



**KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES
ON VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES
AGAINST CHILDREN IN AFGHANISTAN
A BASELINE STUDY**



Save the Children

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Save the Children International in Afghanistan would like to stress its commitment to strengthening organizational responses to improve the situation of Children of Afghanistan.

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Executive Summary

Since 2012, Save the Children (SCI) has been working with Sida on a Holistic Child Protection Programme in Afghanistan. A key component of the program has focused on child protection systems strengthening, in coordination with MoLSAMD. It entails technical support/capacity building of a child protection front line work force – linked with Child Protection Action Network – as well as supporting social workers through a coaching/training/mentoring programme. The overall objective of the present initiative is to strengthen child protection prevention initiatives and quality access to child protection response services to reduce instances of violence, exploitation, and neglect of children. Specifically, the program aims to strengthen child protection systems at the national, provincial, district and community level to protect children at risk of abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect.

The present study assesses the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) on violence and harmful practices against children in SCI targeted provinces, namely Balkh, Jawzjan, Sari Pul, Nangarhar, and Kabul (street working children only). The KAP survey identifies knowledge gaps, cultural beliefs or behavioural patterns, practices and any other socio-cultural and economic factors that facilitate understanding or create barriers for protecting children in SCI target communities. At the same time, the survey establishes baseline data for the proposed programme. Based on the findings, MoLSAMD and SCI will also design and implement an awareness raising campaign that will raise the general public awareness on the protection needs of children.

Key Findings

Communication

- In general, girls have better communication on many issues with their parents if compared to boys and when analysed based on whether answers provided by children refer to mothers or fathers, mothers are perceived as having better communication with their children compared to fathers.
- On average, mothers can discuss beliefs with their children without feeling restrained or embarrassed more often than fathers actually can; are less likely to be insulted by their children; and are more likely to be told about problems and issues that bother children. In two aspects fathers perform better than mothers in communication with children: openness in discussing certain topics and empathy.

Violence against children

- Children experience high levels of all types of violence. Only 9% of children reported not experiencing any type of violence; 21% experienced from 1 to 3 types; 16% from 4 to 6 types, 10% from 7 to 9 types; 13% from 10 to 15 types, 9% from 16 to 20 types, 20% from 21 to 30 types, and 2.5% more than 31 types.
- Children from urban areas reported experiencing higher number of different types of violence at home than children in rural areas.
- Overall, accounting for all types of violence, boys and girls experience similar levels of violence at home. Differences due to age also could not be established.
- Almost half of the children experienced at least a form of psychological violence at home, including shouting, insults, blaming for parent's misfortune, cursing, public embarrassment, threats of abandonment, and locking out of home.
- Approximately 30% of children experienced emotional and physical neglect.
- Physical violence remains high where the worst forms of violence include kicking (40%); hitting with objects (approximately 40%); beating (34%); choking to be prevented from breathing (21%); burning or branding (15%). 15% of children were also given drugs.
- Boys are more likely to experience some forms of physical violence compared to girls, especially threats of being hurt or killed, hitting on the head with knuckles, choking to prevent them from breathing, and having their fingers twisted with a pencil in between. On average, girls are more often scared by invoking harmful people, ghosts or evil spirits against them if compared to boys.
- Despite answers on sexual abuse are very likely underreported, sexual abuse at home is high with 11% of children reporting being forced to watch videos or pictures with people with no or little clothes on; 7% admitted that they had to look at adult's private parts or adults looked at theirs; 7% reported being touched on their private parts in a sexual way or being forced to touch other's private parts; and 4.7% were forced into sexual intercourse. Sexual abuse at community level was reported in considerably higher percentages, especially by girls.

