGING GENDER GAPS USING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY NETWORKS IN THE ARAB REGION

The Programme on Information Technologies for Development in the Arab Region promotes the use of information and communications technology networks to increase government accountability, lower the costs of service delivery, support better procurement, improve efficiency and promote more participatory democracy. The initiative includes support to e-government services to help Arab States address major challenges they face in economic development, labour and population.

A dedicated service was established to support the rights of women and children through access to information. The service aims to develop women's capacity to use information and communications technologies to network more effectively, to access income-generating opportunities and to increase their access to knowledge. The initiative also aims to use its Web site and CDs in order to bring legal information to poor women, answer questions and provide information about family courts—while taking into account accessibility issues such as women's relatively low literacy levels.

In Yemen, for example, where women's literacy rates are among the lowest in the region, a local non-governmental organization working on women's human rights and leadership training is using facilitators to enable women to access information about property, custody, and other rights. Women participating in this initiative are prepared with the necessary legal knowledge to voice their priorities to government on service delivery and related issues.

without legal redress will not compel public officials to reduce their engagement in corrupt behaviour. Therefore, it is important that such laws allow citizens to demand a formal investigation and/or seek legal redress for poor decision-making, abuse of human rights or non-delivery of public services.

UNDP is also implementing a number of information-based gender-sensitive anti-corruption initiatives, including a project in Yemen that will strengthen media's and civil society organizations' capacity to advocate for greater transparency, and a project in the Central African Republic under the Action Learning Plan that will develop the capacity of civil society organizations and the private sector to implement gender-sensitive anti-corruption programmes. Women comprise a substantial proportion of participants in both of these projects.

Gender-responsive budgeting

Corruption may affect resource allocations to public-sector programmes and initiatives aimed at advancing gender equality or improving service delivery to women.

Prevalent public-sector corruption often means that administrative funds and supplies are diverted away from intended beneficiaries. Compounding this, public spending is often managed by men, which is likely to create barriers for women to access information regarding actual expenditures. Gender-responsive budgeting promotes women's participation in public-sector expenditure analysis with a view towards assessing the impacts of public spending decisions on women's rights, and in the process exposing public-sector corruption.

Gender-responsive budgeting also helps planners understand and redress negative impacts of gender-biased spending decisions on women's rights. Such public monitoring of budgets puts women in a stronger position to challenge corruption and acts as a disincentive to public officials who wish to engage in it. Gender-responsive budgeting is, therefore, a useful tool for both the demand- and supply-side of governance reform efforts, as it brings together public-sector actors and civil society groups to enforce stronger oversight of government funds.

This has proven very effective when conducted at the community or local government level, where women are best able to identify the specific impacts that local spending decisions have had on their welfare (Seppänen and Virtanen, 2008).

UNIFEM has supported initiatives for gender-responsive budgeting in more than 30 countries since 2000. In some cases, UNIFEM has worked jointly with UNDP. UNIFEM work has focused on:

- Supporting the development of tools for gender analysis of budgets and adapting the tools for use at national and local levels;
- Strengthening women's civil society organizations' and women's bureaucracies' capacities to carry out budget analysis, so they have the knowledge and skills to advocate for budget allocations that address gender inequalities;
- Sensitizing public officials on issues of gender equality; and
- Supporting advocacy initiatives targeted at the transformation of budget policies that better respond to women's priorities.

The objective of these interventions include building citizen's demand that public spending is more accountable to women and more focused on creating gender equality, and promoting institutional procedures, frameworks and spending plans that target gender equality and support women's rights from inception through implementation. A number of gender budget initiatives funded by UNIFEM have focused their efforts on tracking gaps between budget allocations (planned) and budget expenditures (actual) as a means to identify instances where funds intended for women's needs and priorities has gone missing (see Box 9).

The UNIFEM gender-responsive budgeting programme also focused on supporting the oversight of elected representatives at national and sub-national levels to ensure that they are representing poor people's interests. For example, experience supporting *Gram Panchayat*¹³ representatives and Building Budgets from Below in India demonstrates how community-owned initiatives can promote transparency and monitor public-sector performance (Bhat et al. 2004).

