



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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## **Gender and Corruption**

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*Al servicio  
de las persona  
y las naciones*

# GENDER AND CORRUPTION

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# 1

## THE GENDERED IMPACTS OF CORRUPTION

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



**16** PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS



# THE GENDERED IMPACTS OF CORRUPTION

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Access to public services  
and financial resources

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

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



## ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES AND FINANCIAL 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.*
- *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.*
- *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.*
- *Women's remoteness from some corruption networks reinforces their social and economic marginalization.*



## APPLICATION OF THE RULE OF LAW

*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.*



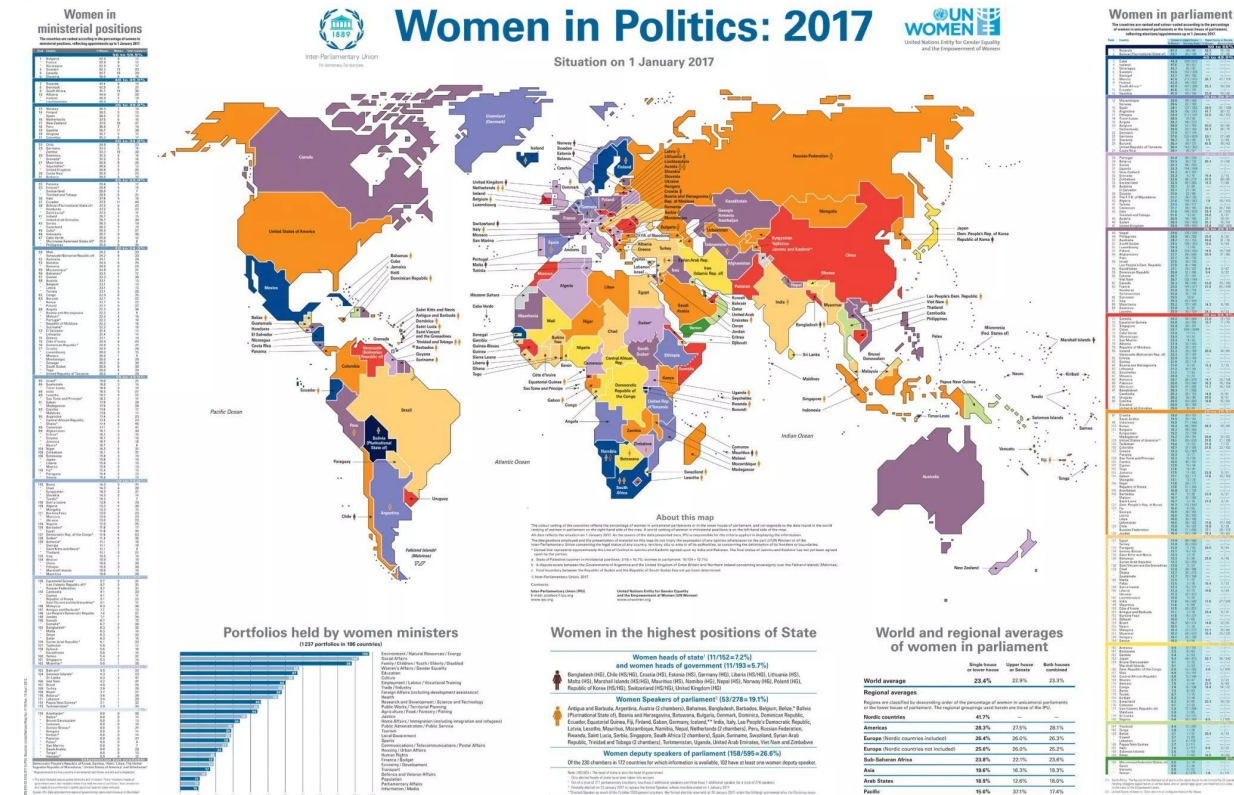


# ACCESS TO DECISION-MAKING AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

*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, or have less access to political financing.*

*This compounds factors such as gender stereotypes that men, not women, should be leaders and decision-makers.*



# 2

## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TO AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORRUPTION





## FEMINIZING PUBLIC SPACE AS AN ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY?

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The idea that women inherently possess greater integrity than men and that there is therefore less corruption under their leadership has been challenged.

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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.

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Gender equality in governance is an essential feature of anti-corruption strategies. It is unrealistic to rely on 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.