- 38% of children think that both girls and boys are equally at risk of sexual abuse. 29% of children think girls are more at risk of sexual abuse and 7% think boys are more at risk.
- Children's exposure to violence is high. 38% of children reported being exposed to murder of a household member in the past year; 31% of children have lived in a place where they have seen people being shot, bombs going off, people fighting, or rioting; and 17% reported someone has come to their home and stolen something. 39% of children heard parents or other adults saying hurtful things to each other or to another adult in the household and 31% of children saw their parents or caregivers hitting each other or another adult at home.
- 62% of respondents think that their community is very tolerant or tolerant of physical punishment of children. 41% of adults strongly agree or agree that in order to bring up, raise or educate children properly, the child needs to be physically punished with responses from (men and women statistically not differing).
- 64% of adults stated using non-violent methods for disciplining children, which directly contradicts the findings on the level of violence experienced by children and violence levels reported by adults themselves.
- Positive disciplining techniques are reported in high percentages by children and parents. Considering the high levels of violence experienced and perpetrated, these are likely less effective.
- While boys and girls experience similar percentages of positive disciplining, girls are more likely to be rewarded for behaving well.
- On average, boys get embarrassed publicly in schools more frequently than girls. Additionally, in school boys are more likely to have their fingers twisted between a pencil; to be threatened with being hurt or killed; to be hit on the head with knuckles; and of being ordered to slap another child.
- 32% of children felt they have been punished for an offence they do not accept; 16% think they received excessive and unnecessary punishment; and 56% think these punishments are not effective as they did not learn to not commit the same offence again. Boys are less likely to learn to not commit the same offence again if compared to girls.
- As sexual perpetrators children mentioned: father (9%); mother (3.9%); another adult living in the household (15%); relatives not living in the same household (22%). In terms of community children reported: powerful individuals (48%); police (5%); armed groups (32%); religious leaders (4.4%); community leader (6%); community members (18%); elderly children (19%). 26% of children also mentioned that nobody in the community commits sexual abuse.
- In terms of who commits most violence at home, children reported father (32%), mother (16%), brother (12%); grandmother (0.9%), grandfather (2.5%); uncle (0.6%); another adult from the household (9%); sister (4.1%); stepmother (1.3%); stepfather (1.9%); other (2.5%).
- In school most punishment is committed by teachers (44%), senior students (14%); school principals (7%); class representatives (6%); guards or cleaners (2.5%); and enzebat or children acting as guards at the entrance of the school (1.9%).
- Children think that violence is caused by: lack of awareness and/or education (73%); unemployment (70%); drug abuse (30%); poverty and social exclusion (49%); low value given to children (39%); absence of laws protecting children (20%); absence of institutions protecting children (20%); negative attitudes towards children from marginalized groups (11%); because people were victims of violence in their childhood (11%); loss of moral values (9%); media (2.1%); religious belief (6%). 11% of children also blamed themselves or the children's behaviour as being the cause of violence.

Child labour

- Almost 75% of adults and children (in the provinces) reported the following reasons for letting children to work: supplement family income (55%); help for paying debts (mentioned by 41% of adults and 46% of children); help in household enterprise mentioned by 38% of adults and 24% of children); in order for children to learn a skill (33% of adults and 42% of children); schooling is not considered useful (2.9% of adults and 8% of children); no school or school is too far (5.5% of adults and 8% of children); families cannot afford school fees (29% of adults and 25% of children); child not interested in school (19% of adults and 12% of children); children are interested in work (14% of adults and 24% of children); temporarily replacing someone unable to work (0.8% of adults and 4.3% of children); and preventing him/her from making bad friends and being led astray (3.8% of adults and 8% of children).
- The jobs that working children in Kabul mentioned performing are the following: washing cars, cleaning, cleaning shoes, washing vegetables, laundry, selling food and beverages (like bolani, burgers, chutneys, eggs, juice, water, etc.), selling mittens, selling plastic, selling vegetables, tailoring, selling cigarettes, selling chewing gum. Among the jobs listed, girls were involved in cleaning; laundry, selling food and beverages, cigarettes; selling plastic; tailoring; washing vegetables, and working at home.
- Traveling time to work is considerable for children in Kabul with more than 20% requiring more than 30 min to reach to their work-place with travelling distances mostly affecting boys.
- Children in Kabul were also asked about the reasons for working where 87% mentioned supplementing family income, 44% have to work to cover the expenses related to school, 31% work to help the family to pay debts, 18% mentioned helping a household enterprise, 2.5% feel the need to learn a skill, 3.8% think school is not useful for ensuring one's future, 3.1% are interested in work, 1.3% are not interested in school, 5% are replacing someone unable to work, 3.7% mentioned having a jobless parent, 1.2% mentioned working because of a death of a parent, and one child mentioned having a parent in prison.
- 18% of children reported that children are vulnerable for recruitment into Armed Opposition Groups in their community (with the highest percentage reported in Jawzjan, followed by Sari Pul, Balkh, and Nangarhar) with 13% of adults sharing the same concern.

