

B.

APPENDIX B

Survey *instrument*.

The complete eighty-six-question instrument administered to all 100 respondents between January 2025 and January 2026.

The complete instrument is reproduced below. Open-response prompts have been condensed; multiple-choice options are listed as they appeared to respondents. Eighty-six questions across eleven sections.

Section 1 • Screening and Consent

Q1 Are you currently or have you previously served in any of the following roles?

Select all that apply.

- Elected local/municipal official
- Elected regional/state/provincial official
- Elected national legislator/parliamentarian
- Appointed government official
- Political party official
- Candidate for elected office
- Staff member or adviser to an elected official

– Other

Q 2 At what age did you first run for or enter public office/government service?

– Open response

Q 3 At what age did you first win elected office or receive an official government appointment?

– Open response

Q 4 What is your current status?

- Currently serving in elected office
 - Currently serving in appointed office
 - Former elected official
 - Former appointed official
 - Candidate seeking office again
 - No longer active in formal politics
 - Other
-

Q 5 Do you consent to participate in this study?

- Yes
 - No
-

Section 2 · Background and Political Entry

Q 6 Country of current or most recent political service:

– Open response

Q7 **Region:**

- Africa
 - Asia
 - Europe
 - Latin America
 - Middle East and North Africa
 - North America
 - Other
-

Q8 **Gender identity:**

- Woman
 - Man
 - Non-binary
 - Prefer to self-describe
 - Prefer not to say
-

Q9 **Age:**

- Open response
-

Q10 **What level of office or government position do/did you hold?**

- Municipal/local
 - Regional/state/provincial
 - National
 - Supranational/regional body
 - Executive/government ministry
 - Party leadership role
 - Other
-

Q11 **How did you first enter politics or public life? Select all that apply.**

- Political party youth wing
- Student politics

- Civil society or NGO work
 - Social movement or protest movement
 - Family political background
 - Community organizing
 - Professional expertise
 - Digital/social media activism
 - Invitation from a party or senior leader
 - Independent candidacy
 - Other
-

Q 12 Which factor was most important in helping you first win or enter office?

- Party nomination/support
 - Personal networks
 - Youth quota or reserved seat
 - Social movement support
 - Community reputation
 - Family/political connections
 - Personal financial resources
 - Digital campaign visibility
 - Civil society background
 - Other
-

Q 13 Before entering office, how prepared did you feel for the responsibilities of the role?

- Very prepared
 - Somewhat prepared
 - Neither prepared nor unprepared
 - Somewhat unprepared
 - Very unprepared
-

Q 14 After entering office, did you receive any formal onboarding or training?

- Yes, extensive training

- Yes, limited training
 - No formal training
 - I had to seek training independently
 - Not applicable
-

Section 3 · Political Retention and Career Continuity

Q15 Have you sought or do you plan to seek another term or higher office?

- Yes, I have already sought another term
 - Yes, I plan to seek another term
 - Yes, I plan to seek higher office
 - No, I do not plan to continue in electoral politics
 - Unsure
-

Q16 If you did not seek another term or are unsure, what are the main reasons? Select all that apply.

- Lack of party support
 - Financial constraints
 - Career or income instability
 - Burnout
 - Family responsibilities
 - Safety or harassment concerns
 - Limited influence in office
 - Lack of staff or institutional support
 - Disillusionment with politics
 - Difficulty securing renomination
 - Electoral defeat
 - Better opportunities outside politics
 - Other
-

Q17 How likely are you to still be active in formal politics five years from now?

- Very likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Unsure
 - Somewhat unlikely
 - Very unlikely
-

Q18 Which best describes your political career so far?

- I entered office and have continued to progress
 - I entered office but have struggled to sustain my career
 - I entered office but was pushed out or blocked from continuing
 - I entered office but chose to leave
 - I entered politics but have not yet won elected office
 - Other
-

Q19 In your view, is it easier for young people to win office than to remain in politics long-term?

- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q20 Please explain your answer.

- Open response
-

Section 4 · Barrier 1 — Party Displacement and Renomination Failure

Q 21 Did a political party support your first election or appointment?

