

UNIT 10

Active Community Participation

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- know the importance of active community participation.
- understand local issues which need active community participation.
- explain the purposes of local civic organization.

10.1 The Importance of Active Community Participation

Look at the following pictures.



Picture 10.1. School sanitation club in activity



Picture 10.2. Community activity in the school

- List the differences between the two pictures.
- Discuss the causes for the differences.
- Which of the above pictures shows active community participation?

The speech of Gunjela School director

As usual the director of Gunjela School delivered his speech to the students at the end of the 1st semester. According to his words, the vision of the school is to produce qualified citizens. For that, the school has to provide quality lessons for the students.

In addition to this, he mentioned some of the problems which affect the quality of the teaching-learning process. The problems of the Gunjela School include lack of pure water, no toilets, the absence of a library and no laboratories. Assuring the preparation of students who will take 10th Grade National Exam for the first time is another problem for the school. Because students lack a library, laboratories, etc. they cannot develop their knowledge practically and outside the class.

But now parents are organized and are supporting the school. As a result most of the problems of the school are alleviated. Through the active involvement of the community the school has a supply of pure water; a library with reference books; a laboratory to relate theory with practice. Some clubs such as the civics and ethical education club, HIV/AIDS, etc. are established with the help of the students. These clubs are able to talk about democratic elections.

Teachers have decided to provide tutorial classes to students who will take the 10th Grade National Examination.

The director also explained about the rules and regulations of the school administration which is approved by the student council. The director strongly

Active Community Participation

emphasized that all of the above improvements and measures are the result of the active involvement of students, their families and the community in the school administration. He also expressed his hope that the quality of education will be improved in the year as many activities are carried out.

(Source: "Lisan Naod" Andegya Amet kutir 1 Tir –Megabit 2000 from Ase Naod school)

Activity 1

1. What are the problems of Gunjela School? What kinds of solutions were provided?
2. What are the roles of students in solving the problems of Gunjela School?
3. Is there any better role that should be played by the students in identifying and solving the problems of Gunjela School? Please explain it with examples.
4. Based on the conditions in your school identify five problems of your school then suggest possible solutions to the problems.
5. Describe what will be the role of the students in your school in identifying and solving the school's problems?

Most of the time activities should be done through the participation of many people otherwise the result will not be satisfactory. For instance to maintain our local security needs the participation of many people is required. If not it doesn't have a good result. In addition to this, it is impossible to connect our locality with other villages without active community participation.

This shows how active community involvement is important. More specifically, we personally benefit from active community participation. For example, we can acquire experience. Furthermore, each participant will be protected from problems.

Active involvement in community participation has more benefit to the community than to

individuals. That means, all local communities are beneficiaries. From our local surroundings the merit of active community participation can be extended to the nearby woreda, zone, regions as well as to the country. Therefore, active community participation has a broader advantage.

Activity 2

Answer the following questions:

1. If someone argues that active community participation is not important, how would you convince this individual that it is?
2. Explain the social benefit of active community participation.

Tullo Primary School

Tullo Primary School is located far from Addis Ababa in a small town. There are about one thousand and eight hundred students in the school. The Tullo Primary School has many problems. One of the major problems is what some students do in groups. They violate the school regulations and this affects the school's activities. There are some students who violate the school rules and regulations in groups. These groups of students usually come after drinking alcohol, so they disturb teachers, students and other school communities.

For instance, they behave illegal in their locality and harass female students even within the school compound. They come late to school and create conflicts with their teachers.

No one can criticize them because they do not respect even their teachers. Because of this, they affect the teaching and learning process in the school. Generally, Tullo School has faced seriously disciplinary problems.

The new director is assigned to the school because he has experience to solve such kinds of problems. The director has decided to look for the solution of the problems. Even though the problems

Active Community Participation

need immediate measures the director hoped that they could be resolved. However, the fruitfulness of his solutions is not only based on his efforts but also needs the participation of different responsible individuals such as students, parents, religious leaders, police officers etc.

