

In 2016, Afghanistan made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The President signed a new Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, hired 14 new labor inspectors, and adopted the Policy on Child Labor in Carpet Weaving. The Government also prosecuted five soldiers involved in a possible case of bacha bazi – a practice involving exploiting boys, often through threats or violence, for social and sexual entertainment – and investigated 60 men in Balkh Province for involvement in such practices. Bacha bazi exists in all provinces of the country, with specific cases documented in the provinces of Balkh, Baghlan, Helmand, and Uruzgan during the reporting period. While some elements of bacha bazi are prohibited under existing Afghan law, the term is not specifically included or defined in the law, making it challenging for law enforcement officials to comprehensively address and compile statistics on these cases. Boys who are victims of bacha bazi are often treated as criminals rather than as victims. In addition, children in Afghanistan are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in armed conflict and forced labor in the production of bricks. Also, Afghanistan’s labor inspectorate is not authorized to impose penalties for child labor violations, and the Government lacks sufficient programs to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Afghanistan engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in armed conflict and the forced production of bricks.(1-6) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Afghanistan. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

Table 1. Statistics on Children’s Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	7.5 (673,949)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	41.8
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	4.6
Primary Completion Rate (%)		Unavailable

Primary completion rate was unavailable from UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016.(7)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children’s Work Project’s analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 4, 2010-2011.(8)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children’s work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Farming, including harvesting poppies (6, 9-11)
	Herding (10, 12, 13)
Industry	Carpet weaving† (10, 13-16)
	Construction, activities unknown (10, 17)
	Coal, gem, and salt mining† (12, 18-21)
	Brick-making (1, 10-12, 15, 16, 22)
	Working in metal workshops, including in the production of doors, windows, and water tanks (16, 17, 23)

Afghanistan

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Table 2. Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity (cont)

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Domestic work (6, 10, 15)
	Transporting water and goods, including across international borders (10, 12, 24)
	Street work, including peddling, vending, shoe shining, carrying goods, and begging (6, 10, 15)
	Collecting garbage† (6, 15, 24, 25)
	Washing cars (10, 11)
	Selling goods in stores (10, 17, 23, 24)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Voluntarily recruited children used in hostilities by state armed groups (5, 6)
	Forced recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict (6, 26-28)
	Use in illicit activities, including in the production and trafficking of drugs (4, 6, 10, 29)
	Domestic work as a result of human trafficking (4, 30)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (4, 24, 27, 31-35)
	Forced labor in the production of bricks and carpets, and in begging, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1-4, 16, 24, 36)

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

Children are subject to commercial sexual exploitation throughout the country. The practice of *bacha bazi* (boy play), in which men – including warlords, police commanders, influential tribal leaders, and mafia heads – force boys to provide social and sexual entertainment, is particularly prevalent.(32, 37, 38) In many cases, these boys are dressed in female clothing, used as dancers at parties and ceremonies, and sexually exploited.(32) According to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, the practice exists in all provinces of the country.(39) Research has found specific cases in the provinces of Baghlan, Balkh, Faryab, Konduz, Helmand, Takhar, and Uruzgan.(35, 38, 39) A national inquiry conducted in 2014 found that most boys were between the ages of 13 and 16, and that 60 percent of them had been subjected to physical violence, confinement, and threats of death.(32) Some government officials, including members of the Afghan National Police, the Afghan Local Police, and the Afghan Border Police, exploit boys for *bacha bazi* as well as to work as tea servers or cooks in police camps.(6, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39-41) Some local police commanders abduct boys and use them for *bacha bazi*.(34, 35) One source indicated that the practice of *bacha bazi* is the biggest weakness of the police forces.(27) In 2016, the Ministry of Interior ordered police to stop having parties in which boys are dressed as girls and forced to perform dances.(39) In 2016, in Uruzgan Province, the Taliban used boys engaged in *bacha bazi* to attack policemen who subjected the same boys to sexual exploitation.(27) The police chief of Balkh province stated that some local officials support and defend suspects of *bacha bazi*.(38)

Children are trafficked both within Afghanistan and internationally. Afghan boys are used for forced labor in agriculture and construction abroad, and girls tend to be used for commercial sexual exploitation and domestic work in destination countries, primarily Iran and Pakistan.(4) Children were trafficked for debt settlement, including in the production of bricks and illicit drugs.(3, 4, 10) Reports indicate that girls from Iran and Pakistan are trafficked to Afghanistan for commercial sexual exploitation.(4, 30)

