

**Policy Brief**  
**October 2018**  
(Updated)

#### About APPRO:

Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization (APPRO) is an independent social research organization with a mandate to promote social and policy learning to benefit development and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and other less developed countries through conducting social scientific research, monitoring and evaluation, and training and mentoring. APPRO is registered with the Ministry of Economy in Afghanistan as a non-profit, non-government organization and headquartered in Kabul, Afghanistan with five regional offices. For more information, see: [www.appro.org.af](http://www.appro.org.af)

APPRO is the founding member of APPRO-Europe, a network association for disseminating applied research findings from conflict environments, conducting training, and carrying out evaluations. For more information, see: [www.appro-europe.net](http://www.appro-europe.net)

APPRO also acts as the Secretariat for the National Advocacy Committee for Public Policy, comprising sub-committees on Education, Food Security, Access to Justice, Anti-corruption, NAP 1325 and Access to Health. For more

## Fighting Corruption Through Education

### Background

Afghanistan continues to be ranked as one of the top ten most corrupt countries in the world. There have been very few attempts to integrate anti-corruption in education curricula, particularly in early and mid-level education.

Anti-corruption values and attitudes introduced at an early age are likely to pay dividends in the long run with the emergence of a new generation of anti-corruption citizens who stand against corrupt social behavior based on a new set of values and principles.

This argument has been put forth by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and taken up through the Anti-Corruption Academic Initiative (ACAD), and OECD: "Empowering our youth to fight corruption begins with ensuring that they understand how to recognise it."

Education reform in a number of countries shows that cross referencing anticorruption education to legal and religious norms can instill anticorruption values in the students.

Islamic values are an obvious starting point for raising awareness against corruption. However, methods of delivering Islamic teaching were strongly and consistently described as unimaginative and ineffective, and done by unqualified instructors who fail to discuss the implications of Islamic provisions against corruption in practical, everyday, terms. The teaching methods were described as uninspiring, un-engaging, rote-learned, and disinterested.

Islamic values are held in high esteem by government officials, teachers, students, and parents. Islam denounces injustice, corruption, ethnocentrism, ignorance, poverty, discrimination, nepotism, bribery, deception and misusing public property [*bait-ul-mal*]. These values need to be incorporated into the education system through changes in the curriculum and appointment of knowledgeable, qualified, and experienced instructors.

Anticorruption education at primary and secondary school levels can be done in two ways.

First is curriculum reform to integrate anticorruption principles and values into existing curricula, re-training teachers and other educational personnel on how to teach about corruption and anticorruption, and involving parents in school-initiated efforts to alert students to the ills and dangers of corruption.

Second is to initiate and organize extracurricular activities as a means to build on what is taught in the classroom and involve the broader community.

Curriculum reform and re-training of teachers and other educational personnel are relatively easy and can be done in measurable steps.

Organizing extracurricular activities with the intention to build on what is taught in the classroom and as a means to engage parents and the community at large takes a much longer time and requires volunteered time from everyone

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**Traditional and religious values could be utilized to fight corruption in Afghanistan.**

**Social and work ethics and social responsibility and Islamic values need to be taught at all levels of education by qualified instructors and linked to virtues of anti-corruption as a moral, religious, and ethical duty.**

involved, facilities and resources, and incentives.

This policy brief is based on research by APPRO and other with the purpose of highlighting possibilities for incorporating anticorruption in educational curricula in Afghanistan as a means to complement the already in-place regulatory provisions to combat corruption.

## **Recommendations**

Anticorruption education should aim to raise generations of citizens who will not tolerate or embrace corruption and see it as a destructive force. To meet this objective, government authorities and community organizations must play complementary roles as follows:

- Community leaders need to enlist and engage joint bodies drawn from educationists, religious scholars, teachers, parents, young people, and students along with cooperation from the media to draw the public's attention to the extent of corruption, its role in undermining security and development, and everyone's responsibility in resisting or fighting corruption.
- Parents and parents' associations should be encouraged, through media messaging and publicity by civil society organizations, demand that the school system, particularly at the primary and secondary levels, provide practical instructions against corruption based on social responsibility and with direct reference to Islamic values.
- Extracurricular activities such as anti-corruption school clubs and conferences organized from within the community and facilitated by schools could be used to arouse interest, create a common voice, and mobilize action.
- Implementing anticorruption curricula requires a legal basis to compel schools, and instructors, to implement them. There are numerous legal provisions on anticorruption in Afghanistan. The link between these legal provisions and

curriculum reform to incorporate anticorruption is missing, however.

- Reform aimed at incorporating anticorruption in education will need to draw on experiences of other countries having made similar attempts and the expertise of early educationists and education psychologists to ensure that various levels of anticorruption education are suited to students with different ethnic and religious backgrounds and different age groups.
- Incorporation of anticorruption in education curricula should be done through integrating anticorruption principles, virtues, and religious responsibilities – rather than having stand-alone or ad hoc tuition or modules on anticorruption.
- Teaching anticorruption should be about more than simplistic delivery of moral lessons. In addition to underlining the moral and religious responsibility of citizens regarding corruption, citizens regarding corruption, the tangible benefits of anticorruption should be highlighted to demonstrate how high levels of corruption contribute to insecurity and failed development programming.
- Teaching anticorruption will require training the teachers in the first instance, particularly in religious education, to prepare them for using anticorruption codes of conduct and examples in their teaching.
- As with all reform oriented interventions, incorporation of anticorruption in education curricula and implementing it through retrained teachers will need to be monitored to assess impact and to take corrective measures as and when necessary.