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**Change Starts Here:
A Youth Guide
to Anti-Corruption in Uzbekistan**



**CHANGE STARTS HERE:
A YOUTH GUIDE TO ANTI-CORRUPTION
IN UZBEKISTAN**

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Corruption remains one of the greatest barriers to sustainable development, economic progress, and public trust worldwide. In Uzbekistan, as in many countries, this deeply rooted challenge weakens state institutions, undermines reforms, and affects the daily lives of ordinary citizens. It restricts equal access to education, healthcare, and employment, depriving young people of fair opportunities and threatening the nation's ambitions for a prosperous future.

As the leaders of tomorrow, young people are uniquely positioned to shape Uzbekistan's integrity and ethical foundations. By rejecting corruption and upholding values such as honesty, fairness, and responsibility, youth can become powerful agents of change. Their engagement is not optional—it is essential for the success of national reforms and the creation of a society where merit, not connections, determines success.

Under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the fight against corruption has become a national priority, firmly embedded in Uzbekistan's modernization agenda. Over the past decade, the government has introduced significant reforms aimed at strengthening institutional integrity and enhancing public accountability. The Law “On Combating Corruption” (2017) laid the foundation for criminalizing corrupt practices, while the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (2021–2025) set clear targets for prevention, education, and enforcement. The ambitious Uzbekistan–2030 Strategy identifies transparency as a key driver of development. Further milestones include Presidential Decree PF-6013 (2020), which reinforced anti-corruption mechanisms, and Presidential Decree PF-10 (2024), which advanced criminological research and public safety. In June 2024, another landmark step was taken with Decree PQ-228, which launched the Virtual Academy Against Corruption—an innovative e-learning platform that enables continuous training for civil servants, educators, and youth in integrity and ethics.

These national efforts are consistent with Uzbekistan's obligations under international frameworks. Since signing the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) in 2008, Uzbekistan has aligned its policies with global standards, including the OECD Istanbul Action Plan recommendations. This commitment has yielded visible progress. The country's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) improved from 21 points in 2016 to 33 in 2023, reflecting enhanced governance and growing public trust. However, in 2024, the score slipped slightly to 32, placing Uzbekistan 121st among 180 countries, a reminder that sustained, vigorous action remains necessary. At the same time, other global indices underscore significant achievements: Uzbekistan ranks 17th among 142 countries in the World Justice Project's Order and Security indicator and 27th out of 146 countries in the Safety Perceptions Index, demonstrating progress in governance and citizen security.

The importance of youth involvement in this process was strongly highlighted during the National Anti-Corruption Council's extended meeting in March 2025, chaired by President Mirziyoyev. In his address, the President openly acknowledged systemic vulnerabilities and called for a “shift in public consciousness,” emphasizing that “corruption must be eradicated from the roots” and urging every young citizen to take personal responsibility in this fight.

This vision is not just about punitive measures, but about fostering a culture of integrity where honesty becomes the norm rather than the exception.

It is within this context that the present guidebook has been developed as part of the #YoshXabardor: Youth Against Corruption initiative. This is not just an informational manual—it is a practical and empowering resource designed to equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to recognize, resist, and report corruption safely and effectively. The content reflects a comprehensive approach that combines global best practices with local realities and cultural sensitivities.

One of the guidebook's strengths lies in its foundation on empirical evidence and direct youth engagement. Recent surveys in Uzbekistan show that 74% of citizens are ready to report corruption, and 82.2% prefer using electronic platforms to do so. Yet, significant barriers remain: 19.8% fear personal retaliation, and 20.4% are unsure where to report their concerns. These figures highlight both the progress and the challenges ahead, underlining the need for tools that increase awareness and facilitate action.

Further insights come from a series of intensive regional trainings under the #YoshXabardor project, conducted in Nukus, Karshi, and Jizzakh in 2024–2025, led by international anti-corruption expert Kodir Kuliev. These sessions revealed striking regional differences and common aspirations. In Nukus, participants posed some of the most complex legal and ethical questions, reflecting their desire for clear guidelines on navigating moral dilemmas, such as distinguishing between cultural traditions and corrupt acts. In Karshi, discussions centered on systemic issues, societal norms, and the persistence of attitudes like “O'zbekchilik” that sometimes normalize unethical practices. Jizzakh participants displayed exceptional engagement, seeking both theoretical clarity and practical solutions. These discussions confirmed that while the fight against corruption is a national priority, its success depends on context-specific approaches that account for cultural, psychological, and social dynamics.

The guidebook also addresses these deeper dimensions. It explores the gift versus bribe dilemma, a sensitive issue in Uzbek culture. It offers practical decision-making tools based on intent, timing, value, and legal compliance. It examines the psychological drivers behind corruption—such as conformity, social pressure, and rationalization—and encourages youth to challenge harmful norms. By empowering young people to question “everyone does it” mindsets, this guide seeks to transform passive tolerance into active resistance.



Ultimately, the fight against corruption is not only about laws and enforcement but about values, choices, and collective responsibility. This guidebook aligns with Uzbekistan's anti-corruption strategies and international obligations, offering practical steps for youth-led action—whether through peer education, advocacy campaigns, digital activism, or community projects. It also emphasizes positive reinforcement by showcasing success stories, encouraging recognition, and providing templates for grassroots initiatives.

As you explore this guidebook, reflect on your role in building a culture of integrity. Share these insights with your peers, challenge unethical behaviors, and utilize the tools provided here to make a positive impact. Together, we can build a stronger Uzbekistan—one where merit prevails over favoritism, fairness over privilege, and honesty over compromise. A future where corruption is not an accepted reality but a challenge actively resisted by an informed and determined generation.

Corruption is often called the "silent enemy" of progress because it quietly disrupts growth and development. In Uzbekistan, it's not just a topic talked about at conferences; it's something that people deal with in their daily lives. This can happen when they try to get into universities, seek medical care, or apply for a business license.

At its essence, corruption happens when someone in power uses that power for their own benefit instead of what's best for everyone. It can show up in many ways, like paying bribes to get things done, hiring friends or family instead of the most qualified people for a job, stealing money that should be used for public services, giving promotions to those who don't deserve them, and using one's official position for personal advantage.

Understanding what corruption really means—both around the world and in Uzbekistan—is the first step toward saying “no” to it in your own life and community. When you learn about its history and the various ways it can manifest, you begin to realize that corruption isn't just a problem for others; it also affects your chances, education, and future.

It's essential to recognize that corruption manifests differently in every country and that there isn't a single, straightforward solution to address it. This awareness encourages you to think carefully about solutions rather than copying what hasn't worked in the past. Recognizing that we can't just “wipe out” corruption helps you understand that you can play a part in keeping it in check and making your surroundings better.

This section encourages you to establish your own standards of honesty and fairness, preparing you to recognize unethical behavior when you encounter it. It sets the stage for you to become an active, informed, and responsible leader who contributes to building a stronger and fairer Uzbekistan.

What is corruption? Local and global perspectives

Corruption has been a persistent issue throughout human history, influencing the development and evolution of societies. It is often mentioned as one reason for the decline of the Roman Empire, where widespread bribery weakened both governance and military strength. Much later, during the Protestant Reformation, many people reacted against the perceived corruption within the Catholic Church, particularly criticizing the sale of indulgences, which they viewed as a serious moral failure. Similar concerns have appeared in other religious and cultural traditions. In Islamic teachings, for example, corruption (*fasad*) is strongly condemned as an act that violates justice and societal harmony, a principle echoed in the Qur'an and Hadith. Likewise, Confucian philosophy in East Asia emphasizes integrity, righteousness, and loyalty to the common good. Yet, historical records from China's imperial periods reveal how systemic bribery among officials undermined these ideals. Hindu and Buddhist ethical codes also warn against greed and misuse of power, framing such acts as sources of moral and social decay. Across cultures and faiths, corruption has consistently been regarded as a betrayal of ethical principles and a corrosive force against collective well-being.

