Women, Health and Corruption: Redefining Partnerships for Social Change

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“Strategies show the power of multi-stakeholder partnerships for reducing corruption and improving local governance. Grassroots women have brought together not only local officials but also service providers and technical experts. When everyone feels like they’re part of the solution to ending corruption, instead of feeling singled out for corrupt behavior, government programs work more efficiently, and people can receive the benefits they’re entitled to.”
-Huairou Commission, Uganda
Executive Summary

Corruption is a highly complex and multifaceted obstacle for development across the globe, disrupting access to essential services and driving apart social classes already fraught with inequality. In many developing contexts, corruption manifests itself at the highest levels of government trickling down to local-level service delivery providers and users.

Innovative financing mechanisms which utilize partnerships are increasingly used to address local-level corruption as there is acknowledged need for a multistakeholder approach. These models are currently applying a gender-neutral lens. This process needs to be modified. Our project proposes a model through which funding mechanisms and partnerships systematically consider women’s role in addressing such a complex issue.

Women, in particular, are adversely and disproportionately affected by corruption in Uganda due to considerable differences in socio-economic dimensions, their role as caregivers and frequent interaction with health care providers. This positions them as natural leaders and agents of change in their communities.

This paper develops an understanding of what is happening on-the-ground in Uganda to tackle corruption. We explored how grassroots organizations are using a variety of tools and strategies such as ICTs and women’s leadership as vehicles for strengthening good governance and accountability. Building on their successes, our innovation attempts to support existing programming rather than reinvesting the wheel. This analysis demonstrates the fundamental challenges facing successful civil society organizations (CSOs): sustainable funding sources and lack of effective monitoring and evaluation tools which inhibit their ability to scale interventions.

Following an examination of the financial sustainability challenges faced by grassroots anti-corruption agencies and recognizing the value of redefining partnerships, we focused on the potential for mainstreaming gender into development impact partnerships (DIPs).

This partnership, which has only recently been integrated into development discourses, is highly suitable for empowering women’s role in anti-corruption programs for the following reasons:

**Sustainability:** DIPs will attract funding for interventions that donor agencies and governments might not be able to fund under existing models and levels of risk appetite;

**Flexibility:** DIPs allow for greater accountability to users, since service providers are granted increased flexibility and agency in implementation; and

**Ownership:** DIPs encourage innovation and learning in service delivery and are considered to be extremely valuable if best practices and lessons learned are shared widely.

The goal of our paper is to show that this novel form of partnership contributes to the sustainability of grassroots organizations addressing corruption, and ultimately empower women to demand accountability and widespread social change.
Part I Corruption: A Wicked Problem

Corruption is a staggeringly prevalent and complex development challenge, impeding economic growth, social welfare and political expediency globally and within communities. At the global level, corruption imposes an estimated cost higher than five percent of global Gross Domestic Product,\(^1\) interrupts the delivery of between twenty and forty percent of official development assistance,\(^ii\) and serves as a “major bottleneck” to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.\(^iii\) The costs of corruption are often intangible, involving the undermining of public trust, civic engagement, and economic and social development.\(^iv\) According to findings of a recent Transparency International study, more than a quarter of people worldwide have given a bribe in the last twelve months when interacting with public institutions and services.\(^v\) In addition to its pervasiveness, corruption is pernicious because it disproportionately affects poor and vulnerable groups and women.

This paper focuses on addressing the negative impacts of corruption on women’s empowerment, with a particular focus on corruption in the public health sector. Corruption especially impacts this sector because of the complexity of its system, the existence of multiple information asymmetries, and the large amount of public sector funds involved.\(^vi\) Corruption in public health services disproportionately affects women because higher costs and longer wait-times result in significant barriers to care sought by women as the primary caretakers of their families and communities.\(^vii\) Corruption is defined broadly as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.”\(^viii\) This project focuses on defining corruption from the perspective of individuals experiencing its adverse effects in their daily lives. To this end, emphasis will be placed on analyzing corruption as local-level, petty exploitation, including poor service delivery, poor governance, absenteeism, and informal payments,\(^ix\) as well as physical or sexual abuse by service providers.\(^x\) Acknowledging the significance of political sensitivity surrounding this topic, we note that a collaborative approach to good governance is necessary for all genders, governments, organizations, and service providers to work towards a solution. Considering the adversarial connotation of the term corruption, this report reframes solutions to this issue by promoting accountability and good governance rather than combating corruption.