In partnership with the International Development Research Centre in Canada and the Commonwealth Secretariat, UNIFEM set up a Web site to provide information on

BOX 9. FUNDAR EXPOSES CORRUPTION THROUGH GENDER ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURES

A civil society group (Fundar) in Mexico that was part of a gender-responsive budget initiative supported by UNIFEM investigated the diversion of \$2.4 million from the federal budget. The monies, originally intended for programmes in the health sector, were instead channelled to eight non-governmental Centers to assist women. This created an uproar in Congress, as it was clearly arbitrary and irregular. Using Mexico's Transparency and Access to Public Information Law (implemented in June 2002), Fundar, as part of a coalition of six NGOs, collected and documented detailed evidence that showed that the Centres were in fact linked to a right-wing pro-life organisation (Provida) whose programmes ran counter to the Mexican government's policies on HIV/AIDS. They also found that 90 percent of the funds allocated to these organisations were blatantly misused—most of the payments were not invoiced and went to 'ghost' organisations that shared the same address as Provida's.

Fundar tabled this report before the Chamber of Deputies and followed up with a massive advocacy campaign that involved the media and was supported by 700 organizations across the country. Subsequent investigations by the internal and external auditors upheld FUNDAR's findings. The internal auditor imposed a huge fine on Provida, which was asked to return the funds and was barred from receiving public funds for 15 years. This example also underscores the power of Access to Information Laws and reinforces the need for UNIFEM and UNDP programming to support the development of such laws and their implementation.

gender-responsive budget initiatives by region, as well as useful literature, information on tools and links to useful resources.¹⁴

Public accountability mechanisms

Efforts to prevent corruption and redress its effects on women include strengthening public accountability mechanisms and their responsiveness to women's needs. Accountability systems include traditional oversight mechanisms (e.g., elections, judicial review, public

audits), promotion and performance review systems within public governance structures, quasi-public review bodies (e.g., ombudspersons, human rights commissions and vigilance commissions), and market regulators. These systems or mechanisms may be gender-biased in their function, failing to monitor or to correct for practices that abuse women's rights. Public-sector accountability systems may need to be refined to ensure that standards of accountability are responsive to women's needs and protect and advance their rights. Gender-responsive reforms are needed to ensure that the accountability institutions' mandates contain commitments to promote gender equality, that personnel are trained in their responsibilities to these commitments, that performance measuring and monitoring systems record and reward actions promoting women's rights, that there are systems for monitoring abuses of women's rights, and that there are mechanisms for correcting these problems and providing redress.

Governance programmes to improve service delivery for women

UNDP and UNIFEM both work to enhance public-sector effectiveness in delivering a range of services. The organizations often collaborate in developing finely-tuned management tools for public sector actors to accurately assess women's needs. Efforts can be made to institutionalize citizen engagement in public programmes in order to provide feedback regarding the availability of services and help expose misappropriations. Public personnel performance assessment systems can be improved by rewarding efforts to reduce gendered impacts of corruption and sanctioning failures to do so. Similarly, capacity-development initiatives can include training of public-sector officials in responsiveness to women's needs, and

BOX 10. GENDER AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: DELIVERING SERVICES FOR WOMEN

UNIFEM, UNDP and Gender at Work (a non-governmental organization specializing in institutional reforms) have developed a five-year global initiative to improve governance from the perspective of women's capacity to access public services and to demand accountability. Currently operational in three countries (Morocco, Rwanda and Tajikistan), it supports governance reforms in public-service agencies and line ministries and seeks to remove gender biases in incentive systems, performance measures and service delivery modalities that may hinder public-sector responsiveness to poor women's needs. The initiative also supports activities to build the capacities of women in local government and their constituencies to monitor government spending on and the quality of local services. The initiative also seeks to build women's capacity to demand accountability when there is evidence that their needs have been ignored or their rights have been abused, including in relation to service delivery.