Traditionally, “corruption” refers to a kind of moral decay or impurity. The Latin word that it comes from means “to spoil” or “to destroy.” Over time, the definition of corruption has evolved in response to varying cultures and laws. In some places, it's closely linked to breaking religious or ethical rules, as seen in countries like Iran, where moral and legal standards are deeply connected. Today, we typically understand corruption as the misuse of power for personal gain, whether in government or the private sector. However, what constitutes corrupt behavior can still vary depending on cultural and historical contexts.

In Asia, corruption has remained a significant issue both in the past and the present. Many Asian cultures, particularly those influenced by Confucian values, such as China and Korea, emphasize the importance of honesty, loyalty, and serving the community. Ideally, these values should help protect against corruption. However, historical examples tell a different story. For instance, during the Ming and Qing dynasties in China, widespread bribery weakened public trust and led to political unrest. Even today, South Korea, which has experienced rapid economic growth, continues to face numerous high-profile corruption scandals involving major companies and former presidents. This shows that a strong economy doesn't necessarily mean corruption will disappear. Similarly, in India, traditional practices of giving gifts and favoritism often blend with bureaucratic inefficiencies, creating a landscape where corruption can flourish, despite having democratic systems and active citizens.

Uzbekistan offers a unique view on corruption, shaped by its history. During Soviet times, official systems were often dominated by informal networks. Personal connections, known as *tanish-bilish*, often took precedence over merit, which can undermine fair governance. After gaining independence, some of these old habits continued. For example, paying bribes for university spots or giving “thank you” money to doctors became common, leading to a situation where public services felt out of reach without extra payments.

Today, Uzbekistan is trying to tackle these issues more effectively. The country has established laws—including the 2017 Law “On Combating Corruption”—that clearly define corruption. This law prohibits acts such as bribery and abuse of power, aiming to meet international standards set by organizations like the United Nations and Transparency International, which define corruption as the misuse of power for personal gain.

According to Uzbekistani law, corruption-related crimes encompass a wide range of unlawful acts, including embezzlement and misappropriation of property, fraud, commercial bribery, abuse of authority or official position, official forgery, accepting or giving bribes, mediating in bribery, and inducing employees of state bodies, organizations with state participation, or self-governing citizens' bodies to act in exchange for bribes. These crimes also cover the illegal receipt of material valuables or property benefits by such employees, the legalization (laundering) of proceeds from criminal activity, as well as abuse of power, exceeding official authority, or inaction by military personnel. All these actions are explicitly criminalized under the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan and are considered serious violations aimed at protecting state integrity, public trust, and the rule of law.

However, viewing corruption solely as a legal problem overlooks the cultural and moral aspects involved. What is considered wrong can change significantly depending on the social context. In Uzbekistan, gift-giving is a significant cultural practice deeply rooted in the traditions of hospitality and respect. But when these gifts come with expectations for special treatment—whether in education, healthcare, or government—they become problematic. This conflict between tradition and legality underscores the importance of cultural understanding and ethical clarity in combating corruption.

By examining corruption from both global and local perspectives, young people in Uzbekistan can gain a deeper understanding of its complexities. Fighting corruption requires more than just following the law; it involves rejecting harmful practices, thinking critically about social norms, and committing to fairness and merit. Learning from history—whether it's the fall of empires, the challenges faced by modern democracies, or Uzbekistan's own experiences—teaches a vital lesson: integrity is essential for building strong and just societies.

Types and forms of corruption

Understanding different forms of corruption enables us to identify and confront them more effectively. In Uzbekistan, some of the most common types include

- **Petty corruption:** Everyday abuse of power by low- and mid-level officials, such as demanding unofficial payments for routine services. Example: A patient being asked to pay "gratitude money" for faster medical care.
- **Grand corruption:** High-level officials manipulating policies or large contracts for private gain, which affects national projects and budget allocations.
- **Political corruption** refers to the favoritism and misuse of political influence for personal or group advantage, which can undermine democratic reforms and erode public trust.
- **Educational corruption:** Unfair practices in school or university admissions and grading, which hinder talented students and discourage honest effort.

Legal vs. moral corruption: Key distinctions

In Uzbek society, moral values are deeply tied to respect, hospitality, and community solidarity. Sometimes, actions that are culturally accepted (like giving gifts) may cross into corruption from a legal perspective.

For example, bringing a gift to a teacher as an expression of respect can be a beautiful tradition. However, if the gift is given with the expectation of better grades or special treatment, it becomes a form of bribery. The same logic applies to administrative processes: paying to jump the queue or secure a position not only violates the law but also breaks the moral fabric of society, contributing to public distrust.

It is crucial to differentiate between acts that are culturally encouraged and those that are legally or morally corrupt. Remember: even if something is widely practiced, it does not make it right or justifiable.

Important Scientific Realities About Corruption

Before discussing the core causes and factors behind the development of corruption, it is vital to understand three scientifically proven facts about corruption.

First, corruption is not uniform across all countries; it varies primarily in terms of type, level, and severity.

Second, an anti-corruption “success formula” from one country does not automatically work in another. Uzbek officials have, at times, proudly adopted foreign anti-corruption tactics without fully adapting them to local realities, which limits their effectiveness.

Third, corruption is always present; it cannot be completely “ended,” as some public officials in Central Asia sometimes claim. Corruption tends to reach an equilibrium, and only by understanding and addressing the factors that shape this equilibrium can we effectively control and reduce it. After all, no nation on this planet remains untouched by the shadow of corruption.



In Uzbekistan, culture, social relationships, and traditions play a crucial role in daily life. Practices like hospitality, strong family ties, and community solidarity are among the country's most cherished values. However, these same cultural foundations can sometimes be misused, intentionally or unintentionally, to justify or normalize corruption.

Why This Section Is Important for You

By addressing the deep-seated psychological and cultural roots of corruption, we not only strengthen our legal system but also reinforce the moral fabric of our society. The youth stand at the forefront of this pivotal transformation. You are not merely the future of Uzbekistan; you are its vibrant agents of change in the present.

The power of "O'zbekchilik"

"O'zbekchilik" is a widely recognized term that represents Uzbek identity and traditional ways of life. It embodies respect for elders, support for family, and prioritizing community harmony. Yet, this powerful cultural framework can sometimes create environments where people feel obligated to offer favors or gifts, even when they are not required.

For example, it is common to bring gifts to teachers, doctors, or officials as a sign of respect or gratitude. But where do we draw the line between sincere gratitude and unethical influence? A modest, symbolic gift, such as one given during a national holiday or after a significant life event, can be acceptable. However, when gifts are given before receiving a service or with the hope of favorable treatment — such as securing a higher grade, obtaining priority in state-financed Medicare, or a job promotion — this most likely constitutes bribery.

A 2024 survey by the Anti-Corruption Agency revealed that 40% of respondents still do not recognize expensive gifts to officials as a form of corruption, considering them instead as expressions of "good manners" or "necessary customs." This highlights the importance of cultural awareness and critical thinking in distinguishing between acceptable traditions and harmful practices.



Psychological factors and social pressures

Corruption is not just a legal or economic issue; it is deeply rooted in human psychology and social norms. Studies across the CIS region, including Uzbekistan, Russia, and Kazakhstan, confirm that corruption thrives in environments where it is socially tolerated and weakly punished.

