

12. PROTESTS

MOBILISE

IN A NUTSHELL

Protest events are a way for citizens and groups to come together in public as a display of large scale support or opposition for a particular issue. Protests, marches, demonstrations and rallies can be a powerful tool for anti-corruption campaigners.

REMEMBER

Before getting started on planning, it's important to verify that protest marches are in line with your national and local laws and to check what legal permits, if any, are required. You should also let your parents know what you have planned. If you're not permitted to carry out this task, please refer to our other youth activities.

HOW DO YOU SET IT UP?

- 1. Build a core organising group:** Protests require a lot of planning, and this is best done with a team. What logistics do you need to worry about? Think about media, permits, equipment, safety, transport and signs.
- 2. Define your message:** Move ahead in steps. Protests are used to communicate short, simple messages. What's the slogan or motto that best describes your campaign? Make it catchy.
- 3. Pick a time and location:** When and where you hold a protest will help determine who can come. The circumstances of the date and location are often important. It is common to march on days of national or historical significance.
- 4. Notify the authorities:** Think about who needs to be notified. This may include police, local government and school or university authorities.
- 5. Organise permits:** You may also need specific permits or formal permissions. If your protest is within your school, ask administrative or senior staff what you need to do.
- 6. Round up volunteers:** Gather as many people as you can to help out on the day. Create a phone tree to make getting the message out as easy as possible.
- 7. Spread the word:** A protest depends on public awareness. Create as much publicity as possible to swell your crowd! Think about social media and word-of-mouth campaigns to do this.

12. PROTESTS

8. **Organise speakers:** Most protest events have a speaker or speakers as the centrepiece activity. The right speakers can educate protestors about your message and inspire them to take up your cause.
9. **Check for hazards and dangers:** The safety of your protestors is vital. You owe it to them to keep them safe. Plan for a safe and risk-free day.
10. **Get equipped:** What do you need to make the day succeed? Microphones? Signs? Video cameras?
11. **Check the weather:** Nothing keeps protestors away like bad weather. Have a “plan B” – like an indoor venue.
12. **Manage the info:** You can educate your protestors by giving them reading material to take away. A protest is also a great chance to get contact details (like e-mail addresses) so you can reach people in the future.
13. **Clean up your mess:** Make sure you clean up when you’re done. Remember that people have to use that space after you’re finished, so leave it the way you found it.

WHY DO IT?

- Protests are a great way to show strength and create change.
- Peaceful protests and rallies can be the beginning of bigger campaigns and movements.

YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN

- The combination of strong motivation, good planning, creativity and passion can be a powerful force to see your campaign realised.

WHAT ARE THE LIMITATIONS?

- Protests come with the high risk of low turnouts. Be confident that you can get enough people there to make it look impressive by promoting the event.
- Protests can come with legal risks. Know what you’re getting yourself and volunteers into. Make sure your protestors are safe by acting within the law and consulting police on safety precautions.

IDEA IN ACTION

Thailand: The Thai Youth Anti-Corruption Network

The Thai Youth Anti-Corruption Network, a group of more than 4,000 Thai university students from more than 90 universities, was recognised as a “Creative for Good” best practice by the World Economic Forum. On 9 December 2012, on International Anti-Corruption Day, 2,000 students rallied at the Bangkok Art and Culture Center. They raised public awareness on the corrosive effects of corruption in Thai society and sent a signal that every sector in Thailand should be actively engaged in fighting corruption, including young people and their universities.

Find out more: www.th.undp.org/content/thailand/en/home/presscenter/articles/2012/12/11/students-crowd-bangkok-on-anti-corruption-day-december-9.html