U4 Helpdesk Answer

Corruption and gender equality

A summary of existing research

Ingrained power asymmetries between men and women produce gender and social roles that make women more exposed to abuses of power, which in some settings can expose them to higher risks of falling victim to corruption. Gendered power differentials, fuelled by historic patterns of discrimination, can embolden discriminatory behaviour that targets women for coercive corruption and other forms of exploitation.

In addition, as a result of societal norms, women are frequently more exposed to higher corruption risks in areas of activity determined by stereotypical gender social roles and specific needs.

RELATED U4 MATERIAL

↗ Gender sensitivity in corruption reporting and whistleblowing

↗ Close the political gender gap to reduce corruption

↗ Mainstreaming gender and human rights in anti-corruption programming

Query

Please provide a synthesis paper with an overview of available evidence on the relationship between corruption and gender equality.

Contents

Caveat

Most of the research conducted on the linkages between gender and corruption has focused on a binary conception of gender with particular attention to the experiences of women and girls. Since the present documents synthetises the existing literature, it larges reproduces those omissions. However, a brief section on intersectionality brings attention to the need to broaden the terms of discussion and the agenda, in the hopes of guiding future research.

MAIN POINTS

— Corruption typically has a disproportionate impact on marginalised populations, and women are no exception. Corruption hinders both women's access to good quality public services, upon which women tend to have a greater reliance, as well as restricting women's participation in public, economic and political life, limiting their influence over decision-making.

— A higher proportion of women in elected office is correlated with lower levels of corruption, but there are competing theories as to why this happens. What is known is that male dominated patronage networks can hinder women's ability to run for office.

— Sextortion is a type of corruption that involves an implicit or explicit request to engage in any kind of unwanted sexual activity in exchange for exercising power entrusted to someone occupying a position of authority. Sextortion affects women at far higher rates than men.

— An intersectional approach could benefit future studies and help address the many dimensions that intersect in marginalised groups and make them

The relationship between corruption and gender equality

Certain gendered assumptions about women guided much of the early research on gender and corruption. In many societies, women, because of the role they tend to play in families and in society more broadly, are often held to be more cooperative, ethical, generous and generally more concerned with the common good than men are (see Eagly and Crowley 1986; Ones and Viswesvaran 1998; Glover et al, 1997; Reiss and Mitra 1998; Eckel and Grossman, 1998).

Inspired by this literature that had found women to display fewer selfish traits than men, a particular research focus emerged in the late 1990s assessing whether women are "inherently" less corrupt than men. A study by Dollar et al (1999), for instance, argued that there was a statistically significant relationship between more women in government and lower levels of perceived corruption.

Following this trend, Swamy et al (2001, 26) argued women were less likely to condone corruption, were less involved in bribery when in charge in the private sector and countries with greater representation of women in government reported lower levels of corruption. They did not delve much into the reasons behind this but referred to other previous studies that claimed women were more honest or risk averse than men (Paternoster and Simpsons, 1996) or that girls are brought up to have more self-control (Gottfredson and Gursgum 1990). This formed part of an effort to explain why countries with more women in public offices appeared on international indices to be generally less corrupt. Other studies (Esarey and Chirillo 2013; Sung 2003, Sung 2012) exhibit a

heterogeneity of results, focusing on other variables, particularly liberal democracy's institutions like rule of law and freedom of the press as being key for both gender equality and lower corruption. Sung (2003: 704) argued that the observed relationship between gender and corruption was in fact a consequence of the context, namely liberal democracy, and it was political liberalisation that was behind both more female participation and less perceived corruption.

These studies have thus cast doubt on the notion that women are intrinsically more honest, and, by extension, that their very presence in public office reduces corruption. The findings were important since focusing on women being intrinsically less corrupt than men could be counter-productive and reinforce the very stereotypes and gender social norms that can exacerbate gender inequality. Furthermore, the participation of women in politics cannot simply be a means to an end, to curb corruption, but rather an essential right.

Several recent studies have instead shifted the focus to how gender and corruption interact and how corruption affects women in specific ways. Since both acts of corruption and gender discrimination involve dynamics that have at their core an asymmetrical relationship of power, they are deeply intertwined (Habershon 2021).

Corruption can be defined as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain" (Transparency International). It then follows that groups with less power in society will be more exposed to the arbitrary or discretionary use of this power, as well as the consequences arising from its abuse. In general, evidence shows that corruption has a larger negative effect on marginalised groups, owing to the ingrained power asymmetries at work (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 1).

In particular, discrimination and corruption harm the marginalised groups in four ways (Transparency International Forthcoming):

1) discriminated groups are at a disadvantage that makes them more vulnerable to corruption;
2) there are forms of corruption that are in themselves discriminatory;
3) the effects of corruption are felt unequally because of discrimination;
4) discriminated groups can have a harder time seeking justice, while corruption can impede efforts to fight discrimination.

Relevant concepts

For the purpose of the present brief, some conceptual cleavages are deployed to provide greater clarity of the gendered effects of corruption.

First, a common – if imperfect – distinction is drawn between petty corruption and grand corruption. Petty corruption refers to small-scale transactions that usually take place at the delivery end of the service, between an official or provider and the service's end user. Grand corruption, on the other hand, takes place at higher levels of government and business, when actors engage in large scale corruption for their own benefit at the expense of the wider public interest. At a systemic level, grand corruption affects society at large through the misuse of public resources, thwarting development and by eroding public trust in institutions (Bauhr, Charron and Wängnerud 2019, 1044; PNUD 2014, 19). At an individual level, the clientelistic networks grand corruption schemes require to operate also typically lead to a self-selecting, homogenous group in power, which can further exclude women and other marginalised groups (Bjanegard 2009).

Corruption can also be collusive or coercive. Collusive corruption usually involves the coordination of "insiders" and their clients to secure undue advantage. As with grand corruption, those groups and individuals party to a collusive arrangement tend to be powerful figures. Marginalised groups without access to power, including in many instances women, are less likely to be the beneficiaries of collusive corruption and more likely to bear the cost (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 2). Coercive corruption involves an overt or covert threat to extort something out of the victim (money, gifts, even sex) in exchange for access to certain prerogatives that they were usually entitled to obtain freely. A recent literature review concluded that marginalised groups, including women, are at greater risk of being targeted by unscrupulous corrupt actors because they are or are perceived to lack access to justice or protection from exploitation (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 3).

