



Youth for Good Governance
distance learning program

Module IX

**The Role
of Youth**

The Significance of Coalition-Building



THE WORLD BANK

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Module IX

The Role of Youth

The Significance of Coalition-Building

Section 1: Module Overview

During this module, you will explore what young people can do to improve governance and fight corruption. Our aim is to provide you with some suggestions and encourage you to explore what you can do in the fight against corruption.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of civil participation in governance
- Understand the role young citizens can play in governance
- See what other people have been doing and what you can do in the fight against corruption
- Be able to structure an advocacy campaign against corruption



Participant Role

You are encouraged to read all the materials in this handbook and attempt to complete all the exercises before the videoconference session. If you have any questions or need guidance with the exercises, contact your facilitator through the e-mail list that has been developed for the course.



Section 2: Citizen Participation in Governance

In this course, we have stressed that citizen participation is a key element of an effective anti-corruption program. To tackle corruption, citizens need to participate in governance and hold government officials accountable for their actions. This **?** *participation* can involve advocating anti-corruption policies, monitoring government actions, and mobilizing others to push for good governance.

? *Definition*

Participation: A process through which citizens influence and share control over the decisions and resources that affect them.

Clearly, these efforts are likely to be more effective where there are good channels for citizen participation. Political rights, such as the freedom to vote and run for office, and civil liberties, such as the freedom of speech and the right to form groups, provide important channels for citizens to voice their concerns, needs, values, expectations and problems. In addition to these basic rights, public hearings, task forces, commissions, and action planning workshops can provide channels for citizens to participate in the development of government budgets, laws, and procedures. As well, access to information, e-government, open procurement and other transparency mechanisms can allow citizens to oversee what the government is doing.

Building **?** *coalitions* between civil society and government can strengthen efforts to fight corruption. By coming together in coalitions, **?** *stakeholders* from government and civil society can coordinate





Definition

Coalition Building: Citizens and government officials working together in groups to bring about a desired outcome (such as lower corruption)

Stakeholders in the fight against corruption include:

- Citizens
- Governments
- Private sector
- Non-governmental organizations
- International and donor organizations

their efforts, pool their resources, establish priorities, speak with a more authoritative voice on the need for reform, and strengthen each other's commitment to the work. Working as part of a coalition also gives citizens improved access to government offices and so provides an excellent channel for citizen participation. National chapters of Transparency International are good examples of coalitions against corruption, which bring together representatives of civil society, business and government in over 90 countries. More information on TI is available at: www.transparency.org.

We could say that citizens have both rights and obligations towards their government. They have the right to an effective, responsive, and efficient government, but they also have a responsibility towards that government which includes their participation in governance. If citizens want their tax money to be spent according to their wishes and needs, they also have the responsibility to express their preferences and to hold leaders accountable. Citizens form



the first and last line of defense against corruption and mis-governance.



Exercise

As part of your community, you have both rights and obligations. Think for instance about your rights and obligations to your family, school, sports teams, clubs, religious organizations, government and country. Make a list of the rights you have and from whom, and a list of some of the obligations you have and to whom.

List of rights and from whom:

ME

List of obligations and to whom:



Section 3: Being Part of the Solution

So what is the role of young people in all this? Well, young people have to be a part of the solution. As we have discussed during this course, change to any system requires change at the bottom and the top. It requires many small steps that reduce tolerance for the way things are, that move people to make changes in their daily lives, and to demand changes from their leaders.

In this course, you have come to learn a great deal about corruption and different responses and strategies to fight it. The information you currently have is very important: it is a very powerful tool that can be used in the fight against corruption. With greater awareness of the problem and ways to deal with it, we hope you can help build a more just and prosperous society.

Do not forget that you are a citizen and a stakeholder in your country's governance. As the youth, you also represent your country's future.



Exercise

Read the following two examples of youth campaigns against corruption.

In **Bosnia**, youth groups have organized a number of successful campaigns against corruption. For example, they are responsible for:

- Organizing a nationwide campaign against corruption
- Holding seminars for entrepreneurs and youth to meet and develop job opportunities
- Creating a youth parliament simulation so that young people debate the country's current affairs



- Convening meetings between youth and politicians to exchange ideas
- Organizing a debate on the budget entitled “What do young people know about budget”

In addition, young people have founded a political party, the Youth Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina, composed of Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks from all over Bosnia. Their aim is to propose far-reaching reforms that tackle the difficult issues impeding a stable and prosperous future. In their view, Bosnia urgently needs strong state institutions, and a politically efficient, accountable government. They want to make radical changes to build a less corrupt, more educated society.

