

Educating Future Leaders: Good Governance in Schools (Zambia)

Summary

The Network of African Youth Against Corruption - Zambia (NAYAC-Zambia)¹ runs anti-corruption awareness clubs in schools, closely co-operating with teachers associations. The Youth for Good Governance project targets Zambian high school and college students. From October 2003 to April 2004, a six months course was held at high schools, regional seminars were carried out throughout the country, and a final national workshop took place. So far, 6,000 students from 40 institutions across four provinces have been trained. In the current phase, more than 20,000 students are being targeted.

Background

"The battle against corruption cannot be fought and won by the Anti-Corruption Commission alone nor by continuing to deal with the older leadership that we say is corrupt. It also needs the new ideas from those who will run economies and the state in the years to come, it needs the fresh blood of the youth who possess both the capability and will to shape a prescribed path for their own future."

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Zambia, like many other new African democracies, is struggling to improve good governance and bring development for its people. The majority of governors are over the age of 50 years. Most of them have proved incapable of managing the country's resources, and many, including former President Fredrick Chiluba and his companions, are believed to have abused and mis-managed national resources and funds for poverty alleviation and development provided by the international community. What is particularly disturbing is that society has come to accept corruption as a way of life and people talk about it casually as if it is not a serious concern.

Against this backdrop, the World Bank Institute (WBI) initiated a Youth for Good Governance project in 2002, in which some 30 high school students, picked by Zambia's Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) participated. The ACC

1 NAYAC-Zambia is part of the Network of African Youth Against Corruption (NAYAC).



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is a governmental body established by an Act of Parliament. In 2003, NAYAC-Zambia, a youth organisation that promotes accountable leadership, joined the programme and, together with WBI, designed the second phase of the Youth for Good Governance project, on a much larger scale than phase one. The programme aims at educating young people who aspire to join public office, so that they can play a positive role in Zambia's development process, and helps future governors to develop practical skills and an attitude that resists corruption.

NAYAC is a network of African Youth organisations and individuals from the community. NAYAC-Zambia has student members in high schools and universities, and organises anti-corruption awareness youth clubs in the schools.

The project

Setting the agenda: consultation and planning

In defining the objectives of training and education on good governance, tailored to the local setting, NAYAC-Zambia sought the views and needs of youth

and teachers. Interviews were conducted with youth graduates who had participated in previous good governance courses (high school level), and college students that are member of NAYAC-Zambia, as well as with teachers of civic education. A co-operation was started with the Teachers Integrity Alliance Against Corruption (TIAAC), a loose national coalition of civic teachers committed to integrity, that provided expert support to the programme at a later stage. The opinions and attitudes of students and teachers were assessed through a survey. The study also included an analysis of the content of the existing school curricula on governance.

The planning process was supported by the WBI whose staff were central to defining and overseeing the planning and implementation process. Other chief alliances were the ACC whose dedicated Community Relations Department officers were vital to the implementation stage, while the Ministry of Education (MoE) was responsible for authorising the implementation of the programme in schools and colleges. A letter was written to the MoE, including copies of the learning modules. The Ministry had no objections, and the project team could revise the syllabus periodically. Teachers belonging to TIAAC and graduates of World Bank activities provided human and intellectual resources in both the organisation and implementation phases.

A project team was set up, consisting of 15 NAYAC staff, one ACC staff, one supervisor based in Washington (WBI) and supporters from the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA). In addition, ten volunteer-facilitators helped to conduct the training.

Carrying out the training

Facilitators provided one hour governance and anti-corruption classroom lectures to pupils and students in the 40 targeted high schools and colleges. The lectures dealt with basic understanding of corruption, its causes, manifesta-

tions and consequences with emphasis on its relations to good or bad governance. The lecture was theoretical and practical and applied specifically to the present situation in Zambia. A number of case studies on corruption investigated by the ACC were presented during the lecture, il-



Three following results were revealed:

- i. Lack of public access to rules and regulations for obtaining a service;
- ii. Non-transparent conduct and procedures that are inconsistent with principles of public accountability and transparency; and
- iii. The lack of knowledge among the general public on their rights and entitlements in areas such as the acquisition of passports and driving licences. This ignorance provides an enabling environment for bribery of public officials.