In Morocco, the programme is assisting the Ministry of Justice to improve women's access to legal services. Potential outputs include developing performance standards in implementing family law; creating a framework for dialogue between the government and civil society organizations; and building a systematic service-quality feedback loop between women users and service providers. In Rwanda, the programme is building the capacity of the Gender Monitoring Office to identify, monitor and address gaps in meeting women and men farmers' demands for agricultural services. In Tajikistan, the aim is to enhance public service delivery for women, specifically in the area of social security, by building local-level accountability and by analysing and addressing institutional barriers in service provision to women at the district level. The programme, resources permitting, is expected to expand to at least another three countries.

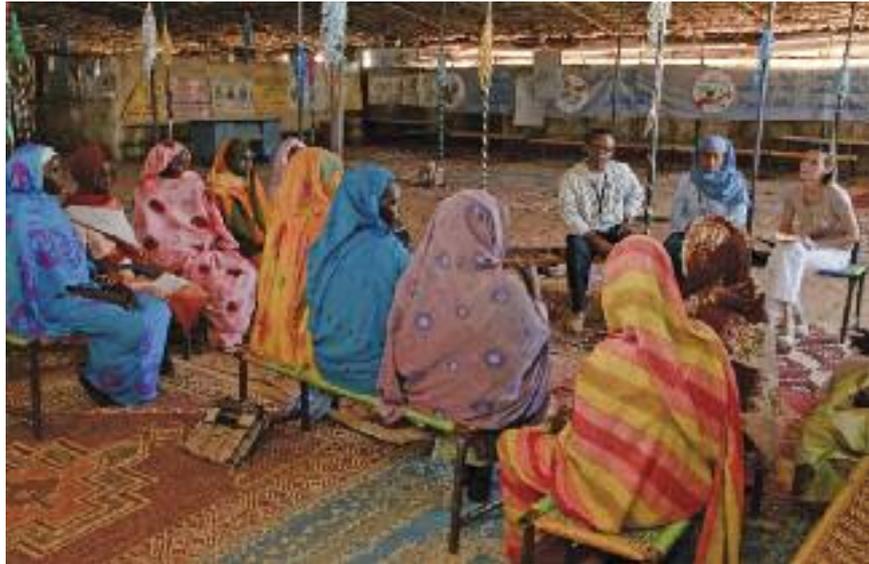
recruitment drives can engage more women as public-service providers.

This will lead to a better awareness and understanding among public-sector officials of the gender dimensions of service delivery and the differential impact that corruption has on women. One of the entry points for including gender approaches to corruption in governance programmes is through the UNIFEM-UNDP programme Gender and Democratic Governance: Delivering Services for Women (see Box 10). Some of the key strategies that the programme is employing to reducing corruption's impact on women are:

- Increasing women's voice in service delivery governance;
- Implementing participatory monitoring of service delivery, including the use of community score cards;
- Supporting public-sector reforms that increase transparency, set performance monitoring standards for service delivery, increase public-sector actors' gender awareness and increase the gender responsiveness of service delivery; and
- Working with radio and print media and public service bodies to increase the availability of information to women.

Civil society and women's organizations

Civil society's active participation is essential to the demand side of accountability. Women in civil society—including global leaders in right-to-information movements—have played a key role in shifting the focus of debate to include the forms of corruption that most impact on women. There are strong linkages between women's participation in monitoring social service delivery and the increased efficiency and



effectiveness of these services at the local level. Evidence from social audits in India and microcredit programmes from Bangladesh (UNIFEM, 2008) shows that women's participation in grassroots and community-level programmes in decision-making processes and accountability mechanisms significantly contributes to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of public programmes intended to assist rural families. For example, many studies in India have suggested that community monitoring is an excellent means of improving the quality of the midday school meal. Based on this, in December 2005, the Government of India requested all state governments to find ways to involve the community, particularly mothers, in monitoring the midday meal schemes (Sinha, 2008).

