#WORKFORIT

YOUTH BRIDGE

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SALZBURG ACADEMY on MEDIA & GLOBAL CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

UNDP country offices in Moldova, Serbia, and Armenia have partnered on an international effort to reduce corruption across sectors. Called Youth Bridge, it is conceived as a platform for anti-corruption programs in all three countries, targeted specifically at youth between the ages of 15-24. It will be comprised of multiple projects, from games, to social media campaigns to mobile applications. The Salzburg Academy for Media and Global Change was tasked with creating specific ideas and processes that could contribute to the Youth Bridge platform.

PART I: FRAMING THE PROBLEM
Country: Armenia
Issue: Corruption in the education system
Rationale:

The corruption in the education system in Armenia is a detriment to the development of the country. Students sometimes find that they have no choice but to buy their grades. Even teachers can be victims, resorting to bribes in order to secure employment. People that are willing to bend the rules are the ones that can benefit from the corrupted system.

Citizens are aware of this problem, but are quite often too afraid to speak out against the injustices that they see, let alone report them to an official. Students, teachers and parents are locked within this vicious cycle and want to break free. They simply need a reliable outlet to discuss and report corruption.

Tackling corruption in the education system is fundamental because it has an impact on how young people will interact with corruption in the future. This culture of dishonesty is slowing down the development of the whole country, and the application of laws is arbitrary and unequal. It is not the best-qualified teachers that get hired, or the most devoted students that graduate with honors, but rather those that are willing to pay.

Despite a general perception that corruption is one of the country's biggest issues, it is not often portrayed this way in the media. They report on the issue as though it is lessening, but in the citizen's opinion, it is not getting any better. Only extreme cases of embezzlement are reported. The problem is present in every-day Armenian life, but not in every-day news (Aleksanyan)[1].

PART II: THE SOLUTION
Our solution:

The solution is to create an online web application for citizens of Armenia with three main purposes. The first purpose is for school officials to have the option to "Take A Pledge". The second is for people to report the corruption they see or know is happening in the education system. The third is to provide them with up-to-date information about specific schools with the number of reports, test results and other public information.

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[1] Aleksanyan, Harutyun (2007-20112). Cases of Corruption and its Prevention in Armenia's Education System.

The pledge is for schools to be recognized as institutions actively fighting corruption. They admit that they know the corruption in their school is a problem and that they are working towards finding a solution.

People will be able to report in two ways on two types of behavior. They can make a positive report for a teacher or official with whom they had a positive experience with, or make a negative report about someone who was acting in an unprofessional way. The basis of the platform is that reports will remain anonymous to protect the identities of those who speak out against corruption. The site is not focused simply on criminalizing those who contribute to the problem; but on persuading citizens to dialogue.

The reports will be subject to an algorithm to prioritize them depending on area, type of bribe, name school of school or teacher, and number of reports The police will investigate a school or teacher that receives many negative reports or one very serious report. Reports will be anonymously published, unless the user requests that their information be posted.

The success of a system like this is dependent on a critical mass of users. Out of the nearly 3 million people in Armenia, 1.3 million have access to broadband and 3.3 million report having a phone and using it regularly (Index Mundi)[2].

The web application will be sustained through the use of a highly active anti-corruption campaign. The campaign will promote the link to the application on their paraphernalia such as bracelets, stickers, and Facebook photos. The application will also have a specific sector for campaign materials. This section can show videos, images, links to selling their products, as well as downloadable content related to the campaign.

Implementation:

The project is affordable and easy to implement in various countries. It would be ready to launch within a year and could be timed with the campaign.

There are many similar projects being implemented in various other countries. "I Paid A Bribe" is a reporting tool for citizens of India to report incidences of bribery. "HarassMap" addresses the issue of harassment in all forms, but especially the sexual harassment of women. There has been a huge spike in the number of other reporting sites for any issue that a country is facing. These tools prove to be helpful because of the mapping tools used to pinpoint where a large number of reports are coming from.

Potential partners may include Transparency International, which has a significant presence in Serbia, Moldova and Armenia, or Armenian Progressive Youth or Youth For Achievements.

The outcome will be assessed by a number of things, both in the short-term and in the long-term. Immediate progress will be visible through the number of hits the application gets, the number of reports received, or the number of schools that have taken the Pledge. In the long-term, success will be seen by the amount of schools implementing anti-corruption plans, and eventually future studies that are conducted about corruption in the education system will show the decrease in number of students who believe that corruption is an issue and a change in the way that society perceives corruption.

