



G7 High-Level Principles on Anti-Corruption Capacity-Building

FOREWORD

Corruption hinders economic growth, distorts competition, undermines the rule of law and erodes citizens' trust in democratic institutions. It carries significant risks for national security, economic and social implications, undermining democracies and exacerbating conflicts, violence, and gender inequality, particularly in vulnerable contexts, contributing to driving irregular migration.

Corruption distorts allocation of resources and leads to development failures, and ultimately compounds poverty.

As such, corruption poses a significant obstacle to security and prosperity, constituting a theft of the future well-being of new generations, especially the most marginalized.

The Russian war against Ukraine has highlighted how kleptocracies pose an immediate threat to the freedom and national security of our societies.

Recent analyses of criminal threats indicate that corruption is often linked to and facilitates organized crime and money-laundering, and is one of the key enablers of human trafficking, necessitating a coordinated international response.

The adverse economic, political and social consequences of corruption, call for sharing good practices on preventing and fighting corruption at an international and regional level.

Technical assistance is a key feature for engagement and cooperation towards addressing gaps in the anti-corruption framework. The need for timely, sustainable, gender responsive, adequate and effective international technical assistance has been widely recognized¹ and is contained both in the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)² and United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).³ The OECD 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation, which complements the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, as well as the OECD 2017 Recommendation on Public Integrity, also underscore the importance of fighting corruption across and beyond OECD member countries.⁴

International technical assistance also serves the national implementation of multilateral commitments and recommendations within the peer review processes and mechanisms that characterize multilateralism in this sector⁵.

To ensure forward momentum on the anti-corruption agenda, it is time to converge towards a common set of principles that emphasize the good

¹ See inter alia the G20 ACWG 2017-2018 Action Plan and Implementation Plan, the G20 ACWG 2022 Pilot Initiative, and EU Team Europe Initiatives on Justice and Security).

² Chapter VI, articles 60, 61, 62, and UNGASS political declaration OP 56.

³ Article 29

⁴ See sections XXVII – XXX of the 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation

⁵ This approach is particularly effective in the implementation of relevant anticorruption international instruments such as those related to the CoE, the OECD and UNODC, or ensuring compliance with FATF standards, especially in addressing recommendations arising from reviews, through cooperation with UNODC, OECD, CoE, EU and other international organizations.

practices and methodologies for international technical assistance to strengthen the anticorruption architecture through capacity-building initiatives.

In this framework the global community in general, and the G7 should promote a multi-level technical assistance methodology that ensures an inclusive, effective and tangible whole-of-society approach, including the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, such as civil society, academia, youth and the private sector.

Recognizing that corruption is a widespread problem that requires collective action, we welcome and endorse the following principles.

Principle 1

Methodology

We recommend the following four combined pillars to embody a comprehensive approach aimed at enhancing effectiveness, conceived to promote good governance, anti-corruption efforts, and the rule of law, ethical values, and justice:

- A) Capacity building and capacity strengthening**, including training for personnel responsible for preventing and combating corruption and civil society organizations is essential. However, they have shown, in some cases, their inadequacy to translate into behavioural changes and to address institutional, legal, regulatory, organizational and other shortcomings.

- B)** Consequently, the need to contribute to the enhancement of the national public institutional system, including the executive, judiciary and legislative branches, has emerged. **Institution-building** and strengthening play a complementary role with the first pillar. Nevertheless, we often encounter challenges beyond the organizational level, such as legal gaps that cannot be remedied by these two pillars alone.
- C)** Therefore, where such gaps are identified, it is necessary to contribute to the strengthening and modernization of the legal/regulatory frameworks. **Law building**, which in this context stands for the strengthening of legal and regulatory frameworks, needs to be appropriately accompanied by adequate capacity, accountability and institutional willingness to apply the new rules.
- D)** The fourth level of intervention constitutes a crosscutting parameter. **Consensus building** on the values that underpin the rule of law, through dialogue and networks, ensures the effective implementation of all the technical pillars. Stakeholders need to have an interest in using technical capacity, institutional features, and legal structures to effectively counter corruption.

It is important to provide assistance that targets change across all of these pillars as each, when pursued alone, is often ineffective.

The rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms must also be respected in the fight against corruption. Without doing so, the fight against corruption would undermine its own objectives.

Principle 2

Multi-shareholder approach

Technical assistance, including the pillar of consensus building as a necessary component, calls directly to action civil society and urges the participation of academia, youth, media and, as appropriate, the private sector in an effective and concrete multi-shareholder oriented approach, together with the public sector.

Principle 3

Tailored capacity-building and strengthening

We advocate for a deliberate commitment to the principle of tailored, nationally owned and driven capacity-building initiatives, recognizing the specific needs and priorities of partner countries, while preserving the internationally recognized treaty standards and other guidelines. This approach aligns with international norms of cooperation and mutual assistance, reflecting a commitment to collective progress and the shared goal of achieving prosperity for all.

To ensure a nationally owned, needs-based and strategic approach to technical assistance, the gaps and technical assistance needs identified under the UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism as well as other peer review mechanisms, such as the OECD peer review mechanism, could be used as a starting point for conducting strategic and participatory technical assistance needs assessments.

To improve effectiveness and efficiency of technical assistance and facilitate peer-learning, needs could be identified and addressed on a regional basis among countries with similar legal systems, needs and priorities.

Principle 4

Mainstreaming inclusion and gender equality

While there are no universal approaches that can be applied for technical assistance, mainstreaming gender equality across anti-corruption efforts, including for any planned action, programming, institutional reforms, and policies, will help cultivate a culture of inclusiveness and integrity for people of all gender identities. A gender-responsive approach considers gendered impacts of corruption and takes measures to actively address them, leading to more effective anti-corruption measures.

Principle 5

Other Inclusive Approaches

It is also crucial to integrate the perspectives of other marginalized, underserved, and underrepresented populations and those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, in order to ensure that these policies enhance equality and do not increase discrimination against them.

Principle 6

Youth engagement and perspectives

As a key stakeholder in the future, we must promote the engagement of youth and empower them to become active participants in the prevention of and fight against corruption through awareness-raising and other meaningful involvement in anti-corruption initiatives and reform efforts.

Anti-corruption, ethics and integrity education should be considered for all educational levels and outside the formal education sector to strengthen the capacity of youth to become leaders of integrity.

Principle 7

Adaptivity of technical assistance

We call for applying dynamic and flexible approaches to technical assistance initiatives, guided by the evolving needs and existing structures and policies in the partner countries and regional contexts. This approach highlights the importance of continuously assessing, adjusting, and tailoring technical assistance programs to effectively address emerging challenges and opportunities. It should also include coordination and collaboration among technical assistance donors and implementers in partner countries and globally.

Technical assistance providers, including States, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other development



partners should coordinate their efforts to ensure consistency, efficient use of resources and avoid duplication and fragmentation.

Principle 8

Co-ownership

Technical assistance should be conducted through the approach of co-ownership with partner countries, which is firmly aligned with the essence of partnership, throughout the needs assessment, decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of the initiatives. In the implementation of these technical assistance initiatives, a regional approach might enhance ownership and encourage emulation among partner countries.

Principle 9

Integrity, transparency, participation and accountability

All technical assistance programs in the fight against corruption, including the capacity building and strengthening initiatives, should adopt the highest levels of integrity, transparency, accountability and participation and should put in place measures to assess progress and success, make adjustments and identify, avoid or manage potential unwanted side-effects.

In this regard, limiting the risk that the work of donors and technical assistance providers fuels corruption is key. This challenge should be met with strong commitment and appropriate measures, such as the deployment of systems for the detection and prevention of corruption offences or enhanced collaboration on the identification and management of risk relating to transnational corruption.

Principle 10

Sustainability

Effective coordination throughout the community of development partners, including the United Nations, other international organizations such as World Bank, OECD and EU, and bilateral assistance providers, plays a critical role to ensure the availability and delivery of efficient and effective, timely and cost-effective technical assistance.

To be sustainable, technical assistance initiatives need to be adequately resourced, strategic and reflective of a long-term commitment to achieve measurable impact in preventing and countering corruption. Resources and incentives should be put in place for the partner countries to continue the reforms in the long run.

A results-based management approach to monitor and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of technical assistance interventions should be applied, using clear and measurable indicators and feedback mechanisms.