

THE PROMISE TRAP

Breaking the Cycle of Political Betrayal

A Political Fable Collection by Mohamed Dabar Salah — Political Commentator, Middle East & Africa

5 Methods for Turning Broken Promises Into Accountability

A broken promise is not the end of the story. These five methods — drawn from the book's fables and commentary — are how ordinary people turned outrage into evidence, and evidence into change.

1 — Document Everything

- Record the exact words, the date, and the location — not just the gist
- Track each promise with an empty or filled circle: visible, undeniable status
- Publish a public, dated "Promise Report" on a regular schedule

"A promise that is recorded cannot be denied, and a promise that is made public cannot be quietly abandoned."

2 — Read the Budget

- "Public" is not the same as "visible" — someone has to actually read the document
- Compare three numbers: what was promised, what was allocated, what was spent
- Let the numbers speak for themselves — you don't need to argue, only to show the gap

"The budget is the only document in which a government is forced to assign a number to its priorities, and numbers do not have escape clauses."

3 — Organize: Numbers, Persistence, Specificity

- One voice is ignored; an organized number of them is a crisis
- Stay and outlast — politicians are trained to survive a burst of outrage, not a siege
- Make the demand specific and measurable, not abstract

"A demand that cannot be measured cannot be met. A demand that can be photographed cannot be forgotten."

4 — Film the Gap

- Place the promise and the visible reality side by side — the contrast needs no commentary
- Follow the video with documentation: records requests, contract comparisons, registry checks
- Treat the video as the spark and the paperwork as the fire — attention fades, documentation doesn't

"The gap speaks for itself."

5 — Build a Promise Wall

- Make every pledge public, dated, and permanent — on a wall, a page, or a shared record
- Make every new candidate face the record of their predecessors before they speak
- Mark kept promises as visibly as broken ones — memory should record both

"The most dangerous community is not the angriest one. It is the one that remembers."

Want the full stories behind these methods?

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