Widespread violence and lack of economic opportunities leads some Afghan children to leave Afghanistan.(42-46) There are reports that the Iranian government and the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) coerce male Afghan migrants and registered refugees, including boys as young as age 12, to fight in Syria in IRGC-organized and -commanded militias by threatening them with arrest and deportation to Afghanistan.(41) Media reported that there were covert recruitment agencies in Afghanistan and that a Syrian opposition leader has urged the Afghan government to prevent recruitment within Afghanistan.(47) Boys, especially those traveling unaccompanied, are particularly vulnerable to trafficking. Some Afghan boys are subjected to sex trafficking in Greece after paying high fees to be smuggled into the country.(41, 48)

Non-state groups, such as the Taliban and Islamic State in Khorasan Province, recruited children for use in armed conflict, to plant improvised explosive devices, or to act as suicide bombers.(28) The UN verified the continued use of children in combat and non-combat roles by the Government in 2016, including five cases of recruitment by the Afghan National Police, two by the Afghan Local Police, and one by the Afghan National Army, at times using fake identity documents.(6, 37, 41) Low birth registration and falsified identity documents contribute to the problem because it makes the determination of a recruit’s age




difficult.(49, 50) Observers reported that some officials accepted bribes to produce identity documents for boys stating their age was above 18 years old.(41)

Based on a 2013 report by the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, about 6 million children are out of school. Barriers to education for children include displacement of populations due to conflict, the use of schools as military bases, distance from school, school-related fees, lack of security, and not being allowed by parents to go to school, particularly for girls.(10, 25, 51, 52) Approximately, 1,000 schools closed in 2016 due to security issues.(53) In 2016, approximately 600,000 Afghan refugees returned from Pakistan.(54) About half of returnee children from Pakistan do not attend school.(55) They are also particularly vulnerable to child labor.(36, 56) Some individuals who facilitate repatriation take returnees to brick factories and keep them in debt bondage to repay their transportation costs.(37)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Afghanistan has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The Government has established laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Afghanistan's legal framework to adequately protect children from child labor.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 13 of the Labor Law (57)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles 13 and 120 of the Labor Law (57)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		List of Prohibited Jobs for Child Laborers (58)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	No		Article 4 of the Labor Law; Article 516 of the Penal Code; Articles 3 and 10 of the Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants; Article 36 of the Law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (57, 59-61)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 3 and 11 of the Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (59, 60)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 18.2 of the Law on Elimination of Violence Against Women; Articles 427 and 429 of the Penal Code; Articles 3, 10 and 11 of the Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (59-61)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		List of Prohibited Jobs for Child Laborers; Articles 1, 7, and 23 of the Counter Narcotics Law; Articles 3.1 and 3.2 of the Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (58, 62)
Minimum Age for Military Recruitment			

Afghanistan

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor (cont)

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
State Compulsory	N/A*		
State Voluntary	Yes	18	Article 3 of the Law on Prohibition of Recruitment of Children in Military Contingencies (63)
Non-state Compulsory	Yes	18	Articles 3, 10, and 11 of the Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (60)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15‡	Article 17 of the Education Law (64)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 17 of the Education Law (64)

* No conscription (65, 66)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (67)

In November 2016, the Parliament passed the Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, which repealed the Counter Abduction and Human Trafficking Law of 2008. The President signed the Law in December 2016, and it entered into force in January 2017, when it was published in the Official Gazette.(68) The Law prohibits recruiting, transferring, transporting, harboring, or receiving children for the purposes of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, production of pornography, forced dancing, and use in armed conflict or illicit activities.(68)

During the reporting period, the President's Cabinet began drafting a Child Protection Act to address some worst forms of child labor. The Parliament must review the draft before it is adopted.(6) The current draft law defines and prohibits *bacha bazi*, although the penalty remains unclear. The draft also asserts that health facilities and parents are responsible for birth registration.(69)

Although forced labor and child trafficking are illegal, research did not find criminalization of debt bondage.

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5). However, gaps in labor law and criminal law enforcement remain and some enforcement information is not available.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Child Protection Action Network (CPAN)	A coalition of government agencies, NGOs, and community and religious leaders. Receive complaints of child labor, investigate such cases, and refer them to NGO and government shelters that provide social services.(6, 70) Not all provinces have a CPAN.(16)
Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled	Respond to complaints of child labor, child trafficking, and child sexual exploitation; refer cases to the Attorney General's Office and NGO shelters; and operate a shelter for trafficking victims in Kabul.(50)
Ministry of the Interior	Enforce laws related to child trafficking, the use of children in illicit activities, and child sexual exploitation.(70)
National Directorate of Security	Identify human trafficking victims and refer these cases to the Ministry of the Interior.(71)
Attorney General's Office	Investigate and prosecute human trafficking, abduction, and sexual exploitation cases.(50)

Labor Law Enforcement

Research did not find information on whether labor law enforcement agencies in Afghanistan took actions to combat the worst forms of child labor.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2015	2016
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspectors	18 (70)	32 (6)
Number of Child Labor Dedicated Inspectors	Unknown	Unknown
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (70)	No (6)