One way of engaging civil society to expose corruption is through social audits. In liberal democracies with access to information laws and mechanisms, such as the Right to Information Act in India, community-level social audits and public expenditure reviews have been shown to reduce corruption's negative impacts on women by involving women citizens in articulating their needs and evaluating government spending (Goetz

BOX 11. MAZDOOR KISAN SHAKTI SANGATHAN EXPOSES CORRUPTION THROUGH SOCIAL AUDITS

A well-known instance of an anti-corruption movement led and substantially driven by women is the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan in Rajasthan, India. With leadership from Aruna Roy, an ex-bureaucrat, this organization of landless people (many of whom are women labourers on government-funded drought-relief infrastructure programmes), exposed corruption in these public works programmes by publicly auditing the programmes' spending patterns. In the process, they lead a national campaign on citizens' right to access information about public expenditures and all manner of official decision-making. The result was the passage of a constitutional amendment that created the Right to Information Law in India. Their example is now being emulated elsewhere in the world (UNIFEM, 2008).

and Jenkins, 2005). (See Box 11.) Citizen or social auditing strikes at the heart of practices that preserve bureaucrats' and politicians' powers—the secrecy in public accounts that mask the use of public funds for personal advantage (ibid). A gender focus entails auditing the sectors and areas in which women experience corruption the most (e.g.,

in maternity clinics, women's entitlements under rural employment schemes or other welfare programmes). Such social audits reveal leakages in government resources meant for advancing gender equality that are siphoned off by corrupt officials for personal gain.

Women's organizations have been at the forefront of anti-corruption efforts in the Philippines, at considerable risk to individual women's lives. A group of public-sector unions in the Philippines provides a striking example of an internal, women-led struggle against corruption. The Public Services Labour Independent Confederation (PSLINK) has been involved in a range of corruption control initiatives, including exposing a high-level criminal network that was trafficking women through the Technical Education Skills Department Authority and the misuse of public funds to fund the election campaign of the Director of the organization (see Box 12).

BOX 12. PHILIPPINE TRADE UNIONISTS EXPOSE CORRUPTION

The Public Services Labour Independent Confederation (PSLINK) is an umbrella organization of 386 public-sector unions. Transparent and democratic governance issues are central to its mission objective. PSLINK has been involved in exposing large-scale corruption undertaken by senior public officials. In one widely publicized case, the Director of the Technical Education Skills Department Authority (TESDA) was involved in diverting funds to his own election campaign and engaging in trafficking women. The multimillion Peso scheme involved falsifying and indiscriminately issuing artist record books to dubious recruitment agencies. The agencies then used the books to tempt thousands of women to work in Japan as entertainers, only to find themselves forced into the sex industry.

In order to gather enough evidence to expose the scam, PSLINK worked closely with other civil society organisations and non-corrupt government bodies. Besides mobilizing activists in various areas to encourage complainants to come forward, the union also worked closely with NGOs opposed to human trafficking and with legitimate promotion agencies responsible for representing and booking talent. Strategies used to gather evidence were often risky, such as planting activists in suspect placement agencies and even posing as applicants and entertainers to learn how the scam operated. PSLINK filed a case against the corrupt official with the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission and made a complaint to the Philippines Ombudsman. After gathering enough evidence, they held a media conference in conjunction with the labour representatives at the TESDA Board to denounce his actions.

Because the position of Director General of TESDA was a political appointee, they also mounted a campaign of action to put pressure on the Office of the President to question retention of an official in spite of evidence of his corruption.

In March 2007, the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission formally charged the Director General with corruption.

Source: Transparency International, 2007, http://www.transparency.org/publications/newsletter/2007/september_2007/interview, and United Against Corruption: <http://www.againstcorruption.org/BriefingsItem.asp?id=14724>

Women have also used information and communications technologies to expose and publicize corrupt practices. In Gujarat, India, an amateur-run radio programme ‘To Be Alive’ carries out ‘radio raids’, in one case exposing practices of doctors who were levying illegal charges against women for delivering their babies in public clinics (UNDP, 2008c).

Increasing the number of women in government—local government, public administration, and at the frontline of service delivery

Efforts by governments to tackle corruption by strengthening women’s presence in key decision-making positions have become increasingly common. In Nigeria, high-profile efforts to appoint women to senior government positions have been framed in terms of tackling grand corruption. Corruption in the country’s mining industry and its Food and Drug Association also reportedly declined under the leadership of women in both instances (ABA-UNDP, 2008).