Corruption often stems from the way we think and interact with one another. Many people justify dishonest behavior by telling themselves, “Everyone else is doing it, so I have to do it to get by.” In cultures like Uzbekistan, where maintaining good relationships and conforming to societal expectations are highly valued, individuals may worry about being perceived as “troublemakers” or jeopardizing their chances for success if they refuse to participate in corrupt practices. This creates a strong pressure to fit in, even if they know these actions are wrong.

Experts in psychology highlight that two main reasons people engage in corruption are the desire for money and the idea that being involved in corrupt activities is a “risky yet exciting game.” These ideas are often supported by mental tricks people play on themselves, like thinking “everyone does it” or convincing themselves, “I’m just getting back what I’m owed.” These thought patterns make unethical actions seem normal, making it difficult for anti-corruption efforts to succeed unless they also change people’s behavior and the culture around corruption, in addition to enforcing laws.

Research indicates that individuals who engage in corruption often exhibit certain traits, including being opportunistic, lacking empathy, and being highly adaptable. Many clever corruption schemes are devised by knowledgeable individuals who find ways to exploit weaknesses in the system. This points to an important truth: enforcing laws isn’t enough to combat corruption. We need to change how people think about it, promote strong ethics education, and build community systems that encourage individuals to stand against corrupt practices without fear of being isolated or punished.

During the #YoshXabardor training sessions, young participants in Karshi discussed how cultural expectations often pressure them to accept or give favors, even when they feel it is wrong. One participant shared:

“If I refuse to pay a 'gratitude fee' at the hospital, I worry my family will blame me if my loved one does not receive good treatment.”

This sentiment reflects a deep social challenge: when ethical decisions conflict with perceived communal obligations, young people need strong support and clear guidance.

The role of family and early upbringing

The insights from the report generated following the #YoshXabardor training sessions highlight the significant impact of family on shaping attitudes toward integrity. Many Uzbek youth learn early that “connections” can solve problems more easily than formal procedures.

While elders often intend to protect their children or ensure their success, these lessons inadvertently teach that breaking the rules is acceptable when it leads to positive outcomes for loved ones.

Yet, this approach ultimately weakens trust in society and limits opportunities for those without such connections. True success should be based on merit and fairness (meritocracy), not on who one knows (favoritism).

The Gift vs. Bribe Dilemma in Uzbekistan: How to decide

Distinguishing between a gift and a bribe is one of the most complex ethical challenges in Uzbekistan. Below is a helpful, practical decision-making tool regarding how to stay safe from being bribed or being accused of bribing in our high-context culture:

Five key factors to consider

1. **Purpose** — Is the gift given to thank someone genuinely or to influence a future decision?
2. **Timing** — Is it given after the service (gratitude) or before (potentially bribery)?
3. **Worth** — Is the gift modest and symbolic, or is it luxurious and expensive?
4. **Openness** — Is the gift given openly and known to others, or secretly?
5. **Legal compliance** — Does the law explicitly forbid this type of gift (for example, public servants are prohibited from accepting gifts in many cases)?

For example, giving a small bouquet to a teacher on Teachers' Day is a cultural norm and generally acceptable. However, giving an expensive watch before final exams in the hope of receiving higher grades clearly crosses the line into bribery.

In labor relations, for instance, it is acceptable for colleagues to contribute modestly to a farewell cake when a coworker retires. On the other hand, offering cash or an expensive holiday trip to a hiring manager during the recruitment process to guarantee employment or promotion is unacceptable.

Regarding the element of 'openness,' giving a bouquet in front of the class is acceptable, while leaving cash in an envelope on the teacher's desk at night could be perceived as a bribe.

Frequency also matters. Is the gift a one-time gesture tied to a cultural occasion, or is it part of a recurring pattern aimed at securing ongoing advantages? For example, contributing to a retirement farewell gift for a colleague is acceptable, whereas making monthly payments to your supervisor to maintain job security would be considered bribery.

Overcoming social and psychological barriers

Breaking the cycle of cultural and psychological justification is difficult but necessary. Youth can lead this change by:

- Questioning practices — Just because something is common does not make it right.
- Educating peers and family — Share what you learn from this guidebook in conversations at home and in your community.
- Setting personal boundaries — Decide now what you will and will not do, and stick to those commitments even under pressure.
- Seeking support — Connect with friends, mentors, and organizations that promote integrity, such as Search For Common Ground (SFCG), and Mahalla committees.

Real-life examples in Uzbekistan

- In 2023, several students at a major university in Tashkent publicly refused to pay bribes for dormitory placements. With support from youth organizations and local media coverage, they successfully achieved fair access. They set an example for others to follow.
- In some Mahalla communities, young leaders have initiated workshops that explain the distinction between helpful hospitality and corrupt practices, utilizing role-playing scenarios to illustrate where the line is drawn.



A robust legal and institutional framework is essential for combating corruption. In recent years, Uzbekistan has implemented significant reforms aimed at increasing transparency, strengthening accountability, and engaging citizens—especially young people—in building a fairer society.

Main laws and decrees

Uzbekistan's anti-corruption efforts are grounded in key laws and presidential decrees. Some key ones include:

- The Law “On Combating Corruption” (2017): This law defines corruption, lists preventive measures, and sets legal grounds for punishment. It states that both giving and receiving bribes are crimes.
- Presidential Decree PQ-228 (2024): This decree created the "Virtual Academy Against Corruption," which promotes online education for civil servants and youth about ethical standards.
- Criminal Code (various articles): Key articles include 211 (Bribery), 205 (Abuse of Power), and 207 (Negligence), which specify penalties for corrupt acts.

Key anti-corruption institutions

Uzbekistan has established specialized institutions to enforce these laws and encourage integrity:

- Anti-Corruption Agency: Founded in 2020, this agency reports directly to the President and Parliament. It monitors high-risk sectors like construction and procurement, analyzes corruption cases, and develops national policies.
- Prosecutor General's Office: This office ensures that public officials act legally. It can start investigations and enforce anti-corruption laws.
- State Security Service and Financial Monitoring Department: These bodies oversee large financial transactions and investigate money laundering, especially in major infrastructure projects or those funded by foreign investments.



Rights and protections for whistleblowers

Protecting whistleblowers—people who report corruption—is vital. Uzbek law supports this in various ways:

- Law on Whistleblower Protection (2020): This law ensures confidentiality and provides legal protection for individuals who report corruption.
- Criminal Code Article 211: If someone is forced to give a bribe and reports it voluntarily within 30 days, they can avoid criminal charges.
- Anonymous reporting platforms: Citizens can report corruption through e anticor.uz, the 1253 hotline, or Mahalla committees without revealing their identity.

Practical protections in action

Uzbekistan's approach combines punishment with incentives and protections. This strategy encourages more people, especially youth, to report corruption.

How does this affect you?

You have the right to a corruption-free environment. If someone asks you for a bribe, you are legally protected if you report it. You can refuse illegal demands without fear of retaliation. The legal framework and strong institutions provide you with support in this matter.



You can also play a role in creating fair systems. By understanding these laws, you can help change community views from "It's always been this way" to "This is how it should be."

The evolving legal landscape

Fighting corruption is a national priority for Uzbekistan's leadership. It is part of the development strategy called "Uzbekistan – 2030." The focus is on digital governance, public service reform, and involving youth. This makes it easier to access services transparently and report wrongdoing without obstacles. Recent presidential initiatives also promote public oversight. New rules require government officials to declare their assets, and open data portals allow citizens to track government spending and contracts.

Recognizing corruption is not just the first step; it is arguably the most vital step in the battle against it. In Uzbekistan, as in numerous other nations, corrupt practices often masquerade beneath layers of tradition, bureaucratic red tape, and entrenched social norms. By learning to identify these insidious practices, you not only safeguard yourself and those around you but also empower yourself to take decisive, informed action.