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2015	2016
Training for Labor Inspectors		
Initial Training for New Employees	No (70)	No (6)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	No (70)	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspections	Unknown	Unknown
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown	Unknown
Number Conducted by Desk Reviews	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	0 (70)	Unknown
Number of Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	N/A	Unknown
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (70)	Unknown
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (70)	Unknown
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (70)	Yes (6)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Unknown	Unknown
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (72)	Yes (6)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (70)	Yes (6)

In 2016, the Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) was the primary mechanism of monitoring child labor cases. It is unknown how many individuals were in charge of investigating child labor complaints in CPAN, but the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled (MoLSAMD) employed 32 labor inspectors.⁽⁶⁾ The number of labor inspectors is insufficient for the size of Afghanistan's workforce, which includes more than 7.9 million workers.⁽⁷³⁾ According to the ILO's recommendation of 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed economies, Afghanistan should employ roughly 200 labor inspectors.^(70, 74, 75) Government officials, NGOs, and UNICEF acknowledge that the number of labor inspectors is insufficient. Labor inspectors do not have legal authority to enforce child labor laws.⁽⁷⁰⁾ MoLSAMD, in cooperation with CPAN, can respond to complaints of child labor, investigate cases, and issue warnings or refer the case to the Attorney General's Office. A person wishing to file a complaint must specify the legal grounds for labor violations in writing.⁽⁷²⁾

Business owners are not required to allow unannounced inspections.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Based on available information, MoLSAMD only inspects businesses that are registered with the Ministry.⁽⁶⁾

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2016, criminal law enforcement agencies in Afghanistan took actions to combat the worst forms of child labor (Table 7).

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2015	2016
Training for Investigators		
Initial Training for New Employees	Unknown	Unknown
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	Unknown
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (70)	Unknown
Number of Investigations	Unknown	60 (38)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Convictions	Unknown	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (70)	Yes (6)

In 2016, the Ministry of the Interior employed two officers in each anti-human trafficking unit throughout Afghanistan's 34 provinces; however, the priority of these units is to combat human smuggling rather than combat the worst forms of child labor.

Afghanistan

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Government officials stated that they lacked equipment and transportation to carry out investigations.(6) Victims of human trafficking were routinely prosecuted and convicted of crimes.(4, 41) Officials hope that with the adoption of the new Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, victims will be more easily distinguishable from perpetrators because of clearer definitions in the new law.(76) In 2016, the Government made 115 arrests, 63 prosecutions, and 34 convictions for human trafficking crimes; however, it is unknown how many of these involved child victims.(50)

In 2015, the President ordered the creation of a committee to investigate and prosecute cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children by security forces, but the committee never convened.(6, 30) In June 2016, the President ordered an investigation into reports of sexual abuse of children by police officials. The President’s Office stated that any official involved in such sexual abuse would be prosecuted and punished, regardless of rank.(77) Officials in Balkh Province began investigating 60 men suspected of using boys for *bacha bazi*.(38) In October 2016, five Afghan National Army soldiers were accused of sexually abusing a boy, possibly in *bacha bazi*. All five were arrested and transferred to an Afghan National Army court, where one soldier was convicted of unlawful use of lethal force and sentenced to two years of imprisonment; another soldier was convicted of battery and sentenced to one year of imprisonment.(41) Some government officials contributed to the lack of prosecutions of individuals who subject boys to *bacha bazi*.(4, 38) The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission’s 2014 report assessed that most men who engage in *bacha bazi* paid bribes to, or had relationships with, law enforcement, prosecutors, or judges that effectively exempted them from prosecution.(41)

Male child victims of human trafficking, especially those who were engaged in commercial sexual exploitation or were used as child soldiers, were sometimes referred to juvenile detention and rehabilitation facilities, rather than receiving appropriate victim support services.(4, 30, 41, 78) Male child sex trafficking victims, including those subjected to *bacha bazi*, were in some cases referred to juvenile rehabilitation centers on criminal charges.(41) The UN noted that some children associated with armed groups were kept in detention centers instead of juvenile rehabilitation centers.(28) The UN reported that some of these children were subjected to torture and ill treatment.(78, 79)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Although the Government of Afghanistan has established coordinating mechanisms to address certain forms of child labor, research found no evidence of an overall mechanism to combat child labor, including all its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
High Commission for Combating Crimes of Abduction and Human Trafficking	Address human trafficking in general, including child trafficking. Led by the Ministry of Justice; other members include nine ministries and five other entities.(70, 71) In 2016, the Commission met quarterly, and its Technical Committee met monthly.(37)
Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee on Children and Armed Conflict	Coordinate efforts to eliminate the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and monitored by the UN and NGOs.(80)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 9).

