

YOUTH AND DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE TOOLKIT

Module 8: Anticorruption Accountability



USAID

Corruption, which Transparency International defines as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain” (Plain Language Guide, 2009), is a major challenge to democracy. This abuse of entrusted power undermines national development by robbing countries and communities of their national wealth, sabotaging development investments across all sectors, undermining the functioning and mandate of institutions, and eroding the public’s confidence in government. By weakening democratic and representative institutions, corruption also compromises sustainable development and reinforces inequality.

Young people – particularly young women and those from other marginalized groups – are disproportionately affected by corruption. Already excluded from decision-making processes, corruption deepens the power gap between public officials and vulnerable communities. The lack of civil rights protections for marginalized populations

inhibits their access to public services, including justice processes, and therefore weakens their ability to seek redress for corruption. Youth and vulnerable people may be more likely to face demands for bribes, suffer from sexual exploitation, be trafficked, and/or face greater barriers to seeking accountability. Corruption inhibits the delivery of public services which are critical to vulnerable populations (including youth). Since these populations are often excluded from participation, they are unable to assert their voices to demand social accountability. It is clear that transparency and inclusive, responsive accountability systems are necessary both to prevent corruption and to ensure access to justice and other services for all people. Supporting young people and other marginalized groups to lead efforts to counter corruption and strengthen the integrity of government institutions helps develop inclusive, accountable democracy in support of USAID’s DRG objectives.



INTERMEDIATE RESULTS AND ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

INTERMEDIATE RESULT	PYD FEATURES AND ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES	
Improved understanding of levels of corruption and its varied effects on individuals based on identity, including age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and other factors.	Skill-Building	Support youth-led research to better understand how experiences of corruption vary based on age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and other identity factors. Incorporate modules on corruption (and anticorruption) into core civic education training. Organize media campaigns (including youth-friendly and possibly interactive games) to teach children and youth about transparency and accountability.
	Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	Support youth-led campaigns to raise public awareness of the negative effects of corruption on young people and to advocate for solutions to decrease government corruption. Incorporate Do No Harm principles to protect youth partners and beneficiaries.
Anticorruption laws and frameworks that respond to the needs and experiences of youth are established.	Skill-Building	Build the capacity of government officials to review, revise, draft, and implement legislation that promotes accountability and transparency by strengthening their youth analysis skills and enhancing their understanding of youth and other marginalized groups' differences in experiences of corruption and accountability.
	Youth Engagement and Contribution	Create opportunities for youth-led organizations and government officials to discuss the adverse effects of corruption on young people, including youth from marginalized communities, and develop solutions. Support youth advocacy coalitions focused on anticorruption and accountability.
Representative institutions and government officials become more transparent and open to youth engagement.	Skill-Building	Work with young people and government officials to incentivize and support agencies to improve the availability of government information to the public. Support youth internship programs with government officials focused on transparency.
	Safe Public Spaces	Create opportunities for diverse young people to discuss common challenges related to corruption and discuss solutions.
	Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	Encourage greater openness and accessibility of executive and judicial offices through the creation of public days and/or regular public hours, citizen advisory boards or liaison groups, and well-publicized and efficient grievance procedures.
Government accountability mechanisms that respond to the needs of youth are created.	Access to Age-Appropriate and Youth-Friendly Programming	Build government capacity to create sector-specific compliance, monitoring, and accountability systems to address inequities in access to public services and to adequately respond to corruption within service provision. In order to become more responsive and equitable, such systems or processes should take into consideration inequality against youth and other marginalized groups which may include differences in time use, access to and use of public services and utilities, discrimination and corruption, and the specific concerns and priorities of such groups.
Civil society advocacy efforts for improved accountability are strengthened.	Skill-Building	Support civil society efforts to hold governments accountable for their commitments to advance youth, inclusion, and equality, whether through international treaties or national-level strategies or policies.
	Belonging and Membership	Support youth-led civil society groups from diverse communities to coalesce around common objectives related to countering corruption and take collective action to achieve those objectives.
	Access to Age-Appropriate and Youth-Friendly Programming	Support the integration of civic education, including modules on corruption, transparency and accountability, into school curricula.