The gendered dimensions of corruption represent extremely complex issues which become more multifaceted when considering the socio-economic and cultural norms that shape how women live their daily lives.\(^xi\) Women frequently become “shock absorbers” for their families when financial means are inadequate due to corruption, are disproportionately exposed to corruption at the point of service delivery, and have a weaker voice to influence policy or demand accountability.\(^xii\) Women are particularly impacted by health sector corruption given “differentiated and greater needs for health services”\(^xiii\) and broader inequities. Women are exposed to greater health challenges, particularly during reproductive years, and require special attention and care during pregnancy and delivery. Given the gendered aspects of corruption, it is unsurprising that women’s empowerment and corruption are closely interconnected. Corruption negatively impacts women’s empowerment in their communities by limiting their access to
resources and the fulfillment of their rights. Concomitantly, this paper will discuss how women’s engagement and leadership can facilitate successful partnerships to promote accountability and good governance. In so doing, it will show that anti-corruption efforts should prioritize women’s empowerment, generating facilitative conditions such that women can be agents of change.

Corruption in Uganda

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

CAPITAL: Kampala
LOCATION: West of Kenya, East of the DRC
LANGUAGES: English, Ganda, Luganda, Nilo-Saharan, Swahili, Arabic
POPULATION: 35,918,915 (July 2014 est.)

For the purpose of this analysis, our group has chosen to examine how corruption in the health care sector in Uganda affects women on a daily basis, and conversely how women have been instrumental community leaders to address the problem. While we have decided to focus on Uganda as a pilot study, we note that this is an iteration of a wider global problem as corruption is prevalent across many health sectors in East African countries and countries all over the world. We have identified issues in Uganda’s health sector which are systemic in many developing countries, making Uganda a relevant pilot study. Uganda is the seventeenth most corrupt country in the world with more than half of the government’s annual budget lost to corruption each year, totaling a loss of $950 million USD. Corruption has adverse effects for levels of foreign direct investment, the delivery of aid and access to basic services in the country. Despite the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Court in 2009, a culture of impunity and lack of political will amongst government officials means that anti-corruption efforts are lackluster and episodic. Non-governmental efforts to address high-level corruption have been constrained by political interference, including the arrest of anti-corruption activists and threat of closure for NGOs active in this area. As a result of these and other incidents, the United Kingdom and the United States suspended all direct aid to the Ugandan Prime Minister’s Office in 2012. While high-level political and economic impacts of corruption are profound, we remain concerned with how corruption adversely affects the individual’s wellbeing. At the local-level, illegal payments are so widespread that it has become common place for citizens to openly pay bribes, without complaint, in order to access public services. We found that 68-77% of formal user charges were misappropriated or pocketed by health workers. Ultimately, this and other iterations of corruption block millions of Ugandans from accessing health care.
While anti-corruption efforts traditionally target corruption at the political level, a bottom-up approach is necessary to compliment top-down efforts and address widespread local-level corruption. Although the problem of high-level corruption in Uganda has proven intractable, there is significant programming potential to increase accountability at the local-level. This project focuses on efforts undertaken to ensure local-level accountability and good governance in health sector service delivery, for which several projects and community-based initiatives have shown promise.

**Uganda: Women and Corruption in Public Health Services**

In comparison to all Ugandan public institutions, corruption adversely impacts health services. Uganda’s health sector is the most corrupt in the East African region, with an overall likelihood of bribery at 26.8% as noted in the 2013 East African Bribery Index. Widespread bribery and absenteeism are apparent, both amongst relevant government ministers and healthcare professionals. Indeed, health services are consistently rated the second most corrupt institution in Uganda. Impacts include the diversion of foreign aid at the macro level as well as excessive costs which block access to services. As a result, insufficient care and disproportionate levels of illness and death on the ground are prevalent. A comprehensive study carried out by the Ministry of Health has shown a leakage rate of 73% in public health facilities. Compounding these challenges is an underfunded health sector in a country suffering from poor levels of civic engagement and feedback mechanisms from officials to citizens. This context ultimately provides an environment in which corruption and poor service delivery can thrive. At the local-level, 70% of grassroots women and men were not even aware of the services available to them in their nearest health centres.