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Labor Policy	Includes objectives to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, including those involving hazardous activities; pass legislation prohibiting child labor; and effectively enforce child labor laws.(15) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.
Action Plan for the Prevention of Underage Recruitment	Aims to prevent the recruitment of minors into the Afghan National Security Forces, including the Afghan National Army, the Afghan National Police, the National Directory of Security, and pro-government militia groups. Seeks to ensure the release of children under age 18 from the armed forces and facilitate their reintegration into families and communities.(81)
Policy on Child Labor in Carpet Weaving†	Provides social services to children, as well as incentives for weaving families that avoid child labor. Includes an implementation plan.(82)

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor (cont)

Policy	Description
National Strategy for Children at Risk	Creates a framework to provide social services to at-risk children and their families, and guides donors in contributing toward a comprehensive child protection system. Focuses specifically on working children, trafficked children, child soldiers, and other children affected by conflict.(83) Since the adoption of the policy, the establishment of CPANs has been an important achievement in its implementation.(84) However, not all provinces have a CPAN.(16) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2016, the Government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 10).

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
USDOL-Funded Projects to address child labor	USDOL projects that aim to build capacity of government law enforcement officials and address child labor in the carpet industry. These are Project to Prevent Child Labor in Home-Based Carpet Production in Afghanistan, a \$2 million project implemented by GoodWeave; and Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor, a capacity-building project implemented by the ILO in at least 11 countries to build local and national capacity of the Government to address child labor.(85, 86) For additional information, please visit our Web site.
Age Verification of New Afghan National Security Forces Recruits†	Joint Government and UNICEF program that operates child protection units in the Afghan National Security Forces recruitment centers. Aims to ensure that new recruits meet the minimum age requirement of age 18 by carefully screening applicants.(87) The process includes an ID check and a requirement that at least two community elders vouch that a recruit is age 18 or older and is eligible to serve.(88) The Government opened 12 new child protection units in 2016.(76) From January to November 2016, child protection units prevented the recruitment of 315 boys and 3 girls into the security forces.(41)

† Program is funded by the Government of Afghanistan.

The Government ran public service messages through radio, television, and print media to raise awareness about human trafficking issues.(37, 41) The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission conducted 60 educational training programs on preventing and combating human trafficking for officials, university lecturers, mullahs, and civil society activists; the programs reached 2,091 individuals.(41)

There is no evidence of programs designed specifically to prevent and eliminate child labor in agriculture or forced child labor in the production of bricks. Research found that shelters and support services for male child trafficking victims older than age 10 were particularly limited.(33, 76) Some boys who are victims of human trafficking are sent to juvenile rehabilitation centers due to the lack of shelters.(37)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Afghanistan (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that debt bondage is criminally prohibited.	2015 – 2016
Enforcement	Establish a CPAN in all of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.	2016
	Publish information on labor inspectorate funding; the number of CPAN technical advisors dedicated to child labor inspections; training of labor inspectors; the number of labor inspections, including those conducted at worksites and by desk reviews; the number of child labor violations identified and penalties imposed and collected; and whether unannounced inspections were conducted.	2015 – 2016
	Authorize the inspectorate to assess penalties for violations of Afghan law.	2015 – 2016
	Ensure that new labor inspectors receive training on child labor.	2011 – 2016

Afghanistan

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms (cont)

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO recommendation.	2011 – 2016
	Ensure that the labor inspectorate has legal authority to enforce child labor laws, including by legally requiring businesses to comply with unannounced inspections.	2014 – 2016
	Simplify the child labor complaint mechanism to allow oral complaints, and waive the requirement that the individual filing a complaint must specify the legal grounds for the violation.	2015 – 2016
	Publish data on the training system of criminal investigators, as well as the numbers of investigations, violations, prosecutions, and convictions for all crimes involving the worst forms of child labor.	2011 – 2016
	Ensure that investigators are available to enforce criminal laws involving all of the worst forms of child labor.	2014 – 2016
	Ensure that criminal law enforcement agencies have the necessary equipment and transportation to enforce laws involving the worst forms of child labor.	2012 – 2016
	Ensure that child victims of human trafficking and other worst forms of child labor are correctly identified as victims and are not detained; ensure that victims are referred to appropriate social services, and that children held in juvenile detention or rehabilitation facilities are not subject to mistreatment or torture.	2014 – 2016
	Ensure that the committee to investigate and prosecute <i>bacha bazi</i> crimes actively fulfills its mandate.	2016
Coordination	Establish coordinating mechanisms to combat child labor, including all its worst forms.	2013 – 2016
Government Policies	Implement the National Labor Policy and the National Strategy for Children at Risk.	2016
Social Programs	Institute a birth registration campaign.	2015 – 2016
	Institute programs to increase access to education and to improve security in schools, especially for girls.	2014 – 2016
	Institute programs to address child labor in agriculture and bonded child labor in brick kilns.	2009 – 2016
	Provide financial support to open shelters for victims of human trafficking and to ensure that sufficient shelter services are available for older male child trafficking victims.	2010 – 2016