Although the evidence regarding whether women are asked for bribes more often than men is inconclusive (Transparency International, Forthcoming: 26), recent household surveys have shown that citizens believe sextortion happens relatively frequently in some countries (Transparency International 2019b, 21). Sextortion is a type of corruption that involves an implicit or explicit request to an individual to engage in any kind of unwanted sexual activity in exchange for exercising power entrusted to someone occupying a position of authority, and it chiefly affects women,

As described in the next sections, corruption is a key barrier to inclusive development for women and girls, as it prevents them from fully enjoying their rights by taking a toll on their health, socio-economic wellbeing, and political participation, and as such exacerbates the negative impacts of

other forms of gender discrimination (Transparency International Forthcoming, 32).

The next two subsections will present some of the main findings of the literature regarding these two approaches to gender and corruption, how women can affect corruption and how corruption impacts women (Solano 2019, 5).

Women's political participation and corruption

The evidence of the effect of corruption on women's political participation is twofold. On the one hand, there is research that shows corruption can hinder women's ability to rise to high-level positions in politics (Sundström and Wängnerud 2016; Bjanegard 2009). On the other hand, several studies have shown that having more women in elected offices is correlated with lower levels of corruption (Dollar et al 1999; Swamy et al 2001).

Both corruption and bad governance appear to have negative effects on the number of women in senior roles in both politics and business. Gender norms and expectations in many countries already act as obstacles to women's political careers, and these barriers are compounded by corruption, as male-dominated networks can influence party nominations to the detriment of women (Sundström and Wängnerud 2016; Bjanegard 2009).

Over the years, multiple studies have consistently pointed to a correlation between the number of women in elected office and lower levels of corruption (Bauhr et al 2019, 1043, Hao et al, 2018). However, the evidence is not conclusive as to the nature and direction of causality.

The first wave of research on this topic focused on the fact that greater political participation of women was correlated with lower levels of corruption (Boehm 2015: 2 ; Swamy et al 2001). It was proposed that the correlation was partly attributable to the fact that gender stereotypes affect perceptions of corruption (which were being used as a proxy for actual levels of corruption), and female politicians tend to be viewed as more ethical and trustworthy (Barnes and Beaulieu 2014).

Other literature proposed stronger democratic institutions as an independent variable with strong explanatory power, as it positively affects both the reduction of corruption and more women participating in politics (Sung 2003). In that sense, the more transparent and robust institutions that come with liberal democracy could both enhance women's participation in public life and lower corruption (Sung 2003; Esarey and Chirillo 2013).

This explanation seems to be in line with recent findings that the correlation between women in parliament and control of corruption is much stronger in full democracies with robust parliamentary oversight (Stensöta and Wängnerud 2018: 10). Studies involving survey experiments have confirmed the view that women politicians are typically seen as less corrupt than their male equivalents (Barnes and Beaulieu 2014).

Indeed, this more recent work has moved beyond the reductionist argument that women are more honest. Instead, Barnes and Beaulieu (2014: 135) contend that popular perceptions that women politicians are less corruption than their male counterparts are not solely based on misguided gender stereotypes, but are grounded in the experience that female newcomers to the political arena may have a lower propensity to engage in corruption as outsiders to male-dominated

patronage networks (Barnes and Beaulieu 2014: 135). If women are discriminated against and kept from power, they have no opportunity to abuse it. Historically, men have dominated the public sphere relegating women to the domestic sphere, thus limiting women's opportunities to engage in corruption (Rheinbay and Chêne 2016: 6). Additionally, as newcomers to political spaces, women may be inexperienced in corrupt and illicit transactions (Boehm 2015: 3).

A recent study by Bauhr and Charron (2021) found evidence that seems to point in this direction, as data on French municipalities showed that newly elected women mayors were associated with a lower risk of corruption, but this difference became negligible in municipalities where women mayors were re-elected. Bauhr and Charron (2021: 1315) point out that an interesting question here is whether elected women officials with no history of improbity decide to adopt corrupt practices and networks as a means of staying in office.

More broadly, another recent study finds that women's representation lowers corruption while high levels of corruption decreases women's participation in public office (Esarey and Schwindt-Bayer 2019: 1715). This is in line with the idea that corruption benefits an "in-group" chiefly composed of elite men and thus becomes an additional obstacle to women's political participation (Sundström and Wängnerud 2016: 355). Male dominance lies behind clientelist political parties, since within-group trust needs to be strong, and trust could be easier to establish in a group of persons that have more in common, like gender (UNODC 2020: 36). Women are less likely to be recruited for political parties in corrupt or clientelistic environments where male dominated networks decide who runs (Bjanegard 2009). This is due to what an author has named "homosocial

capital", a political capital only available to men that is made up of a necessity to build networks with those who can access resources and a desire to collaborate with people more similar to oneself since their behaviour can be predicted and trusted (Bjanegard 2009, 23).

Corruption not only hinders women's possibilities to run for office, but also can harm their careers in the executive branch, since corrupt elites will appoint ministers they trust and women tend to not be in these inner circles (Stockemer and Sundström 2019). It could also be the case that women choose not to run in environments where corruption is widespread but there is a reasonable risk of detection since they are generally believed to be more risk-averse than men or if they run for office and win they are less likely to engage in corruption for the same reason (Esarey and Schwindt-Bayer 2018).

Indeed, an interesting concomitant phenomenon related to gender stereotyping of political leaders is that elected female officials often appear to be held to a higher standard of probity and be more likely to be voted out if they engage in corruption (Esarey and Schwindt-Bayer 2018; Chikapa 2016). This phenomenon could further deter women from a career in politics (UNODC 2020: 34).

