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**Topic 1: Governance and its Effects on Education**

In many parts of the world, not everyone has the chance to receive formal education. The quality of education is affected by the level of governance within a certain state. Many countries suffer from poor governance due to different factors such as corruption, political instability and financial crises. Therefore, the education system needs to improve for the state to develop in an evermore-globalized world. UNESCO declares that good governance is understood as a society’s ability to guarantee the rule of law, free speech and open and accountable government. It is critical for countries to improve their policies to improve their governance as it affects the education system considerably.[[1]](#footnote-1) Since education plays a vital role in the capacity of a country to thrive, it is imperative that the problem of poor governance be solved.

For many years, Turkmenistan had been part of the Soviet Union and has been considered the most authoritarian state in Central Asia. The power of the President is abused and it controls every aspect of the country’s public life. The poor governance of the state affect the education system in different ways. Turkmenistan ranks 154th out of 168 countries in the 2015 Corruption Perceptions Index assessed by Transparency International with an alerting score of 18%.[[2]](#footnote-2) The problem of bribery in the education system has been a topic of political debate in Central Asia in recent years, with officials warning that corrupt practices and widespread bribery have severely damaged the quality of education. Although the education system in Turkmenistan retains the centralized structural framework of the Soviet system, the government is attempting significant modifications to promote their participation in international commercial activities. While primary enrolment rates are above average and secondary attendance is slowly improving, greater access to pre-primary and tertiary education is needed.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Although the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) is very helpful in solving the problem of corruption, it is not enough. Since 2005, UNESCO has been implementing possible solutions to provide support on improving the quality of education in states like Turkmenistan. To achieve a lower the rate of corruption, the government of the country need to be open, they need to encourage freedom of the press, transparency and access to information. According to Transparency International, access to information will improve the awareness of the government bodies as well as increase the participation rate of the public.[[4]](#footnote-4) Furthermore, the incorporation of a community monitoring initiative such as an interactive map in Slovenia can contribute to the detection of corruption and will improve the quantity and quality of public services.[[5]](#footnote-5)

**Topic 2: Preservation of World Heritage Sites**

World Heritage sites are profoundly affected by climate change and war mainly due to the lack of proper action taken by the nations. The World Heritage sites are important to preserve as it represents the beauty of natural and human-made creations. UNESCO is very active in its mission to protect these heritages of great value. As these sites are carefully chosen among many according to different criteria, the legal status of World Heritage sites makes it imperative that they be protected by numerous international treaties. Additionally, the power of these organisations is limited when faced with factors such as global warming and war and solutions must urgently be put in place to preserve the various World Heritage sites.

Turkmenistan is gifted with 3 World Heritage sites. State Historical and Cultural Park “Ancient Merv” is the oldest and best-preserved of the oasis cities along the Silk Rute in Central Asia. The property well maintained through consistent and laborious repair and conservation programmes.[[6]](#footnote-6) Kunya-Urgench is an old town filled with outstanding monuments of a great architectural achievement. It is well conserved using annual work plans, controlling protection, research and monitoring.[[7]](#footnote-7) Parthian Fortresses consists of unexcavated remains of an ancient civilization which expertly combined its own traditional cultural elements with those of the Hellenistic and Roman west. Since the property is a recent World Heritage site, serious efforts are still needed to set up an efficient preventive maintenance system that will ensure the survival of the recently dug parts of the site.[[8]](#footnote-8)

The World Heritage sites are important to perverse and solutions must be implemented urgently against climate change and war. To prevent damage caused by armed conflicts, the UN can send out its troops, Peacekeepers, to protect heritage sites during war, so that armies from each country would not damage the sites as much.[[9]](#footnote-9) Also, because the damage of these cultural heritage sites are usually unintentional, instead of coming up with solutions to prevent damage, there should be solutions that effectively help repair each cultural site in the future. As for the issue of climate change, UNESCO is considering designing appropriate adaptation measures to prevent the devastation of the properties. Experiments have already been conducted on four natural sites (2 in India and 2 in Kenya) with the financial support from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust, the Flanders Funds-in-Trust and the Government of Belgium.[[10]](#footnote-10) If UNESCO can develop this solution, more investors will join and the World Heritage sites will be preserved from the climate change matter.

**Topic 3: Supporting and Accomplishing Education 2030**

Although the education programs have developed**, education remains an inaccessible right for millions of children around the world. Today, more than 72 million children of primary education age are not in school and 759 million adults are illiterate and do not realise the improvement needed in their living conditions.**[[11]](#footnote-11) **The main causes of lack of education are poverty and marginalization as they differ depending on the country’s mind set on the definition of good education.**[[12]](#footnote-12) **Furthermore, these cultural differences make it difficult to arrange international standards for programs. To help solve this conflict an initiative at the World Education Forum 2015 was put in place called The Incheon Declaration for Education 2030, aiming** to transform lives through education, recognizing the important role of education as a main driver of development.[[13]](#footnote-13)

The living conditions for Turkmen have only gotten worse since the country gained independence from the USSR in 1991. 50% of the population in Turkmenistan lives below the [poverty line](http://humanium.org/en/poor-children/). The [education level](http://humanium.org/en/fundamental-rights/education/) of the Turkmen population has declined considerably since Turkmenistan declared its independence. [Education](http://humanium.org/en/fundamental-rights/education/) is free for all children. However, children in distant areas often do not have access to a school. The quality and quantity of services proposed by the education sector is very far behind those in the capital. After many years of underinvestment in the regions, the government of Turkmenistan is supporting a new regional development initiative. To attain a higher level of education, the government has been making modifications in the sector. Primary and secondary curricula are being restructured according to Western models.  The Latin alphabet has been reintroduced, so that the Arabic alphabet is not the only one learned.  Classes are taught in Turkmen, Russian, and English.President Berdymukhamedov embarked on a new social and economic plan outlined in the country's development strategy “Strategy of Economic and Political and Cultural Development of Turkmenistan up to 2020”, aiming at addressing changes in the fields of social security, education and science.[[14]](#footnote-14) The President has recently announced his intention to increase the number of obligatory secondary education and ensure that tertiary education agreed with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) standards.[[15]](#footnote-15) The government hopes that these changes will produce competent workers and give the country an opportunity to become a global player.

Countries such as Turkmenistan don’t have the financial capability to develop their education system as much as other more fortunate countries. A solution to improve this problem would be a financial agreement between nations. More economically stable countries such as Germany and Switzerland can aid the developing nations such as Afghanistan and Sudan by financially supporting UNESCO. By creating this option, international programs will be able to attend more profoundly in the needed countries. With organizations, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the children will be equipped with quality teaching and education strategies which will develop the certain countries into opening to global affairs.[[16]](#footnote-16)

1. www.unesco.org [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. www.transparency.org [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. www.unesco.org [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. www.transparency.org [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. ec.europa.eu [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. whc.unesco.org [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. whc.unesco.org [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. wch.unesco.org [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. middleschoolmun.wikispaces.com [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. whc.unesco.org [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. www.humanium.org [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. www.humanium.org [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. www.uis.unesco.org [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. ec.europa.eu [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. ec.europa.eu [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. www.ilo.org [↑](#footnote-ref-16)