Ugandan women feel the impacts of corruption most acutely in their role as primary caretakers of their families and communities. In particular, women disproportionately encounter inadequate drug provision, absenteeism of health professionals, health centre closures, exorbitant costs, and requests for bribes. Women are often required to walk long distances with sick family members to receive inadequate care. These issues become more widespread and complex for women from poor communities. In Uganda, a poor woman may be unable to receive critical health services simply because she cannot afford to pay informal fees or bribes. Estimates show that in Uganda, 16 women die daily due to maternal complications as a result of failure to access critical health services. A grassroots study conducted by the Huairou

“**My wife was supposed to give birth by caesarean section, but for 3 days of labour pains nothing was done. By the time we were asked to pay we had already decided to move to Nsambya hospital.**”

- **Men’s Focus Group Discussion Bugolobi, Uganda**
Commission corroborates this finding through surveys with women, which showed that 76% of women believe that corruption has prevented them from accessing public goods and services. xxxi Conversely, women’s extensive interactions with corruption at the local-level make them natural leaders for anti-corruption programming and strategies. Women representatives in the Uganda Community Based Association for Child Welfare (UCOBAC), a grassroots women’s transparency and accountability initiative in Uganda, stated “grassroots women fight corruption because we have been the most affected and can work best in our communities. If we mobilize and sensitize our communities we can bring the issue of corruption to light. Let us fight corruption. Our strategies will work.” xxxii As such, this report focuses on the potential to promote accountability and good governance in the public health sector by leveraging women’s leadership in grassroots initiatives.

**Women as Agents of Change**

Given disproportionate effects of corruption on women’s health, this project focuses on the critical role of women as agents of change. There is a need to shift focus in the gender-corruption literature away from the idea that women are disproportionately “victims” (representing, for example, 70% of the world’s poor) xxxiii and towards agency-centric approaches. Debates on the relationship between women and corruption typically centre on whether women are more vulnerable to corruption than men, xxxiv a framing that results in the portrayal of women from the Global South as weak and voiceless. This narrative xxxv justifies the preclusion of women from important community-level decision-making processes and deflects attention from the gendered impacts of corruption. xxxvi At best, framing women as victims fails to recognize the vital role of women as agents of change in their communities xxxvii and, at worst, undermines women’s empowerment. Women are increasingly engaging across Uganda in awareness-raising campaigns and capacity-strengthening initiatives. They are mobilizing public action and are actively involved in monitoring service delivery. xxxviii Evidence suggests that when women are supported and empowered, all of society benefits. xxxix It is critical to recognize and build upon the strides taken by women to combat local-level corruption. In Uganda, a select few organizations acknowledge the critical role of women in promoting accountability and good governance in public health services. Research indicates these projects’ high potential for success. With a focus on increasing the sustainability and scalability of these interventions, we proceed by highlighting successful programs and interventions that leverage women’s leadership to address such a complex problem.

Not only does [recognition of women as agents] improve governance processes by making them more accountable and participatory, it also makes communities more resilient…”
-Huairou Commission, Uganda
Part II Grassroots Initiatives: Empowering Women to Combat Local-Level Corruption

Uganda’s large civil society sector has been instrumental in addressing the issue of corruption in public health service provision. Anti-corruption agencies such as Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda (ACCU) and Rwenzori Anti-Corruption Coalition (RACU) are two groups that have spearheaded a significant amount of local anti-corruption action. These organizations use methods like community meetings, advocacy, and outreach programs. Other organizations, including the Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development (HEPS Uganda), focus directly on health services and local barriers to access. All of these organizations use Information Communication Technology (ICT), such as SMS, to track drug stock-outs, raise awareness, and monitor community health centres. Organizations that partner with global agencies are also playing a large on-the-ground role. Partnerships are a critical part of the solution to corruption. For instance, Transparency International Uganda (TIU) has partnered with the Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) to address health-service delivery by using mobile technology to monitor and report on corruption.

Although traditional anti-corruption initiatives have employed a gender-neutral approach, several CSOs are beginning to emphasize women’s role in addressing health sector corruption. Women have been identified as key agents for change and as instrumental figures in combatting local barriers to access in health services. In a 2012 study, the UNDP and the Huairou Commission identified a need to understand the lived impacts of corruption on women, and to understand how women can play a main role in designing, implementing, and sustaining anti-corruption programs. Both the UNDP and the Huairou Commission have partnered with Ugandan organizations using women-led grassroots solutions to successfully address petty corruption. Although women are disproportionately affected by local-level corruption, they are also positioned to combat barriers to health services through grassroots mobilization.