Since corruption can be a barrier to women's political advancement, it is arguably in their self-interest to break up collusive networks in order to pursue their political and personal goals (Bauhr, Charron and Wängnerud 2019: 1045; UNODC 2020: 38). This could potentially explain the relationship between more women in politics and less corruption.

Barnes and Beaulieu (2019: 136) argue that policies that make politicians less risk-taking will both enhance trust in government and reduce

corruption. The reasoning is that by making politicians more risk averse, they are less likely to engage in corrupt acts, which are sanctioned. Their research also showed that when politicians face the risk of institutional sanction, citizens are less sceptical of them, which could improve trust in government (Barnes and Beaulieu 2019: 159).

Additionally, women may appeal to different constituencies and be more responsive to women's interests (UNODC 2020, 38; Bolzendahl 2009). For example, Bolzendahl finds that social spending increases when more women are in the legislative body (2009: 66). In European countries, bribery in the education and health sectors appears to be decrease where there are more women in local governments (UNODC 2020: 39). For Wängnerud this is likely due to the fact that in most countries, women depend more on the state that can provide basic services to help them with the economy of care, like the caring of children and the elderly (2015). Female representatives are substantively representing women, and thus advance their political goals focusing on the improvement of sectors that affect women (UNODC 2020: 39). If women are left out of the policy making process, their interests will not be prioritised, or solutions will be inadequate (Bullock and Jenkins 2020, 10; Bauhr et al 2018).

In general, the studies show a much more complex relation between women's political participation and corruption than early work assumed. For example, Stensöta (2018) finds that more women in the legislature can have a positive correlation with less corruption, but this does not hold at the level of public administration and the bureaucracy. Any further research should thus consider institutional architecture and behaviour and assess its impacts on gender to better understand the links (UNODC 2020: 28).

Gendered impact of corruption

Since men and women's lived social experiences differ as a result of the unequal places they occupy in patriarchal systems, they will also inevitably experience corruption, a specific manifestation of the misuse of power in those systems, differently.

Specifically, a 2015 study by Sida identified four areas where women appear to be more susceptible to corruption than men: 1) accessing certain public services, markets and credits; 2) political participation; 3) gendered crimes (like sexual trafficking and sextortion); and 4) negligence and/or mismanagement (Sida 2015: 2).

Women make up a larger percentage of the world's poor, making them more reliant on free or low-cost public services (Transparency International Forthcoming ; Transparency International 2014 ; Bullock 2019 ; UNDP-SIWI 2017: 6) and they also experience poverty in a different way, since they are usually the primary caregivers of their families (UNODC 2020: 39). Women are affected by corruption because as a group they have less socioeconomic power than men and because corruption tends to be more prevalent in certain public services women rely on more (UNODC 2020, 20). Unsurprisingly then, randomised control trials have indicated that women are less likely than men to misuse social welfare resources (J-PAL 2015).

Corruption worsens both the quality and quantity of public services like healthcare, education and water and sanitation (by diverting public resources into private pockets), and it also reduces access to these services at the client interface when officials charge illicit fees (Transparency International, Forthcoming). Rheinbay and Chêne (2016: 7) find

that women generally report the public service sector as the most corrupt part of the government. It also could explain why women questioned in household surveys are often more likely than men to perceive that corruption is a significant or worsening problem (see Latinobarometro 2018).

The effect of corruption on women is both direct and indirect (Bullock 2019: 2; Boehm and Sierra 2015). The indirect effects of corruption are the negative externalities of, usually, grand corruption. When money is diverted from their legitimate objectives to the pockets of corrupt officials, the quality and quantity of public services suffer. The direct effect of corruption is when a person is forced to pay a bribe to secure a service they are actually entitled to (Boehm and Sierra 2015, 1-2). As we will see in the next subsection, corruption affects public services in a way that makes women suffer more from both the indirect and direct effects of corruption.

Public services

Poverty disproportionately affects women, and as a result petty corruption to access public services can have a significant impact on their finances, since they are likely to have less income (Boehm and Sierra 2015: 2; Transparency International 2014 ; Bullock 2019). But since corruption hinders economic development in general, and women are overrepresented among the poor, this could hurt them proportionately more (Boehm and Sierra 2015: 2). Additionally, when women do not have enough money for bribes, they can be forced to pay in other ways, particularly through sexual acts, as described in the section on sextortion below (Bullock 2019, 7).

Women's experience with corruption is thus a consequence of two parallel gendered socialisation processes, the economy of care, by which women are entrusted with the obligation to care for others, and power marginalisation (Bauhr and Charron 2020: 93 ; UNODC 2020), a phenomenon exacerbated by the gendered nature of poverty.

Gender disparities – particularly in terms of levels of education, the literacy gap still lies at almost 7% and is much larger in certain developing countries –can render women's voices weaker and make them appear to unscrupulous actors to be easier targets for extortionate corruption since they are expected to be less familiar with their rights and not to report abuse (Transparency International 2014: 6). Surveying the literature, Bullock (2019: 9) finds that women are more likely than men to be economically vulnerable and also have less bargaining power when confronted with corrupt state officials.

How women encounter corruption in the provision of public services seems to inform their perceptions of it. According to recent research, women tend to perceive a higher prevalence of "need corruption" (when people use corruption to access basic public services), whereas men perceive a higher prevalence of "greed corruption" (when people resort to corruption in order to gain unfair privileges) (Bauhr and Charron 2020, 95). The authors argue that this difference is a reflection of what types of corruption to which men and women are more exposed. Because of their caretaking roles inside family structures, women will spend more time dealing with education and healthcare, and because of power marginalisation, women will not be part of the patronage and corrupt networks where, according to authors, "greed corruption" tends to happen. Particularly, since women are more likely to encounter corruption in healthcare and education, they perceive that type of

corruption as more prevalent (Bauhr and Charron 2020, 99).

Health

The health sector is particularly susceptible to corruption throughout the world. This is a result of its characteristics, being a sector marked by huge financial flows, actors dispersed throughout the country (from doctors and nurses in large urban hospitals to health employees in small first-aid posts in rural areas) and often limited oversight (Transparency International 2006: 4; Schoeberlein 2021: 2).