Using these findings, participants worked on counter measures for improving the situation. Flyers and posters were developed and distributed for public usage in places where these services are rendered, with students providing further information to those accessing public service. The students were asked to use their imagination to transform their acquired knowledge into posters, including messages such as “hate corruption NOW for the better tomorrow” and many others.

Regional seminars and a national workshop

At regional level, four different seminars were held on three days, each for an average of 85 youths. The seminars brought together participants from the good governance course, and it provided a platform to compare lessons learnt and discuss joint action. Training included the identification and design of strategies for fighting corruption, planning effective advocacy, awareness and lobbying campaigns, as well as exposing youths to good international practices of fighting corruption. The local and national press provided the young people with an opportunity to present their opinions on governance and ideas on improving it.

The final national anti-corruption workshop for 150 youth participants was held from 6th to the 8th of January 2004. The workshop defined the way forward for youth intervention. At the end of the workshop, participants pledged to disseminate the anti-corruption message and to build a strong alliance in order to improve Zambia’s governance system. This was done through signing the Ibis Integrity Pledge, named after the workshop venue.

Results

Challenges

There was hostility from a few public officials towards youth involvement in assessing governance and corruption in public institutions. However, expla-



Participants of the course

nations that the students' aim was not to investigate public officials, but to bring out the evils of corruption as they see them, helped to overcome hostility.

The biggest challenges appeared as a result of inexperience in budgeting. Costs of anti-corruption experts had been underestimated, and few experts could be hired. NAYAC governing board members had to replace, on a voluntary basis, expensive lecturers from universities. In addition, the project had no costs for administrative purposes and capacity building, and was thus dependent on the available resources of NAYAC-Zambia Secretariat. Furthermore, the financial costs of using the Internet in Zambia are very high, preventing ordinary pupils from completing research and participating in electronic discussions.

Another constraint was the lack of computer skills: Most Zambian students are not exposed to computers and even less to the internet. During the project NAYAC-Zambia had to provide short training courses to students to allow them to participate in electronic discussions on governance.

As a consequence of insufficient funds, the number of participants had to be reduced from the initially targeted 10,000 participants to 6,000, and the num-

ber of provinces decreased from nine to four provinces in order to bring down costs.

Achievements

The biggest achievement was the outreach to 6,000 pupils and students and their actions in translating what they learnt from the course and the seminars. The leaflets and posters produced to influence the attitude of the general public were a concrete outcome of the training. 15,000 anti-corruption posters, 8,000 flyers and 5,000 booklets were developed and distributed to schools and public institutions.

Furthermore, youths can be said to have grasped an understanding of the key constituents for good governance. The initial analysis of the evaluation form indicated a 90% increase in knowledge on good governance among youths.

The project led to an increase in numbers of active anti-corruption awareness clubs in schools, from 18 before the project to 45 afterwards. In addition, eight more chapters of NAYAC-Zambia were formed in colleges, totalling 12 active chapters that form its membership.

The project has received widespread recognition, also from private companies that provided transportation to pupils undertaking visits to public service providers. The media played a major role in the success of the programme by participating actively in seminars and sharing some experiences. They not only publicised the work of NAYAC-Zambia and its partners but also brought young peoples' views on their country's national development and governance into public light.

Recommendations

To sustain students' groups it would be useful to have Students' Resources Centres where students could be trained on how to use computers and have access to the internet at minimal costs.

Collaboration with other civil society groups with different specialisation and focus on development issues should be enhanced. This will enrich the knowledge of youths on governance issues such as conflict-prevention and resolution, etc. The governance course should undergo revision to include up-to-date governance issues such as understanding the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), the Millennium Development Goals and other initiatives that affect the lives of all citizens.

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