Within Uganda, there are several organizations implementing programs that aim to use women’s leadership to address local-level corruption. Many of these organizations take a three-pronged approach to gender and corruption based on social accountability, monitoring,
and advocacy. The first involves community members being trained in health rights and budgets, and holding meetings with public officials to address their concerns. Monitoring groups provide a complementary strategy, as women’s groups are provided with tools like mobile phones to monitor and collect data on corruption in health services. Finally, advocacy is used to increase awareness of health rights and anti-corruption strategies in the community, often by using ICT technology such as radio and SMS to disseminate anti-corruption messages.

Identifying Trends: ICTs to Combat Local-Level Corruption

ICT – Information and Communication Technologies –
“are information-handling tools – a varied set of goods, applications and services that are used to produce, store, process, distribute and exchange information. They include the “old” ICTs of radio, television and telephone, and the “new” ICTs of computers, satellite and wireless technology and the Internet.”

ICTs are increasingly recognized as efficient tools to address social issues and disparities in Uganda. ICTs have high potential to combat bureaucratic corruption for several reasons. First, in terms of health sector reform, ICTs – particularly SMS technology – have an established role. When individuals in Uganda encounter drug stock-outs or health-provider absenteeism, they can send an anonymous message using a free short code to report problems. Furthermore, mHealth (mobile health, supported by mobile devices) benefits a range of stakeholders in Uganda’s health sector, providing public health education and remote patient monitoring to produce significant patient benefits. Telemedicine, electronic patient records, and point-of-care support assist community health care providers, facilitating eHealth (electronic health) data collection and electronic supply chain management which have been beneficial for the national health care system. ICTs are already being used in the health sector for the purposes of educating health care providers, reducing medical errors, improving patient services, and to provide evidence-based care.

Second, ICTs are effective tools for national anti-corruption programs as they provide an easy and effective medium for Ugandans to break the “culture of silence” about corruption. ICTs ensure anonymity and give people access to vast networks of popular support for anti-corruption initiatives. These technologies give “voice to the voiceless” and generate an empowered forum for public debate.

Third, ICTs are recognized as an appropriate mechanism for local governments in Uganda to encourage better transparency and accountability of political processes, raise public participation in governance affairs, and work towards poverty reduction and development within wider
Millennium Development Goals (MDG) frameworks. Uganda developed the Rural Communications Development Policy (RCDP) in 2001, which ensures affordable and universal access to basic communication services and supports the penetration of ICTs into rural areas.

Fourth, ICTs provide appropriate tools for action because Ugandans enjoy expanding network access with more than 14 million mobile phone subscribers as of 2011. There is strong government support for the continued development of ICTs in Uganda, manifested in the national policies for universal access, deregulation of telecom markets, creation of frequent ICT training facilities and internet cafes, and other government service delivery reforms. There has been accelerated growth in public and private projects to develop wireless hot spots across the country, with an increase in internet usage. ICT infrastructure is also well-developed throughout the rest of East Africa, making it an appropriate medium for a scalable project.

As will be discussed in the next section, ICTs are appropriate tools for this proposal because there is already momentum for their use amongst existing civil society groups that operate in this area.

**Partnerships & Organizations: Using ICTs & Women’s Leadership**

Organizations utilizing multiple forms of ICTs, such as combining the use of SMS and radio, are especially useful in areas with low literacy rates. These tools have allowed women to improve their technological literacy, provide a viable platform to disseminate information, and increase their ownership over health service monitoring and accountability measures. ICTs have also allowed implementing organizations to collect and measure data on local-level corruption.

An organization that has been successful in utilizing ICTs and women’s leadership methods is ACCU’s Gender Strategic Accountability project. ACCU engages women throughout the country in local monitoring groups, which equip women with mobile phones to track health service provision. Women’s groups are also educated in public expenditure tracking, and hold meetings with public officials to discuss avenues for improving health services. Many of
ACCU’s implementing partners use radio programs and SMS to report on corruption and broadcast anti-corruption messages to those who are unable to access mobile devices.\textsuperscript{lvi}

