Short Session Report

Session Title: New Standards of Equity and Accountability: Bringing Sextortion and Gender into the Anti-Corruption Discourse and Response
Date & Time: December 2, 2016; 11:30 – 13:30
Report prepared by: Rukshana Nanayakkara, Advocacy Manager, Transparency International Secretariat

PLEASE INCLUDE BEST QUOTES!

Grand corruption feeds into and provides justification for petty corruption to thrive including sextortion.

Experts:

Nancy Hendry, Senior Advisor, International Association of Women Judges
Anga Timilsina, Programme Manager, UNDP
Farai Mutondoro, Senior Researcher and Coordinator, Transparency International Zimbabwe

Moderated by: Kinda Hattar, Regional Advisor for Middle East and North Africa, Transparency International Secretariat

Session coordinated by: Nancy Hendry, Senior Advisor, International Association of Women Judges

Main issues raised in kick off remarks. What’s the focus of the session?

All over the world, women are disproportionately affected by corruption in accessing public services to go about their daily lives. In interacting with their male counterparts, sexual favours are demanded as a form of bribe, with or without first being confronted with a demand for a monetary bribe. This is what is called ‘sextortion.’

Ignorance of rights, mistrust and difficulties in accessing formal justice system, fear of
stigma, inadequate whistle-blower protection, and lack of gender-sensitive response measures allow this practice to continue despite its adverse impact on women across the globe, without geographic or economic bounds.

What initiatives have been showcased? Briefly describe the Game Changing strategies/ ideas (if applicable)

- Having safe space for women to come forward to report corruption proved to be effective, e.g., Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres run by Transparency International. In some countries, special complaint mechanisms to report gender based violence have proven effective in encouraging women to come forward, and the same model should be introduced in countering sextortion.
- Effective law enforcement, justice system, and sanctions create a deterrent effect and provide encouragement for women to complain
- Showcasing the champions who broke taboos against sextortion and similar sexual violence aid in dismantling cultural taboos and encourages women to come forward to speak

Briefly describe the highlights including the thematically interesting questions and ideas that were generated from the discussion or from the floor, and session quotes.

- Sextortion is disproportionately under-reported. Low level of awareness on the issue helps the practice to flourish in silence. Breaking cultural taboos and creating opportunities for affected parties to come forward is key in tackling sextortion.
- Sextortion often takes place when women lack monetary resources to pay bribes.
- Some women may not report sextortion, despite its devastating effects on their lives, because receiving a benefit may seem “consensual” even when they don’t have a choice beyond the demanded transaction.
- Sextortion is not only a women’s issue. Men and boys are also affected by it through abuse of power in contexts of vulnerability and imbalance in power relationships.
- Sextortion occurs in a context of power imbalance that is inherently coercive and inconsistent with a “consensual” transaction.
- Certain societal expectations for women create barriers for them to come forward to complain about sextortion.
- Special attention should be given to places where cultural taboos bar women from complaining against sexual violence.
What are the key recommendations, follow-up Actions (200 words narrative form)

- Promote inclusive justice by incorporating sextortion and gender into the anti-corruption discourse and response
- Close gaps in the existing anti-corruption legal framework to assure effective adjudication processes and remedies for sextortion
- Introduce sextortion into institutional practices, such as codes of conduct, ethics, etc., and build educational programmes
- Make available safe, confidential and gender-sensitive reporting mechanisms for women to come forward. New technology could be a valuable tool in this regard.
- Nurture collaborations between the women’s rights and anti-corruption communities to combat sextortion and integrate SDG 5 and 16 together.

Key Insights that could be included in the IACC Declaration

- Recognise sextortion as a form of bribery that disproportionately affects women across the world and pay a special attention to mainstreaming gender into the anti-corruption discourse

Rapporteur’s name and date submitted

Rukshana Nanayakkara
2nd December 2016
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