REFERENCES

- UNICEF. *Strategic Programme Framework for ILO-UNICEF Support to National Efforts to Progressively Eliminate Child Labour and Bonded Labour in Brick Kilns in Afghanistan*; December 15, 2012.
- ILO and UNICEF. *Breaking the mould: Occupational safety hazards faced by children working in brick kilns in Afghanistan*. Geneva; 2015. http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_25295/lang--en/index.htm.
- Sabory, G. “Nangarhar Women and Children Forced into Slavery Over Loans.” Tolo News [online] April 12, 2015 [cited March 9, 2017]; <http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/nangarhar-women-and-children-forced-slavery-over-loans>.
- U.S. Department of State. “Afghanistan,” in *Trafficking in Persons Report-2016* Washington, DC; June 30, 2016; <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/258878.pdf>.
- Spencer Ackerman, Sune Engel Rasmussen. “US military attacked for complicity in Afghan child soldiers after boy’s murder.” The Guardian, London, February 4 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/feb/04/afghanistan-child-soldier-taliban-us-military-afghan-local-police?CMP=share_btn_tw.
- U.S. Embassy- Kabul. *reporting, January 18, 2017*.
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics. *Gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary education, both sexes (%)*. Accessed December 16, 2016; <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>. Data provided is the gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary education. This measure is a proxy measure for primary completion. This ratio is the total number of new entrants in the last grade of primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the theoretical entrance age to the last grade of primary education. A high ratio indicates a high degree of current primary education completion. The calculation includes all new entrants to the last grade (regardless of age). Therefore, the ratio can exceed 100 percent, due to over-aged and under-aged children who enter primary school late/early and/or repeat grades. For more information, please see “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” in the Reference Materials section of this report.
- UCW. *Analysis of Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Statistics from National Household or Child Labor Surveys*. Original data from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 4, 2010-11. Analysis received December 15, 2016. Reliable statistical data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. As a result, statistics on children’s work in general are reported in this chart, which may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information, please see “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” in the Reference Materials section of this report.
- Gannon, K. “After Record Opium Year, Afghans Plant New Crop.” Associated Press [online] 2013 [cited March 9, 2017]; <http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/after-record-opium-year-afghans-plant-new-crop>.
- Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. *The Situation of Children*; December 31, 2013. <http://www.aihrc.org.af/home/research-report/2213>.
- Xinhua General News Service. “Afghan children are victims of continuing insurgency in Afghanistan.” [online] May 31, 2015 [cited January 11, 2016]; <http://www.rawa.org/temp/runews/2015/06/01/afghan-children-are-victims-of-continuing-insurgency-in-afghanistan.html>.
- Veda Khamoush, S. “Hazardous work and violations of childrens rights.” Pajhwok November 9, 2013 [cited January 7, 2016]; <http://www.pajhwok.com/dr/2013/11/09/%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%87-%D9%88->