As a result, all responsible people were invited to support the director's ideas. His ideas were fully supported by everybody, so teachers and families in the local community with their kebele associations supported the director. Finally, the problem was resolved with the involvement of all concerned bodies, which was extended to solve other problems of the schools as well.

Now Tullo School is one of the best schools, and recognized by the zone for its organized activities and ethical standards.

Group Work

1. Assume you are student of Tullo School and member of student council; identify the problems of the school and suggest your solutions.
2. Identify the main problems of your school and suggest solutions that can involve active community participation and report it to the class.

Like any other organization a school also has its own community. Whatever the problems the school faces the community is concerned. In a democratic environment every school should encourage community participation either in groups or individually, as necessary.

Therefore, all members of the school community should approve any decision. Members of school communities have to participate without any outside reinforcement and influence for the improvement of the school. This indicates each and every student should have to actively participate in all issues concerning the school.

Activity 3

1. Do you think that in a democratic system the high-ranking officials of institutions and ordinary employees should participate with the issues affecting their institutions and know the decision equally? Why? How?
2. Do you think that you have to participate in issues affecting your school? Why/Why not?

10.2 The Importance of Participating in Civic Associations

Let student look at the following two pictures.



Picture 10.3. Environmental pollution



Picture 10.4. Movement against environmental pollution

- What do you understand from the pictures?
- What is the benefit of the association in the picture to society?

I love my smoke-free childhood

"There are so many problems that may affect children. Moreover, according to international laws children

Active Community Participation

have the right to be protected from harmful things.” This is the message of Matthias who is 12 years old and a member of the Anti-Cancer Association.

International cancer day is annually celebrated throughout the world. This year’s slogan for the day is “I love my smoke-free childhood”. It is the wish of all children in the world.



Picture 10.5. Respect our right to live in clean environments

Matthias said “cigarettes, besides affecting the life of the smokers, pollutes the surroundings which others share. Therefore, people who smoke cigarettes in our home, school or in our locality have to stop. Everybody has the responsibility to advise smokers in order to stop such behaviour.”

The international cancer organization needs our support in order to support its aim of protecting children from cigarette smoke. The organization minimizes the spread of cancer by teaching smokers about the effects of smoking. We can persuade smokers not to smoke cigarettes.

We all have the responsibility to stop people smoking cigarettes at home, in the car, at school, in places of civic association, etc. In order to meet the above goal families, teachers and all people who love and support children should have the responsibility to create an environment free from cigarette smoke. Children have the right to live in clean and unpolluted areas.

Activity 4

Answer the following questions according to the passage:

1. What are the two civic associations named in the passage? List their functions.
2. What did you learn about Matthias?

Group Work

By using your knowledge of the above passage discuss the following in your groups:

- A. Talk about a similar club you could establish in your school.
- B. List the benefits you can get from such a club when you establish it in your school.
- C. Based on the benefits to be gained, explain the ways you can initiate students in order to participate in different clubs.

Civic organizations are organizations which can be established by groups or individuals having their own social and economic objectives. They are organizations formed by one’s initiation without the interference of government. Because of this they are free and legal associations. In a democratic system they provide society with different kinds of economic, social and political benefits.

Civic organizations have many benefits. They can do things, which are beyond the capacity of government to address, for society. They may create opportunities for society in order to discuss governmental policies to develop ideas and to control the country’s politics.

In addition to this, individuals after participating in civic association will get experience and knowledge. The other benefit is that members can also develop the culture of co-operation and concern for each other as well as have positive attitude towards any work.

Active Community Participation

Activity 5

Do the following questions:

1. Prepare a short story about a man or a woman who is hard worker in your locality.
2. List the importance of civic associations.

“Tutuye” and her grandfather “Abiye”

Tutuye: Abiye, what is your birthday that mama celebrate today?

Abiye: It is my eighty-eight year. God bless her!

Tutuye: Thus, why you did quarrel with her after she did it?

Abiye: That is because of her ignorance Tutuye! She said that “Today is your birthday so you have to wear new clothes and look smart. But do not move out of home”.