Protection

- Only 10% of children and 17% of adults reported there is a place in the community where children can go to ask for help if they are abused by their parents or if they run away with girls in higher number being aware of such places.
- On average, CPAN members correctly identified 82% of the different types of violence (including sexual abuse) that children can be exposed to. Considering that these are the main bodies mandated for protecting children their overall knowledge should be considered low and in need of improvement.
- Less than 50% of CPANs have knowledge on at least a law/policy/institution protecting children with limited knowledge on the Child Rights Convention. Only 29% of CPANs were aware of the fact that the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and the Disabled is the primary authority for protecting children in Afghanistan.
- If CPANs came across violence against children 59% would report the case to the relevant bodies, 22% would confront the perpetrator, and 17% would directly offer care to the child. 3.4% would keep quiet or take no action, which contradicts their mandate as CPAN member.
- CPANs face considerable challenges for conducting their work, including: lack of resources; lack of knowledge; children's rights having low priority; lack of transportation; poor cooperation with other CPANs; staff turnover; poor cooperation with security actors, government, and NGOs; lack of rule of law; lack of facilities/spaces for children; lack of a clear plan; and lack of authority.

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Acronyms

AMICS	Afghanistan Multi – Clustered Survey (AMICS)
CPAN	Child Protection Action Network
CBCPAN	Community – Based Child Protection Action Network
DCPAN	District Child Protection Action Network
CRC	Child Rights Convention
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices
MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, the Martyred and the Disabled
ANDMA	Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority
UNICEF	United Nation International Children’s Emergency Fund
DCPAN	District Child Protection Action Network
UNHCR	United Nation High Commission of Refugee
IOM	International Organization for Migration
SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
UNCRC	The United Nation Convention on the Rights of Child
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
PDET	Positive Discipline in Everyday Teaching
PDEP	Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting
ANIM	Afghanistan National Institute of Music
DIC	Drop in Centre
OSA	Open Space School
FSL	Food Security and Livelihood
OCD	Organizational Capacity Development
OHQ	Organization for Human Development
ToR	Term of Reference
CPiE	Child Protection in Emergency
ANP	Afghan National Police
GBV	Gender Based Violence
CP	Child Protection
HTAC	Help the Afghan Children
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
CRG	Child Rights Governance
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence
MTR	Mid Term Review
TV	Television
VOA	Voice of America
EU	European Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Centre
UPR	Universal Periodic Report
CFS	Child Friendly Space
SCS	Save the Children Sweden
AOG	Arm Opposition Group
FECM	Forced and Early Child Marriage
EPP	Emergency Prepared Plan
WG	Working Group
SSC	School Students Council
APC	Afghanistan Protection Cluster
CAAF	Child Associated with Arm Force
SWEC	Afghanistan Women Education Centre
AWN	Afghan Women Network
SAF	Solidarity
NAC	Norwegian Afghanistan Committee

1. About the Programme

Since 2012, Save the Children has been working with Sida on a Holistic Child Protection Programme in Afghanistan. A key component of the program has focused on child protection systems strengthening, in coordination with MoLSAMD. It entails technical support/capacity building of a child protection front line work force – linked with CPANs – as well as supporting social workers through a coaching/training/mentoring programme. Some initial foundations have been established. For example, there are now more active and trained social workers at the Provincial Directorates of MoLSAMD and front line personnel such as Community-Based Child Protection Networks (CBCPN) and children’s groups in communities, and trust within the local communities as well as with national child protection networks have been established.

However, the mid-term review in June 2015 found that even though the capacity of the members of CPAN has improved, for the DCPANs to operate sustainably, they require more training, mentorship and resources to put knowledge into quality community action and services. Moreover, one of the key lessons learned from the current program is that more community mobilisation and dialogue will promote participation and ownership among members of the communities on prevention initiatives. This will bring the services of the CPAN closer to the communities. The second phase 2016 – 2019 will build and expand on the current program, based on lessons learned from Phase I strategies, objectives, approaches, and results.

The overall objective for this initiative is that strengthened child protection prevention initiatives and quality access to child protection response services reduce instances of violence, exploitation and neglect of children. Specifically, the program aims to strengthen child protection systems at the national, provincial, district and community level to protect children at risk of abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect.