Tackling gender and corruption issues in basic services requires ensuring that women are adequately represented at all stages of service delivery. Increased proportions of women among public-sector staff have a marked effect on public-sector responsiveness to women’s needs. For example, strong correlations are evident between high numbers of female teachers and the retention of girls in school (UNESCO, 2006); the presence of women health workers is linked to decrease of maternal and infant mortality rates (UNOCHR, 2009; Save the Children, 2010); female judicial personnel have been more willing than male counterparts to apply gender equality legal provisions in deciding cases, and the presence of more women police (particularly at the station



level) is associated with higher willingness of victims of sexual violence—both female and male—to report (Peresie 2005; Downie, 2005).

The introduction of women public-sector workers to improve the gender responsiveness of governments may not necessarily yield a direct anti-corruption effect. As Goetz points out, women’s gender alone cannot be relied upon to derail systemic corruption (Goetz, 2007). Apart from advancing women’s political rights, when women’s participation in the governance of public-sector services and programmes increases, there are three additional consequences. First, it increases the possibility that women benefit as much as men from governance reforms that focus on reducing corruption, because gender considerations will have been kept in mind while designing such interventions. Second,

BOX 13. GENDER-SENSITIVE CORRUPTION MEASUREMENT TOOLS

In 2008, the Global Programme on Democratic Governance Assessments at the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre published its 'Users' Guide to Measuring Corruption'. The Guide addresses one of the most significant challenges in anti-corruption measurement and corruption control programming: the need for disaggregated, country-level data on the prevalence of different forms of corruption that matter to citizens, in particular women, the poor and marginalized groups. The Guide provides practical advice on how to generate gender-sensitive data using corruption assessment tools and how the data can inform policy development.

In addition, the UNDP 'Framework for Selecting Pro-Poor and Gender-Sensitive Governance Indicators' identifies different dimensions of gender sensitivity for governance indicators, offering examples of anti-corruption indicators and data that are disaggregated by gender and poverty levels.

UNDP and UNIFEM recently partnered to produce 'A User's Guide to Measuring Gender-Sensitive Basic Service Delivery'. This guide provides practitioners with a set of indicators and measurement tools to gauge women's access to public services (the indicators and tools were developed by multilateral and bilateral agencies and national counterparts). The primary focus of the Guide is on whether the implementation processes that define, generate and deliver the services are sensitive to differences in the needs and situations of women and girls compared to men and boys. It focuses on the processes rather than the outcomes of governance because these are key to improving the delivery of basic services.

All the publications are available online at the UNDP Governance Assessment Portal at http://gaportal.org/view/undp_pub.

fostering women's participation brings more civil-society stakeholders into the decision-making processes. This is likely to enhance overall transparency and accountability and have broad corruption-reducing effects. Lastly, conventional power structures in the public sector and the political sphere are usually male-dominated. Increasing the number of women in government (whether at the local, public administration, or at the front line of service delivery), will lead to a change in gender norms, behavioural codes

and power mechanisms. Corrupt networks, mostly dominated by men, rely on these mechanisms and therefore may be weakened when women are introduced as outsiders who do not belong to these corrupt networks.

However, it is necessary to recognize that female public-sector service providers' responsiveness to women's and girls' needs appears to be determined by a range of conditions, such as being in a critical mass of at least 30 percent of personnel, not being crowded at the lowest and most degraded levels of the public sector, and enjoying work conditions that enable women to achieve a work-life balance (Joshi, 2010). In addition, gender-sensitive accountability systems that enhance public-sector actors' responsiveness to women's and girls' needs need to be put in place along with increasing the number of women. Such systems include those that incorporate assessments of the quality of service provision into review processes and that focus on ensuring probity in the dispatch of public functions.

Improving data on gender and corruption

The preceding sections identified a lack of adequate evidence, including gender-disaggregated data, on the gendered impacts of corruption. The general lack of internationally accepted poverty and sex-disaggregated measures of corruption make it difficult—but not impossible—to measure the different impacts of corruption on women and men and to improve targeted anti-corruption policies. Strategic entry points for future programming to reduce the gendered impacts of corruption include developing gender-sensitive tools, data and measurements and undertaking gender assessments. (see Box 13).

