



**Asia-Pacific
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Fighting the Gendered Impact of Corruption

Submitted by: UN Women



**Symposium on Gender Mainstreaming and
Women Empowerment to Fight Corruption
Putrajaya, Malaysia
11-12 February 2020**

A woman in a dark blue police uniform with gold epaulettes and a name tag is standing in a meeting room. She is pointing with a blue marker at a whiteboard that has some faint writing on it. In the background, there are other people seated at tables, and a large screen is visible. The room has wood-paneled walls and a modern interior.

Fighting the gendered impact of corruption

Gaelle DEMOLIS - UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Corruption disproportionately affects women



WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO PAY BRIBES FOR **HEALTH SERVICES**



WOMEN WITH **HIGHER LEVELS OF EDUCATION** ARE MORE VULNERABLE TO PAYING BRIBES TO **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



**POORER WOMEN ARE MORE
VULNERABLE TO PAYING BRIBES FOR
COURT SERVICES COMPARED TO
WEALTHIER WOMEN**



**ONLY 1 IN 10 WOMEN WHO PAID A
BRIBE IN THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS,
REPORTED IT TO THE AUTHORITIES**



Gendered impacts of corruption

Impact of corruption on women and men:

- 1. Corruption creates barriers to accessing basic public services and resources:** Because poor women are the primary users of basic public services (water, health and education), they pay disproportionately for corruption in service delivery.
- 2. Bribes are a greater proportion of women's income:** Statistically, women have lower incomes than men therefore bribes affect disproportionately their income.
- 3. Application of the rule of law in advancing rights and providing protection from abuse:** Women's statistically lower literacy levels, which often result in a relative lack of knowledge of rights and entitlements to services and public programmes, leave them more vulnerable to extortion and abuses of laws
- 4. Corruption that takes the form of sexual extortion:** Corruption's impact on women may be greater than men's when the currency of bribes is in the form of sexual favours

Corruption that takes the form of sexual extortion: Corruption's impact on women may be greater than men's when the currency of bribes is in the form of sexual favors



1 IN 5

**PEOPLE EXPERIENCES
SEXTORTION OR KNOWS
SOMEONE WHO HAS**

- Sextorsion at school in exchange of good grades



Marie (nom d'emprunt), l'une des nombreuses victimes de harcèlement sexuel dans le lycées sénégalaise, le 17 octobre 2018. Matteo Maillard

Sexual bribery/ Sextorsion

- Research on military widows who faced various, often multiple, instances of sexual bribery and other forms of sexual exploitation
- Key findings:
 1. Military personnel and policemen are perceiving **widows and single women as particularly vulnerable**, malleable and open to sexual predation.
 2. Of the 16 cases of sexual bribery that were mentioned by the interviewees, only 2 widows had lodged complaints
 3. Key reasons why women did not lodge complaints were **fear of reprisals** from the military and government officers and **fear of social stigma** and losing honor and respect
 4. The fact that **none of the complaints were taken seriously** nor the perpetrators punished resulted in further disillusionment for the 2 widows who had lodged complaints



Are women less corrupted than men?

Does having more women in positions of power will make a difference?



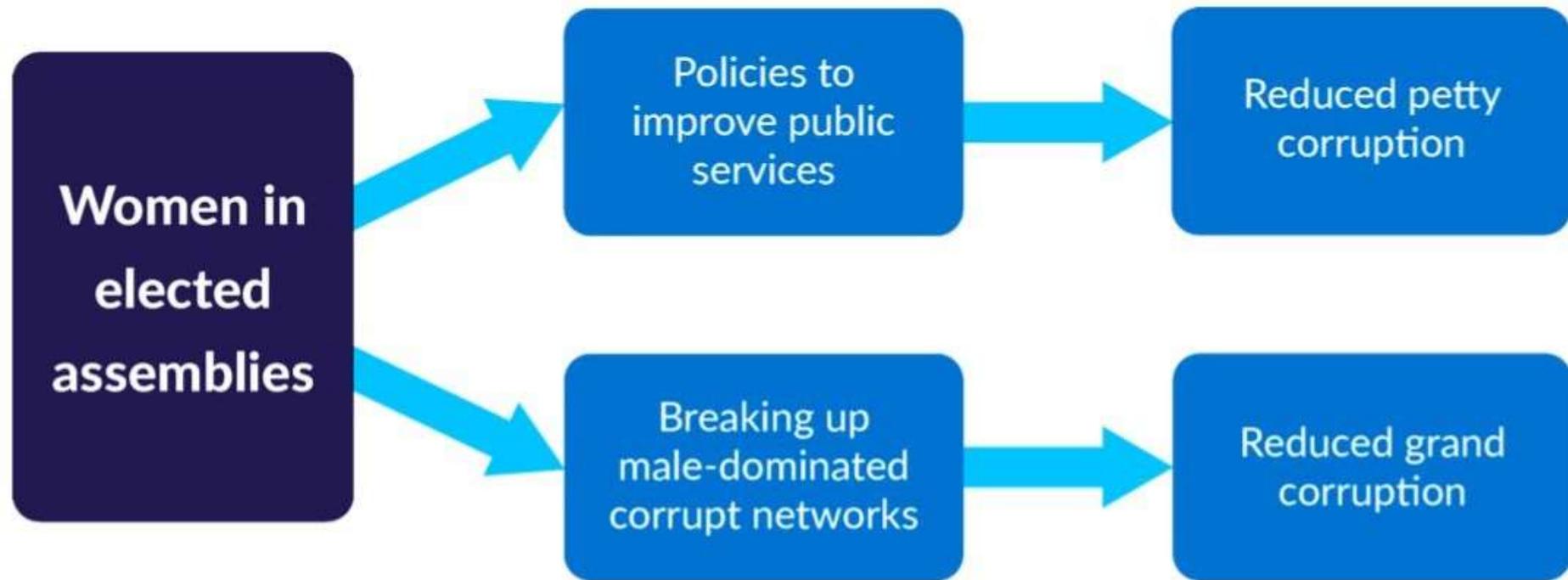
No, women are not intrinsically immune to corruption because they are women!

- Women may have limited opportunities for corruption, particularly when corruption functions through all-male networks and in forums from which women are usually socially excluded.

But a more balanced and representative institutions can help reducing corruption

- Influx of **new, outside nonparticipants** sufficiently disturbs the networks and reduces the effects of corruption
- Increasing the number of female politicians/public officials is usually accompanied by “fairer systems”, **building public accountability and governance systems that are transparent and responsive to women’s and men’s needs**
- More women in law enforcement **reduces the risk of sex-torsion**

Some research have demonstrated that the increased representation of women in elected office can reduce both petty and grand corruption



What UN Women

do? • Gender Equality, from legislative change to social norms

- Increasing women's understanding of their rights
- Increasing Women's Access to Justice (formal and informal systems) and Gender Justice
- Increasing women's political participation
- Gender Responsive Budgeting
- Promoting women in law enforcement
- Strengthening the capacities of law enforcement officers on how to conduct investigation from a gender and victim centered perspective
- Addressing sexual bribery experienced by military widows and war widows

New regional research on Women in Law Enforcement in ASEAN is being developed in collaboration with INTERPOL and UNODC... To be released in June 2020

More data is needed on nexus between Gender and Corruption