- [%D9%86%D9%82%D8%B6-%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%88%D9%82-%D8%A8%D8%B4%D8%B1%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%AF%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%86.](#)
13. Samuel Hall Consulting. *Ties that Bind: Child Labor in the Afghan Carpet Sector*. Kabul, GoodWeave International; June 2014.
 14. Samuel Hall Consulting. *Cutting the Threads? Assessing Child Labour in the Afghan Carpet Production*. Kabul, GoodWeave International; June 2014.
 15. Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs Martyrs and Disabled. *National Labor Policy*; 2012. <http://www.newunionism.net/library/national%20data/Afghanistan%201-2012.pdf>.
 16. Human Rights Watch. *"They Bear All the Pain": Hazardous Child Labor in Afghanistan*; July 2016. https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/afghanistan0716_brochure_lowres.pdf.
 17. Zucchino, D. "In Afghanistan, childhood is often a full-time job." Los Angeles Times, April 19, 2014. <http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-afghanistan-child-workers-20140420-dto-htmlstory.html>.
 18. Nissenbaum, D. "Teenager Films Afghan Child Labor- School Documentary Project Seeks to Illuminate Open Secret: Young Boys at Work in Remote Coal Mines." Wall Street Journal- Eastern Edition, New York, July 14, 2012; World News. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303640804577491511393159548.html>.
 19. Nichols, M. "Afghanistan Vows to 'Set Standards' on Child Labor in Mines." Reuters [online] August 12, 2011 [cited 2014]; <http://ca.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=CATRE77B12V20110812>.
 20. Azizi, MS. "Afghan miners killed in coal mine collapse." Al Jazeera [online] September 15, 2013 [cited March 9, 2016]; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2013/09/201391563752759330.html>.
 21. Amini, K. "Child Labor in Samangan Coal Mines." Tolo News [online] March 5, 2015 [cited March 9, 2017]; <http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/child-labor-samangan-coal-mines>.
 22. ILO. *Buried in Bricks: a Rapid Assessment of Bonded Labour in Brick Kilns in Afghanistan*; February 6, 2012. http://www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/publications/WCMS_172671/lang-en/index.htm.
 23. "6 p.m. News," Kabul: TOLO News (transcript and translation by BBC Monitoring South Asia - Political); September 17, 2016; 23 min., 32 sec., Accessed March 9, 2017; <http://www.tolonews.com/nightly-news/tolonews-6pm-news-17-september-2016>.
 24. UNICEF. *Child Notice Afghanistan*. New York; January 2013. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5124c09e2.html>.
 25. UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. *End of Mission Statement by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Mr. Chaloka Beyani, on his visit to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan*; October 20, 2016. <http://ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20712&LangID=E>.
 26. Chopra, A. "Instant paradise: An Afghan child bomber's journey." L'Agence France-Presse (AFP) [online] April 18, 2016 [cited February 3, 2017]; https://www.yahoo.com/news/instant-paradise-afghan-child-bombers-journey-081903095.html?soc_src=social-sh&soc_trk=tw.
 27. Chopra, A. "Taliban use 'honey trap' boys to kill Afghan police." L'Agence France-Presse (AFP) [online] June 16, 2016 [cited November 23, 2016]; <https://www.yahoo.com/news/taliban-honey-trap-boys-kill-afghan-police-034032649.html>.
 28. UN. *reporting, 2016*.
 29. Aziz, A. "Afghan Children Targeted by Drug Gangs: Minors are seen as the ideal way to smuggle and supply narcotics." Institute for War and Peace Reporting 29 November, 2016 [cited February 1, 2017]; <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/afghan-children-targeted-drug-gangs>.
 30. U.S. Embassy- Kabul. *reporting, February 1, 2016*.
 31. Human Rights Watch. *"I Had to Run Away" The Imprisonment of Women and Girls for "Moral Crimes" in Afghanistan*. New York; March 2012. http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0312webcover_0.pdf.
 32. Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. *Causes and Consequences of Bachabazi in Afghanistan*. Kabul; October 14, 2014. http://www.aihrc.org.af/home/research_report/3324.