Stereotypical gender roles usually mean that women assume the responsibility of primary caregivers of children and elderly throughout the world. Women also have specific health needs during their reproductive years. These are both characteristics that mean that women interact more frequently with healthcare services than men, and as a result can be more dependent on a well-functioning and free-to-access health system (Bullock 2019 ; Bullock and Jenkins 2020 ; Schoeberlein 2021).

Yet the quality and availability of healthcare can be severely affected by corruption, and women's services have been shown to have been disproportionately affected. For example, women's health supplies have been found to get "lost" more often, which endangers the life of women in need (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 9-10). Furthermore, several studies (Choguya 2018 ; Baluku 2019 ; Schaaf and Topp 2019) show women having to pay bribes or informal payments to access maternal health, sometimes to ensure they will receive proper care at childbirth, a moment when women find themselves in a situation of particular need and vulnerability.

Sexual and reproductive health rights are particularly affected by corruption. They are subject to petty corruption, but also to the larger problems of corruption in the sector, like procurement fraud and absenteeism (Schoeberlein 2021: 3). In many areas of the world, the marginalisation and stigmatisation of the primary users of these services, (including women, LGTBIQ communities and particularly sex workers) can make them easier prey for extortion, abuse and sextortion at the end-point delivery (Schoeberlein, 3).

Water and sanitation

Gathering water is in many countries a task performed by women and girls, since water is needed for many of the tasks assigned to them in the economy of care (such as cooking, cleaning and washing). Women and girls are in charge of collecting water in three-quarters of households without a water connection (Jenkins 2017: 11) and studies in places as different as Bogota and Johannesburg have found women consider themselves to be responsible for securing access to water at home (UNDP-SIWI 2017: 14). When corruption restricts access to water, women are thus more likely to be directly affected by demands for bribes or even sex in exchange for water (Jenkins 2017: 11 ; UNDP-SIWI 2017: 20).

Furthermore, where mismanagement or grand corruption has caused systemic failings in the sector that reduce delivery or increase the cost of access, women have to devote much of their time to fetching water. Not only can this affect their health because of the strain in carrying water over large distances (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 10), but this is time not used in education or productive work that could help them escape the poverty trap (Bullock 2019: 6 ; Jenkins 2017: 11)

Education

Corruption in the education sector affects women disproportionately in a number of ways (Bullock 2019 ; Boehm and Sierra 2015 ; Bullock and Jenkins 2020). Mothers might have to pay bribes in order to get their children registered in school, but also they tend to make up a larger proportion of the lower levels of the workforce in the sector, whereas men tend to have more administrative power which can lead to women having to pay bribes to secure their jobs (UNODC 2020, 52-53).

Where corruption diverts funds from education, quality and quantity suffer, with a twofold effect. Women have fewer resources to pay for private schools or tutoring (Bullock 2019), which affects both their education and their children's education. This can force women to cut other necessary expenses and jeopardise other areas of their lives, including their health (Bullock and Jenkins 2020, 9). Poor quality education, reflected in insufficient learning materials and overcrowded classrooms, together with malnutrition, poverty and ill-health can lead to children dropping out of school (Sabates et al 2010). Children are also more likely to drop out when there is teacher absenteeism (Sabates et al 2010, 12) where corruption has an impact on lowering teachers' attendance rates, it is likely to affect dropout rates.

Evidence through the years has shown that families in developing countries favour boys' education over girls', making it more likely that they will invest the little money they have in their male children (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 9). Similarly, when confronted with economic hardship, poor families will take girls out of school before boys, worsening the gendered poverty cycle and condemning girls to remain under-educated. In general, girls' dropout rates are higher than those of boys (Sabates et al 2010, 13). Therefore, if corruption affects dropout

rates by lowering the quality of the education or leading to teachers not showing up, it is probable that girls will suffer disproportionately.

Finally, sextortion, covered in more detail below, is well documented in the sector. This can occur either where mothers try to ensure access to education for their children, or as documented in a medical school in Madagascar, where teachers force students to engage in unwanted sexual acts in order to pass entrance exams or obtain good grades (Transparency International, Forthcoming ; Boehm and Sierra 2015).

Sextortion

Sextortion is a form of sexual exploitation and coercive corruption where a person in a position of authority abuses their power to extort an unwanted sexual activity from someone in exchange for something (IBA 2019: 8. Sex, instead of money, is exchanged in order to gain access to a "benefit", which in many cases is something the victim was legally entitled to. When sex becomes the currency of corruption, the exchange is gendered (UNODC 2020: 44). It overwhelming affects women, with one study finding that 84% of victims were women (Anderson, cited in Hlongwane 2017) but it could possibly also target non-binary persons (UNODC 2020: 43).

Sextortion is a form of sexual abuse that also involves a coercive, corrupt exchange in the interaction, a quid pro quo (IBA 2019: 37). It is important to clarify that it is not a sexual activity used to obtain an advantage, but the result of abuse of power (Transparency International, Forthcoming) and thus a sexualised form of corruption (Transparency International 2020). It usually takes place when the power disparities between the two parts are great and when the

bribe-payer does not have enough resources to pay (UNODC 2020: 45). To qualify as an act of sextortion the following conditions must be met: 1) abuse of authority by the perpetrator; 2) quid pro quo; and 3) psychological coercion (Transparency International 2020: 8). The tools to characterise sexual acts[1] as a type of corruption currency are still being developed (UNODC 2020: 45).

Women are more exposed to sextortion because of their sex and social norms that facilitate the aggressive sexual behaviour of men (Transparency International 2020: 18). In addition, women may have less access to financial resources, thus, when confronted with a coercive corruption situation, they could be unable to pay bribes in cash and be forced into sexual activities as currency in order to obtain permits, access public services or even get good grades (Transparency International 2020).

Comprehensive data on sextortion is not available due to a number of factors. There is widespread stigma surrounding sexual crimes; it is harder to report and to prove; the existing reporting mechanisms are not gender-sensitive; it was not recognised as a form of corruption until recently and in some cases when it is viewed as corruption it can also prosecute the victim/survivor (Transparency International 2020 ; Zuñiga 2020).

