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## Annex I

### Guidance Note

#### **Guidance note for States parties and signatories on sharing information and experiences on:**

- **the participation of society in the prevention of and fight against corruption;**
- **the negative effects of corruption on women and youth; and,**
- **the role played by women and youth in preventing and combating corruption.**

In its resolution 10/1, entitled “Atlanta 2023: promoting integrity, accountability and transparency in the fight against corruption”, the Conference reiterated that:

*“the active participation of society is integral to complementing States’ efforts in the prevention of and the fight against corruption and promoting transparency, integrity and accountability”*,

and urged States parties to:

*“put in place and effectively implement policies and practices, within their means and in accordance with the fundamental principles of their domestic laws, that allow individuals and groups outside the public sector, such as civil society, non-governmental and community-based organizations, the private sector, academia and media, to be able to contribute in this regard also thereby promoting accountability, including through the full and effective implementation of article 13 of the Convention”*.

The resolution also emphasized the importance of engaging young people in the prevention of and fight against corruption.

Corruption affects all members of society – women and men, boys and girls - in different ways. It often results in the exclusion of vulnerable groups from decision-making processes and access to basic public services, reproducing negative stereotypes and limiting economic power and educational opportunities.

In its resolution 10/3, entitled “Follow-up to the Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption”, the Conference requested the Working Group to consider including, as a topic for discussion at its fifteenth meeting *“the negative effects of corruption on women and youth and the role played by women and youth in preventing and combating corruption”*.

The secretariat has prepared the attached questionnaire as guidance on information sought on the above topics. Should sufficient information be received, a report will be prepared in view of facilitating the discussion at the fifteenth Working Group on Prevention to be held from 28 August to 6 September 2024. Unless otherwise indicated in the submissions, the input will be published online and may be

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used for the development of knowledge products. The information sought includes descriptions of good practices and challenges faced in adopting and/or implementing these measures. The submission of supporting documentation, if any, is encouraged, including but not limited to legislation, regulations, reports, policy documents and evaluations.

## **Participation of society in preventing and fighting corruption, inclusive decision-making processes; role of non-governmental stakeholders, journalists and media**

1. Has your country promoted the participation of society, including non-governmental stakeholders, journalists and the media, in anti-corruption activities, programmes and initiatives, including in relation to anti-corruption strategies? If yes, please specify how.

The Financial Crimes Commission (FCC) (previously ICAC) has since its inception adopted an inclusive approach in the fight against corruption. In this context, the focus of its prevention and education strategy has been on building integrity in the nation with the objective of creating a vigilant civil society, change the mindset of people and instil a culture of integrity.

The FCC (previously ICAC) has promoted the participation of the civil society in the fight against corruption, by working in close collaboration with civil society networks, community-based organisations and NGOs, the press and media. Therefore, in view of sustaining the engagement of the stakeholders from the civil society, the following networks were created:

- Comité Anti-Corruption (CAC). The main objective of the CAC is to catalyse and strengthen citizen's participation, including the youth, to sustain an anti-corruption culture and reinforce community integrity;
- Trade Union Action Against Corruption (TAC), was set up to strengthen dialogue between the ICAC and the Trade Union Federations to explore collaboration opportunities in the prevention of corruption; and
- Civil Society Network Against Corruption (CSNAC), is set to propose anti-corruption strategies, take initiatives to promote an ethical culture and contribute actively to the fight against corruption.

Anti-corruption sessions/training sessions and activities are regularly held targeting members of the above with the aim of reinforcing their engagement in the fight against corruption and to advocate for collective actions against corruption.

Moreover, the FCC (previously ICAC) has nurtured a working relationship with newsrooms with a view to build collaboration with the press/media. As such, media outlets readily send representatives to cover our events. On average, 700 press articles (written press/audiovisual media) are released on our activities per year by the FCC (previously ICAC).

In this vein, regular training sessions for practising journalists are organised in collaboration with the Media Trust, to empower members on the legislative framework.

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2. Has your country identified any barriers to the participation of society in the prevention of and fight against corruption? If yes, have any programmes been designed and implemented to address such barriers?

