

## **How do people decide to act against corruption?**

### **Unpacking context and causal mechanisms that determine how, when, and why individuals choose to engage against corruption**

A novel research project between Global Integrity and Transparency International

How do citizens decide to take action against corruption — when they do? What are the factors they weigh before deciding to act through a particular mechanism? What do they consider to be a viable mechanism? Does engagement depend on the type of grievance they have? To what degree do contextual factors influence their decision-making? What can we learn from organizations that have been successful at providing citizen-centric mechanisms to engage against corruption?

Together with Transparency International, we are looking at positive examples of how citizens act against corruption accessing particular mechanisms. This, we hope, will help us unpack and better understand the factors that determine why and how citizens choose to take action. We hypothesize that an individual's decision to act can be analyzed as a sequence of a series of decisions – a pathway – that begins with a grievance and involves a number of granular decision-making steps until a mechanism is triggered. We furthermore suspect that sustaining engagement depends on citizens continuously recalculating the cost and benefits, taking into account not just time and monetary incentives but intangible factors such as trust and affirmation.

The objective of this “Doing Anti-Corruption Differently” research project is to support the TI-Secretariat and other frontline organizations to better understand how and why citizen engagement works when it does. We have deliberately chosen to focus our efforts on unpacking the factors for engagement to get conceptual clarity and better understand the logic of citizen engagement. To do so, we have conducted a literature review, built a conceptual model and have conducted fieldwork in Tunisia and Georgia. The goal is to gather information from citizens themselves and match the data with information collected about the particular mechanisms offered, so to better understand the factors and dynamics that drive citizen's decision-making.

We concluded the fieldwork in June and plan to present our findings in October 2017 in a format useful to practitioners at both country and global levels. We are not planning to deliver an authoritative ‘what works’ report — rather, we are trying to get clarity on the right types of questions practitioners might want to ask in order to figure out how they can create or tweak mechanisms to be as helpful as possible for citizens to engage against corruption — in their particular contexts.