ILLUSTRATIVE PYD OR YOUTH-FOCUSED INDICATORS

To effectively measure PYD or youth-focused outcomes, indicators should be selected that are practical to measure and pertain as directly as possible to the PYD feature the program addresses. It is important to disaggregate monitoring data by relevant social cleavages including sex, geographic location, marital status, marginalized or at risk populations, and age (e.g., early adolescence (10-14); adolescence (15-19); emerging adulthood (20-24); transition to adulthood (25-29)). As a complement to inclusive indicator development, a [complexity-aware approach to monitoring, evaluation, and learning \(MEL\)](#) is likely to be useful for many USAID programs focused on social change in complex environments.

PYD FEATURE	ILLUSTRATIVE INDICATOR
Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	% change in young people reporting that they have a “very high” or “moderate” level of access to public officials to advocate for issues important to them.

PROGRAM EXAMPLE: [YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT \(YES\) \(BANGLADESH\)](#)

The YES program, led by Transparency International, assists young people in effectively raising their voices to counter corruption in Bangladesh. The program has supported young people in the creation of 60 youth groups, mostly comprising university students, who carry out a variety of activities to promote transparency and public integrity. With support from the YES program, young people have led public awareness-raising campaigns to raise demand for ending corruption; used “report cards” to assess the nature, extent, and implications of corruption in various government service areas; advocated to public officials for reforms to reduce corruption; and led cultural events to engage more youth and other citizens in the anticorruption movement. Through support from Transparency International and leading YES activities, young people have developed the commitment, courage, and skills to continue as leaders in expanding and strengthening the growing social movement to end corruption in Bangladesh.

PYD FEATURE	PROGRAM COMPONENT
Skill-Building	Through the program, young people strengthen skills, including citizen organizing, policy analysis, and public speaking, necessary for leading awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns and constructively engaging with public officials. These skills are important for their continued efforts as political and civic activists and leaders.
Belonging and Membership	Young people involved in YES have led study circles and peer-learning discussions on issues related to corruption and governance. These have allowed young people to develop relationships and bonds around common challenges and interests.
Healthy Relationships	YES participants have collaborated and built relationships with adult leaders in the anticorruption accountability movement, who can serve as mentors and sources of inspiration for young activists.
Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	Through the program, youth have learned about corruption and further developed their personal ethics and integrity. Through activities on national and international days of importance for anticorruption accountability efforts, such as international anticorruption day, youth have led activities to publicly promote norms of good governance and integrity.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM SNAPSHOTS

International Republican Institute (IRI) ran a Youth Political Leadership Academy in the Ukraine, training young leaders in political leadership, local advocacy, and anticorruption. One participant's story is told here: [“Keeping it Local: One Youth Leader Who Is Fighting Corruption in Ukraine”](#).




IRI also launched Next Generation in Cambodia in 2012. The initiative was Cambodia's first televised youth debate competition aired on the country's most popular television network. Each weekly 30-minute episode brought together 24 selected contestants to debate pressing social and political issues such as poverty, the electoral system, Facebook censorship, and gender quotas in politics. Participants built skills in public speaking and engaged on questions of national importance. Read more about one participant here: [Cambodia's Youth Debate Champion Helps Youth People Find Their Voice](#).

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This module is a part of the Youth and Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Toolkit, which can be found at: <https://www.youthpower.org/youth-inclusion-drg-toolkit>.

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USAID YouthPower Learning generates and disseminates knowledge about the implementation and impact of positive youth development (PYD) and cross-sectoral approaches in international development. The project leads research, evaluations, and events designed to build the evidence base related to PYD. Concurrently, YouthPower Learning employs expertise in learning and knowledge sharing to promote engagement and inform the global community about how to successfully help transition young people into productive, healthy adults. YouthPower Learning supports the implementation of the 2012 USAID Youth in Development Policy to improve capacity and enable the aspirations of youth so that they can contribute to, and benefit from more stable, democratic, and prosperous communities.

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