Mobilisation of civil society is always challenging. Regarding the youth component of the civil society, a research study titled ‘Barriers to youth engagement in the fight against corruption’ was conducted in collaboration with the University of Technology, Mauritius and with the support of the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council.

The aim of the study was to gauge the hurdles preventing the youth to engage in the fight against corruption. The study not only investigated and shed light on the barriers to youth engagement but also made recommendations. The findings revealed that though our youth were facing few barriers in relation to their engagement (namely, education system, fear, influence of parents and time constraints), they showed willingness to engage in the fight.

The publication can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.icac.mu/barriers-to-youth-engagement-in-the-fight-against-corruption/>

In addition, the FCC (previously ICAC) contributed at the level of the Expert Group, for the development of a “Policy Guide on the Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) in Anti-Corruption Efforts” under the Global Resource for Anti-Corruption Education and Youth Empowerment (GRACE) initiative implemented by the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA) in collaboration with the UNODC and the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) of Hong Kong, China.

Some of the suggestions revealed that, to effectively engage young people, anti-corruption authorities need to give them a “seat at the table” and seek their advice and engagement on effective youth participation design. This can be achieved through mobilizing young volunteers, recruiting interns, establishing youth partnerships and collaborations, and working with youth leaders in anti-corruption operations and knowledge work. This ensures that young people are readily available to anti-corruption authority staff for quality youth participation.

The policy guide can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.icac.org.hk/icac/myeguide/en/index.html>

The recommendations from the research study and policy guide were taken on board in devising the Action plan for the youth. Some of the initiatives considered have been the development of a youth corner on the organisation’s website, setting-up and sustaining platforms such as Inter-University Students Anti-Corruption Forum and Integrity Clubs to facilitate youth engagement.

An additional barrier which the FCC (previously ICAC) has also faced regarding the participation of society in the prevention of and fight against corruption is that the media has the tendency to paint a distorted picture of the Commission. Such situation therefore necessitates greater efforts from the Commission to secure the meaningful engagement of the society in the fight against corruption.

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**The negative effects of corruption on youth and the role played by youth in preventing and combating corruption. For each reply, we would be grateful for hyperlinks to relevant supporting documentation or websites, or any other supporting documents.**

While the official definition of youth provided by the United Nations refers to persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years (and indeed, all United Nations statistics on youth are based on this definition), the United Nations recognizes that “the operational definition and nuances of the term ‘youth’ vary from country to country”<sup>1</sup> as it relates to sociocultural, institutional, economic and political factors, and adapts to the countries where it operates.<sup>2</sup> UNODC uses the age range of 15 to 30 when referring to engaging young people outside the UN as partners and leaders in their shared objective to prevent and counter corruption. In line with this flexible definition of youth, we encourage Member States to decide which definition they would like to refer to and specify it in their answers to the questionnaire.

1. Does your country collect data disaggregated by age on the experience of young people as victims of corruption? Please provide the findings of any studies you may have carried out on the impact of corruption on young people. An example could be the impact of corruption on access to economic opportunities for businesses owned by young people.

We do not collect data disaggregated by age on the experience of young people as victims of corruption. However, whenever a national perception survey is conducted, the youth form an integral part of the survey. The last survey which was commissioned in 2014 by the FCC (previously ICAC) to an independent consulting firm, namely, the ‘National Survey on Perception of Corruption’ revealed information concerning the youth, as follows:

- 54.2% of people perceive the younger generation as not so committed to the fight against corruption or even not committed at all.
- 81.9% of respondents from the 21-25 age group believe that one would pay to get services from officers issuing licenses (“patentes”).
- 51.4% of the age group 18-20 would not report a case of corruption.
- These findings are characterized by a high level of cynicism among the youth.

The report can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.icac.mu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Final-Report-NSC.pdf>

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, “Global Issues: Youth”, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/youth>.

<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution 36/81; and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Meaningfully engaging with youth* (Paris, 2019).