TIU, in partnership with WOUGNET, has also been successful in implementing these strategies in northern Uganda. In their “ICT for Health Service Delivery” project, WOUGNET and TIU use a telephone hotline, SMS technology, and radio programs to report poor health service delivery.\textsuperscript{lvii} Their programs reached 7000 community members and lowered absentee rates in health clinics by 30%.\textsuperscript{lviii} After the completion of Phase I, they compiled a report showing the resulting increase in knowledge of good governance and civic engagement.\textsuperscript{lix} At the close of the project, 30 Voluntary Social Accountability Committees (VSACs) had been established in five districts in northern Uganda with each VSAC comprising 11 women and 4 men.\textsuperscript{lx} In total, more than 450 VSACs acquired the necessary skills to monitor and report corruption in local government services, and identify mismanagement of local public resources.\textsuperscript{lxii}

A final organization that successfully uses many of these techniques in Uganda is UCOBAC, which has partnered with the Huairou Commission and the UNDP in their Transparency and Accountability Initiative. Their programs have trained women’s leadership groups in monitoring and advocacy on health service provision in southwestern Uganda, as a grassroots measure to address corruption.\textsuperscript{lxiii} This partnership demonstrates the value-added of collaborating with a diverse set of stakeholders to address such a complex issue as corruption. We will further discuss how to leverage instrumental partnerships that support women-based interventions.

Throughout these projects, several best practices have been identified to address local-level corruption. Women-led community groups have exhibited success, especially through a three-pronged approach using advocacy, monitoring, and accountability programs. This holistic approach has allowed women to address corruption through the strategies that, based on their experience, work best. Establishing key partnerships has proven particularly effective, with women identifying non-confrontational approaches as extremely important.\textsuperscript{lxiv} Instead of combatting ‘corruption,’ grassroots communities utilize language such as ‘good governance’ and ‘reducing barriers to health access’ to provide a more fruitful dialogue with all members of the community, public officials, and health service providers. Building networks throughout the local communities and Uganda broadly has allowed for a more integrated approach towards addressing corruption on the grassroots level.
Part III Barriers to Success: Challenges for Organizations Combating Corruption on the Ground

Local-level organizations continue to face significant barriers that result in unsustainability and limited impact. Extensive research of these programs demonstrates that a primary problem is a lack of sustainable funding opportunities. International governmental and non-governmental donors often provide funding to the Ugandan government or to umbrella actors like WOUGNET and ACCU, which then allocate resources among their networks of CSOs across Uganda to implement anti-corruption projects. Our research of these smaller women’s empowerment groups emphasized that funding for anti-corruption programs is unsustainable, and innovative sources are desperately needed. Some sources deplored the lack of long-term donor commitment, and insisted upon the need for new types of partnerships. Lack of long-term resources inhibits the scalability of highly successful pilots. Our research into various anti-corruption projects conducted by women’s organizations in Uganda revealed that several have been limited to highly restrictive six to twelve month contracts with donors, which is scarcely enough time to generate an observable impact. It is difficult to get a true sense of the comparative value of women’s anti-corruption projects, since very few last long enough for relative impacts to be observed. Nevertheless, women’s involvement in projects has proven to increase their effectiveness.

As a result of these findings, we endeavored to discover why sustainable funding for local-level anti-corruption programs is so difficult to achieve. Our research showed that these organizations’ challenges include, but are not limited to, the difficulties inherent in monitoring and evaluating (M&E) impacts on corruption, competition among CSOs and larger NGOs for scarce donor resources, and sporadic governmental support for anti-corruption programs in general.

Monitoring and evaluating interventions are a significant obstacle for local women’s CSOs in Uganda trying to secure sustainable funding. In regions where government officials are complicit in corruption, data to show a sector’s losses and the impact of programs to mitigate these losses can be extremely difficult to procure. M&E continues to be problematic for anti-corruption organizations operating within Uganda, leading many to resort to less-definitive reporting mechanisms.

A deficit of quantifiable data to demonstrate a pilot project’s success in combating corruption makes it very difficult for external agencies to justify the continued provision of resources and to develop more scalable frameworks. Donor organizations, particularly those associated with donor governments, are under pressure to establish “value for money” in the way they spend tax revenues, and so need to demonstrate that their resources are creating a meaningful impact. However, the challenge for demonstrating impact lies in the difficulty in obtaining quantitative data for corruption interventions. Recognizing the true value of qualitative data – the stories, voices and testimonies of grassroots women’s organizations – is yet to be achieved.

