



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

News Release: MEC Releases Two Reports Highlighting Mismanagement of Donor Funds at the MOE

KABUL, Afghanistan, November 21, 2015 – Today, MEC released a vulnerability to corruption assessment (VCA) and a separate report that both focus on donor-funded projects at the Ministry of Education (MOE): The Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP) operated by the World Bank and the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF); and the World Food Programme's (WFP) food-distribution initiatives.

Problems Identified in EQUIP Program Can Still Be Addressed

Despite spending more than half a billion U.S. dollars on the EQUIP program over more than ten years, MEC found many instances of wasted funds, poor planning, inadequate oversight, illegal interference, fraud, and improper recruitments, in all components and phases of the program.

The report highlights specific areas for improvement, including financial management, planning, and budgeting, which should be immediately addressed since the program is currently operating and has planned activities extending into 2017.

Despite Efforts by WFP, Oversight Deficiencies Remain

In addition to the EQUIP program, WFP's food-distribution initiatives highlight the problems with donor-funded projects that extend into provinces and districts where oversight is difficult due to insecurity and corrupt local officials. Much of the waste in these WFP initiatives occurred simply because local officials could act with impunity, misappropriating aid before it could get to its intended beneficiaries, enabling fraud in the contracting processes, or falsifying the existence of donor-funded councils or construction projects.

MEC hopes that donors acknowledge the fact that extending project implementation into areas without ensuring adequate oversight will inevitably result in the continued waste of donor funds and contribute to the culture of corruption in Afghanistan. The government can also show their commitment to fighting corruption by prosecuting those individuals found to be committing fraud and embezzling funds in these, and other, donor-funded projects.

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