



Students strengthening the budget process and services in Palestine

In Palestine, 1,800 students conducted social audits in their communities over the last year, with support from their school faculty, the Teacher Creativity Centre (TCC) and Integrity Action. They analysed policies and practice, engaged experts in engineering, maintenance and design, and conducted community interviews to monitor the use of funds. The media publicised the work and engaged in advocacy especially when it was found that public officials are not cooperating.

The students uncovered financial and delivery problems in 85% of the 57 projects they monitored. They have worked with authorities and contractors to address these issues. In the West Bank, for example, students identified problems in the construction of a road in Qabatiya and pressed the mayor to ensure the contractor delivered properly and on time.¹ In Awarta, the students' monitoring has ensured that residents of Awarta and surrounding villages benefit from an improved electrical network, better access to water, and greater safety because of the street lighting and covered power cables.² In the Nablus area, students stopped a contractor from building a road on people's land and made sure it was delivered in the right place and to the correct dimensions. The students' work resulted in better roads for more than 200,000 people.

The students' monitoring findings are captured on DevelopmentCheck, an online platform for feedback on development. One can see the level of transparency, participation and effectiveness of development projects in Palestine, such as roads, schools, water projects and a centre for people with disabilities.³

Policy and practices are changing. After signing a memorandum of understanding with the Teacher Creativity Center, the Ministry of Education is ensuring that every teacher trained on the action learning methodology implements social audits with their classes to ensure sustainability. The Ministry of Education released a national plan and is developing their strategy with the Center, opening the door for students to conduct social audits in public schools and improve services across the West Bank.

¹ Please see the report on DevelopmentCheck <http://www.developmentcheck.org/project-view/526>

² Please see the report on DevelopmentCheck <http://www.developmentcheck.org/project-view/303>

³ Please see the projects on DevelopmentCheck <http://www.developmentcheck.org/project-view/303><http://www.developmentcheck.org/palestine>