G20 ANTI-CORRUPTION PRIORITIES

INFORMATION SHARING AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Why is it important?

International collaboration and coordination between law enforcement authorities is essential in tackling corruption. Corruption is a global threat that crosses international borders, threatening economic growth, the rule of law and trust in institutions. Funds generated from corruption are often moved out of the country and hidden in foreign jurisdictions, sometimes in property or other high value assets. This is why Article 48 of UNCAC requires that countries 'facilitate the secure and rapid exchange of information concerning all aspects of [corruption]' and to consider developing multilateral and bilateral arrangements between law enforcement authorities to enhance cooperation.'

What does this mean in practice?

Successful anti-corruption efforts often rely on multiple jurisdictions working together and sharing information but often the processes for sharing information are slow or inefficient. It is, therefore, important that there are informal mechanisms for sharing information between global law enforcement authorities as well as formal mechanisms, such as Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) requests. There is an increased focus on the need to share real-time, or close to real-time, information in order to avoid suspects escaping from the reach of law enforcement or being able to hide the proceeds of their crimes in uncooperative jurisdictions.

What does it mean if you don't get it right?

In 2020, the OECD, together with UNODC, the World Bank and FATF, produced a scoping report on [International Cooperation in relation to Economic Crime, Offenders and Recovery of Stolen Assets](#). This study found that there were significant challenges in implementing existing legal frameworks on international collaboration, echoing the findings of the UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism.

Particular barriers include the lack of resources or capacity, language barriers and the lack of trust between jurisdictions which results in a lack of information sharing and a reluctance to collaborate. The problem is particularly acute when it comes to the ability of anti-corruption authorities in developing countries to engage in international information sharing efforts. The barriers in information sharing and international collaboration make it more difficult to identify and locate suspects involved in corruption as well as locating looted assets and returning them to their rightful owner.

Past G20 commitments - why is it important now?

While there has been a significant amount of work done by the G20 in relation to international cooperation, it remains as important now as ever. The [2021-24 Anti-Corruption Working Group Action Plan](#) identifies it as a key priority, with the need for members to engage in both formal and informal mechanisms of international cooperation.

Under the current presidency, the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group has also developed High Level Principles for Strengthening Law Enforcement related International Cooperation and Information Sharing for Combating Corruption. While previous publications have focused on formal methods of information sharing, such as MLA, there is an increased awareness of an over reliance by law enforcement authorities on cumbersome formal processes and a need for informal mechanisms which can allow for the near-real time and proactive sharing of information. In addition, there is a need for G20 members to provide increased capacity building efforts and technical assistance to developing countries to support the effective use of informal mechanisms.

Previous publications from the G20 on information sharing include:
- [G20 High-Level Principles on Mutual Legal Assistance](#) (2013)
- [G20 High-Level Principles on Cooperation on Persons Sought for Corruption and Asset Recovery](#) (2016)

Examples from the G20

There are many examples across the G20 of platforms or mechanisms to enhance information sharing, both at a global level and bilaterally. The International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre (IACCC) was set up in 2017 and it brings together law enforcement from countries including Australia, Canada, the US and the UK.

It is supported by Interpol. It aims to share intelligence and assist countries who have suffered from grand corruption and help them to bring corrupt officials to justice, including through the provision of 'fast-time' information sharing. In 2018, the IACCC led to the arrest of two senior officials for corruption-related offences, the identification of 227 suspicious bank accounts found within 15 different jurisdictions and identified approximately £51m of worldwide suspicious assets.

The GlobE network was established at the G20 Anti-Corruption Ministerial Meeting in Riyadh in October 2020 to enhance direct cooperation between national law enforcement authorities involved in the fight against corruption and to address gaps identified in informal communications between global law enforcement authorities. It complements existing information sharing networks such as the Egmont Group, which consists of global Financial Intelligence Units, and the OECD Working Group on Bribery Law Enforcement Networks.

The GlobE network now consists of 87 member states/parties and acts as a platform for information sharing between law enforcement and also provides resources and tools needed to track cross-border corruption. The GlobeE network was established in particular to support anti-corruption efforts in developing countries which may face capacity or resource barriers to engaging in established international channels; prior to its establishment, it was estimated that more than 100 countries around the world were not members of any network that facilitated information sharing between anti-corruption authorities.

Some G20 countries are also involved in regional initiatives. For example, the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Southern Africa (ARINSA) was established in 2009, headquartered in South Africa. ARINSA is an informal multi-agency network for participating countries in the region. This platform enables participating members to exchange information, model legislation and country laws in asset forfeiture, confiscation and money laundering. It was reported that the UNODC had provided specialist training through the ARINSA network to over 2,000 members of the judiciary, law enforcement, and other government officials in asset forfeiture, money laundering and proceeds of crime.

EL PAcCTO (Europe Latin America Programme of Assistance against Transnational Organised Crime) is an international cooperation programme funded by the EU to support the fight against organized crime in Latin America. It seeks to strengthen capacity in Latin America and facilitate international cooperation between EU member states and countries in Latin America. In 2022, it produces a guide to share information about asset recovery experiences with a practical approach for the operators of the justice systems, police and other relevant authorities of the beneficiary countries.