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SAMPLE PROPOSAL · 2010

Empowering Youth for Transparent Health Governance: The 'Your Health, Your Say' Initiative in Cameroon

A community-driven project equipping young citizens with human and electoral rights education to actively participate in the governance of Local Public Hospital Institutions and improve healthcare delivery.

Executive Summary

In many regions of Cameroon, the poor quality of service delivery in Local Public Hospital Institutions (LPHIs) is deeply rooted in weak community oversight and a lack of citizen engagement in local health governance. The 'Your Health, Your Say' project addresses this critical challenge by mobilizing and empowering youth—traditionally sidelined in institutional decision-making—to claim their rights and actively participate in health management committees. Over a 12-month implementation period, this initiative will train 150 young community leaders in human rights, health governance, and electoral advocacy, establishing structured dialogue platforms between citizens and hospital administrators. By bridging the gap between communities and health providers, the project aims to foster transparency, accountability, and measurable improvements in local healthcare service delivery.

Background and Context

Cameroon's decentralized health system relies heavily on the active participation of local communities to ensure that public hospitals remain responsive, transparent, and accountable to the populations they serve. While regulatory frameworks provide for community representation within Local Public Hospital Institutions (LPHIs), these mechanisms often remain nominal. Communities frequently lack the knowledge, confidence, and organizational capacity to hold health authorities accountable. Youth, who represent over 60 percent of the population, are particularly disconnected from these formal governance structures. Without proper education on human rights, electoral processes, and civic advocacy, young citizens view health services merely as transactional rather than as a public right subject to democratic oversight.

Problem Statement

The core problem is the persistent failure of communities—particularly youth—to fulfill their governance responsibilities within Local Public Hospital Institutions in Cameroon, leading to systemic poor governance and substandard health service delivery. This governance deficit manifests as chronic absenteeism of staff, lack of transparency in drug management, disrespectful treatment of patients, and the absence of functional feedback mechanisms. Because young people are excluded from decision-making spaces, their specific health needs are ignored, and abuses go unchallenged. Without targeted intervention to build civic competence and establish structured engagement channels, LPHIs will continue to operate without public accountability, perpetuating poor health outcomes across vulnerable communities.

Goal

To enhance accountability, transparency, and service delivery in Local Public Hospital Institutions in target Cameroonian districts through active youth participation in health governance and human rights advocacy.

Objectives

- Train 150 youth leaders in human rights, health sector governance, and civic advocacy within the first four months of the project.
- Establish and operationalize five Community-Hospital Dialogue Platforms (CHDPs) connecting youth representatives with LPHI management teams by month six.
- Conduct three community-led social audits on healthcare service delivery and present findings to municipal and health authorities by month nine.
- Advocate for the formal inclusion of youth representatives in at least three local LPHI management boards by the end of the project cycle.

Project Description

The 'Your Health, Your Say' project employs a rights-based approach to transform the relationship between young citizens and public health providers. Implemented over 12 months in two target health districts, the project combines capacity building, community organizing, and constructive advocacy. First, we will recruit and train 150 Youth Health Ambassadors (YHAs) through intensive workshops focusing on electoral rights, health rights, and monitoring techniques. Second, these ambassadors will cascade their knowledge to wider community groups and establish Community- Hospital Dialogue Platforms—safe spaces for collaborative problem-solving between patients, youth, and hospital directors. Finally, the project will utilize findings from youth-led social audits to drive policy dialogue with local health delegations, ensuring long-term institutional reforms.

Key Activities

- Conduct a baseline assessment on current community participation levels and governance bottlenecks within target LPHIs.
- Design and print a simplified civic and health rights toolkit adapted for youth and community audiences in French and English.
- Organize four intensive capacity-building workshops for 150 selected Youth Health Ambassadors on human rights, health governance, and advocacy.
- Facilitate the launch and bi-monthly meetings of five Community-Hospital Dialogue Platforms (CHDPs).
- Train and deploy youth monitors to conduct three structured social audits evaluating service delivery, drug availability, and patient rights in LPHIs.
- Host two municipal public hearings where youth present social audit findings to hospital directors, local council members, and health ministry officials.

Expected Outcomes

- 150 youth leaders possess advanced knowledge of human rights, electoral processes, and health governance principles.
- Five active Community-Hospital Dialogue Platforms functioning effectively to resolve minor grievances and improve local hospital transparency.
- Three comprehensive social audit reports published and formally submitted to municipal and health district authorities.
- Measurable improvement in the responsiveness of LPHI staff and inclusion of youth perspectives in local health planning.

Timeline

The project will be executed over a 12-month period, structured into three distinct phases: Phase 1 (Months 1-3) focuses on baseline studies, community mobilization, and curriculum finalization.

Phase 2 (Months 4-9) encompasses the training of youth ambassadors, the launch of dialogue platforms, and the execution of social audits. Phase 3 (Months 10-12) is dedicated to public advocacy hearings, institutional engagement, project evaluation, and sustainability planning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Project monitoring will be continuous and participatory, led by our dedicated M&E officer in collaboration with youth representatives and local partner organizations. We will track progress against a detailed Logical Framework containing specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) indicators. Key verification tools will include workshop attendance records, meeting minutes from the Community-Hospital Dialogue Platforms, published social audit reports, and pre- and post-training evaluation tests. A mid-term review will be conducted at month six to assess implementation pace and make necessary tactical adjustments, followed by a comprehensive external evaluation at month 12.

Risks and Mitigation

Potential project risks include resistance or suspicion from conservative hospital administrators regarding external monitoring. This will be mitigated by framing social audits as constructive, collaborative tools rather than punitive inspections, emphasizing shared goals of better patient care. Another risk is youth apathy or dropout; we will counter this by providing practical leadership development opportunities, certificates of completion, and active roles in high-level municipal forums to maintain high motivation.

Sustainability

Project sustainability is embedded in its institutional design. By anchoring community oversight within permanent Community-Hospital Dialogue Platforms, the project builds lasting bridges that will persist beyond donor funding. Furthermore, by institutionalizing youth representation on hospital management boards, we create structural permanence. Capacity building is focused heavily on local youth organizations and civic leaders, ensuring that human rights and health advocacy skills remain rooted within the community for years to come.

Project Management

The project will be managed by an experienced NGO team based in Cameroon, possessing proven expertise in human rights advocacy, public health governance, and youth mobilization. A dedicated Project Coordinator will oversee day-to-day implementation, supported by a Finance and Administrative Officer and a Community Outreach Field Officer. Technical oversight will be provided by an advisory board comprising civil society leaders, public health specialists, and local administrative representatives.

Budget Overview

Personnel (Project Coordinator, Field Officers, M&E Specialist)	\$18,500
Capacity Building & Training Workshops (Venues, materials, travel, per diems)	\$12,000
Community Engagement & Dialogue Platforms (Meeting costs, logistics)	\$5,500
Social Audits & Research (Toolkit design, survey printing, data analysis)	\$4,000
Advocacy & Public Hearings (Venue hire, media outreach, transport)	\$3,500
Administrative & Indirect Costs (Office supplies, communication, audit)	\$3,000
Total Requested Grant	\$46,500

Conclusion

The 'Your Health, Your Say' project offers a practical, rights-based solution to the systemic governance challenges plaguing Local Public Hospital Institutions in Cameroon. By empowering youth with the knowledge and platforms to demand accountability, this initiative transforms passive communities into active partners in public health. With modest financial investment, the project will generate enduring improvements in transparency, civic engagement, and healthcare service delivery, directly benefiting thousands of vulnerable citizens who rely on public health institutions.



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