Data on gender and corruption can also be gathered through gender assessments. Most current anti-corruption strategies do not mention gender needs assessments conducted prior to the strategy's implementation, or do not make any specific mention of how corruption was affecting women versus men. Most anti-corruption plans remain gender-blind in the sense that they do not account for the specific forms of corruption experienced by women (e.g., sexual extortion and trafficking), or for the role that gender plays in increasing women's vulnerabilities to exploitation by corrupt officials.

Alolo (2007a) conducted one of the few studies of integrating gender into a national anti-corruption strategy. The study revealed that there was no systematic attempt to incorporate gender issues into anti-corruption programmes in Ghana. For example, none of the agencies interviewed¹⁵ undertook routine research to explore the impact of their operations (prevention, investigation or prosecution) on women and men, or to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of their anti-corruption work was gender-sensitive. This is despite the fact that the staff of many of these agencies (e.g., the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Ghana News Agency) had a demonstrated appreciation of the relevance of women's engagement to their work. However, this appreciation was not shared by senior bureaucrats, whom Alolo reported as saying that they did not see any link between their work and gender roles and relations and thus saw no need for a gender-sensitive anti-corruption policy. The same was found to be true in Nicaragua and the United Republic of Tanzania, where Seppänen and Virtanen (2008) conducted studies on the integration of gender into national anti-corruption policies and plans.

A gender-specific corruption assessment should include consultations with civil society in order to understand how corruption impacts women differently than men within similar socio-economic groups; where and why corruption occurs in its various forms and frequencies; and what its costs are to women's and men's well-being. Seppänen and Virtanen (2008) proposed a method to analyse the gender dimensions of corruption by integrating sector-specific situation analyses of corruption into those currently conducted on gender and poverty.

This can generate gender-sensitive anti-corruption plans, at least for those sectors in which corruption has the most negative impacts on women (e.g., health and education). Seppänen and Virtanen reported not having found any gender-sensitive analysis of corruption at the sectoral level (*ibid.*). Their research revealed that the health and education administrations in Nicaragua and United Republic of Tanzania have elaborated concrete sector-specific initiatives on anti-corruption focusing on procurement, human resources and financial transfers, without any mention of how corruption affects women in these sectors. They suggest that this is probably true for many other countries (*ibid.*).



BOX 14. GENDER-EQUITABLE LOCAL-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT

The Gender Equitable Local Level Development programme is a partnership between the United Nations Capital Development Fund, UNIFEM and UNDP to support local governments in five African countries; Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Tanzania to ensure gender-equitable development and improvement of women's access to resources and services at the local level through gender-responsive planning, programming and budgeting. The main focus is on training in performance-based gender-responsive planning and budgeting for local development. The objective is to improve local government capacity to respond to and budget for women's needs, and also to generate empirical experience on gender-equitable local development that could be replicated and up-scaled. The central output is to construct a model that establishes linkages between planning intentions and policy outcomes in relation to gender equality.

There are three substantive components. In the planning and budgeting component, local governments apply a gender lens to their planning and budgeting activities by including sex-disaggregated targets and benchmarks and measures in support of women's empowerment. The equitable performance component includes systematic monitoring of budget performance that analyses local government expenditures and their impact on gender equality. This includes analysis of whether expenditures are achieving or impeding women's empowerment. The knowledge-generation and policy component emphasizes policy engagement, advocacy and communications.

Decentralization

Decentralization, or decentralizing governance, refers to the restructuring or reorganization of authority so that there is a system of co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional and local levels according to the principle of subsidiarity, thus increasing the overall quality and effectiveness of the system of governance, while increasing the authority and capacities of sub-national levels (UNDP, 1997). Decentralization is often cited as a means to reduce corruption and to empower women in governance. Many suggest that decentralization helps increase accountability to the

poor by helping policy-makers experience and understand how the people they represent live, as it brings decision-making down to the local level (Seppänen and Virtanen, 2008). It is also argued that decentralization benefits women because of their greater involvement in the community and family. In a poll recently conducted by Transparency International in Kenya, 60 percent of respondents believed that the decentralization of state resources will help reduce graft (Affiliated Network for Social Accountability, Oct 2010).¹⁶

However, when resources allocated to local governments are inadequate, or when accountability systems are weak or lack adequate controls on local spending patterns, an environment of shortages can result in the underpayment of local public officials, motivating petty bribery to compensate for low salaries. Decentralization, therefore, should only be planned where resources are sufficient to sustain the salaries and structures of public servants and where it is possible for an ombudsperson or auditor, in partnership with local community members, to adequately supervise the accounts and administration of government programmes (Seppänen and Virtanen, 2008). One of the programming entry points is the Gender Equitable Local Development programme (see Box 14).

