



# **Exploring the link between integrity and gender equality in the Arab countries**

**Towards a Regional Alliance of Women Against Corruption**

Beirut, 27 April 2022

# Outline

- I. Global Integrity and Gender Equality Mandates**
- II. A regional approach for improved governance and equality?**
  - 1. Participants in, and operations of, a women's alliance
  - 2. Actions by a women's alliance
  - 3. Information collection
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  - 5. Views of leading regional experts



# **Global Integrity & Gender Equality Mandates**

## Gender Equality

UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) ;  
Dec. 1979, in force Sept. 1981; 189 State Parties.

prohibits all forms of discrimination, against all groups of women, in all spheres of life (political, civil, legal, social, cultural and sexual and reproductive realms)

 no link to corruption

## Anti-corruption

UN Convention against Corruption ; Oct 2003; 188 State Parties (August 2021)

Core values : fairness, accountability and transparency, equality before the law

 explicit relation to gender

# 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development = conceptual and operational link between anti-corruption, gender equality and women's empowerment

- 1) For U.N., corruption = "one of the biggest impediments" to achieving the SDGs**
- 2) Gender equality : a precondition for sustainable development;  
a fundamental driver for more inclusive and equitable societies**

- 1: No Poverty.
- 2: Zero Hunger.
- 3: Good Health and Well-being.
- 4: Quality Education.
- 5: **Gender Equality.\***
- 6: Clean Water and Sanitation.
- 7: Affordable and Clean Energy.
- 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.
- 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

- 10: Reduced Inequality
- 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- 13: Climate Action
- 14: Life Below Water
- 15: Life on Land
- 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions**
- 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal



**Gender Mainstreaming = gender equity is cross-cutting in the 16 other objectives**

# For anti-corruption strategies' effectiveness and to achieve sustainable development



- ✓ Anti-corruption and gender equality efforts tend to be ***mutually reinforcing***
- ✓ Synergies between the two can strengthen policy decisions and legal frameworks which in turn enhance women's empowerment and their increased participation in social, economic and other activities.

## **It is essential to:**

- include a gender perspective into any preliminary analysis;
- improve the overall understanding of the complex interrelation of corruption and gender.

## **Methodological challenges:**

- ❖ insufficient data, including cross-country information,
- ❖ lack of understanding and evidence of the causal mechanisms behind the possible relationship between gender and corruption.



# **A regional approach for improved governance and equality?**

# MENA countries' commitment to



## 1) UNCAC :

- 12 out of 22 Arab countries have adopted National Anti-Corruption Strategies & 18 out of 22 Arab countries have put in place Anti-Corruption agencies.
- Public sector integrity is considered priority in AC reform policies.

## 2) Achieve the 2030 Development Agenda



# Why enhance regional knowledge on improving the fight against corruption through a gender lens ?



- Policy makers, civil society and researchers may wish to examine the link between corruption and gender in a nuanced manner to develop adequate policy responses.



- Support by a **regional women's alliance** in the field of transparency and accountability across the Arab States region ?
- Attentive to regional and national context, culture and sectors ?
  
- INCREASE KNOWLEDGE ON THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN AC through
  - Mutual capacity building
  - Cross-regional learning
  - Capacity-building at the national level
  - Enforce anti-corruption and gender sensitive public policies

# Considerations on a regional AC Women's Alliance



- I. Participation and operation of the Women's Alliance
- II. Actions by the Women's Alliance
- III. Support provided to the Women's Alliance
- IV. Information collection
- V. Views of leading regional experts

# Who could be involved and when?

## Women's Alliance Participants:

- **Women leaders** from government, the private sector, academia and civil society to support anti-corruption through a gender lens in the Arab region.

## Friends of the Alliance for input & guidance to strengthen impact

- **Local consultative groups:** women from different stakeholder groups with relevant anti-corruption, sector or gender equality expertise (incl. existing Women AC groups - Iraq (UNDP, 2020) Palestine (April 2022));
- **Partner institutions** = regional or international civil society organisations as well as relevant inter-governmental organisations (e.g., UN WOMEN, UNODC).

## Meetings:

- **Alliance: quarterly meetings**
- **Friends:** upon demand /availability but at least once a year

# Actions by a regional AC Women's Alliance ?

- Support expertise and advocacy work on specific issues, measures to be taken;
- A watchdog role concerning the execution of public services;
- Contribute to the identification and development of preventive and repressive measures, incl. laws (e.g., through studies, knowledge database, training and networking);
- Support monitoring and follow-up on prevention and anti-corruption policies;
- Sensitization of the various stakeholders to the phenomena of corruption and gender equality;
- Act as an active agent in the elaboration of corruption prevention, gender equality and sustainable development ;
- Participate in specialized conferences towards public authorities and parliamentarians and the international community.

# What's needed for pragmatic interventions building on gender mainstreamed anti-corruption programmes ?



- Clear definitions (corruption, gender equality, women empowerment) and sanctions
- Stakeholder mapping and issues mapping;
- Understand SDGs interactions;
- Gender related observations in AC strategies;
- Sector integrity engagements;
- Gender disaggregated data on:
  - access to public services and utilities ,
  - employment in the public service and the private sector supporting the public service, incl. in leadership positions ,
  - perpetration of corruption offences & AC law enforcement;
  - know who establishes the overview and the controls.

What else ?

# UNDP's support to a regional AC Women's Alliance



## Women's alliance

- Determine research agenda
- Suggest policy proposals and validate policy recommendations

## UNDP

- Facilitate the development of a roadmap
- Facilitate communication between participants in the Alliance, incl. meeting organisation
- Provide support to policy research in relevant areas, incl. through relevant UNDP activities and programmes
- Draft documentation (analytical, proposals & recommendations)
- Maintain a database (people, policy topics, research)
- Raise visibility & awareness at national, regional and international level

# Views of leading regional experts :

- Would you agree that there is a need for a regional AC Women's Alliance (ACWA)?
- If there is, who should participate in it ?
- What should be the ACWA's actions ?
- Any other suggestions ?

## Next steps:

Identify women participants incl. stakeholder mapping of domestic women's AC initiatives

Desk research on the AC gender dimension incl. 1) in current AC strategies & Action Plans and 2) selected sector specific risk assessments