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[2] Armenia. (n.d.). Retrieved August 7, 2014, from http://www.indexmundi.com/armenia/

Visualization:

Who We Are
How It Works
View All Reports
Campaign
Privacy Statement
Contact Us

●●●○○ ABC   09:06 AM
#workforit
YOUTH BRIDGE
Make A Report
Take The Pledge
Find My School
GPS Location

Home Page for Web Application.
Three main calls to actions.
1. Make a report
2. Find your school
3. Take the Pledge
Option to open left bar with more options of pages to search.

●●●○○ ABC   09:06 AM
#workforit
Make A Report
Positive Report   Negative Report

First call to action. Title of page is "Make A Report".

Option to make a Positive Report or a Negative Report.

●●●○○ ABC   09:06 AM
#workforit
Positive Report
1. Choose Your School   Choices ▼
School 1
School 2
School 3
School 4
School 5
2. Name of teacher or administrator
3. Add comment

Form for a Positive Report. The user selects their school and names the person and is given the chance to share their story.

●●●○○ ABC   09:06 AM
#workforit
Negative Report
1. City
2. School
3. I am a   ☐ Teacher
                  ☑ Parent
                  ☐ Student
Reporting a   ☑ Teacher
                  ☐ Parent
                  ☐ Student
4. Add comment

Form for a Negative Report. The user selects their city and school but is not required to give any names. The select the status of the persons involved and share their story.

This is the next call to action, for administrators to Take the Pledge to agree to be actively fighting corruption. They enter their name and their school and check the I Pledge box with the conditions of the Pledge.

●●●○○ ABC 09:06 AM

#workforit

Take the Pledge

1. Name

2. School

☐ I PLEDGE

To take a stand against corruption.

To create programs that promote positive and honest behavior among citizens.

To actively and openly discuss the issues of corruption with parents and students.

Submit

Once the school official submits their form, they are taken to the next page, which congratulates them for taking the Pledge. They also see a list of schools who have taken the Pledge with their name on the list.

●●●○○ ABC 09:06 AM

#workforit

Take the Pledge

Congratulations!
You have taken the pledge to take a stand against corruption.

Here's some other schools who have taken the pledge, too!

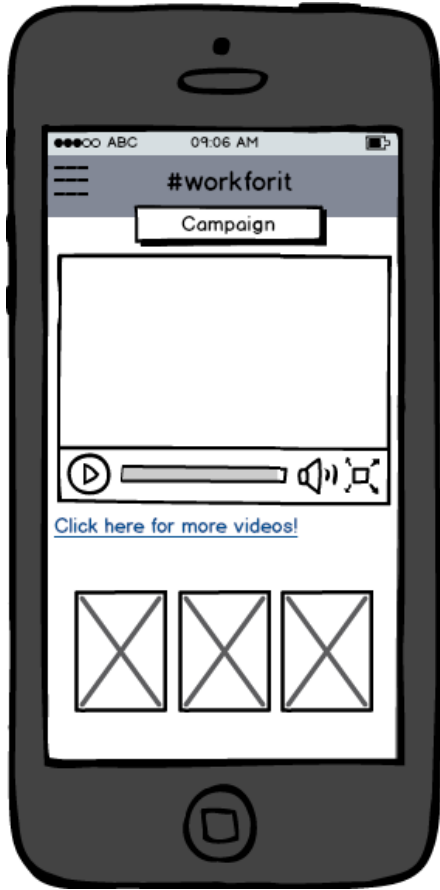School 1
School 2
School 3
School 4
School 5

This is where parents, students, or officials can find information about a specific school. Once the school is selected, the number of reports for that school will show, as well as other public information.

●●●○○ ABC 09:06 AM

Find My School

1. Choose Your School Choices ▼

School 1
School 2
School 3
School 4
School 5

Number of Reports 17

Average SAT Score 1050

Average TOEFL Score 80

☑ The administrator of this school has taken the Pledge!

This is a sample page of viewing a report. The user will be able to read the full report, excluding the personal information of the submitter, and will be able to give the report thumbs up, thumbs down, or comment on it.

●●●○○ ABC 09:06 AM

#workforit

View All Reports

REPORT #1157
Yesterday, I went to go to a teacher for help after class. I saw her talking with another student so I waited outside. I started to listen and realized that the teacher was explaining that the student had a D in the class and needed a C+ to pass. She offered to change his grade in exchange for money.

Comment on this report:

This is the page for the campaign to promote any of their materials. They can post videos, pictures, as well as sell any branded products that will engage citizens in the project.

How It Works. There is a flowchart that explains very simply how the process works. People have a comment to make. The come to the site. They make the report. That raises awareness and they have helped to fight corruption.