Supporting parliaments to develop anti-corruption strategies

Parliamentary approaches to corruption have mainly focused on establishing appropriate anti-corruption legal frameworks at the country level and strengthening parliamentary oversight functions in sensitive areas such as monitoring budget processes. Parliaments also have the duty and responsi-

bility to adhere to the highest integrity standards (U4 Resource Centre 2007). UNDP and UNIFEM can support parliaments to enhance their transparency and increase their capacities to provide better financial oversight in delivery of public provision of goods and services. Parliamentary oversight can play an important role in reducing grand corruption (see Box 15).



BOX 15. UNDP'S GLOBAL PROGRAMME FOR PARLIAMENTARY STRENGTHENING

The third phase of the Global Programme for Parliamentary Strengthening (GPPS III) has the overall objective of strengthening parliaments' capacity for deepening democracy and delivering human development. GPPS III seeks to accomplish the overall objective by linking national, regional and global approaches through the following objectives:

- Provide leadership and advocacy in the field of parliamentary development at the global level;
- Ensure that expertise developed through GPPS III strengthens parliamentary development programming throughout UNDP and the UN system;
- Support South-South regional cooperation;
- Promote regional knowledge development and exchanges;
- Support parliamentary development at the national level; and
- Document and share its parliamentary development experiences.

GPPS III will enhance UNDP work in strengthening parliaments via a consensus-building and agenda-setting Parliamentary Development report, through continued efforts towards the establishment of benchmarks and standards for democratic parliaments, and through advocacy on the position of minorities and indigenous people in parliament. GPPS III will also contribute to the sharing of parliamentary development expertise within the UN and with partner organizations in parliamentary development through the new Parliamentary Knowledge Portal (www.agora-parl.org), through continued staff training, and through specific knowledge products.

At the regional level, GPPS III will focus on the exchange of good practices and knowledge creation and dissemination in the Arab States and West Africa. The activities implemented at the regional level will facilitate the piloting of sensitive issues that cannot easily and immediately be tackled at the national level, such as parliamentary oversight of the security sector and community security issues. At the national level, GPPS III interventions will focus on Algeria, Lebanon, Mauritania and Niger. The national support efforts intend amongst others to reinforce parliament's engagement in achieving the MDGs, to build budget oversight capacity, to support parliaments' contribution towards the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption and to reinforce women's political participation and gender-sensitive policy making.



Conclusion

For most researchers and practitioners, addressing the gendered impacts of corruption is a relatively new area of inquiry and programming, and needs further research and attention from both policy-makers and practitioners. As demonstrated by the limited available evidence, advancing gender equality and addressing corruption may have complementary effects, both of which are necessary to ensure good governance.

This primer reviewed evidence to show that corruption affects women and men differently. Like men, women face pressure to pay bribes when they interface with public-sector actors in low-accountability contexts. In addition, because of existing gender discrimination in laws and in practice, women have fewer opportunities than men to obtain an education, own

land or other productive assets, receive credit, or earn wages equal to men's—factors that increase women's vulnerabilities to corruption and exacerbate its impacts. In addition, women constitute the majority of the global poor and remain a minority in decision-making bodies, which adds to corruption's differential and disproportionate impacts on women.

For example, women may face corruption in their interactions with a different set of public authorities than men—often with providers of basic public services upon which women are more dependent. In contrast, men typically engage with business regulators, land registry officials, and tax collectors. Furthermore, women—particularly poor women—often bear different costs of corruption. Bribes paid with money may represent a greater portion of their income than it would for men. Women are also more often subject to sexual extortion pressures—a form of corruption that deeply erodes their equal citizenship rights, dignity, and health. A rights-based approach to gender equality and anti-corruption is, therefore, essential when designing and implementing anti-corruption policies.