Identifying the Red Flags

Corruption often begins as a seemingly trivial issue, masquerading as harmless. Here are some common warning signs to watch for in the Uzbek context:

1. Requests for Unofficial Payments

- Warning Signals (examples):
 - A school official suggests an extra “donation” or “contribution” to secure your child's admission or guarantee a better teacher.
 - A doctor hints that paying a little extra will ensure quicker or better treatment in a public hospital.
- Risk Behind the Scene: This is a classic example of bribery disguised as a fee. According to the Law “On Combating Corruption” in Uzbekistan, both giving and accepting such payments are illegal.

2. Unexplained Wealth or Lifestyle

- Warning Signal (example):
 - A mid-level official suddenly buys a luxury car, owns multiple apartments, or frequently travels abroad without a visible legal income source.
- Why It Matters: Under Uzbek law, public officials are required to declare income and assets. Sudden wealth is often associated with kickbacks, embezzlement, or the misuse of state resources.



3. Favoritism in Hiring or Promotions

- Warning Signals (examples):
 - Jobs in government agencies or state-owned companies are offered to relatives or friends, bypassing competitive exams or qualification standards.
 - Candidates are told they need a “recommendation” or support from influential figures rather than being assessed on merit.
- Risk Behind the Scene: This is nepotism, which undermines fairness and efficiency and is recognized internationally as a corruption risk factor.

4. Lack of Transparency in Processes

- Warning Signal (examples):
 - Officials refuse to provide written explanations or receipts for payments.
 - Key decisions, like procurement or scholarship awards, are made behind closed doors without clear criteria.
- Why You Should Care: Opacity breeds corruption. OECD guidelines emphasize that public decisions must be open to scrutiny to prevent abuse of power.

5. Overly Complex or Delayed Procedures

- Warning Signal (examples):
 - Excessive paperwork or intentional delays for basic services like property registration or business licensing.
 - Staff hint that “things can be done faster” if you “cooperate.”
- Why This is a Big Deal: Bureaucratic hurdles are a standard tool for soliciting bribes in many countries, including Uzbekistan.

6. Conflicts of Interest Not Disclosed

- Warning Signal (example):
 - A government tender is awarded to a company owned by the official's relatives or friends without competitive bidding.
- Why You Should Care: The Uzbek Law on Conflict of Interest (2024) and OECD best practices demand full disclosure to prevent abuse of office.

7. Frequent “Gifts” Before Key Decisions

- Warning Signal (example):
 - Managers, doctors, or educators receive expensive gifts before exams, medical procedures, or contract signings.
- Why it matters: While gift-giving is part of Uzbek culture, offering costly items with the intent to influence decisions constitutes bribery.

8. Use of Middlemen or “Helpers”

- Warning Signal (example):
 - Someone offers to “speed up paperwork” or “arrange everything” in exchange for cash, often claiming close ties to officials.
- Impact on Fairness: Intermediaries often facilitate bribery and provide a cover for officials to avoid direct accountability.

9. Intimidation or Suggestive Language

- Warning Signal (example):
 - A phrase like “It would be a shame if this process took too long” or “We always appreciate those who support us”.
- Why it matters: Subtle hints often indicate an expectation of unofficial payment or favor.

10. Manipulated Results and Documents

- Warning Signal (example):
 - Exam scores, audit reports, or procurement evaluations suddenly change without explanation.
- Watch Out! Document tampering is a common form of administrative corruption, both in education and government procurement.

Local Example from Real Life

In 2021, a widely discussed case involved a district education department in Samarkand where parents were being asked for “donations” to ensure their children’s enrollment in top schools. Investigations revealed that these were not voluntary contributions but disguised bribes. Following media coverage and reports by active parents, officials were held accountable, and the practice was stopped.



Corruption Risk Self-Check for Public Officials

Before acting or approving any decision, it is essential to assess whether the situation could involve corruption. Many unethical acts start with small steps—what seems like a “favor” today may lead to serious legal consequences tomorrow. Use this simple self-check tool to quickly determine whether an action is safe, risky, or clearly corrupt.

How to use:

For each question, answer YES or NO. If you answer YES in the Risk column for two or more questions, this indicates High likelihood of corruption. If any question involves illegality or concealment, it should be treated as corruption and reported immediately.

Criterion	Question to Ask	Safe (NO)	Risk (YES)
Position of Authority	Is this person acting in an official capacity (public job, state-owned company)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scope of Power	Does the act relate to decisions on budgets, licenses, services, or legal actions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal or Affiliated Gain	Does someone (or their family/friends) benefit personally from this decision?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concealment or Avoidance	Is this being done in secret or without required oversight/approval?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Perception & Law	Would ordinary people or the law consider this unfair or illegal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



How to Interpret Your Answers

- Mostly Safe (NO in Risk column): Low likelihood of corruption.
- 1 YES in Risk column: Warning sign—seek clarification or report internally.
- 2 or more YES in Risk column: Very likely corruption—report to e-anticor.uz, hotline 1253, or Mahalla Committee.

More Practical Tools and Methods for Countering Corruption

1. Community Surveys (Measuring Reality)

Surveys are a powerful tool to understand where corruption occurs and how it affects people.

- How to do it:
 - Prepare short, anonymous questionnaires for peers, parents, or local residents.
 - Ask questions like: “Have you been asked for an unofficial payment in the last 6 months?” or “Which public services are most difficult to access fairly?”
- Example from Uzbekistan:

During the #YoshXabardor training in Jizzakh, youth surveyed their peers and discovered that admission to local universities and allocation of student dormitory spots were perceived as the most corruption-prone processes.

2. Open Data Analysis (Following the Money)

The Uzbek government has launched open data portals that publish information on public procurement, budget expenditures, and salaries of civil servants. Youths can analyze these data sources to find inconsistencies (e.g. comparing official spending with reality). For instance, if a local government project reports high spending on repairs, but the actual facility is in poor condition, this discrepancy can be a sign of fund mismanagement.

Another common method is to track the frequent winners of government tenders. If the same companies consistently win without competition, it may be a sign of bid-rigging.

3. Case study analysis

Reviewing real-life corruption cases helps build critical thinking. For example:

- **Construction projects:** In Tashkent, residents noticed that newly built roads started deteriorating within months. Further investigation revealed that the winning contractor offered bribes to bypass quality inspections and use less expensive materials.
- **Health sector:** In 2022, nurses in a regional hospital in Andijan reported that they had to pay bribes to receive night shift assignments, which offered additional pay. Public exposure to this case led to policy changes and the removal of corrupt administrators.

Lesson: Corruption often hides in plain sight—patterns like poor quality, sudden rule changes, or rumors of “special payments” are signals to investigate.

4. Community Mapping or Visualizing Risk Zones

Create a visual map of the areas in your school, university, or neighborhood where corruption risks are highest. Identify:

- Which services are most vulnerable (e.g., admissions, scholarship distribution, public housing allocation).
- Who is involved (officials, intermediaries, or other influential individuals).
- What are the most common forms of unofficial demands?

5. Sharing Personal Experiences (But Safely)

Young people often hesitate to share their own encounters with corruption due to fear or shame. However, collecting anonymous stories from friends, classmates, and family can reveal systemic issues. During #YoshXabardor focus groups, many students expressed surprise at how common certain practices were when they began openly discussing them.

6. How to act on your analysis

- **Share findings responsibly:** Use school meetings, Mahalla gatherings, or social media to present your findings. Always focus on facts, not rumors.
- **Engage with authorities:** Report your findings to school directors, university rectors, local councils, or directly to the Anti-Corruption Agency. Presenting evidence-based analysis makes your report more credible.
- **Develop peer-led solutions:** Collaborate with classmates to suggest improvements, such as implementing anonymous feedback boxes or clearly displaying fee schedules in public spaces.