Sextortion can have devastating effects, leaving severe social, physical, and psychological scars on its victims (Transparency International, Forthcoming ; Transparency International 2020). Consequences can include dropping out of school and pregnancy, further compounding gender inequalities and even condemning the victims to a life in poverty, since many of the victims are

women in already precarious situations and (Transparency International 2020: 18).

While there is increasing awareness of sextortion as a form of corruption, it remains largely unaddressed in national legal frameworks.

Natural resource management: land, forestry and mining

There is a dearth of research looking into the specifics of the relationship between gender and corruption in natural resources sectors such as forestry, which results in sectoral anti-corruption measures seldom being gender-sensitive (Kirya 2019, 4). At the same time, efforts to integrate gender into activities in the sector do not always consider the role corruption plays in hindering forest conservation and gender equality (Kirya 2019). Although it varies from country to country, gender plays a role in how men and women use forest resources and at what stages of the value chain they are engaged (Kirya 2019: 11). In general, women tend to be more involved in using forest resources for subsistence, whereas men tend to dominate the commercial use of the resources (Kirya 2019: 12). Corruption in the sector can thus impact women's subsistence.

It can be inferred that women suffer more from the effects of corruption in the forestry sector than men. This is because there is a link between corruption and deforestation and the latter has a detrimental effect on people whose livelihoods depends on the forest (Kirya 2019, 19): As with fetching water, firewood collection tasks fall more on women than men, and if they have to collect it from farther away, they have less time for other

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[1] *Although UNDOC uses the term sexual "favour", Transparency International (2020) cautions against the* use of this word, since it could signal consent, which negates the coercive nature of this exchange.*

activities (Kirya 2019, 19). Deforestation also leads to soil erosion, which affects food security and women are usually the primary responsible for securing food (from growing and harvesting it to serving it) (Kirya 2019: 19).

And although much remains to be explored, what has become clear is that increasing women's participation in forest governance improves the governance and the sustainability of resources and that a more integrated approach to gender, forestry and corruption is needed (Kirya 2019).

Similar dynamics are at work in the mining sector. First, women are exposed to gendered forms of corruption, like sextortion, second corruption can have a disproportionate impact on women and third it is important to take into account women's participation in the governance of the sector (Carpis 2020).

As with other sectors, one of the main problems with corruption in mining is that it can exacerbate underlying gender inequality. Where women depend on land for both their subsistence and to feed their families, corruption in land negotiations directly affects women's livelihoods if they are denied access to land due to corruption (Carpis 2020). When corruption in mining leads to the pollution of the local water source, women are more affected, since they are likely the ones responsible for fetching water and will have to travel farther to get it (Carpis 2020).

Mining projects usually require some sort of social license to operate and many countries stipulate that commercial mining companies must engage in negotiations with Indigenous communities, in line with the International Labour Organisation's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention. Low levels of literacy in women in mining communities undermines their ability to engage in these

processes and be fully cognizant of the proposed mining projects and their rights (Carpis 2020).

Additionally, women can be sidelined in negotiations because of gender norms and often have less voice to defend their land (Carpis 2020). Women's ownership of land is sometimes not properly recognised or recorded, which renders them less able to secure their property rights. This happens due to judicial and administrative barriers and gender norms, with barriers that sometimes dictate that male relatives or husbands are the ones entitled to decide on family land (Carpis 2020).

Finally, the loss of government revenue due to corruption in natural resources can deprive governments from income that could be used for public services, affecting their quality and quantity, which disproportionately affects women (Kirya 2019: 20).

Enabling gendered crimes

Human trafficking disproportionately affects women, with 70% of the 40 million victims of modern slavery in 2016 believed to be women (ILO cited in Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 11) with previous estimates being even higher (European Union 2016). Corruption is involved at multiple stages of this heinous crime and organised human trafficking networks rely on corrupt practices. Corruption plays a role from the recruitment of potential victims, to producing fake documents, paying off law enforcement, and obstructing justice when these crimes reach the courts (Gerasymenko 2018: 41).

Corruption, whether paying off law enforcement agents and judges or abusing a position of power in order to secure favourable results, can also facilitate gender violence (from rape and sexual harassment to femicide), by allowing perpetrators

go free. When the perpetrators of criminal acts against women are protected from prosecution through bribes, women's rights are undermined (Transparency International 2010: 4).

Access to justice

The socioeconomic position of women in society can result in them having less power to seek legal protection or even access the proper channels to access justice (Transparency International 2010, 4). Additionally, corrupt judiciaries and law enforcement officials can reinforce discrimination against women in different forms, from ruling against them on certain issues like divorce or property rights, even if the legal code dictates otherwise, to protecting the perpetrators of gender violence (Transparency International 2010: 4). In so doing, corruption in law and order effectively denies women access to justice and prevents them from being adequately protected.

Data shows that women tend to report corruption less frequently than men, which could be the result of (often justified) anxiety about reporting wrongdoing, especially with regards to stigmatised issues like sextortion (Bullock 2019: 8 ; Transparency International 2020), a fear of retaliation and the impression that they will not be taken seriously and that reports are not likely to lead to action (Transparency International 2019b). But this can also stem from the structural imbalance of power, since in developing countries women have lower levels of literacy and may be less aware of their rights (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 8). Even if they are familiar with their rights, they can feel less empowered to use them, particularly if there are no gender-sensitive reporting mechanisms available (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 8).

Finally, women's underprivileged socioeconomic and structural position in society also hinders their ability to pay or gain access to corrupt justice systems (Bullock 2019: 8; Transparency International Forthcoming: 31).

Labour

In many low- and middle-income countries, women form a large part of the workforce in the informal sector, which can render them more vulnerable to petty corruption from street level bureaucrats or law enforcement agents (Bullock 2019 ; Bullock and Jenkins 2020 ; Transparency International Forthcoming ; Sida 2015). Given their precarious situation, informal workers' income depends on their ability to continue to perform these activities, and they are likely to pay the bribes and develop a dependency relationship with corrupt officers.