In addition to difficulties with M&E, local CSOs and NGOs are also challenged to secure sustainable funding by competition for scarce donor resources. These smaller organizations often
have to compete with larger international NGOs which, while they may possess greater capacity for anti-corruption projects, remove ownership of these projects from the country context\textsuperscript{xiv} and limit the potential for women leadership at the local-level. While DFID attempted to address this in 2010 with its Development Innovation Fund to which local and small-scale CSOs could apply, funds remained limited and there was no possibility for renewal.\textsuperscript{xv}

CSOs and local anti-corruption projects also have difficulty securing sustainable funding when it is allocated through the domestic government, since political support for anti-corruption policies can oscillate based on changing circumstances. External donors channeling funds through the Ugandan government must contend with the fact that “the development cycle of [anti-corruption programs] is frequently assumed … to be linear but, in reality, it is sporadic, erratic, and vulnerable to disruption by the volatility of government support and by fluctuating donor enthusiasm and fatigue.”\textsuperscript{xvi} When local organizations are working within a political context unsupportive of anti-corruption, and when donors have imposed unrealistic expectations and inappropriate measurements for success on them given this context, the organizations will be preordained to fail, causing them to lose in the competition for scarce external resources. It is critical that donors realize these challenges to local anti-corruption organizations in order to develop more realistic and relevant results-based approaches to funding. In the following section, we will propose a new framework for scaling up successful interventions in Uganda and providing a more favorable environment in which these programs and organizations can secure sustainable funding.
Part IV: Systematic Consideration of Women’s Empowerment in Alternative Funding Models

Innovative financing is a growing tool used to address funding challenges faced by organisations. These models fail to systematically address women and the gendered dimensions of programs and interventions. In doing so, their capacity to account for differentiated impacts on men and women is inhibited. Our proposal addresses this shortcoming in existing innovative financing models and processes.

Innovative Financing: A Window of Opportunity?

As highlighted above, civil society’s use of ICTs in anti-corruption initiatives is growing across Uganda. A number of CSOs have been working to tackle the issue of corruption in the provision of health services and their interventions ensure that citizens, particularly women, are able to:

1. Use ICTs to enhance awareness of corruption and of health rights in communities;
2. Leverage mobile technology to monitor and report on corrupt practices; and
3. Engage women as community leaders armed with the knowledge and expertise to ensure social accountability.

The interventions outlined above have been instrumental increasing social change in Uganda. In this regard, the aim of our proposal is not to suggest reinventing the wheel: instead, at the core of our proposal is the belief that scaling up successful development interventions should be the primary objective of development partners. This thinking led our team to conduct extensive research into local organizations in Uganda. Results demonstrate that a lack of sustainable funding remains the primary challenge inhibiting the scaling of successful interventions.

A number of published reports highlight that one-off interventions that do not lead to sustained and scaled impact fail to add significant value at the macro level. Furthermore, interventions that have been successful as pilots but are not scaled will only create localized benefits for a small number of beneficiaries. The value-added of our proposal is recommending solutions that will help CSOs tackle sustainable funding challenges which will ultimately help to improve their delivery of interventions. As a group, our aim is to ensure that anti-corruption efforts in Uganda using ICTs are able to reach a larger section of the population, including women.

Traditional instruments of financing, such as donor-based approaches, are predominantly used in international development. The literature shows that social innovative finance includes a number of novel potential funding streams that can be leveraged to fund development projects and interventions. Some innovative financing mechanisms include community investing and...
philanthropy, microfinance, impact investing, outcomes-based philanthropic grant making and program-related investments.

Innovative financing models are gaining considerable traction because traditional instruments to fund development are under strain. This circumstance builds the case for tapping into financing mechanisms that can complement traditional donor-based funding models. A recent report issued by the World Bank explains the idea of innovative financing based on sources of funding and the causes they support:

In addition, the OECD Development Assistance Committee posits that innovative financing tools will help to maximize development impact, and promote progress towards the MDGs while improving global governance frameworks. As such, our goal is to provide recommendations to mobilize multiple sources of capital, since “innovative financing mechanisms stand to improve the efficiency of development assistance in the coming years”.