In a school in **Ecuador**, one student decided to act against corruption and started a school campaign. The school reformed its structure making it more accountable to the students by creating school councils and student-teacher boards so students could air their ideas and concerns. The students of the school conducted a community survey and published the results in local papers. Because this campaign received so much attention, the school got the funds to publish an anti-corruption booklet for very young children explaining the danger of corruption through drawings and comics. This campaign spread to schools in other parts of the country and had a lot of impact in the community.

Answer the following questions.

- Would campaigns like these be possible or likely in your country?
- Are there any particular problems for youth involvement in governance in your country?
- What effect, if any, do you think youth campaigns against corruption are likely to have?



Section 4: Advocacy

Of all the ways you can participate in governance, **?** *advocacy* is central. As an advocate, you can help to convince fellow citizens and policy-makers that reforms in governance are crucial for economic, social and political development. You can be educators within your community, and make people care about and participate in the processes that shape your society.



Definition

Advocacy: Speaking out in support of a cause.

In order to get your ideas across effectively, you need to organize yourselves and target your efforts. To influence public policy, you need to learn how government works, and the importance of timing, compromise, and lobbying. Here are some ground rules for advocacy:

Define your goals

In preparing an advocacy campaign, you need to define goals of your campaign, and make sure they are attainable. The scope of your campaign, the delegation of work, and the budget depend on what you seek to achieve. You should look carefully at how your goals are relevant to your community and establish a basis of consensus between all those participating in the campaign. Make sure you set a time limit for achieving your goals. Vision is long term, but goals are short term!

Recruit supporters

You need to ask others to help with your campaign.



You can recruit supporters among fellow students, teacher, informal educators, community members and local organizations.

Manage the work

To set the campaign in motion, you need to set up a steering committee that will be responsible for the planning and implementation of the campaign.

Plan your approach

Brainstorm on your overall approach and specific ideas, from the bizarre to the obvious. Ask participants to prepare an assessment of resources, including financial, human, physical, educational resources as well as support from partner organizations.

Develop a message

You cannot advocate without having a message. Consider what you want to say about corruption or good governance. The message should be short and easy to understand. Think of the acronym "KISS," which stands for "Keep it simple and short." You can use analogies or come up with concrete images such as "uncorrupted minds." Enjoy it and have fun.

Hone communication skills

Once you develop a message, you need to communicate it to others. You may have to speak in front of an audience or speak to friends or colleagues. In preparing for a presentation, ask who your audience is, and what their interests are. Ask for their opinions and how they think they can help solve the problem.

What follows are a number of concrete suggestions for youth campaigns:



- **Make presentations** to schools, clubs, scout troops, Parent Teacher Associations, anti-corruption organizations, human rights organizations and women's organizations. You can make a general presentation about corruption and the harm it does, and then present a case study or a scenario for discussion, such as what they would do if they encountered a government laboratory polluting a local river. A counselor, youth worker or teacher could accompany the group to facilitate the discussion. You could also have a symposium on corruption, or show a movie on corruption and have a panel discussion afterwards.
- **Organize competitions** for posters, cartoons, poems, essays, and drama that communicate an anti-corruption message.
- **Use public places** to communicate an anti-corruption message, through street theatre, art and music in streets or shopping malls, billboards, stickers, and sign-up campaigns.
- **Work with the media**, including the Internet, the press, radio and television, by offering a syndicated article or feature (such as personal stories), developing an events calendar, holding press conferences, paying for advertising spots, distributing press releases or hand-outs for your events, and reporting on events in your community.
- **Carry out research** such as monitoring a public service or helping with surveys.
- **Contact key people** about a problem in order to make such a situation public or push for a resolution. Some of the people you could approach are your friends, journalists, community leaders, political figures, academics, inter-



national institutions, and NGOs. You can write them letters, request a meeting or ask them to speak at events you are organizing.



Exercise

You have read quite a bit now about corruption and have looked into many of the aspects involved in the fight against it. Think about something concrete that you could do to improve governance and fight corruption in your country. Write a paper no longer than 250 words discussing what citizens in general, and especially young people, can do in the fight against corruption. In writing this, answer the following questions:

- Why do we need to involve citizens and young people?
- What are the things they can do in your country?
- What do you think will be a constraint for citizens in your country to get involved in the fight against corruption?