7. Empowering yourself and others

Eradication of corruption starts with you. Yes, you. Those who are corrupt do not know any better—they are not honest; they are lazy and unwilling to work hard and do not want change. Learning to identify corruption strengthens your confidence and equips you to become a proactive member of your community. You can inspire others by demonstrating that even small actions, such as questioning a suspicious fee or refusing to pay for a shortcut, contribute to a larger culture of integrity.



Recognizing corruption is just the beginning; taking action against it is where real change occurs. In Uzbekistan, many citizens, particularly the youth, are reluctant to report corruption due to fear of retaliation, a lack of trust in institutions, or uncertainty about how and where to report it. This section offers clear and practical guidance on how to report corrupt practices safely and effectively.

Official and anonymous channels

E-Anticor.uz

The e-anticor.uz platform is Uzbekistan's primary online portal for reporting corruption. It enables citizens to submit complaints anonymously and track the status of their submissions. The Anti-Corruption Agency established this website to promote safe reporting and enhance public involvement.

Hotline 1253

The 1253 hotline is a toll-free number operated by the Anti-Corruption Agency. It is available 24/7 and accepts both named and anonymous reports. Additionally, operators can provide guidance on what evidence to collect and how to submit any additional materials.

Mahalla committees

In many neighborhoods, Mahalla committees serve as the primary point of contact for addressing community concerns. Although they do not have formal legal authority, Mahalla leaders can assist citizens in drafting complaints and connecting with higher authorities.

President's Virtual Reception Office

This online platform (pm.gov.uz) enables citizens to submit complaints directly to the Office of the President. In recent years, numerous young entrepreneurs and students have effectively utilized it to combat corruption in local government services.

Evidence collection and safety considerations

Reporting without evidence is less effective and may delay investigations. Here is what you should consider:

- Document everything: Keep copies of payment receipts, screenshots of messages, or audio recordings (if legally permissible).

- Take notes: Write down dates, names, and specific details as soon as they are still fresh in your mind.
- Avoid confrontation: Do not directly accuse or threaten the person involved before you have secured your evidence and reported it through proper channels.

Ensuring anonymity and protection

Uzbekistan's Law on Whistleblower Protection (2020) ensures that individuals who report corruption are legally protected from retaliation. Some important points:

- You can choose to remain anonymous during initial reporting.
- If your identity becomes known, you have the right to legal protection and assistance from law enforcement authorities.
- You should never disclose your reporting activity to others unnecessarily, especially before an official investigation starts.

Overcoming fear and hesitation

Fear is one of the biggest barriers to reporting. Here's how to overcome it:

- Understand that the law is on your side: Recent reforms demonstrate a strong political will to support whistleblowers, with examples of officials being held accountable following citizen reports.
- Seek support networks: Youth organizations such as Yuksalish, local student unions, and independent civil society groups can provide moral support and help prepare your complaint.
- Think long-term: Even if the process seems complicated, reporting corruption protects future opportunities for you and your community.

What happens after you report

Once you submit a report, the authorities will take the time to review the evidence you've provided. They may reach out to you for additional information to clarify any details. If sufficient evidence is found to proceed, an official investigation will be initiated. This process could result in various outcomes, including disciplinary measures, criminal charges, or policy changes. Although you may not receive immediate updates due to confidentiality rules, it's essential to remember that being persistent and maintaining proper documentation will help ensure that your voice is heard throughout this process.

In Uzbekistan, youth make up more than 60% of the population. This demographic strength is not just a statistic — it is a powerful force for change. Young people are energetic, creative, and often more open to new ideas and reform. When youth take a leadership role in fighting corruption, they influence not only their peers but also the broader society, including institutions and policymakers.

Why Youth Leadership Matters

Corruption often thrives in environments where silence and passivity prevail. Youth, with their natural curiosity and sense of fairness, are uniquely positioned to challenge this silence. During the #YoshXabardor regional trainings in Nukus, Karshi, and Jizzakh, participants repeatedly emphasized that youth networks can quickly mobilize, spread awareness, and create new norms of integrity. In 2023, students at Karshi University established a “Transparency Club.” The club organized weekly meetings to discuss case studies, conducted surveys about corruption risks in campus services and developed an integrity pledge signed by over 500 students. This initiative gained media attention and inspired similar actions in other regions.

Peer-led campaigns and school clubs

Forming an anti-corruption club

- Gather like-minded peers who share a passion for fairness and honesty.
- Define clear goals (e.g., raising awareness, monitoring campus activities, supporting reporting efforts).
- Develop an action plan with small, achievable steps to build momentum.

Activities you can organize

- Integrity weeks: Host discussions, competitions, and quizzes on ethics and anti-corruption topics.
- Poster and video contests: Encourage creative expression to highlight the harms of corruption.
- Role-play workshops: Act out common dilemmas (e.g., gift vs. bribe scenarios) to develop practical refusal skills.

Community engagement and local councils

Youth should not limit their efforts to schools and universities. Collaborating with Mahalla committees, neighborhood leaders, and local councils allows for wider community impact. In 2022, youth volunteers in Andijan partnered with the Mahalla to conduct door-to-door information sessions on reporting corruption and understanding legal protections. This outreach helped demystify the process for older community members and showed that youth can lead serious civic initiatives.

Participating in public hearings

Many local councils now hold open meetings where community members can voice concerns. Youth attendance and active participation in these hearings send a strong message that young people are watching and care about fairness.

Inspiring success stories

- **Namangan youth media team:** A group of journalism students created a YouTube channel to investigate and report on everyday corruption cases (e.g., hidden school fees). Their videos reached thousands, sparking public debates and resulting in policy changes at several local schools.
- **Bukhara entrepreneur group:** Young entrepreneurs formed a coalition to advocate for fair business licensing. They engaged with the Chamber of Commerce and local government, advocating for streamlined and transparent procedures, and published a guidebook for other young business owners.

Creating a ripple effect

Youth initiatives go beyond individual actions; they have the potential to transform entire communities. One significant impact is the reduction of tolerance for corrupt behaviors among peers, fostering an environment where integrity is valued. Additionally, these initiatives empower individuals to report wrongdoing, encouraging a collective stance against dishonest practices. Furthermore, by demonstrating that integrity can be a source of pride, they help to shape a cohesive identity grounded in shared values and ethical standards.

How to start your strategy

1. **Identify your focus area:** Schools, healthcare, local services, or business licensing — choose a topic relevant to your community.
2. **Gather a core team:** Build a small group of committed friends or classmates.
3. **Engage mentors:** Reach out to teachers, nationwide recognized experts, Mahalla leaders, or local NGOs for guidance and support.
4. **Plan events:** Design activities that combine education, engagement, and action to create a meaningful experience.
5. **Document and share:** Use social media, newsletters, or school noticeboards to amplify your message.

Stay Motivated and Overcome Challenges

Many young people worry about facing backlash or believe they are "too young to make a difference." However, real examples from Uzbekistan show that small, organized groups can create significant change. Remember: every successful movement starts with a few brave voices.

As a young leader, you possess the energy, creativity, and clear values necessary to combat corruption. By coming together, sharing your concerns, and supporting each other, you can change your community and build a better, fairer Uzbekistan.

Remember: you are not just the leaders of tomorrow—you are the leaders of today. Take action, inspire others, and promote a culture of integrity. What you do today will shape the future.



Today's youth are the most connected generation in Uzbekistan's history. More than 70% of young people use the internet daily, and platforms like Telegram, Instagram, and YouTube have become key sources of information. This digital connectivity can be a powerful tool for promoting integrity and fighting corruption if used strategically and responsibly.