There are a number of innovative financing solutions which can be applied to the Ugandan context. One innovative financing mechanism created to combine public and private contributions is known as public-private partnerships (PPPs). PPPs help to mobilize private finance for public service delivery. Under PPPs, public and private financiers invest jointly in projects based on common goals and a jointly agreed upon framework of roles and risk-sharing. PPPs have been identified as key to addressing global development challenges, and are commonly seen as “an approach to solving development problems through a coordinated and concerted effort between government and nongovernment actors, including companies and civil society, leveraging the resources, expertise, or market efforts to achieve greater impact and sustainability in development outcomes.”

While partnerships are a common tool for development programming, new forms are emerging within a number of agencies. These new creative financing relationships make use of catalytic financing and impact investing. This has led to the creation of unique forms of public-private partnerships, such as impact investing PPP models, whereby investors are only paid if and when improved social outcomes are achieved. One notable example is that of Development Impact Investing, or Development Impact Bonds (DIBs), which is an outcomes-based model that works
to improve the quality and local-level accountability of funding development projects. The DIBs model is not to be interpreted as a traditional ‘bond’. Rather, the model embraces the idea of creating a Development Impact Partnership (DIP) with country governments, potential investors, intermediaries and service providers. Hence forth, we will refer to this innovative financing model as a DIP.

**Development Impact Partnerships**

The DIP is a new outcomes-based finance model for tackling complex social problems in international development. DIPs are being leveraged in the face of tightening public budgets and limitations of traditional funding models. The value-added of a DIP is that it “bring[s] together private investors, non-profit and private sector service delivery organizations, governments and donors to deliver results which society values.” A DIP is established once an outcomes-based contract is signed and a private investor agrees to pay in advance for interventions. Payments are contingent upon outcomes-based results as stipulated in the contract between relevant stakeholders. Donor organizations and/or governments make payments to investors if the interventions succeed, with returns linked to progress achieved. If agreed upon outcomes are not met, investors lose some or all of their investment. The ultimate objective is to provide an opportunity for leveraging new revenue and investment streams in order to increase the dollars available for scaling successful interventions and approaches that tackle key social and environmental challenges.

**Figure 1** provides a simplified outline of a DIP structure.
Thus far, the Development Impact Bond Working Group, convened by the Center for Global Development and Social Finance UK has designed two pilot DIPs for Uganda. In the report produced – *Investing in Social Outcomes: Development Impact Bonds* – two of the six case studies focused on health and education challenges in Uganda. These cases demonstrate precedence for the implementation of innovative financing mechanisms that will help to scale up successful local-level interventions. The first DIP aims to reduce Rhodesian Sleeping Sickness, which threatens approximately 9 million of Uganda’s rural poor. Similar to corruption in health service delivery and provision, Rhodesian Sleeping Sickness is a complex problem that affects a number of Ugandans and lacks sustainable funding sources. The second DIP hones in on the possibility of improving access to high-quality secondary education. Likewise, this partnership facilitates investment in existing interventions to address a composite problem. Our aim is not to assert that DIPs serve as a silver bullet to sustainable funding and partnership challenges but rather to suggest a unique and innovative tool that can be employed in similar development projects. Apart from nurturing a collaborative environment amongst partners, DIPs can provide a number of advantages. Some advantages are:

**SUSTAINABILITY**
DIPs attract funding for interventions that donor agencies and governments might not be able to fund under existing models and levels of risk appetite.

**FLEXIBILITY**
DIPs allow for greater levels of accountability to users because service providers are granted a lot more flexibility in implementation.

**OWNERSHIP**
DIPs encourage innovation and learning in service delivery and are considered to be extremely valuable if best practices and lessons learnt are shared widely.

Despite these advantages, the latent effects of DIPs remain unseen. While DIPs could bring unique complexities, dangers and costs, they are innovative financing models that complement traditional donor-based initiatives and approaches. A viable DIP has the potential to address the challenges discussed above.

Although this model can address funding issues and gaps, our team identified a critical drawback of innovative financing models that remains unexplored. Some organizations that use impact investing fail to employ a gendered lens or dimension in their practices and activities. Gender-sensitive approaches and policies are not mainstreamed in impact investing funding models. This is a principal concern, particularly because gender serves to both proscribe and constrain the life experiences, opportunities, access to capital, and ultimately the balance of power between women and men. As such, adopting a band-aid solution to tackling social ills will fall short in addressing the differentiated effects experience by both women and men.
Our proposal attempts to do two things:

