

## **NGOs call for continued support for transparency and accountability**

We, the undersigned national and international NGOs, call on providers of development assistance to maintain support for transparency, accountability and open government initiatives in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and the ensuing economic crisis.

Multilateral and bilateral agencies, foundations and other funders are reviewing their priorities in response to the pandemic. We support these efforts: it is essential that assistance is provided to those suffering the immediate effects of the crisis and that in the medium to long-term, systems and procedures are made more resilient in preparation for managing future crises.

Disclosing data on all current and new investments will further accountability and enable cost savings of magnitude. Even before the pandemic it was estimated that \$455 billion of the \$7.35 trillion spent on health care worldwide on an annual basis was lost to corruption. Researchers also suggested that 1.6 percent of annual deaths in children under 5, more than 140,000, could be explained in part by corruption.

Experience of managing previous pandemics, such as SARS and Ebola, show that such losses are likely to increase in times of crisis. Numerous examples are already emerging of widespread corruption occurring as part of the response to the novel coronavirus.

Progress has been made in recent years to improve transparency and accountability and reduce losses through corruption, mismanagement and inefficiency. In infrastructure investment for example, financial costs savings of up to 25 per cent have been achieved. Openness in public health has been shown to extend life expectancy and reduce infant mortality. And a study of G20 countries found that open data added US\$2.6 trillion of economic value on average. This progress would have been impossible without the support of bilateral and multilateral agencies, foundations and other funders.

Now is not the time to reduce this support. To do so would risk reversing the significant progress made in recent years and reducing the impact of expenditure aimed at tackling the pandemic and the economic crisis.

We call on all providers of development assistance to continue and extend support for transparency, accountability and open government. In an increasingly uncertain world, these measures help to safeguard public expenditure, build trust, accelerate delivery and save lives.

### ***Signatories***

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Transparency and Development Information Initiative  
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