Women active in the informal sector are subject to compound power asymmetries, as a result of their gender, their socioeconomic status and their precarious legal status since their work is not protected by the law and sometimes depends on illicit activities (for example, street vendors are forbidden in several cities). As women have fewer means to refuse extortive corruption by the officials in charge of regulating and controlling such activities, they are often forced to set aside part of their already low earnings to pay off unscrupulous officials (Sida 2015).

In the formal employment sector too, women entrepreneurs are more affected by corruption. First, since there is also a gender gap between the profits of female and male-owned business, any bribe or informal payment women entrepreneurs are forced to pay will often be proportionately larger for their business and thus affect it more

negatively (ICRW 2019: 2). There are findings that women entrepreneurs are less likely to bribe than men when they run small firms (with less than 10 employees), a difference that disappears in larger enterprises, which could be the result of smaller firms having less interaction with public officials and women being more risk averse (Trentini and Koparanova 2013: 5). Unfortunately, this correlation could be bad for their business, since the same study finds that informal payments for female-owned firms could improve their performance (Trentini and Koparanova 2013: 21). This is in line with the findings of Wellalage et al (2019: 278) that female-owned small and medium enterprises in South Asia gain more than male entrepreneurs from paying bribes when accessing credit, since their enterprises will be less credit-constrained than female-owned small and medium enterprises that do not pay bribes.

Women sometimes are less educated than men, and might not know all the laws that apply or their rights, which make them targets to try to collect undue payments (ICRW 2019: 2). There is also evidence that suggests that female-owned enterprises in Africa are more likely to be inspected by tax officials that then ask for undue payments or gifts (ICRW 2019: 3), which could be a result of the larger power asymmetry that comes from the official's authority and the gender of the female entrepreneur.

Finally, women may be more likely to lose economic opportunities when corruption is rampant, since they are likely to excluded from male-dominated patronage networks in the business world (Transparency International Forthcoming). Corruption can also make it harder for women to access both regular employment and credit and financial services, by either directly demanding for bribes at this point or through petty

corruption in obtaining licences and permits, which hinders their economic development as it makes it difficult for them to start a business or construct a house (Transparency International 2007: 4).

Intersectionality

Most of the existing literature on gender and corruption, and thus covered in the present document, has fixated on a binary definition of gender, and focused almost exclusively on women and girls. However, there is a growing understanding of the inadequacy of working just with two gender categories (UNODC 2020: 23). For example, homosocial capital excludes not only women from patronage and clientelistic networks, but also men who do not conform to the particular type of masculinity that serves as social capital for those groups (Bjarnegard 2009 ; UNODC 2020: 37).

Intersectionality at large has been mainly absent of the discussion, but recent studies are seeking to fill in the gaps and broaden the agenda of corruption to other marginalised groups (Transparency International Forthcoming).

Intersectionality is "*(t)he interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to an individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage*" (UNODC 2020: 23).

Intersectionality proposes that social inequality and its effects cannot be understood under a single axis of social division, but that many different axes are at work and influence and reinforce each other (Colins and Bilge 2016: 2). Different hierarchical social divisions, like gender, class, sexuality, ability and race, determine people's social position and

whether they have or lack power (Ryder and Boone 2019: 1). Intersectionality brings light to the nuances of certain differences, by showing that the experiences of women of colour are different from those of white women (Ryder and Boone 2019: 5) since the axes of social division are not exclusive but build on each other (Collins and Bilge 2016: 4).

The fact that one of the reasons corruption affects women more is because women represent a larger ratio of poor people is by itself an example of intersectionality, where women's experiences are affected both by their gender and socioeconomic status. Although these links are implicit in much of the literature, the research on corruption and gender could benefit from pursuing these avenues of research, as has been done in other areas, like violence against women (Sosa 2017).

For example, Sosa argues that the mix between rurality, which affects access to services, young age and migration lead to a specific form of violence against women: sexual exploitation (Sosa 2017: 68). By using a more explicit intersectional approach, the already existing literature regarding, for example, corruption targeting women in water access (Jenkins 2017 ; Bullock and Jenkins 2020 ; UNDP-SIWI 2017) could expand on the links between rurality and poverty and how they compound women's experiences of corruption. Intersectionality is key to fully understand the gendered effects of corruption and there are calls for future research to delve into it explicitly (UNODC 2020: 42).

The links between anti-corruption and gender equality in the development agenda

There is increasing recognition among development practitioners that anti-corruption and gender equality interventions cannot run simply run in parallel. Corruption affects women and girls disproportionately, and by putting additional financial strains on them while delivering worse public services it can sentence them to a life of poverty.

Furthermore, by not looking at corruption from a gender perspective, specific practices, like sextortion, could remain invisible. Thus, any effort to curb corruption needs to be accompanied by measures to embed gender concerns so as not to unduly disadvantage women and girls. Both corruption and gender inequality damage democracy, since governments will only be truly responsive to the interests and needs of their citizens when they respect the "democratic dimensions of rights, equality, and accountability" (O'Donnell 2004: 32).

Tackling corruption, particularly at the public service level, can improve gender equality outcomes, by expanding and facilitating access for all women to the public services to which they are entitled. Anti-corruption efforts can consider gender equality by prioritising resources for curbing corruption at the end-point of public services women rely more on (UNODC 2020: 74). Such a strategy should also consider intersectional inequalities, as women are more susceptible to corruption at the public service delivery level because their gender intersects with poverty, and,

particularly, that persons from the LGTBI community will also tend to rely more upon some services (UNODC 2020: 74).

Promoting the participation of women in politics can help improve the responsiveness of public policies to women's needs and reduce corruption since women have a self-interest in dismantling corrupt networks that hinder their own political careers but also tackling petty corruption in the sectors that affect women more (Bauhr et al 2019 ; UNODC 2020: 41-42). Tokenistic participation alone is insufficient, real change will require disrupting established male-dominated patronage networks and prosecuting corruption. Otherwise women, as the study of re-elected mayors in France (Bauhr and Charron 2021) shows, can also become complicit in corruption schemes that not only weaken the rule of law, but divert resources from public services. Likewise, if a corrupt firm is suddenly transferred to the custody of the wife of the former director, it is likely that he will still act behind the scenes or that the patronage network remains intact (UNODC 2020: 72).

