

Financial Transparency and Integrity Cohort Meeting

December 7, 2022

Summary and Key Takeaways:

Representatives of cohort co-leads USAID and OGP opened the high-level conversation by outlining the corrosive effects of corruption on democracies around the world, summarizing relevant Summit for Democracy commitments, and stressing that the second Summit serves not as an endpoint but rather a springboard for further collective action. Per OGP's analysis, more than 40 jurisdictions made commitments related to anti-corruption at the first Summit, but no commitments were made on political finance, lobbying, or asset disclosure. OGP offered to be a vehicle for advancing, strengthening, and supporting Summit commitments.

Representatives from several participating governments discussed their progress on anti-corruption efforts since the first Summit. Civil society representatives offered suggestions for strengthening countries' commitments and achieving anti-corruption goals. They noted that civil society might be able to help governments develop and declare new concrete commitments; underscored the importance of connecting civil society, government, and business to advance anti-corruption objectives; and proposed building an independent reporting mechanism to review progress toward commitments.

During the second portion of the agenda, the co-leads solicited ideas for a call to action that would be released by the cohort in advance of the second Summit. Participants underscored the need to focus on a small number of high-impact issues, such as beneficial ownership transparency, open procurement, and enabling and gatekeeping industries, all of which have been referenced as priority work areas in previous meetings of the cohort. Discussants also suggested opportunities to enhance the cohort's work, including to 1) strengthen engagement with the private sector; 2) ask governments to create a plan for their commitments related to the FTI cohort beyond the second Summit; 3) encourage the participation of countries that have not been part of the cohort but arguably should; and 4) improve the accessibility of meetings for participants from countries with a substantial time zone differential.

In concluding remarks, Brookings emphasized the importance of holding a convening for civil society in the lead-up to the second Summit and noted that further information is forthcoming. The co-leads committed to circulate a draft call to action to reflect the cohort's discussion early in the new year.