 33. Thorson, J. *Forgotten No More: Male Child Trafficking in Afghanistan*. Kabul; October 2013. <http://hagarinternational.org/australia/files/Forgotten-No-More.pdf>.
 34. Chopra, A. "Hopeless Afghan struggle to save boy sex slaves." L'Agence France-Presse (AFP), 2016 [cited February 3, 2017]; <https://sg.news.yahoo.com/hopeless-afghan-struggle-save-boy-sex-slaves-062614093.html>.
 35. Chopra, A. "Behind the shame and silence." L'Agence France-Presse (AFP) [online] January 8, 2017 [cited February 3, 2017]; <https://correspondent.afp.com/behind-shame-and-silence>.
 36. Noori, Z. "Held in bonded labour, Afghan returnee children make bricks for a living." Reuters [online] November 2, 2016 [cited November 25, 2016]; <http://news.trust.org/item/20161102143257-7ahkn/>.
 37. U.S. Embassy- Kabul. *reporting, February 28, 2017*.
 38. Babak, Q. "Boys Sold for Sex in Afghan Province." Institute for War and Peace Reporting [online] March 2, 2017 [cited April 13, 2017]; <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/boys-sold-sex-afghan-province>.
 39. Saifullah, M. "Afghan laws 'ambiguous' about pedophilic boy play subculture." Deutsche Welle, June 20, 2016 [cited February 1, 2017]; <http://www.dw.com/en/afghan-laws-ambiguous-about-pedophilic-boy-play-subculture/a-19343339>.
 40. U.S. Embassy- Kabul official. E-mail communication to USDOL official. May 26, 2016.
 41. U.S. Department of State. "Afghanistan," in *Trafficking in Persons Report-2017*. Washington, DC; June 27, 2017; <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2017/271129.htm>.
 42. Bengali, S. "Afghans, leaving in droves, say they see no future in their country." Los Angeles Times [online] March 17, 2016 [cited July 28, 2017]; <http://www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-afghan-refugees-20160317-story.html>.
 43. U.S. Department of State. "Afghanistan," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2016*. Washington, DC; 2017; <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/265742.pdf>.
 44. Malikiyar, H. "Afghanistan: The other refugee crisis." Al Jazeera [online] September 16, 2015 [cited July 28, 2017]; <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2015/09/afghanistan-refugee-crisis-150915073827019.html>.
 45. Froutan, A. and Foster, N. "Children on the move: Young Afghan migrants receive support after hazardous journey home." Medium [online] September 7, 2016 [cited July 28, 2017]; <https://medium.com/@UNICEFAfghanistan/children-on-the-move-fd2d2bafcec5>.
 46. Bjelica, J. "Deciding To Leave Afghanistan (2): The routes and the risks." Afghanistan Analysts Network [online] May 18, 2016 [cited July 28, 2017]; <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/deciding-to-leave-afghanistan-2-the-routes-and-the-risks/>.
 47. Rasmussen, S. and Nader, Z. "Iran covertly recruits Afghan Shias to fight in Syria." The Guardian [online] June 30, 2016 [cited July 28, 2017]; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/30/iran-covertly-recruits-afghan-soldiers-to-fight-in-syria>.
 48. Howden, D. "Refugees Caught Up in Child Prostitution in Athens." Refugees Deeply [online] July 14, 2016 [cited July 28, 2017]; <https://www.newsdeeply.com/refugees/articles/2016/07/14/refugees-caught-up-in-child-prostitution-in-athens>.
 49. Mirzaei, G. *Finding a way to stop child recruitment in Afghanistan* UNICEF October 7, 2014. http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/afghanistan_76196.html.
 50. U.S. Embassy- Kabul official. E-mail communication to USDOL official. June 16, 2017.
 51. Bouckaert, P. *How Afghan Classrooms Became Bunkers*; May 31, 2016. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/05/31/how-afghan-classrooms-became-bunkers>.
 52. Human Rights Watch. *"Education on the Front Lines" Military Use of Schools in Afghanistan's Baghlan Province*; August 17, 2016. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/08/17/education-front-lines/military-use-schools-afghanistans-baghlan-province>.
 53. Paiwand, S. "Worsening security forces more Afghan schools to shut." Reuters November 30, 2016 [cited February 2, 2017]; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-education-idUSKBN13P1AT>.