The programme will be implemented in the five provinces of Kabul, Nangarhar, Sa-re-Pul, Jawzjan and Balkh. Humanitarian initiatives will be implemented in Nangarhar and Faryab, respectively. With the exception of Faryab, these were the provinces covered by the first phase, but Kabul had only the component of children associated with harmful work. This also remains the only component to be executed in Kabul province in this phase. Kabul was selected for one component only because of the high number of street working children as a result of displacement and rural-urban migration.

At provincial level, there are 25 members of a CPAN. All the components of the initiative will be implemented in four provinces. This phase will support 100 members of the CPAN. In Kabul, the initiative will rely on the CBCPN for implementation of the component on children and harmful work. Beneficiaries for humanitarian interventions will be determined during the inception phase. At district level, the number of any DCPAN is dependent on the number of villages in that district. This makes the numbers vary from 9-15 per district with a 50% representation of male and female members of the DCPAN. District level members of CBCPN will include about 10 members per category. This initiative will support directly some 120 members during implementation and other 120 members of the children’s groups. A total of 1,750 children associated with harmful work will be supported in all the five provinces, including Kabul. Besides the latter, activities will be also implemented in 15 schools per province, 60 schools in total. The table below outlines the groups targeted by the programme.

Table 1: Target groups

Beneficiary category	Male	Female	Total
CPAN (4 provinces * 25 members)	50	50	100
DCPAN (8 districts * 20 members)	112	48	160
CBCPN (12 district networks*10 members)	60	60	120
Children’s groups (12 districts*10 members)	60	60	120
Teachers and school authorities	1,000	1,000	2,000
Children in schools	10,000	10,000	20,000
Parents and caregivers	600	600	1,200
Children in Harmful work	963	787	1750
Schools 15 per province	30	30	60

The present report explores the context of violence against children in Afghanistan, including corporal punishments, child labour, sexual abuse, forced marriage, and children in armed conflict. The following section outlines the approach and methods followed by the findings on communication between children and parents in Afghanistan and different types of violence against children, at home and in school. Also the perpetrators, causes, consequences, and knowledge on violence are addressed. Child labour in the provinces is estimated only where in-depth information from street working children in Kabul is also explored in the same section. After a short section on children in armed conflict protection mechanism are explored, as perceived by community members and in terms of knowledge and activities of CPANs.

2. Context

Violence against children in schools by teachers, adult children, and at home by parents is widespread in Afghanistan. Physical and humiliating punishment (PHP) is common in both schools and at home with verbal and emotional abuse being the most prevalent. There are also many other harmful practices that continue to plague both girls and boys, such as early child marriage, child labour including recruitment into armed groups, and sexual abuse.

Corporal Punishment of Children in Afghanistan

At home, corporal punishment is lawful in Afghanistan. While Article 7 of the Constitution 2004 states that “the state shall observe the United Nations Charter, inter-state agreements, as well as international treaties to which Afghanistan has joined, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights there is no explicit prohibition of all corporal punishment of children in national law where article 54 (1) of the Penal Code 1976 confirms the “right” of “punishment of son and student by father and teacher; provided the punishment is within the limits of religious and other laws”; article 194(6) of the Shiite Personal Status Law 2009 states: “Parents and legal guardians can discipline their children to the extent that does not require dia [blood money/ransom] or [compensation for injury]; however any kind of extreme discipline can result in liability.”¹ Provisions against violence and abuse in the Penal Code 1976 and the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women 2009 are not interpreted as prohibiting all corporal punishment in childrearing.

In 2010, Government representatives in SAIEVAC (South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children) developed a national action plan to achieve prohibition and in 2011 endorsed a report on progress towards prohibiting corporal punishment in South Asia states which included an analysis of the reforms required in Afghanistan. The Government reported to the Universal Periodic Review in 2014 that the Penal Code, Civil Code, Juvenile Code and other laws are under review as part of the process of law reform in light of international human rights obligations. Corporal punishment is prohibited in schools, which is outlined in article 39 of the Education Act 2008: “Every kind of physical and psychological punishment of students is prohibited even for their correction and chastisement. Violators shall be prosecuted in accordance with the legal provision.”²

