



**Independent Joint Anti-Corruption  
Monitoring & Evaluation Committee**

**NEWS RELEASE: Corruption in Teacher Recruitment at the Ministry of Education**

**KABUL, Afghanistan, August 22, 2015** – Today, MEC released a Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment (VCA) on one of the most pertinent issues threatening the educational development of Afghanistan's youth: the recruitment of unqualified teachers solely because of who they know, not what they know. All phases of the teacher-selection process, from the needs assessment to the examination and selection phases, are marred by deep-rooted nepotism and bribery. The corruption found in the Ministry of Education's (MOE) process of teacher recruitment in this VCA raises serious doubts about the Ministry's oversight and accountability mechanisms, as well as its commitment to fair and equal education for all.

Based on consultations with a diverse array of stakeholders in Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar, Balkh, Badakhshan, and Laghman provinces, MEC found that, notwithstanding the legal requirement for teachers to have completed the 14<sup>th</sup> grade and passed a national teaching skills examination, approximately 46% of teachers do not meet these requirements. In 2014, out of 9,000 successful candidates who passed the teacher recruitment exam, only 1,800 could be hired due to a surplus of retired teachers. Clogging the rolls are about 5,000 retired MOE employees who are legally entitled to continue working for up to 10 years after their retirement date.

Additionally, Provincial Educational Directorates (PED) and Members of Parliament (MPs) often block teachers' appointments even after they have been approved by the MOE, or extract bribes for allowing appointments to go through without interference. MPs commonly trade their votes on the MOE budget for a certain allotment of teaching positions that they can then provide to their constituency or political allies. In Badakhshan, audits of the PED uncovered flagrant misuse of the educational budget, while in Herat members of the *Surkhpushan* football team were recruited as teachers by the PED. Legal loopholes allowing for these special appointments and temporary contracts significantly undermine the competitive recruitment process for teachers.

While internal auditors at the MOE and the Supreme Audit Office are aware of most of these issues, no action has been undertaken to solve the deficiencies. To counteract these fraudulent practices and prevent a further descent into corruption, MEC recommends that the MOE immediately focus on three courses of action. First, the MOE must ensure that only individuals who have passed the competitive examination are appointed. Second, the MOE should improve the integrity and transparency of the competitive examination process by modernizing it through unique test-taker identification numbers and computerized testing. Third, the MOE should draft a plan to eliminate the selection of teachers based on personal relationships.

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