

The Transparent Education Network (TEN)

The SLP **Anti-Corruption** component has developed the Transparent Education Network (TEN) aimed at: (a) raising awareness about corruption in education and its impact on society; (b) strengthening local capacity to analyze effects of corruption in education at individual and school levels; and (c) promote a culture of transparency and accountability in secondary- and tertiary-level schools.

Phase 2 of the project, launched in November 2010, has seen a fresh wave of enthusiasm from the TEN member NGOs. During these months, the TEN member NGOs have focused on recruiting and training new youth participants for the workshop activities; developing the codes of conduct; and reaching out to universities and other local and international stakeholders.

This program update places a spotlight on staff members from each of the four TEN member NGOs – YEF, YUVA, NGOC and Alliance - whose hard work and key contributions bring the TEN project to life every day.

Youth Educational Forum, Macedonia

Katerina Todorovska is a Project Coordinator at Youth Educational Forum (YEF), TEN member in Macedonia. She has been collaborating with TEN since Phase 1 and has been involved in a variety of activities ranging from awareness raising and grant writing, to workshop training and development / implementation of Codes of Conduct.

“The *Codes of Conduct* component is, I think, the best thing that is coming out of the project. We have established a good cooperation with universities at this point. It was a challenge at first, but now I think we really have empowered both students and professors to understand their rights and responsibilities when it comes to promoting a transparent and accountable education system.”

Katerina has been interested in issues regarding human rights and anti-corruption since her years as a law student.

“Cheating and corruption is tolerated in school. It is considered a normal, everyday thing. This is the greatest challenge to deal with – people need to change their mindset regarding what corruption in education is, and I think TEN is doing this, especially with youth. To help them understand that they are not just users of a service, but active participants in the education system with rights and responsibilities.”



Katerina Todorovska, YEF



Svetlana Zakrevska, Alliance

The Transparent Education Network (TEN)

brings together key individuals and organizations from the Europe and Eurasia region to foster peer-to-peer collaboration and dialogue and share lessons learned, best practices, challenges, and knowledge / resources relevant for understanding and addressing the issues related to corruption in education.

TEN consists of the following four organizations: 1)

- 1) **NGO Center (NGOC)** in Armenia;
- 2) **YUVA Humanitarian Center (YUVA)** in Azerbaijan;
- 3) **Youth Educational Forum (YEF)** in Macedonia;
- and 4) **Alliance** in Ukraine.



YUVA Humanitarian Center, Azerbaijan

Togrul Alakbarov is a Project Coordinator at YUVA Humanitarian Center since August 2010. One of the latest additions to the TEN team, Togrul is known for his magnetic energy and his enthusiasm to help others learn about transparency.

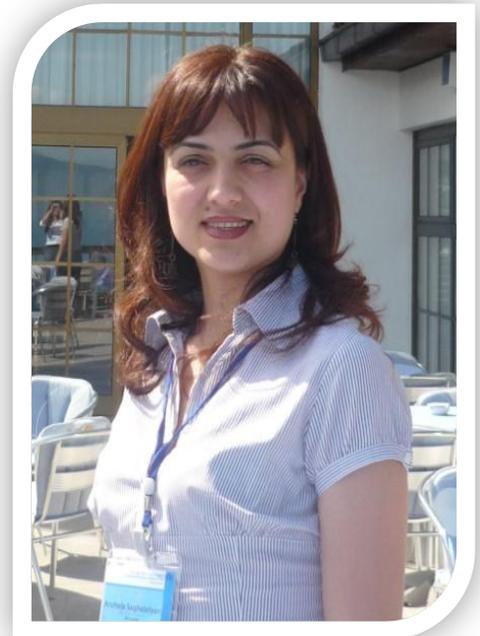
“Corruption is not something that you can eliminate overnight. It is a long struggle and it takes a lot of optimism! We, at YUVA, are optimistic. We are not here just to carry out a project. We are here because we believe this change is long overdue and we want to do something about it.”

Togrul is especially active and involved with the youth. He is responsible for several of the most successful TEN initiatives at YUVA such as: *I am a Student. I Don't Give a Bribe*, the original student *flash mobs* held in Baku, and the popular “TENergy parties” with students from partner universities. All of these activities have promoted the Transparent Education Network in the higher education community of Azerbaijan in combination with the use of media and communications thanks to the acclaimed TEN blog and frequent appearances in radio and television broadcasts.

“I am particularly proud to be a part of this anti-corruption effort and to see that it is really happening. Youth stay in our YUVA offices until 8pm most nights talking about issues of transparency in education. I am confident that a real change is under way here today, thanks to TEN and all of our efforts.”



Togrul Alakbarov, YUVA



Angela Saghetelyan, NGO Center

NGO Alliance, Ukraine

Svetlana Zakrevska is the President of NGO Alliance, TEN member in Ukraine. She has been involved with the project since 2009, working closely with the other TEN members to provide guidance and support in the development and implementation of Codes of Conduct for partner higher education institutions in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Macedonia.

“Corruption really influences the everybody’s lives in the university. Codes of Conduct are one of the most important tools to fight the tendency to be corrupt and help to create an environment of transparency. The design and enforcement of this document are critical steps to succeed. My role is to facilitate this process.”

As an expert in the development and implementation Codes of Conduct, in November 2010, Svetlana hosted the TEN Workshop in Kiev, Ukraine and has witnessed the progress of the member NGOs throughout the life of TEN.

“We all have a very difficult task because we are trying to change people’s ideas about corruption, and the environment is still largely very hostile toward change. This is a big change that has to happen, but I am hopeful because I have traveled to Armenia and Macedonia, and I have met with the member NGOs staff, and worked with them intensely. I have to say that these are great teams. I have not visited the Azerbaijani NGO yet but I am in contact with them. It is good to see that things are moving and that challenges are being addressed.”

NGO Center, Armenia

Angela Saghatelian is a Project Coordinator at NGO Center, TEN member in Armenia. Angela has been involved with TEN since Phase 1 and has witnessed the project’s evolution and growing success.

“During Phase 1 we faced various barrier. People didn’t understand why it is important to promote transparency in education and we spent time educating stakeholders about these issues. Now we have overcome these challenges and we are really beginning to see the results. Students and professors are motivated and NGO Center is really becoming well known as an anti-corruption fighter in Armenia and in the region. We have built capacity and knowledge about corruption and now we’re being sought to provide guidance for this type of efforts.”

NGO Center has recently been invited to participate in a USAID-UNDP co-sponsored conference on combating corruption in April, as a part of the Mobilizing Action Against Corruption (MAAC) Project.

“We certainly will continue in this direction after the life of the TEN project. We want to continue the work we are doing with our partner universities and institutions to promote the Codes of Conduct and the practice of transparency in education. Training and educating students on these issues is the most rewarding part of the project because they are so enthusiastic and motivated to be a part of this initiative.”