It is important to move beyond equal participation to start targeting the root cause of gender inequalities (UNODC 2020: 69). For example, when implementing gender provisions in procurement, the legislation should require bidding firms to have written parental leave policies, special protections against sexual harassment, equal payment, among other provisions that enhance women's participation but are more than just quotas (UNODC 2020: 72). Without also investing in programmes that foster gender equality, women will continue to disproportionately assume the unpaid economy of care, poverty will remain gendered, and women will be susceptible to other abuses of power.

Policy priorities and good practices

One of the most important priorities in order to advance gender equality by curbing corruption is to expand the body of research on the link between gender and corruption and collect more gender-sensitive and disaggregated data (Boehm 2015: 4 ; UNODC 2020: 68). First, although it has been established that corruption affects women disproportionately at the end-point of public services, corruption surveys have not always picked up those nuances and it is only in the past couple of years that questions related to sextortion have been included in household surveys.

Although research on the links between gender and corruption has increased over the years, the particular dynamics that mean that countries with more women in elected offices tend to exhibit lower levels of corruption has still not been definitively explained. To inform future strategies aimed at curbing corruption and fostering gender equality, there are several avenues of research that remain to be explored (Bullock 2019: 9-10): the causal mechanisms by which women in politics influence corruption; the impact of women's participation on anti-corruption policies; drivers for elected women to pursue anti-corruption policies; and the role women leaders in business.

Research in this direction could be productively accompanied by awareness-raising campaigns that demonstrate the gendered aspects of corruption to help inform policies that address women's specific concerns and experiences (Rheinbay and Chêne 2016: 9). More importantly, as intersectionality becomes more central in development efforts (Sosa 2017; Kabeer 2010), it is important to pursue research paths that take into account the

compound effects of different basis of discrimination. Complementing sex-disaggregated data with more in depth and qualitative investigation can help gain a deeper understanding of what is driving the trends the data reveals (UNODC 2020).

Public services

Since corruption affects public services such as health and education that women are particularly reliant on, the petty corruption that takes place at the point of service delivery is an important entry point for gender sensitive anti-corruption interventions (Transparency International 2014: 6). As with most policies, representation matters. The quality of these services could be improved with more female political participation and oversight, since some studies show that increasing women's representation appears to have positive policy outcomes, with greater investments in areas more relevant for women, like childcare, or the water and health sectors (Braga and Scervini 2017 cited in Bullock 2019: 4). Using specific policy tools like participatory and gender responsive budgeting could also expand the quality of public services (Transparency International 2014: 7).

Sectoral development programmes, such as those that seek to improve health access and quality for women would do well to mitigate against corruption risks that could hinder gender equality. For example, reforms to sexual and reproductive health services need to be accompanied by robust accountability mechanisms, community engagement and gender-sensitive reporting channels (Schoeberlein 2021: 22).

Similarly, development strategies to increase access to water and sanitation have to be accompanied with accountability and transparency strategies that strengthen local monitoring, promote

transparent competition for water contracts and ensure dedicated opportunities for women's participation (Jenkins 2017: 12-14). The involvement of women in the governance of natural resources like land, forestry and mining is also key to combat the particular effects corruption can have on women (Kirya 2019).

Gender mainstreaming

In order to mainstream gender into anti-corruption programming, it is necessary to consider gender at each stage of the programme, from its very conception and design to its implementation and later monitor and evaluation. A key issue is to assess whether and how the planned interventions will promote gender equality (Merkle 2018: 2-4). This is important since evidence shows that taking gender inequalities and power relations into account can improve the outcomes and sustainability of anti-corruption programmes (Merkle, 2018).

The following questions can be asked to evaluate whether an anti-corruption programme has mainstreamed gender concerns (Merkle 2018: 8):

1) Do women and men benefit equally from the project and how can we know that?
2) Are women providing and accessing the information?
3) Do women have a voice in decision making?
4) Are there opportunities for engaging women's organisations?
5) Does the project present gender-based risks?
6) Does the project reach women across social, economic, and ethnic/racial identities?

Finally, all gender programmes should consider intersectionality, since the marginalisation of some on the basis of their gender, cannot be separated from other forms of marginalisation (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 1) and any programme should pay attention to the context where it is going to be implemented, considering the intersectionality of gender, ethnicity and social norms (UNODC 2020: 24).

This means considering the various intersections of discrimination, but also thinking beyond binary categories of gender, and consider more plural forms of masculinity, femininity and non-heteronormative genders (UNODC 2020: 69). As was mentioned before, intersectionality has only recently made an incursion into corruption studies, but using an intersectional approach will no doubt help come up with recommendations better suited for each particular context. There are studies in sectors like health (Tolhurst et al 2012) that could be used as guidelines.

The political arena

Interventions to encourage women's participation in public office in developing countries should be accompanied by institutional support and capacity building (Afridi et al 2013). Since women are often new to politics, they might lack the experience and skills to make a difference (Transparency International 2014: 6). Capacity building programmes for female leaders should incorporate anti-corruption strategies and raise awareness of gendered forms of corruption.

Quotas and reserved seats are becoming more popular, and Chile's Constitutional Assembly will possibly result in the first constitution in the world designed by women and men in equal numbers. However, achieving higher numbers of elected women cannot be the only measure of success for advances of gender in the political arena. Although there is some evidence that points in the direction of more women in politics being good for women's interests, descriptive representation is important, but it is not enough for substantive representation, (Wängnerud 2009, 51). The party's ideology as well as the environment women politicians manage themselves in also have important effects on the agendas they enact (Grey 2006). Finally, women in politics tend to be assigned "women's issues", like health and welfare both in parliament and in the executive (Wängnerud 2009) and this can possibly make it harder for them to pursue policies in other sectors which may not only impact their political ambitions, but also limit their ability to push for substantial reform.