Tutuye: What is her ignorance Abiye? I wear new cloth in my birthday, look beautiful and decorated then sit with my sisters and brothers and enjoy at home? Why do not you like me?

Abiye: You also did not understand me. You see I lived long and throughout my life I served our local development association by working hard. The reason for my

long life is hard work. Therefore, I will not be isolated from my precious work in order to sit and celebrate my birthday. Until now I enjoyed with my family and celebrate my birthday. Then I have to change my cloth and go to work. I do have appointment with my staff after celebrating my birthday. I should not forget my two relatives. This is the reason for the dispute between your mother and me.

Tutuye: Now I understand Abiye! I will follow your habit!

Abiye: Good my daughter! Grow well! May God give you long life like me! Let you have love to your work!

Activity 6

Based on the above discussions answer the following questions:

1. According to your understanding what is the reason for dispute between Tutuye’s grandfather and her mother?
2. What lessons have you learned from Abiye?
3. Which example is best for Tutuye, that of her mother or of her grandfather? Why?

Summary

Active community participation has great benefits for the social development of a country and for building a democratic system. Democratic system can be built fast societal development as well as social security can be achieved through active community participation. Moreover, a democratic system creates a suitable environment for active community participation. In a democratic system, citizens are free to establish any associations. Unity and association will initiate and build individual’s power together.

Organizing civic associations is one of our democratic rights. Individuals and groups using their initiative and for different economic and social benefits establish civic associations. They are free from

governmental influence and support government by providing different services as well as playing great role in building a democratic system.

In society they monitor the implementation of governmental policy and pave the way for popular participation. If the associations are good and strong they even teach lessons about working co-operatively and building hardworking cultures.

Based on this, all students are expected to be members of civic associations and actively participate as well as discharge their responsibility. Through your active community participation you can promote your good habit, love and develop your working culture.

Active Community Participation

Key Words

<i>Personal benefit:</i>	Advantageous only for an individual
<i>Societal benefit:</i>	Important for some groups or the whole of society
<i>Initiation:</i>	Leading others in order to understand our ideas, purposes, etc.
<i>Love to work:</i>	Respecting our work because it is important for our existence

Unit Review Exercises

Do these review exercises in your exercise book.

I. Choose the correct answer for the following questions

- One of the benefits of a civic organization is:
 - Enabling members to hold political seats
 - To replace the government at the time when it faces scarcity of resources
 - To open a forum for civic participation in order to develop policies
 - To struggle on behalf of some discriminated groups of people.
- Any beneficiary works can be done:
 - Individually
 - In groups
 - Either individually or in groups
 - None of these.
- A true statement about civic associations is:
 - They can be formed by individual or groups
 - They can carry out activities, government guides and rules
 - They only social following not economic objective
 - None of these.
- Which of the following groups are beneficiaries of active community participation?
 - The country
 - Kebele's community
 - People in that woreda
 - All of these.

II. Write "True" if the statement is correct and write "False" if the statement is incorrect

- Active community participation has only personal benefits.
- In the world of competition, do we have to do things for personal benefit only?
- Our love to work can only be expressed only by talking about the benefits of work.
- A democratic system is necessary in order to organize civic associations as well as to play a wider and beneficiary role in society.
- Active community participation can create the love to work.

Active Community Participation

III. Match words or phrases under column 'A' with correct items of column 'B'

A

1. That cannot be done by an individual
2. One of the benefits of civic associations
3. Beneficiaries of an active community participation
4. Not influenced by government
5. Democratic system

B

- (A) Family, kebele, woreda, region and country
- (B) Lack of active community participation
- (C) Civic organizations
- (D) Local development activities
- (E) Doing activities which are beyond the government's capacity
- (F) Cultural imposition
- (G) Difficult conditions for active community participation

IV. Copy the following questions on your exercise book and fill the correct answer on the space provided

1. Civic organizations result from free _____ right.
2. If a society has some social development benefits after working hard this is the social benefit of _____ association.

V. Give short answers for the following questions

1. List two benefits of civic organizations.
2. Explain with examples the personal and societal advantages that are gained from active community participation.