The role of advocacy

Advocacy means actively supporting a cause and working to influence decision-makers and public opinion. In the context of anti-corruption, advocacy can take many forms: speaking out against unfair practices, demanding more transparency, and promoting legal reforms.

Why advocacy matters

Advocacy involves publicly supporting or recommending a cause to create positive change. Corruption often persists because individuals may feel powerless or isolated, leading to a sense of helplessness. Advocacy empowers youth to have a collective voice, demonstrating that integrity is not just a personal choice, but a shared value.

In 2022, youth in Tashkent organized an online petition demanding transparency in university dormitory placements. They collected over 10,000 signatures in just two weeks, which led to an official investigation and the implementation of new digital allocation systems.

In another example, a group of young activists in Andijan collaborated with local journalists to expose hidden "service fees" in public hospitals. They gathered patient testimonies and shared this evidence through social media campaigns and community meetings. As a result, regional health authorities introduced new oversight mechanisms, dismissed several officials, and launched an awareness program for medical staff to ensure fair treatment for all patients.



Using social media effectively

Create clear messages

Your message should be simple, honest, and relatable. Avoid jargon and speak directly to the emotions and everyday experiences of your peers

Use hashtags

Hashtags help organize and amplify messages. Popular Uzbek hashtags include:

- #KorrupsiyagaYo'q ("No to Corruption")
- #YoshXabardor ("Youth are Aware")

Tell stories

People connect more with stories than statistics. Share personal experiences (while respecting privacy), real examples of successful reporting, or case studies from your community. For example, a group of medical students in Samarkand started an Instagram page to share stories about students who refused to pay for exam grades and still succeeded on merit. Their stories gained thousands of followers and encouraged others to act ethically.

Fact-checking and responsible sharing

False information spreads quickly and can undermine trust in anti-corruption efforts. Before sharing any information, it's important to verify the facts through reliable sources, such as official government websites or respected news outlets. Also, whenever possible, check multiple perspectives to gain a well-rounded understanding of the issue at hand. It's also crucial to avoid reposting sensational or unverified claims, as doing so can perpetuate the problem. For example, during the 2023 local budget hearings in Fergana, misleading posts circulated suggesting that all funds had been misused. Youth bloggers fact-checked these claims and published accurate breakdowns, maintaining credibility and focusing attention on genuine issues.

Citizen journalism and collaboration with media

What is citizen journalism?

Citizen journalism involves ordinary people collecting, reporting, and analyzing news and events. In Uzbekistan, this approach is gaining momentum, particularly among young people who are frustrated by the slow pace of official

responses. To address corrupt practices effectively, start by documenting any evidence you encounter, whether that involves taking photos or videos. It's important to document these incidents clearly and accurately. Following this, write short, factual reports detailing what you've witnessed and share them on social media platforms or local news blogs to raise awareness. Additionally, consider partnering with professional journalists who can help amplify your stories and publish them in larger outlets for greater impact. For example, in Andijan, young activists documented the collection of illegal parking fees in a public park. Their video reports were shared widely and covered by national media, prompting the city administration to cancel unauthorized contracts.

Online campaigns and creative engagement

- Video challenges: Encourage youth to create short videos explaining how they would act when offered a bribe or witnessing favoritism.
- Memes and graphics: Design simple, eye-catching visuals that spread anti corruption messages in a humorous but impactful way.
- Digital events: Organize webinars or live streams with local leaders, youth activists, and legal experts to discuss solutions.

Protecting yourself online

When engaging in online advocacy:

- Use strong passwords and enable two-factor authentication.
- Be mindful of what personal information you share.
- If reporting sensitive cases, consider using anonymous accounts or secure channels.

Building networks

Success in advocacy depends on the community. Build networks by connecting with:

- Youth unions and student organizations
- NGOs focused on transparency (e.g., Yuksalish)
- Local media outlets interested in youth perspectives
- Mahalla committees and local councils



In the fight against corruption, focusing only on punishment can discourage people from coming forward. Positive reinforcement — celebrating integrity and ethical leadership — is equally important. In the context of Uzbekistan, where community respect and social reputation are deeply valued, recognition can be a powerful tool to inspire others and foster a culture of honesty.

Why rewards matter

Uzbek culture places high importance on collective honor (“or-nomus”) and community standing. When individuals act with integrity and receive public appreciation, it not only affirms their personal values but also sets a powerful example for peers, families, and even entire Mahalla communities.

Certificates and public acknowledgments

Official certificates

The Anti-Corruption Agency of Uzbekistan and the Yuksalish Movement often issue certificates and formal letters of appreciation to individuals and youth groups who contribute to transparency efforts. In 2023, a youth team in Bukhara created an awareness campaign called “Halollik — mening tanlovim” (“Integrity is my choice”). They visited schools and organized debates about ethical decision-making. The team received formal certificates from the regional administration, and the campaign was featured on local TV, encouraging many more students to join.

School and university awards

Many educational institutions in Uzbekistan now include “Best Ethical Student” or “Integrity Ambassador” awards during graduation or year-end ceremonies. These awards promote ethical behavior as a prestigious achievement alongside academic or athletic successes.

Mentorship and leadership opportunities

Recognition should extend beyond mere certificates. It's essential to create platforms where ethical youth leaders can mentor others, fostering a culture of integrity. One effective approach is through mentorship circles, where recognized students can lead discussion groups with their younger peers. In these settings, they can share their experiences of resisting pressures to engage in corruption, providing valuable insights and guidance. Additionally, inviting youth who have demonstrated integrity to speak at community meetings, Mahalla gatherings, and local youth forums can further inspire others. Their stories can resonate deeply, encouraging open dialogue about ethical decision-making. Furthermore, showcasing these youth role models in local TV programs or online interviews can amplify their influence, reaching a wider audience and reinforcing the importance of integrity in our communities.

For example, in Tashkent, a university student who publicly refused to pay for an exam grade was invited by local NGOs to mentor high school students. Her story was broadcast on educational YouTube channels, transforming her into a community role model.

Celebrating collective success

Beyond individual achievements, group efforts can also be celebrated to strengthen the idea that integrity is a shared responsibility.

Community acknowledgments

Mahalla committees and youth councils can publicly recognize collective actions, such as streamlining local administrative processes or organizing transparent school admissions.

Annual integrity festivals

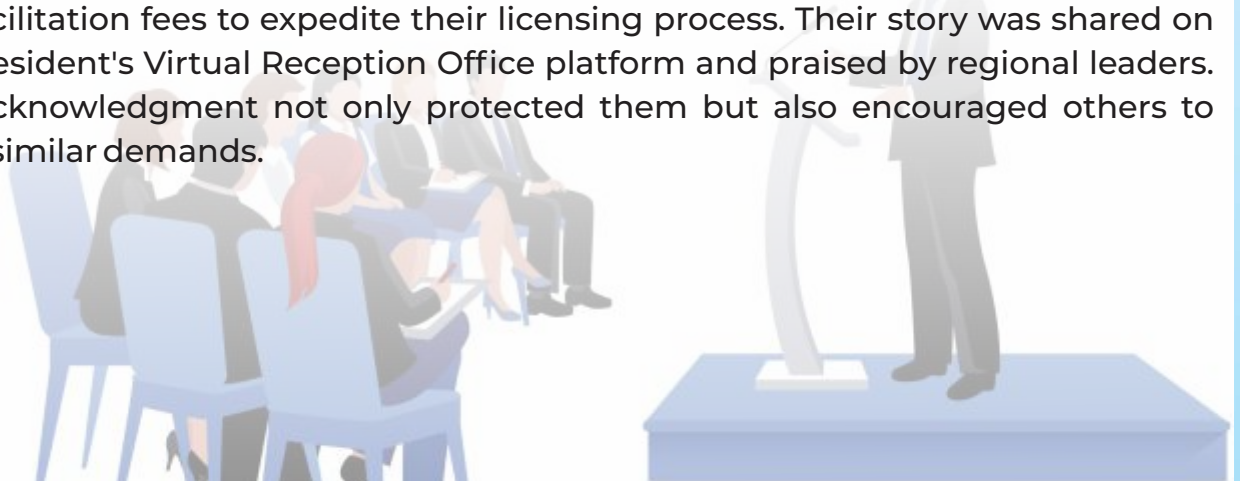
Some regions have started organizing “Halollik festivali” (Integrity Festival), combining music, art, competitions, and workshops to celebrate honesty and showcase youth initiatives. These festivals provide positive and engaging spaces to reinforce anti-corruption messages in a culturally festive manner.