- Yes
 - No
 - I ran as an independent
 - Not applicable
-

Q 22 How important was party support to your initial political success?

- Essential
 - Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all
-

Q 23 After you entered office, did your party continue to support your political career?

- Yes, strongly
 - Yes, somewhat
 - Support decreased over time
 - No, support was withdrawn
 - I was never supported by a party
 - Not applicable
-

Q 24 Have you ever faced difficulty securing renomination, reselection, or party backing for a future race?

- Yes
 - No
 - Not yet applicable
 - Prefer not to say
-

Q 25 If yes, what were the main reasons? Select all that apply.

- Party preferred an older or more senior candidate
- Factional politics

- Lack of money or fundraising capacity
 - Internal party competition
 - Gender, caste, ethnic, racial, religious, or class bias
 - My views conflicted with party leadership
 - I was seen as too independent
 - I lacked patronage networks
 - The seat was promised to someone else
 - Other
-

Q26 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “Young candidates are often used by parties for visibility, but not supported for long-term leadership.”

- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q27 Did you feel that your youth identity was more valued during the campaign than during your time in office?

- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

- Q 28** In your political system, how common is it for young elected officials to be replaced after one term by older or better-connected candidates?
- Very common
 - Somewhat common
 - Rare
 - Very rare
 - I don't know
-

- Q 29** Have you personally experienced or observed party displacement of young elected officials?
- Yes, personally experienced
 - Yes, observed it happen to others
 - Both personally experienced and observed
 - No
 - Unsure
-

- Q 30** Please describe one example of party support, party abandonment, or party displacement that shaped your political career.
- Open response
-

Section 5 · Barrier 2 — Financial and Career Instability

- Q 31** Before entering office, what was your primary source of income?
- Full-time employment
 - Part-time employment
 - Self-employment/business
 - Family support
 - Student support/scholarship
 - Campaign or party stipend

- No stable income
 - Other
-

Q 32 During your time in office, was your compensation sufficient to support your basic living expenses?

- Yes, fully
 - Mostly
 - Somewhat
 - No
 - Not applicable
-

Q 33 Did serving in office require you to reduce or leave paid employment?

- Yes, I left paid employment
 - Yes, I reduced paid employment
 - No
 - Not applicable
-

Q 34 Did financial pressure affect your ability to serve effectively?

- A great deal
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
-

Q 35 Did financial pressure affect your decision about whether to seek another term?

- Yes, significantly
 - Yes, somewhat
 - No
 - Not applicable
 - Unsure
-

Q 36 Which financial challenges have you faced as a young political actor? Select all that apply.

- Campaign expenses
 - Travel costs
 - Housing or relocation costs
 - Loss of income
 - Lack of health insurance or benefits
 - Supporting family while serving
 - Fundraising expectations
 - Debt or personal loans
 - Pressure to self-fund campaigns
 - Lack of paid staff
 - Other
-

Q 37 Did you have access to financial support from any of the following? Select all that apply.

- Political party
 - Family
 - Personal savings
 - Donors
 - Civil society organization
 - Youth leadership program
 - Government salary or stipend
 - Employer flexibility
 - None
 - Other
-

Q 38 To what extent do you agree: “Only young people with family wealth, patronage networks, or outside income can afford to remain in politics.”

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree

- Strongly disagree
-

Q 39 Did you ever consider leaving politics for a more financially stable career?

- Yes, seriously
 - Yes, occasionally
 - No
 - I have already left for this reason
-

Q 40 What kind of financial support would most improve retention of young elected officials? Select up to three.

- Public campaign financing
 - Better salaries or stipends
 - Housing or travel allowances
 - Health insurance/benefits
 - Paid staff budgets
 - Fellowship programs for young officials
 - Party support for re-election campaigns
 - Donor networks for young candidates
 - Career transition support after office
 - Other
-

Q 41 Please describe how financial instability has affected your ability or willingness to continue in politics.

- Open response
-

Section 6 · Barrier 3 — Institutional Under-Support and the Staffing Gap

Q 42 During your time in office, did you have access to paid professional staff?