1. Recommend the use of a DIP that will enable the scaling of successful interventions that empower grassroots women to employ ICTs as a tool for monitoring and reporting on corruption in Uganda; and
2. Propose an adaptation of current innovative financing mechanisms, such as DIPs, to ensure that gendered dimensions are taken into account in terms of (i) M&E and (ii) interventions funded

A failure to apply a gender lens in investing is problematic. On a larger scale, considering these necessary adjustments is critical because impact investing is a growing innovative tool that has significant potential to change the face of international development financing and investing for social change. Current funding models apply a gender-neutral lens, which risks providing disproportionate benefits based on gender. In many developing countries and communities, women traditionally have significantly less access to capital, education, and opportunities. As such, it is important to recognize that simply financing any number of interventions is not enough to close the gaps that exist in terms of education, gender equality and leadership. Mobilizing investment dollars has to improve the conditions of both women and men worldwide; in order to achieve this, adopting a gender lens in investing is crucial. Tailoring the development impact partnership to account for women will ensure that their vulnerabilities are not exacerbated.

Our proposal provides a window of opportunity based on the premise that investing in women accelerates change for everyone. Our proposal for the Ugandan context advocates for (i) investing in successful women-based interventions and projects that tackle corruption in the health sector and (ii) monitor and evaluate outcomes with a gendered perspective to ensure that investments are closing inequality gaps and engaging women as leaders. With the importance of adopting a gendered lens to DIPs outlined above, our proposal redefines and scales existing partnerships to systematically consider women’s empowerment. Figure 2 below outlines a
potential DIP structure that provides sustainable funding for women-led interventions. Pending further research, such a structure could be implemented in the Ugandan context as a means of strengthening programming that supports good governance and accountability to address local-level corruption in public health sector delivery.

**Figure 2:** Potential DIP structure to address local-level corruption in Uganda.

*All return on investment is contingent upon contract details as stipulated by stakeholders.*
Outlined above is our potential DIP structure with key on-the ground stakeholders. The value of our proposed DIP is four-fold:

Engages women as leaders and agents of change

Incorporates gendered dimensions in interventions and DIPs

Leverages the value-added of Partnerships and Collaboration

Facilitates effective M&E by acknowledging differentiated impacts for women and men

These benefits will aim to supplement the voices of women that speak out against corruption in Uganda, and are actively engaging communities to reduce its prevalence. Their stories provide valuable qualitative data that indicates a change in corruption levels, as experienced by men and women at the local-level. Women’s stories are powerful and serve as a tool for change. Our proposal aims to support successful pre-existing efforts on-the-ground.
Part V: Scalability

Our proposal facilitates social impact partnerships through a qualitative, outcomes-based model to enhance the scalability of women’s anti-corruption initiatives in countries like Uganda. Supportive networks and cooperative projects already exist, and motivated and inspirational women are heavily involved. Despite this progress, sustainable funding sources provide significant obstacles to their long-term success. By redefining partnerships and the types of interventions normally funded, women’s organizations will be empowered to spread geographically, pollinating outside their community of origin and navigating women’s networks throughout Uganda. Endowing these organizations with agency has the potential to increase their scope beyond Uganda’s borders, and serve as a model for emulation throughout East Africa and globally.

Since innovative finance is an increasing trend for funding development interventions, the systematic inclusion of women’s empowerment in these models provides a significant opportunity for women’s leadership and increased role in addressing complex global problems. Empowering women creates female role models for younger generations. Establishing sustainable women’s engagement in such programs will have a normative impact on women’s ability to demand accountability and political change, and imbue our project with intergenerational scalability.

As Kofi Annan states, “There is no development strategy more beneficial to society as a whole - women and men alike - than the one which involves women as central players.” By redefining underlying funding and partnership frameworks, our project acknowledges the profound value of women’s engagement towards a solution to local-level corruption.
Endnotes


Although we recognize that there is a controversy surrounding the inclusion of informal payments in definitions of local-level corruption, we are including it because our definition aims to encompass the experiences of men and women on-the-ground. Informal payments comprise a significant component of corruption in public health sector delivery in Uganda.

Studies carried out by Uganda Community Based Association for Child Welfare (UCOBAC) with support from the Huairou Commission in Kiboga district emphasize the fact that 63% of grassroots women report having experienced corruption as part of their daily life. These women define corruption not only within the scope of bribery or use of power but also strongly view poor service delivery, poor governance, as well as physical or sexual abuse as falling within the realm of corruption.


Ibid


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