Building a "circle of trust"

When young people see that ethical choices lead to respect and recognition, they develop a "circle of trust." This network effect inspires others to follow suit, creating an environment where integrity is the norm, not the exception.

Overcoming fear through positive examples

A fear of standing alone is a significant barrier for youth. Public recognition demonstrates that ethical choices are valued and supported by the broader community, helping young people transition from “I am alone” to “I am part of a movement.” In Fergana, for instance, a group of young entrepreneurs refused to pay facilitation fees to expedite their licensing process. Their story was shared on the President's Virtual Reception Office platform and praised by regional leaders. This acknowledgment not only protected them but also encouraged others to reject similar demands.



Fighting corruption requires teamwork between young people, government institutions, and civil society organizations (CSOs). In Uzbekistan, recent reforms have aimed to be open, involve citizens in decision-making, and foster collaboration. This gives young people the opportunity to contribute to creating a more transparent and equitable society.

Youth-led initiatives can be highly effective, but their impact is amplified when they receive support from institutions and the broader community. By working together, young people can access resources, spread their messages, and influence policies more effectively.

Partnering with Mahalla committees

Mahallas are a unique feature of Uzbek society — local neighborhood self-governance structures that play a central role in community life.

Opportunities for collaboration

To foster greater awareness about corruption, it's essential to partner with Mahalla leaders to organize local seminars or neighborhood discussions. These gatherings could focus on important topics, such as the distinction between gifts and bribes, as well as how to report illegal fees.

Additionally, Mahallas can play a vital role in supporting vulnerable groups in the community. For instance, they can facilitate connections between youth and elderly residents or those from low-income backgrounds who may be unaware of how to report instances of corruption.

Finally, to promote transparency and encourage residents to voice their concerns, youth can establish feedback channels with the support of Mahallas. This could involve creating suggestion boxes or online forms that allow community members to report issues anonymously, thereby fostering an environment where residents feel safe speaking out.

In 2022, a youth group in Khorezm collaborated with their Mahalla to conduct door-to-door visits, educating residents on using the e-anticor.uz platform. As a result, local reporting increased significantly, leading to investigations into the misuse of community funds.



Working with NGOs and civic organizations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Uzbekistan, such as the Yuksalish Movement and Transparency International Uzbekistan, have been increasingly active in promoting anti-corruption education and civic engagement.

How to engage

Engaging in joint campaigns can significantly enhance our advocacy efforts. By collaborating with NGOs, we can leverage their resources to reach larger audiences and attract valuable media attention. Additionally, attending workshops and training sessions offered by these organizations presents a valuable opportunity for capacity building. Through these sessions, we can deepen our understanding of legal frameworks, advocacy tools, and public speaking techniques. Furthermore, participating in policy discussions allows us to share our perspectives on proposed anti-corruption measures, ensuring that youth voices are heard in the decision-making process. In Andijan, for example, a youth-led club partnered with Yuksalish to launch a regional “Integrity Hackathon.” Young people proposed digital tools to enhance public service transparency, with the winning idea presented to the local administration for implementation in the real world.

Engaging with local government and state agencies

Many local governments now hold public hearings on budgets, social programs, and community development plans. Attending these meetings allows youth to ask questions about public spending and project implementation, propose community monitoring initiatives, and hold officials accountable for promises and service quality. For instance, in Samarkand, university students began attending city council budget meetings. They raised concerns about unexplained expenses in road construction. Their intervention pushed the council to publish detailed budget breakdowns online for the first time.

Building networks of trust

To foster effective collaboration, it's essential to approach interactions with respect and a constructive mindset. This means focusing not only on identifying problems but also on proposing viable solutions. Staying informed about local regulations and understanding the responsibilities of each participant in the collaboration is also crucial. This knowledge will help ensure that all voices are considered and that efforts align with community standards and expectations. Besides, documenting progress is vital for maintaining transparency and motivation. Sharing updates on joint activities through social media, Mahalla bulletins, or community newsletters can engage the wider community and keep everyone informed about the positive developments.

Role of media and public support

Positive media coverage of youth and community collaborations strengthens credibility and pressures institutions to maintain integrity. When young leaders collaborate publicly with officials and NGOs, it demonstrates that change is possible through dialogue, rather than confrontation. In Tashkent, for example, a collaborative campaign between students, the Anti-Corruption Agency, and local media highlighted “honest officials” in a public recognition series. The program not only celebrated integrity but also motivated other officials to improve transparency to gain public trust.



Knowledge and awareness are powerful catalysts for change, starting with individual action. A Personal Integrity Plan helps you transform insights into commitments that shape your choices and build resilience against corruption. This guide provides steps and templates to craft your plan and inspire positive change in your community.

In Uzbek society, where community expectations shape behavior, a clear, written personal plan acts as a moral compass, reinforcing your values amid social or peer pressure.

Self-assessment checklist

Start by reflecting on your current attitudes and behaviors. Ask yourself:

- o Do I ever excuse minor unethical actions as being "normal" or "necessary"?
- o Have I ever participated in or accepted a bribe, even in a subtle or indirect way?
- o Am I fully aware of the legal and ethical boundaries within my school, workplace, or community?
- o Would I confidently voice my concerns when I witness unfair practices? - Who do I look up to as paragons of honesty and integrity?

By thoughtfully and honestly addressing these questions, you can uncover areas ripe for personal growth and equip yourself to take meaningful action.

Setting personal integrity goals

Define clear, realistic goals for yourself, such as:

- I will refuse to pay or offer bribes, no matter the pressure.
- I will educate at least five friends or family members about reporting mechanisms, such as e-anticor.uz.
- I will volunteer for at least one anti-corruption event or Mahalla initiative this year.
- I will share a story on social media that encourages integrity and fair behavior.

Write these goals down and revisit them regularly to track your progress.

Community project guide

Once you've built your personal plan, think bigger: how can you inspire others? Use this simple guide to create your own integrity-focused project.

Step 1: Identify the problem

What specific issue in your school, university, Mahalla, or workplace do you want to address? Unofficial "donations" are being demanded in schools for better grades is a good example.

Step 2: Form a team

Find a small group of peers who share your commitment to the same goals. Even two or three people are enough to start.

Step 3: Develop an action plan

- Define activities (e.g., an awareness campaign, a student pledge, community workshops).
- Assign roles and responsibilities.
- Set a timeline and measurable objectives.

Step 4: Engage stakeholders

Inform teachers, Mahalla leaders, or local authorities about your plan. Seek their support to strengthen your credibility.

Step 5: Implement and document

Conduct your activities and collect photos, videos, and testimonials. Share results through school newsletters, local media, or social media to motivate others.