Afghanistan

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

54. Simpson, G. *For Afghan Refugees, There's No Going Back* Human Rights Watch; April 13, 2017. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/13/afghan-refugees-theres-no-going-back>.
55. Save the Children. *Thousands of Children Face Early Marriage and Child Labour as Education Crisis Takes Hold among Afghan Children Repatriated from Pakistan*; December 14, 2016. <https://www.savethechildren.net/article/thousands-children-face-early-marriage-and-child-labour-education-crisis-takes-hold-among>.
56. The Associated Press. "Afghan children returning from Pakistan risk early marriage, child labour." Dawn December 14, 2016 [cited February 2, 2017]; <http://www.dawn.com/news/1302285/afghan-children-returning-from-pakistan-risk-early-marriage-child-labour>.
57. Government of Afghanistan. *Labour Law*, enacted February 4, 2007. http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.details?p_lang=en&p_country=AFG&p_classification=01.02&p_origin=COUNTRY&p_sortby=SORTBY_COUNTRY.
58. Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries. "MOLSAMD Announces List of Prohibited Jobs for Child Laborers." [online] February 9, 2014 [cited 2014]; <http://www.acci.org.af/component/content/article/38-news/467-molsamd-announces-list-of-prohibited-jobs-for-child-labors.html>.
59. Government of Afghanistan. *Penal Code*, enacted 1976.
60. Government of Afghanistan. *Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants*, enacted 2016. http://moj.gov.af/content/files/OfficialGazette/01201/OG_01244.pdf.
61. Government of Afghanistan. *Law on Elimination of Violence Against Women*, enacted 2009.
62. Government of Afghanistan. *Counter Narcotics Law*, enacted December 17, 2005. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4c1f343b2.html>.
63. Government of Afghanistan. *Law on Prohibition of Recruitment of Children in Military Contingencies*, enacted February 17, 2015. http://moj.gov.af/content/files/OfficialGazette/01101/OG_01162.pdf.
64. Government of Afghanistan. *Education Law*, enacted July 1, 2008.
65. Child Soldiers International. "Appendix II: Data Summary on Recruitment Ages of National Armies," in *Louder Than Words, An Agenda for Action to End State Use of Child Soldiers*. London; 2012; <https://www.child-soldiers.org/shop/louder-than-words-1>.
66. Government of Afghanistan. *Presidential Decree No. 97*, enacted December 25, 2003.
67. U.S. Embassy- Kabul. *reporting, February 8, 2015*
68. Government of Afghanistan. *Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, No 238*, enacted November 21, 2016. http://moj.gov.af/content/files/OfficialGazette/01201/OG_01244.pdf.
69. Government of Afghanistan. *Child Act - Draft Law Approved by Council of Ministers, November 28, 2016*, enacted [N/A].
70. U.S. Embassy- Kabul. *reporting, January 31, 2016*.
71. Government of Afghanistan, Ministry of Justice. *First-Third Quarter Consolidated Report of High Commission to Combat Crimes of Abduction and Human Trafficking for 1392 (2013)*. Kabul; February 10, 2014.
72. U.S. Department of State official. E-mail communication to USDOL official. February 23, 2016.
73. CIA. *The World Factbook*, [online] [cited May 18, 2017]; <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2095.html#131>. Data provided is the most recent estimate of the country's total labor force. This number is used to calculate a "sufficient number" of labor inspectors based on the country's level of development as determined by the UN.
74. ILO. *Strategies and Practice for Labour Inspection (GB.297/ESP/3)*. Geneva, Committee on Employment and Social Policy; November 2006. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/reim/gb/docs/gb297/pdf/esp-3.pdf>. Article 10 of ILO Convention No. 81 calls for a "sufficient number" of inspectors to do the work required. As each country assigns different priorities of enforcement to its inspectors, there is no official definition for a "sufficient" number of inspectors. Amongst the factors that need to be taken into account are the number and size of establishments and the total size of the workforce. No single measure is sufficient but in many countries the available data sources are weak. The number of inspectors per worker is currently the only internationally comparable indicator available. In its policy and technical advisory services, the ILO has taken as reasonable benchmarks that the number of labor inspectors in relation to workers should approach: 1/10,000 in industrial market economies; 1/15,000 in industrializing economies; 1/20,000 in transition economies; and 1/40,000 in less developed countries.
75. UN. *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2012 Statistical Annex*. New York; 2012. http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_current/2012country_class.pdf. For analytical purposes, the Development Policy and Analysis Division (DPAD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (UN/DESA) classifies all countries of the world into one of three broad categories: developed economies, economies in transition, and developing countries. The composition of these groupings is intended to reflect basic economic country conditions. Several countries (in particular the economies in transition) have characteristics that could place them in more than one category; however, for purposes of analysis, the groupings have been made mutually exclusive. The list of the least developed countries is decided upon by the United Nations Economic and Social Council and, ultimately, by the General Assembly, on the basis of recommendations made by the Committee for Development Policy. The basic criteria for inclusion require that certain thresholds be met with regard to per capita GNI, a human assets index and an economic vulnerability index. For the purposes of the Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor Report, "developed economies" equate to the ILO's classification of "industrial market economies; "economies in transition" to "transition economies," "developing countries" to "industrializing economies, and "the least developed countries" equates to "less developed countries." For countries that appear on both "developing countries" and "least developed countries" lists, they will be considered "least developed countries" for the purpose of calculating a "sufficient number" of labor inspectors.
76. U.S. Embassy- Kabul. *reporting, December 5, 2016*.
77. L'Agence France-Presse (AFP). "Kabul to investigate child sex slavery fuelling insider attacks." [online] June 28, 2016 [cited July 5, 2017]; <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/28/kabul-to-investigate-child-sex-slavery-fuelling-insider-attacks/>.
78. United National General Assembly Security Council. *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (S/2015/409)*; June 5, 2015. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCE9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2015_409.pdf.
79. United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. *Treatment of Conflict-Related Detainees: Implementation of Afghanistan's National Plan on the Elimination of Torture*; April 2017. <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/AF/AfghanReportApril2017.pdf>.
80. United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. *Afghanistan: Government, UN sign plan to stop under-age recruits in security forces*, UN, [online] January 30, 2011 [cited February 3, 2015]; <http://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-government-un-sign-plan-stop-under-age-recruits-security-forces>.
81. Government of Afghanistan. *Action Plan regarding Children associated with National Security Forces in Afghanistan*; March 30, 2011.
82. Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs Martyrs and Disabled. *Policy on Child Labor in Carpet Weaving*; 2016. <http://policymof.gov.af/smaf-annex-ii-child-labour-in-carpet-weaving-policy-paper-and-action-plan-molsamd/>.
83. Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs Martyrs and Disabled. *National Strategy for Children 'at-risk'*; 2004 http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session5/AF/AFG_Afghanistan_National_Strategy_for_Children_at-risk.pdf.
84. U.S. Embassy- Kabul official. E-mail communication to USDOL official. February 25, 2017.
85. GoodWeave International. *Project to Prevent Child Labor in Home-Based Carpet Production in Afghanistan*. Washington, DC; August 1, 2013.
86. ILO-IPEC. *Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor (CLEAR)*. Technical Progress Report. Geneva; October 2015.
87. UNICEF. *UNICEF Afghanistan Situation Report*. New York; July 31, 2013. http://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_Afghanistan_HAC_mid-year-report_July_2013.pdf.
88. U.S. Department of State official. E-mail communication to USDOL official. June 10, 2014.