- Yes, full-time staff
 - Yes, part-time staff
 - Yes, shared staff
 - No paid staff
 - Only volunteers
 - Not applicable
-

Q 43 If you had staff, who provided them?

- Government/institutional office
 - Political party
 - Personal funds
 - Donor-funded support
 - Civil society or fellowship program
 - Volunteers
 - Other
-

Q 44 Which types of support did you have access to? Select all that apply.

- Legislative/research support
 - Communications/social media support
 - Constituent services support
 - Policy analysis
 - Legal or procedural guidance
 - Fundraising support
 - Scheduling/logistics
 - Speechwriting
 - Mentorship
 - None of the above
-

Q 45 Which types of support did you need but did not have? Select all that apply.

- Legislative/research support
- Communications/social media support
- Constituent services support

- Policy analysis
 - Legal or procedural guidance
 - Fundraising support
 - Scheduling/logistics
 - Speechwriting
 - Mentorship
 - Security or harassment response
 - Mental health support
 - Other
-

Q 46 How much did lack of staff or professional support limit your effectiveness in office?

- A great deal
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
-

Q 47 To what extent do you agree: “Young elected officials are expected to perform like senior politicians but without the staff, networks, or institutional infrastructure they need.”

- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

- Q 48** Did you rely on unpaid volunteers, friends, or personal networks to perform official duties?
- Yes, frequently
 - Yes, sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
-

- Q 49** Did the absence of staff or institutional support affect your decision about whether to continue in politics?
- Yes, significantly
 - Yes, somewhat
 - No
 - Not applicable
-

- Q 50** Would access to a professional staffing ecosystem make you more likely to seek another term or higher office?
- Yes, definitely
 - Yes, probably
 - Unsure
 - Probably not
 - Definitely not
-

- Q 51** What would a useful staffing ecosystem for young elected officials include? Select up to five.
- Policy researchers
 - Legislative assistants
 - Communications staff
 - Digital/social media staff
 - Constituent service coordinators
 - Legal/procedural advisers
 - Fundraising advisers

- Campaign managers
 - Mentors/former elected officials
 - Mental health or burnout support
 - Security/risk management support
 - International peer network
 - Other
-

Q 52 Please describe a moment when lack of staff, training, or institutional support made your work harder.

- Open response
-

Section 7 · Barrier 4 — Institutional Marginalization and Limited Power

Q 53 After entering office, how much real influence did you feel you had over decisions?

- A great deal
 - Some influence
 - Limited influence
 - Very little influence
 - No influence
-

Q 54 Were you given meaningful committee assignments, portfolios, or leadership responsibilities?

- Yes, significant responsibilities
 - Yes, but limited responsibilities
 - No, mostly symbolic responsibilities
 - No formal responsibilities
 - Not applicable
-

Q 55 To what extent do you agree: “Young elected officials are often celebrated publicly but excluded from real decision-making.”

- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q 56 Have you ever felt tokenized because of your age?

- Frequently
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
-

Q 57 In your experience, which groups had the most influence over decision-making?
Select all that apply.

- Senior party leaders
 - Wealthy donors
 - Older elected officials
 - Bureaucrats/civil servants
 - Business elites
 - Family dynasties
 - Religious/community leaders
 - Military/security actors
 - International actors
 - Other
-

Q 58 Did senior leaders mentor you or actively block your advancement?

- Mostly mentored me
- Some mentored me, some blocked me
- Mostly blocked or ignored me
- Neither

– Not applicable

Q 59 How often were your ideas dismissed because of your age or perceived lack of experience?

- Very often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
-

Q 60 Did institutional marginalization affect your motivation to continue in politics?

- Yes, significantly
 - Yes, somewhat
 - No
 - Not applicable
-

Q 61 Please describe one example where your age affected how seriously you were treated in office.

- Open response
-

Section 8 · Barrier 5 — System Exit, Burnout, Risk, and Disillusionment

Q 62 Have you experienced burnout as a result of political work or public office?

- Yes, severe burnout
 - Yes, moderate burnout
 - Mild burnout
 - No
 - Prefer not to say
-

Q 63 Which factors contributed most to burnout or disillusionment? Select all that apply.

