

Corruption in education poses a serious threat to youth development as it:

- **Undermines** educational quality
- **Reduces** educational resources
- **Compromises** equitable access for all students to educational services
- **Diminishes** student optimism about fulfilling their potential
- **Limits** students' career prospects

"Students who have not paid money, suffer"
Student in Ukraine

What can be done about it?

- **Awareness:** Raise student and staff awareness about the forms and causes of and solutions to corruption in education.⁴
- **Integrity/Accountability:** "Promote an enabling environment for integrity, as the antithesis of corruption."⁵
- **Transparency:** Increase transparency, "a principle that allows those affected by administrative decisions, business transactions or charitable work to know not only the basic facts and figures but also the mechanisms and processes."⁶

What can young people do?

Youth can be powerful actors in this struggle for awareness, integrity, accountability, and transparency in the education system.

Youth can educate themselves and each other about corruption. There are many excellent NGOs active in fighting corruption in education.

⁴ TI, 2005

⁵ USAID, 2005, p. 1

⁶ TI website

For more information on how youth and youth-oriented organizations can address corruption in education, please visit our website or e-mail us at:

Transparent Education Network

<http://ten.edc.org>

ten@edc.org

References

Transparency International

http://www.transparency.org/news_room/faq/corruption_faq

Transparency International. (2005). *Stealing the future: Corruption in the classroom.*

UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning. (2004). *Transparency in Education.*

USAID Europe and Eurasia Bureau Anti-Corruption Working Group. (2005). *TAPEE: Transparency, Accountability, Prevention, Enforcement, Education: An Analytical Framework for Combating corruption and promoting integrity in the Europe and Eurasia region.*



Funded by the US Agency for International Development, TEN was developed under the E&E Social Legacy Program implemented by Education Development Center (EDC) through EQUIP3
55 Chapel St., Newton, MA 02458 • Tel +1 617.618.2448
ten@edc.org



Corruption in Education

Understanding issues that affect transparency in education and schools in Eastern Europe and Eurasia

What is corruption in education?

What does it look like?

Where does it come from?

Whom does it hurt?

What can be done about it?



Corruption in Education

What is Corruption in Education?

Corruption has been defined as “the perversion or destruction of integrity in the discharge of public duties by bribery or favor.”¹

Corruption in education can be defined as “the systematic use of public office for private benefit whose impact is significant on access, quality or equity in education.”²

Incidences of this “perversion of integrity” will vary in nature and degree across countries, and may find their way into every sector of society. When corruption appears in the educational system, it is youth who are hurt the most.

“I know that corruption is evil and, being aware of my rights, I try to struggle against it”

Student in Armenia

By diminishing the quality of education, **corruption limits the potential of youth**, who embody the future of the country, exacerbates social inequities, poses serious danger to citizens by producing ill-trained professionals, dilutes national ethics, depresses citizens’ morale, and thus, cumulatively and systematically weakens society as an institution. Inevitably, corruption in education can cause long-term damage to a country’s development.

¹The Oxford Unabridged Dictionary

² UNESCO / IIEP, 2004

What does it look like?

Corruption in education can take many forms. Some of the most common are the following:

- **Bribery**: a gift, promise, or offer of a benefit intended to influence the judgment or conduct of a person in a position of trust or power.
- **Extortion**: an illegal use of power to obtain property, funds, or patronage.
- **Coercion**: to compel someone by force or threat to act or make a choice.
- **Embezzlement**: the taking for one’s own use any property or funds entrusted to one’s care.
- **Favoritism**: the showing of special favor toward one person in a group.
- **Fraud**: any illegal act, expression, omission, or concealment, which is calculated to deceive another to his disadvantage.
- **Misappropriation**: the intentional and wrongful use of the property or funds belonging to another person for one’s own use or any unauthorized purpose.
- **Nepotism**: favoritism based on kinship.

“We should work together in order to spread the potential benefits of the Codes of Conduct and start a campaign for a more transparent education”

Professor in Macedonia

“I have struggled because corruption confronts first of all my personal principles”

Student in Armenia

Where does it come from?

Systemic dysfunctions and inequities in all sectors of society lend themselves to the breakdown of infrastructure, creating “a pernicious constraint adversely affecting full realization of economic growth, democracy and governance, and social transition development initiatives.” Such societal problems create the conditions for the development and spread of corruption.

“I want to tell that all is in our hands! Healthy future is the future without corruption...!”

Student in Azerbaijan

Whom does it hurt?

Corruption in education hurts everybody:

- Promotes inequity in resource allocation
- Exacerbates socioeconomic disparities
- Undermines social and national cohesion
- Undermines ethical behavior
- Compromises the integrity and impartiality of the decision-making process
- Reduces the overall system’s efficiency
- Increases the costs of business transactions

³ USAID, 2005, p. 2