

Corruption Free Afghanistan (CFA)



International Anti-Corruption Day 2014

Resolution

9 December 2014

Since 2008, Transparency International has consistently placed Afghanistan in the bottom five in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Although Afghanistan has been classified as one of the most corrupt nations in the world for many years now, the Afghan government has not done enough to counter corruption and increase the government's legitimacy. Corruption is a massive problem in Afghanistan that seriously threatens the stability of the country and has contributed to the economic slowdown and low levels of foreign investments.

We have chosen to focus our campaign on combating corruption in the education sector of Afghanistan. There are three strong arguments why:

- A) After the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education has the highest ministerial budget.
- B) Based on a survey conducted by Integrity Watch Afghanistan in 2013, corruption in the education sector has increased, making it severely plagued by corruption. Hence, if the resource leakage from the Ministry of Education down to school level could be reduced, it has the potential to free up huge amounts of resources that could be used for proper education purposes.
- C) In Afghanistan around 65% of the population are 24 years or younger. In other words, education affects virtually everybody making the impact of meaningful anti-corruption reforms in this sector potentially huge.

Cooperation for Peace and Development (CPD) through its Corruption Free Afghanistan's initiative has been campaigning on anti-corruption for years. We consider the following key problems as the root causes of corruption in Afghanistan's education sector:

- Excessive, cumbersome bureaucratic processes that pave the way for systematic corruption;

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- Poor monitoring of education authorities especially in insecure provinces, which leads to increased abuse of authority and resource leakage;
- Existence of “ghost teachers” on payroll and teacher absenteeism;
- Insufficient "Access To Information", "Social Accountability" and "Complaint Mechanisms" for teachers, parents and students;
- Centralized budgeting processes with poor financial management capacity at provincial and district level leading to improper budget allocation;
- Politicization of the Public Administration;
- Poor internal audit and control mechanisms to monitor quality of public service delivery;
- Demotivation of government employees due to lack of proper "Social Protection" policies;

Therefore, we recommend the following:

- We call on administrative reforms, such as digitalizing the system and application of e-governance for resolving bureaucratic complications in the public administration including education sector.
- Despite the achievements over the past 13 years, many Afghan children and youth still have no, or limited access to primary, secondary and vocational education on the one hand and qualitative education on the other. Education quality suffers from the existence of “ghost teachers” on payroll and teacher absenteeism, lack of skilled teachers, lack of aid materials, poor infrastructure etc. We therefore strongly request the government to provide adequate educational opportunities for Afghans in insecure areas of the country by reopening closed schools and establish new ones where needed. Measures to improve the quality of education through reforming and introducing better oversight mechanisms in the provincial education departments, strengthening the provincial budget practices and utilization should be taken. Insufficient opportunities for children to have their education in their mother tongue is another reason of sub-standard quality of education. We urge the authorities to step forward to ensure this very important opportunity for every Afghan child. Community participation and prosperity is key to successful progress and the above mentioned measures will pave the way for a stable and prosperous Afghanistan.
- For years, cases of fraud has been reported in University Entrance exams and therefore, we call upon authorities to seriously pay attention and address this issue and enable students to be evaluated based on their talents, competencies and knowledge only. Scholarships should also be allocated based on merit and through a transparent mechanism without discrimination.

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- We call for the government to more effectively monitor, oversee and evaluate a) the utilization of education resources, b) identifying / and punishing corrupt officials and c) publicly disclose revenues spent to enable all Afghan to ensure that the education resources have been utilized in an optimal manner.
- Access to information is a fundamental right of every Afghan and is vital in bringing transparency and good governance to our country. The dialogue with civil society to review the recommendations to further strengthen the Access To Information law, needs to continue.
- It is also of high importance to ensure that government staff receive sufficient salaries to secure proper livelihoods.

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For further information, please visit:

Corruption Free Afghanistan: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Corruption-Free-Afghanistan/258432867566167>

CPD website: www.cpd-af.org