Personal Integrity Pledge Examples (Templates)

EXAMPLE 1: I pledge to act with integrity and uphold the highest ethical standards in all aspects of my life. I will reject and speak out against all forms of corruption, bribery, and dishonest behavior. I commit to promoting transparency, fairness, and accountability in my community and beyond. By serving as a role model, I aim to inspire others to join me in building a culture of integrity. Together, we can create a society where honesty is valued, public trust is strengthened, and every citizen can thrive.

EXAMPLE 2: I willingly commit to fostering a culture of honesty and fairness in both my personal and professional interactions. I will actively resist and denounce any form of corruption that undermines our shared values. I pledge to voice my concerns against unethical behavior and to encourage those around me to uphold the highest standards of integrity. By working together with others who share this vision, we can create a stronger, more just Uzbekistan, where each individual contributes to a society built on trust and ethical principles.

EXAMPLE 3: I pledge to uphold honesty and fairness in my daily life. I refuse to participate in or support any form of corruption. I commit to speaking out against unethical behavior and inspiring others to act with integrity. Together, we can build a stronger, fairer Uzbekistan.

Community Awareness Event Plan Example

Event title: My Mahalla Without Corruption

Objective: Raise awareness about everyday corruption and promote reporting tools.

Activities:

- Presentation on gift vs. bribe distinctions.
- Group discussions with real-life scenarios.
- Distribution of reporting guides (e-anticor.uz info sheets).

Partners: Mahalla committee, local youth club.

Date & Venue: [To be filled by organizer]

Expected outcomes: At least 50 residents gain practical knowledge on recognizing and reporting corruption.

Letter to a local official (template)

Dear XXX,

As a concerned young citizen of [City or District], I am writing to express my support for initiatives that strengthen transparency and integrity in our community.

I encourage your office to prioritize [e.g., fair hiring practices, transparent budget disclosures] and to collaborate with youth and community members to develop joint solutions.

I would be happy to volunteer or assist in any activities that promote these goals. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

[Your School/University or Mahalla]

[Contact Information]

Remember! Staying motivated can often be a challenge, especially when trying to implement change. It's important to recognize that this journey doesn't happen overnight. To keep your spirits up, celebrate the small wins along the way; for instance, each time you recruit a new supporter or receive positive feedback, take a moment to appreciate these accomplishments. Additionally, sharing your progress with your support network can be incredibly encouraging, as their backing can help bolster your motivation. Regularly reflecting on your goals is also key; as you evolve, don't hesitate to adjust your objectives to align with your growth. By embracing these practices, you'll find it easier to maintain your motivation throughout your journey.



This section addresses the most common and sensitive questions youth in Uzbekistan have asked during the #YoshXabardor trainings in Nukus, Karshi, and Jizzakh. The answers are grounded in national law, cultural context, and global best practices.

Q1: Is it corruption if I give a gift to a teacher or doctor?

Answer: It depends on **intent, timing, value, and transparency**. In Uzbek culture, giving modest gifts (like flowers or sweets) during holidays is accepted. However, if a gift is expensive, secretive, or given before a service to influence the outcome (e.g., to get a higher grade or skip a queue), it constitutes **bribery** under the law.

Tip: Use the 5-factor test from the guidebook: Intention, Timing, Value, Transparency, Legality.

Q2: How can I report corruption anonymously and safely?

Answer: Use Uzbekistan's official tools:

- e-Anticor.uz – anonymous online reports
- Hotline 1253 – free 24/7 call center
- Mahalla committees – local trusted channels
- President's Virtual Reception – direct online appeals

Whistleblower protection is guaranteed under the 2020 Law. If you're forced to give a bribe and report it within 30 days, you are exempt from punishment (Criminal Code, Article 211).

Q3: I know someone using connections (tanish-bilish) to get a job or benefits. Is that corruption?

Answer: If connections are used to bypass fairness, transparency, or qualification requirements, it's **favoritism** — a form of corruption. This undermines **meritocracy** and disadvantages others, especially those without privileged ties. It also creates a culture where success depends on “who you know,” rather than skills or performance, harming public trust and disadvantaging qualified candidates. Under Uzbek law and international standards (UNCAC, OECD), this is considered a corrupt practice, even if no money changes hands.

Not all personal connections lead to corruption; many networking situations are both legal and ethical. For example, seeking advice about job openings or exam preparation is acceptable networking. Applying through official channels after learning about a vacancy from a friend is also ethical, provided you meet qualifications and compete fairly.

Mentorship based on skills and achievements, following a transparent process, is beneficial. Generally, if a personal connection helps you uncover opportunities or gain insight without bypassing rules, it's networking. However, if it enables you to circumvent requirements or gain an unfair advantage, it becomes corruption.

Q4: What if I'm afraid to speak up? What if people criticize me?

Answer: Fear is normal, especially in tight-knit communities. But remember:

- The law protects you
- You can stay anonymous
- You're not alone — organizations like Search for Common Ground, Yuksalish, and student networks can support you

Start small: talk to a trusted teacher, write anonymously, or join a youth group committed to integrity.

Q5: Why should I care if corruption "has always been like this"?

Answer: Because normalizing corruption creates a broken future — limited education, unfair jobs, bad healthcare, distrust in the system. Every young person has a right to a just society. Change starts when someone dares to say: "Enough."

A curated list of the most relevant tools, organizations, and laws for youth fighting corruption in Uzbekistan.

Official Reporting Platforms

Resource	Description
e-anticor.uz	Main national anti-corruption reporting portal (anonymous submissions allowed)
Hotline 1253	Free 24/7 line managed by the Anti-Corruption Agency
pm.gov.uz	Direct contact with the President's Virtual Reception Office
Mahalla Committees	Local self-governance bodies that assist in processing community grievances

Core Legal Frameworks

- **Law “On Combating Corruption” (2017)** – primary national law defining corruption and enforcement mechanisms
- **Presidential Decree PQ-228 (2024)** – created the Virtual Anti-Corruption Academy
- **Criminal Code (Articles 205–214)** – includes bribery, abuse of office, negligence, and illicit enrichment
- **Whistleblower Protection Law (2020)** – protects citizens who report corruption

Supporting Organizations

- **Search for Common Ground (SFCG) Uzbekistan** – civic engagement and peacebuilding initiatives
- **Yuksalish Nationwide Movement** – youth empowerment, education, anti corruption activities
- **Youth Union of Uzbekistan** – leadership development and civic participation
- **Independent journalists and bloggers** – citizen journalism as watchdogs

Further Reading and Learning

- **“Korrupsiyadan Himoyalaniish uchun 10 Qadam”** – practical Uzbek youth handbook (UNDP, 2025)
- **OECD ACN Toolkit for Youth Engagement in Anti-Corruption**
- **UNODC Education for Justice (E4J) Youth Modules**
- **Transparency International Youth Lab**
- **TG Channel: @anticorruptere** (learning and discussion platform)

“Imagine being part of a generation that says 'no' to corruption — building trust, fairness, and opportunity for all.”
— Nukus participant, #YoshXabardor

To make a difference in the fight against corruption, start by raising awareness about the issues outlined in this guidebook. Share its insights with your peers and family so that more people understand the impact of corruption on our daily lives. Next, consider getting organized by either starting or joining a club, a Telegram group, or a youth council dedicated to promoting integrity and transparency.

It's essential to report any wrongdoing you encounter. Use available resources like e-anticor.uz or hotline 1253 to ensure that issues are addressed. At the same time, make an effort to reward honesty and fairness within your community by celebrating those who demonstrate these values.

Ultimately, be the difference you want to see. Lead by example, even in challenging situations, and remember that each of our actions contributes to a larger movement. The fight against corruption extends beyond courtrooms and governmental buildings; it begins in classrooms, dormitories, hospitals, job interviews, and the everyday choices we each make. Your voice and actions are powerful, and your courage will play a crucial role in shaping the future of Uzbekistan.

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