

Anti-Corruption Working Group

ISSUES NOTE

BRICS 2025



1. Background Information

Corruption negatively impacts the effectiveness of public policies and economic growth, as it harms both public and private institutions and compromises the democratic process. Moreover, corruption limits and distorts access to public power, reinforces predatory practices, and excludes rightful participation in collective decision-making. The vulnerable are most affected by this, increasing costs and reducing access to basic public services. In this context, corruption is a fundamental obstacle to sustainable development, as it exacerbates inequalities and reduces investment.

Fighting corruption and promoting integrity are thus instrumental to fostering trust and accountability. As corruption becomes an increasingly transnational challenge, cooperation is key to preventing and countering corrupt practices. The recovery of stolen assets, one of the main principles of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and a priority for developing countries, is also fundamentally dependent on international cooperation for its implementation.

In this context, the **BRICS Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG)** was established, following the leaders' decision in the 2015 Ufa Declaration, as a tool to foster the implementation of the UNCAC obligations and to increase coordination among BRICS members at the margins of other international anticorruption fora. The WG is now one of the most significant spaces for the Global South to discuss relevant challenges related to corruption and asset recovery. Under the Brazilian chairship, it should bring to the agenda topics related to sustainable development, new technologies and asset recovery.

2. Priorities

The Brazilian chairship of the BRICS ACWG will build on the ongoing activities developed by the Group and seek to complement them with other multilateral mechanisms.

2.1 Anticorruption and sustainable development

While the detrimental impact of corruption on society is clear, promoting anti-corruption and integrity in both public and private sectors can lead to more efficient management and allocation of resources. This, in turn, can serve as key tools for enhancing governance, reducing inequalities, and fostering development. Therefore, the BRICS ACWG will address the effects of corruption on sustainable development and inequality, as well as examine how integrity and anti-corruption measures can be more effectively leveraged to support social, economic, and environmental policies.

2.2. Asset recovery

The recovery of assets derived from corruption is a paramount global priority, as recognized by international conventions and enshrined as a fundamental principle in UNCAC. Since the inception of the ACWG meetings, BRICS nations have given high priority to this issue, despite persistent challenges. However, the effectiveness of these efforts remains limited. Successful asset recovery requires harmonious coordination and collaboration at all levels, leveraging both criminal and non-criminal mechanisms, as outlined in UNCAC. Member states must establish national frameworks that fully implement all stages of the asset recovery process: identification, tracking, seizure, management, forfeiture/confiscation, and repatriation, thereby enhancing fruitful international cooperation in asset recovery cases.

2.3. Artificial intelligence and the fight against corruption

In recent years, the widespread adoption of new technologies has led to an unprecedented increase in the flow of data, enhancing the exchange of information among citizens, governments, businesses, and civil society. In this context, many governments have introduced innovative and inspiring solutions, as well as new technologies using artificial intelligence, to prevent and combat corruption. The BRICS ACWG will share information and best practices on how artificial intelligence can be applied to promote transparency, enable greater accountability and participation, provide tools to effectively monitor and report corruption, and systematize procedures with positive impacts on anti-corruption efforts.



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COOPERATING FOR AN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE WORLD