



## Women's involvement in grassroots anti-corruption activities

Women hold immense untapped potential to promote transparency and accountability across the developing world.

The effects of corruption have different, and often disproportionate, impacts on women due to prevailing social and cultural norms that deny political, social and legal gender equality. Poor women in developing countries are especially affected by corruption due to, among other factors, household responsibilities, lack of control over household resources, and socio-political exclusion.

On the other hand, women's unique experiences also provide differentiated knowledge on the challenges and solutions to address corruption, particularly at the local level. Therefore, understanding women's perspectives and supporting women-led grassroots initiatives enhances both anti-corruption and women's empowerment efforts.

The majority of PTF-supported projects have adopted a social accountability change model that focuses on advocacy, capacity building, third party monitoring and constructive engagement (see reverse).

By employing and tailoring these strategies to fit specific contexts, women are producing powerful lessons on effective methods to gain their involvement in grassroots anti-corruption projects. Women have also proven particularly effective in ensuring gender-differentiated views, challenges and needs are recognized and addressed, while leaving lasting effects on their participation in governance.

PTF-supported projects have demonstrated beyond doubt that through awareness raising, training and mentoring, women's groups can be extremely effective in reducing corruption at the grassroots. Yet, in light of the many changes faced in different contexts, gaps remain in our understanding of how to best engage women in more challenging environments. PTF is working to learn from our experience and develop field-tested models for future anti-corruption projects that increasingly respond to the needs of women.



# Social Accountability Change Model



- 1 Change knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and practices of both men and women through information campaigns.
- 2 Support women's groups to monitor/evaluate public services, carry out collective action activities and engage with the media.
- 3 Seek increased responsiveness of service providers to women's issues through constructive engagement and public pressure.
- 4 Monitor responsiveness of public service providers and share results with the community to sustain interest.

## PTF-Supported Project Examples

The projects below displayed one or more of the following characteristics: (a) addressed one or more issues that affect mainly women; (b) the main participants and/or leaders were women; and (c) the main beneficiaries were women.



The **International Governance Institute-Focal Integrity Team (IGI-FITCAM)** at the University of Buea in Cameroon implemented a PTF supported project aimed at strengthening the internal mechanisms to effectively track and curb corruption in various forms (including trading of sexual favors for grades, physical abuse etc.). The project led to the emergence of a number of similar initiatives at high schools in the region. All are actively supported by strong and committed women who are leading the charge against corruption in their institutions.



**Sambandh**, an NGO working in the eastern state of Odisha, India, encouraged an all-woman Self Help Group to take on the local government and organize a peaceful demonstration highlighting the poor condition of transport facilities and road infrastructure. Their activities received extensive media coverage, and resulted in construction of essential rural roads that benefited women who were previously unable to access health services.



**Center for Advocacy and Research (CFAR)**, an Indian NGO that works in the urban slums of Bengaluru, established eight women's groups to spread awareness about the government's subsidized food schemes and provided training on how to access it. The participating women led a campaign to constitute monitoring centers and vigilance committees that ensured Fair Price Shops functioned fairly and without corrupt practices. As a result, the number of households accessing subsidized food increased, as did the rations distributed (from 38% to 99% of entitlements).