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2. Does your country have education for young people on integrity, ethics and anti-corruption at the primary, secondary, tertiary or informal level? If yes, please describe and provide any supporting documents.

Since inception, the FCC (previously ICAC) has laid much emphasis on the education of young people on corruption, ethics, and integrity. In this context, the institution has regularly conducted awareness raising campaigns on anti-corruption and the importance of values/ethics/integrity in primary, secondary and tertiary education institutions in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology.

Another important initiative undertaken has been the development and integration of anti-corruption elements in the tertiary education curriculum of public and private tertiary institutions. Through these modules the youth (18 +) has been educated on anti-corruption issues and the importance of ethics and integrity. These anti-corruption components are currently being complemented by the UNODC GRACE modules. As extra-curricular activities, university students are also encouraged to participate in anti-corruption competitions and projects.

In addition to the above, several programmes and platforms have also been developed targeting the youth such as :

- Implementation of a Lifeskills Programme in all secondary schools in Mauritius targeting young people (teens) aged 14-15;
- Setting up of Integrity Clubs (ICs) at the level of secondary schools with the aim of educating the young population and promoting value-based activities. To facilitate the implementation of the anti-corruption activities, members of IC's are educated on corruption and related issues at school level. Consequently, this initiative allows schools to take ownership of the activities implemented; and
- For the higher education sector, an Inter-University Students Anti-Corruption Forum has been set up which regroups representatives from all the public and private higher education institutions in Mauritius. The aim of the platform is to sensitise youth on the dangers of corruption as well as provide the youth with a platform to discuss anti-corruption issues, share views among peers, and foster youth engagement as ambassadors of change.

3. How does your country meaningfully include young people in the development, implementation and monitoring of anti-corruption efforts, including in relation to national anti-corruption strategies?

In line with its mandate, the FCC (previously ICAC) has worked extensively with the youth to promote and sustain their meaningful engagement in the fight against corruption. In this respect, the youth has been engaged in anti-corruption initiatives not only as participants but also as leaders/contributors in the implementation of anti-corruption programmes which eventually grooms them as anti-corruption ambassadors.

Thus, to further secure the buy-in of youth, the FCC (previously ICAC) sustained their engagement through membership to the CAC which involved catalysing and strengthening citizen's participation to sustain an anti-corruption culture and reinforce community



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United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

integrity. On the other hand, as members of the Inter-University Students Anti-Corruption Forum, students from Higher Education Institution (HEIs) also contribute to further the anti-corruption mandate by sharing of ideas and views in the implementation of anti-corruption initiatives. Consequently, they are regularly provided with the opportunity to participate in anti-corruption programmes/activities conducted by the institution which fosters responsible citizenship.

### **The negative effects of corruption on women and the role played by women in preventing and combating corruption**

1. Have any studies (quantitative or qualitative) been undertaken or has information been gathered in view of discerning the negative effects of corruption on women in your country? If available, please provide the findings of any such studies or information collection efforts.

Unfortunately, no studies (quantitative or qualitative) have yet been undertaken or information gathered in view of discerning the negative effects of corruption on women in Mauritius.

2. Has your country promoted the role of women in preventing and combating corruption? Has this included efforts to promote the meaningful participation and engagement of, and cooperation with, women's and community-based organizations that support women in the policy development, planning, implementation and monitoring of your anti-corruption programmes? Please enclose any supporting documentation or hyperlinks, if available.

Regarding development, planning, implementation of anti-corruption programmes, the FCC (previously ICAC) has since its inception promoted meaningful participation and engagement of women across all sectors (public sector, private sector, civil society and youth) in preventing and combating corruption. One such initiative is the empowerment of women entrepreneurs through focused workshops with the aim of enlisting their support in the fight against corruption at grassroot level and the promotion of integrity, transparency and accountability in all undertakings.

Further, to commemorate the International Women's Day to promote women participation in the fight, various initiatives were undertaken such as organisation of forums, and development of e-posters disseminated through the ICAC Facebook page.

In this perspective and in view of strengthening the role of women in law enforcement, the FCC (previously ICAC) regularly empowers women, who are officers of the Commission.

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