Reporting corruption

Studies have shown that differences in levels of corruption reporting are not only influenced by gender, but also by contextual, social and demographic characteristics (Zuñiga 2020). In that line, it is important to consider the incentives that can motivate people differently (Zuñiga 2020, 7). For example, men and women appear to respond differently to moralistic incentives and instrumental incentives, with women responding more to the former, and men to the latter (Zuñiga 2020: 7). Whistleblowing mechanisms should then include both.

Developing mobile units to report corruption could help address two obstacles some women face: lack of awareness and the accessibility of reporting institutions (Zuñiga 2020: 7). The experience of some national chapters of Transparency International shows that women prefer to use mobile units and report corruption face-to-face instead of calling the hotline (Zuñiga 2020: 8). Drawing from the experience of Transparency

International Zimbabwe, Zuñiga also suggests implementing 'non-confrontational' activities, like community meetings, that help raise awareness (2020: 8).

An Anti-Corruption Toolkit developed in Fiji provides useful lessons that can be adapted and applied to other countries (UNODC-UNDP 2020). First, a number of workshops on anti-corruption were conducted with women entrepreneurs and it was through the discussion with 51 of these women that they identified their main concerns and needs regarding corruption. The toolkit was a response to this and it delved into five steps that women could take to protect their business, which included internal controls and reporting corruption (UNODC-UNDP 2020: 18). Engaging women in a more direct manner is important as they will be more invested in the concrete actions to fight corruption but will also give important insights as to their contextual situation and the specificities that need to be addressed instead of implementing a "one size fits all" program.

As with all corruption reporting, it is important to ensure confidentiality and that there will not be retaliation against the victim or the whistleblower (Zuñiga 2020). There is some evidence that anonymity is more important for women than men when reporting corruption (Feldman and Lobel 2010). Hotlines and online platforms can be useful as channels to report corruption anonymously. They should operate throughout the day and not only during business hours and the information there collected treated in complete confidence (Zuñiga 2020, 8).

Sextortion

Since it is not formally defined in most jurisdictions, victims of sextortion do not always perceive themselves to be victims of a corrupt act

that is a punishable crime (IBA 2019: 26, 35), even though the consequences for their physical and mental health can be worse than other corruption crimes. A first step in the right direction is to develop an adequate understanding of the current legal deficits in most jurisdictions around the world when it comes to prosecuting sextortion. Notably, an attempt should be made to align the three different sets of legislation that cover different aspects of sextortion anti-corruption laws, gender-based violence laws and anti-harassment legislation (IBA 2019: 25). The legislation should address the cases where corruption and sexual abuse intersect and do so in a way that protects and does not criminalise the victims/survivors (UNODC 2020: 46).

In a more concrete recommendation, Transparency International points to the importance of breaking the "boys will be boys" atmosphere that can allow this behaviour to flourish (2020: 34). This means promoting more female personnel in sectors where anecdotal evidence of sextortion has been recorded (Transparency International 2020, 34).

Sextortion remains underreported and has been until recently excluded from the larger anticorruption agenda (Transparency International 2020: 9). In this sense, it is crucial to develop and strengthen reporting mechanisms for the survivors. In particular, this means reporting mechanisms that are easy to access and are safe, confidential and gender-sensitive; and that also trigger the types of support that sexual abuse survivors need, including, but not limited to, physical and psychological health services, and financial and legal support (Transparency International 2020: 34). Although any person reporting a crime should be protected against retaliation, it is of the utmost importance in these types of crime, where the power asymmetry between the perpetrator and the

victim/survivor is so large (Transparency International 2020: 35).

There would be much to gain by working together with practitioners skilled in the reporting and prosecuting of sexual crimes. Particularly, it is important to learn from their survivor-centred approach, which prioritises the rights, needs, and wishes of the survivor at all stages, with strategies that aim at empowering the victim/survivor (UNODC 2020: 23). The officials that will interact with the survivors should be trained accordingly, so they are aware of their possible biases and are careful while handling the reports (Transparency International 2020: 35). It is important that they use inclusive language especially when interacting with the victims, and that the premises are also inclusive (Zuñiga 2020: 9). Both civil society and public advisory bodies should also play a role in victim support (UNODC 2020: 82). Seeking alliances with women's organisations can help to both receive cases (that could have been first reported to the organisation) and to handle sensitive cases (Zuñiga 2020: 9).

Reporting mechanisms in both anti-corruption and gender-based violence offices should coordinate their efforts, ensuring that clear protocols are activated when such a complaint is filed (Transparency International 2020, 35).

Some of the current barriers to prosecuting this crime in some countries have a lot to do with the poor legislation regarding sexual offenses (for example, having to provide a witness of the incident) that not only affect victims of sextortion, but victims of rape and sexual crimes in general.

Concluding remarks

Since corruption is a form of abuse of power, marginalised groups that are excluded from circles of power will be more exposed to the effects of corruption. There is a body of evidence that shows corruption has a disproportionate impact on marginalised populations, and women are no exception (Bullock and Jenkins 2020: 1).

As corruption affects the quality and quantity of public services, women are more affected by this because they are more reliant on these services. Additionally, corruption and patronage networks restrict women's participation in public, economic and political life, which in turns hinders the possibility of having their voices heard. Although there is no evidence that women are "intrinsically" more honest than men, pursuing gender equality in political participation is an objective by itself that can have an lasting impact on the lives of women in the communities they represent.

Sextortion - the demand of an unwanted sexual activity in exchange for exercising power entrusted to someone occupying a position of authority - is a gendered type of corruption, because it affects women at far higher rates than men.

Finally, there is still much research to be done on the links between gender and corruption. It is important to ensure that enough data is gathered in order to fully understand these links and that future research takes an intersectional approach.

Individuals can encounter marginalised on multiple, compound grounds including gender, age, literacy, poverty, social status and so on. How these dimensions intersect can lead to different consequences and make people at risk of gender-based discrimination more vulnerable to certain types of corruption in some circumstances.

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KEYWORDS

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