While individual women may not be less corrupt than individual men, when there is a critical mass of women (approximately 30 percent) in decision-making positions, policy and budget decisions and priorities often change in ways that benefit not just women and girls, but communities as a whole. This opens up avenues for women to seek redress from public accountability failures, and may in turn lead to reducing the gendered impacts of corruption.

These findings have policy implications. First, it is essential that anti-corruption initiatives do not neglect the forms of corruption that primarily affects women and girls. These involve transactions in sectors and locations not always subject to policy interventions. Initiatives require much more gender-sensitive and gender-disaggregated measurement tools to assess women’s and girls’ experiences of corruption without compromising their dignity or exposing them to potential backlash from public authorities. Second, gender-sensitive anti-corruption initiatives should have a broader focus than solely on those sectors in which women directly experience

corruption—the focus should also encompass those areas where corruption profoundly limits their engagement (e.g., corruption in business regulation or in political competition), which may limit women’s access to enterprise development facilities or impede candidacies for public office.

Third, anti-corruption efforts benefit from wider engagement of women in civil society and in positions of public authority. In terms of civil society, an important constraint that must be addressed is women’s relatively limited information about the public sector and the constraints on their capacities to analyse public expenditures and other data in order to expose and combat corruption. Innovative methods developed to engage women in anti-corruption efforts have had considerable positive effects, and UNDP and UNIFEM programming can build on and support these methods.

Finally, efforts to combat corruption that rely on the recruitment of women into public-sector positions must recognize that public accountability systems will be needed in order to curb corruption by all public-sector actors—it would be imprudent to rely on women’s gender alone to have anti-corruption effects.

A common theme across all approaches is the need for more information on how corruption affects different social groups. This primer has demonstrated that corruption is not gender-neutral in its workings or its effects, and much is revealed about women’s relationship to the state by an analysis of their experiences with corruption. In addition, much is revealed about the pragmatic means of combating corruption in such analyses—which recognize that women have a great deal to contribute to improving the quality of governance and to the effectiveness of public accountability systems.

“Public accountability systems will be needed in order to curb corruption by all public-sector actors.”

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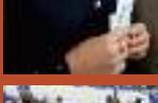
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Endnotes

1. See <http://content.undp.org/go/cms-service/download/publication/?version=live&id=2084493>, accessed on 7 September 2010.
2. See <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>, accessed on 7 September 2010.
3. See <http://portal.unesco.org/en/files/11483/10649049699Definitions.doc/Definitions.doc>, accessed on 7 September 2010.
4. See <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/e4devw.htm>, accessed on 7 September 2010.
5. See <http://www.u4.no/document/faqs5.cfm>, accessed on 7 September 2010.
6. Ibid.
7. See <http://www.who.int/gender/whatisgender/en/>.
8. UNIFEM is in transition to a new UN Entity, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). UN Women brings together four UN entities: UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.
9. Key papers published on this theme include Dollar et al., 1999 and Swamy et al., 2000a.
10. Such questions are used in the Global Barometer Surveys—perception-based surveys that track public attitudes and orientations toward democracy. For additional details, see www.globalbarometer.net.
11. From the 2003 Ugandan Administrative Barriers to Investment Update (FIAS Foreign Investment Advisory Service).
12. As of April 2010.
13. *Gram Panchayats* are local governments at the village or small-town level in India.
14. See <http://www.gender-budgets.org/>.
15. These were the Ghana Auditor General's Department, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, the Ghana Police, the National Commission for Civic Education, the National News Agency and the Serious Fraud Office.
16. See www.ansa-africa.net/index.php/views/news_view/new_laws_key_in_war_on_corruption/.



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Page 40. A woman poses in front of a graffiti representing the sun. (UN Photo/Martine Perret)

“This primer shows that corruption affects women disproportionately and in different ways than men. Women’s relative lack of political and economic leverage reduces their ability to demand accountability or to highlight their specific experiences of and concerns about corruption. Undoubtedly, public accountability systems need to be made more gender-responsive in order to curb the impact of corruption on women. Advancing gender equality and addressing corruption have complementary effects, and both are necessary to ensure good governance.”



PRIMERS IN GENDER AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

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