# 3

## GENDER-SPECIFIC APPROACHES TO FIGHTING CORRUPTION



# MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

- Access to information
- Gender-responsive budgeting
- Public accountability mechanisms
- Governance programmes to improve service delivery for women
- Civil society and women's organizations
- Increasing the number of women in government— local government, public administration, and at the frontline of service delivery
- Improving data on gender and corruption
- Decentralization
- Supporting parliaments to develop anti-corruption strategies



# 4

## UNDP RESEARCH AND FINDINGS

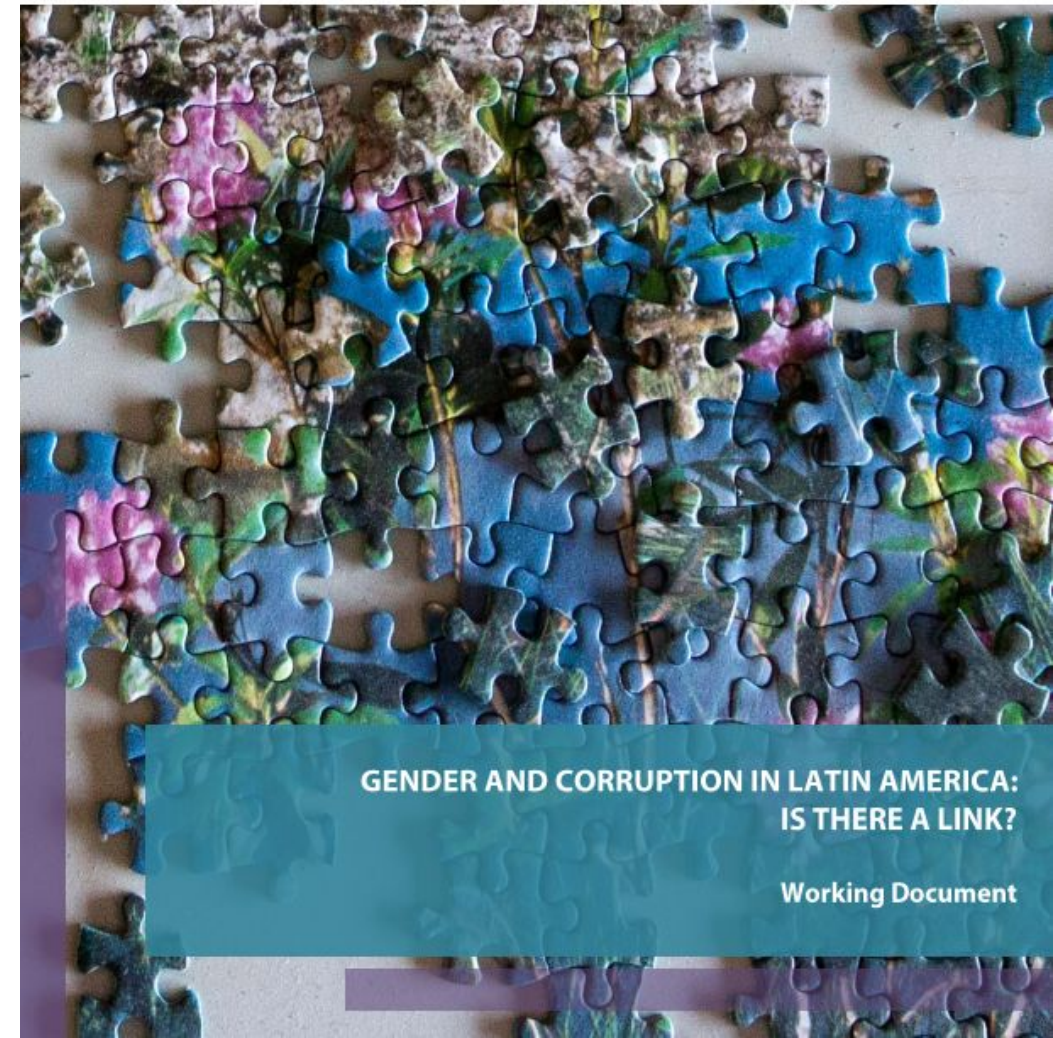


*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*



# GENDER AND CORRUPTION IN LATIN AMERICA

1. *There is no solid evidence linking the presence of women in leadership and decision-making positions to the degree of corruption in a given country.*
2. *Broadening women's participation in politics is a matter of rights and quality of democracy and by itself is not an anti-corruption means.*
3. *A major gap is detected in gender disaggregated data in official statistics, which could help to better understand the link between gender and corruption.*
4. *In cases of petty corruption, there are areas in of public administration in which corruption can have a gender bias (education, health, police, justice).*
5. *An important deficit exists in institutions that facilitate citizens in effectively reporting cases of corruption. The effect of this deficit can be exacerbated by factors associated with gender discrimination.*



GENDER AND CORRUPTION IN LATIN AMERICA:  
IS THERE A LINK?

Working Document





# CORRUPTION AND GRASSROOTS WOMEN

- *Corruption, as experienced in and defined by grassroots communities, covers a wide range of exploitative practices, such as physical abuse, sexual favours, and both the giving and taking of bribes – all of which are perceived as strongly linked to non-delivery of services and poor leadership. It is thereby labelled by the women as a misuse of power and public office.*
- *Broadly speaking, grassroots women's experience of corruption is concentrated in the realm of public-sector service delivery*
- *women reported being subjected to corruption when seeking employment and running businesses in both the formal and informal sectors*
- *The police force in particular was consistently named by grassroots women as the most corrupt government agency*
- *The findings reflect that grassroots women have devised and utilized a variety of successful anti-corruption strategies in their communities*



United Nations Development Programme

SEEING BEYOND THE STATE:  
GRASSROOTS WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES  
ON CORRUPTION AND ANTI-CORRUPTION



***Thank you***

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