- Overwork
 - Lack of staff
 - Financial stress
 - Party conflict
 - Public criticism
 - Online harassment
 - Physical safety concerns
 - Family pressure
 - Slow pace of change
 - Corruption or unethical practices
 - Lack of real power
 - Electoral pressure
 - Media scrutiny
 - Other
-

Q 64 Have you experienced harassment, intimidation, or threats because of your political role?

- Yes, online
 - Yes, offline/in person
 - Yes, both online and offline
 - No
 - Prefer not to say
-

Q 65 Did safety concerns affect your willingness to continue in politics?

- Yes, significantly
 - Yes, somewhat
 - No
 - Not applicable
-

Q 66 Did your political work negatively affect your personal life, family life, health, or career?

- Yes, significantly
 - Yes, somewhat
 - No
 - Prefer not to say
-

Q 67 Have you ever seriously considered leaving politics altogether?

- Yes, and I have left
 - Yes, seriously considered it
 - Yes, occasionally considered it
 - No
-

Q 68 If you have considered leaving politics, what was the main reason?

- Financial instability
 - Party gatekeeping
 - Lack of staff/support
 - Burnout
 - Safety concerns
 - Lack of influence
 - Family or personal reasons
 - Better career opportunities
 - Disillusionment with political institutions
 - Other
-

Q 69 To what extent do you agree: “The political system is better at recruiting young candidates than sustaining young leaders.”

- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q 70 What would have made you more likely to stay in politics long-term?

- Open response
-

Section 9 • Comparative Political System Questions

Q 71 In your country or political system, are young people encouraged to run for office?

- Yes, strongly
 - Yes, somewhat
 - Not really
 - No
 - Unsure
-

Q 72 In your country or political system, are young elected officials supported after winning?

- Yes, strongly
 - Yes, somewhat
 - Not really
 - No
 - Unsure
-

Q 73 Which of the following best describes your political system's approach to young leaders?

- Encourages young people to run and supports them after they win
 - Encourages young people to run but does not support them after they win
 - Does not seriously encourage young people to run
 - Uses young candidates mostly symbolically
 - Other
-

Q 74 Are there formal mechanisms to support young elected officials in your country?
Select all that apply.

- Youth quotas
 - Reserved seats
 - Public campaign finance
 - Training programs
 - Mentorship programs
 - Staff budgets
 - Young legislators' caucus/network
 - Party youth wings
 - International fellowships
 - None
 - Other
-

Q 75 Which mechanism has been most useful in helping young people enter politics?

- Open response
-

Q 76 Which mechanism has been most useful in helping young people remain in politics?

- Open response
-

Q 77 What is the biggest gap between youth political entry and youth political retention in your country?

- Open response
-

Section 10 · Ranking the Barriers

Q 78 Please rank the following barriers from most important to least important in explaining why young elected officials leave politics after one term.

- Party displacement or renomination failure
 - Financial and career instability
 - Lack of staff or institutional support
 - Limited power or marginalization in office
 - Burnout, harassment, risk, or disillusionment
-

Q 79 Which one barrier most affected your own political career?

- Party displacement or renomination failure
 - Financial and career instability
 - Lack of staff or institutional support
 - Limited power or marginalization in office
 - Burnout, harassment, risk, or disillusionment
 - None of these
 - Other
-

Q 80 Which one reform would most improve retention of young elected officials?

- Stronger party commitments to renomination
- Public campaign finance
- Better salaries or benefits
- Guaranteed staffing support
- Mentorship and training
- Protection against harassment and violence
- Leadership roles for young officials
- Career transition support

Section 11 • Final Open-Ended Questions

Q 81 What is one thing outsiders misunderstand about young elected officials after they win?

– Open response

Q 82 What was the hardest part of serving in office that you did not expect before winning?

– Open response

Q 83 What support did you receive that helped you stay in politics?

– Open response

Q 84 What support did you need but never received?

– Open response

Q 85 If you could redesign the political system to better retain young elected officials, what would you change first?

– Open response

Q86 Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as a young elected or appointed official?

– Open response

Return to [the main report](#).

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