

Corruption results poverty around the world and it is amongst the prevalent obstacles to development. It causes at all levels of society and the most affected are weak and vulnerable people. The concern over eradicating corruption is increasing worldwide. Though there are plenty of public discussions regarding corruption, it could be observed during the workshops held by YMaC that knowledge of anti-corruption laws is poor in Sri Lanka. Therefore there is a need for collective advocacy.

We all are aware that combatting corruption is not possible without the cooperation of the general public. It could be seen that when people lack the knowledge, some officials tend to manipulate them. It makes it easy to hide the assets earned through corruption too. After a crime is committed, it is not easy to recover the damage occurred. YMaC believe that taking preventive measures is one of the finest means to fight corruption. Deficiency of awareness of the society about the laws and negative effects of corruption speed up the levels of corruption in the society.

It could be noted that people are aware that corruption consume a large quantity of public money and have a direct influence on economic as well as social progress. Yet Sri Lanka lack mechanisms to empower the general public to stand against corruption. Corruption destroys morality and lead people to lose confidence in public service and also judiciary system.

Majority of the people we met during this journey expressed that recovering the assets is at utmost importance. Even though punishing criminals is essential the real achievement and the gain of the state is punishing the criminals while recovering the assets.

YMaC intend to hold advocacy programmes on anti-corruption and newly introduced Right to Information Act which can be used as an efficient tool against corruption. I think majority of the participants are government servants. You as an accountable group of people to the state have a responsibility to stand against corruption.

Majority of the youth we met expressed that, though punishments exist, as long as the benefits derive through corruption are more attractive than consequences of getting caught; people will engage in such activities.

There are children in Sri Lanka who go to school starving because the parents cannot afford to buy a slice of bread. In a country like that, corruption is not only a criminal offence, but a sin. Changing the mindset of people to see this as a sin, as well as an offence is essential. We, as a youth organization try to contribute to the task of combatting corruption through attempting to remove the youth from this corrupt equation.

Corruption can have negative impact on every norm of life. As corruption is interconnected with the lives of the public, in combatting corruption the support and the commitment of the public is essential. We are proud as an organization that we could ignite the will of the youth we met, to stand against corruption. We invite all of you to join with us.

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