Based on findings from the Afghanistan Multi – Clustered Survey (AMICS), 74% of children aged 2-14 years were subjected to at least one form of psychological or physical punishment by their mothers/caretakers or other household members, and 38% of children were subjected to severe physical punishment. Additionally, while only 41% of household members believe that in order to raise their children properly, they need to physically punish them, in practice 69% of household members used physical punishment to discipline their children.³ There was no variance found between rural and urban areas in the percentage of children subjected to severe physical punishment. However, some minor variance was found with respect to gender: 40% of boys and 37% of girls were subjected to severe physical punishment.⁴

1 Global Initiative to End all Corporeal Punishment, “Corporeal Punishment of Children in Afghanistan”, 2015, - <http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/assets/pdfs/states-reports/Afghanistan.pdf>

2 Ibid.

3 CSO, “AMICS”, 2013,

4 Ibid.

Child Labour

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines child work as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to children's physical and mental development. It refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.⁵ ILO adopts three mutually exclusive categories of child activity: child labour, working children, and non-working children. Of these categories of child activity, child labour is defined in terms of the age of the child, the kind of economic activity undertaken and how long it takes, and the conditions of work. There are three categories of child labour according to the child's age: 1. Any work done by children aged between 5 and 11 years, irrespective of hours or conditions of work, whether it is on the household's farm or garden, in the family's or a relative's business, or the production or sale of articles, or any other income-earning activity, is regarded as child labour. 2. Work done by children between the ages of 12 and 14 is child labour if it involves performing any economic activity for 14 hours or more, and/or performing hazardous work. If the child is 15-17 years and is performing any economic activity for 43 hours or more, and/or performing hazardous work, this work is also regarded as child labour. If children between 12 and 17 years of age are engaged in economic activities, but spend less than 14 hours a week on that activity, while the activity itself is not of a hazardous nature (carrying heavy loads and/or working with dangerous tools or heavy machinery), then such children are regarded as working children, but not engaging in child labour. ILO excludes house chores from the definition of child labour.

Based on AMICS, 27% of children aged 5-11 years were involved in child labour activities, while the figure is 22% for children aged 12-14 years. The prevalence of total child labour (aged 5-14 years) is 25%. There is some variance of total child labour between girls (23%) and boys (28%). Almost twice as many children in rural areas (28%) are involved in child labour than their counterparts in urban areas (15%).⁶ Based on ALCS, in 2013-14, of a total population of 10.3 million children between 5 and 17 years of age, 2.7 million children or 27% were in child labour with 4% of all children in this age group were working children, while slightly more than two thirds were not working. Nearly half of all children in child labour (46%) were between 5 and 11 years of age. Nearly two thirds of all children in child labour (65 percent) were boys. In fact, of the entire population of boys between 5 and 17 years of age, a third was engaged in child labour.⁷

Children whose mothers have no education (26%) are twice more likely to be involved in child labour than children whose mothers have attained secondary education or higher (13%). Children living in the poorest households (30%) are twice as likely to be involved in child labour than children living in the wealthiest households (15%)⁸, which was also established by the AMICS where the poverty rate was much higher in households with at least one child engaged in child labour (48 percent) compared to those without child labour (39 percent) and as increasing progressively for households with more children engaged in child labour.

When controlled for other factors, it is quite likely that child labour will be found to be a significant constraint to school attendance where characteristics related to age, disability, child labour, whether the mother or father makes decisions about children's education, the level of economic prosperity in the community and spatial characteristics were significantly associated with the probability of school enrolment. Of these variables, however, the level of economic prosperity in the community as measured by the proportion of bad jobs emerged as the single most important factor, which suggests that the health of the local labour market is a key determinant of whether parents decide to send their children to work or to school.⁹ In some communities, however, a traditional lifestyle propels children into the workplace where the nomadic lifestyle of the Kuchi, which is based on tending livestock, requires children to undertake many tasks associated with child labour, which results the Kuchis having the highest rates of child labour among both girls and boys.¹⁰ Based on AMICS findings, more than half of all ages' children from 5 upwards were involved also in variety of house chores such as collecting firewood, fetching water, cooking, cleaning, washing, shopping and caring for children, old or sick people.¹¹

5 ILO

6 CSO, AMICS

7 ALCS, 2014

8 CSO, AMICS

9 Afghanistan Living Conditions survey

10 CSO, AMICS

11 CSO, AMICS

Children in Armed Conflict

Regardless of how children are recruited and of their roles, child soldiers are victims, whose participation in conflict bears serious implications for their physical and emotional well-being. They are commonly subject to abuse and most of them witness death, killing, and sexual violence. Many are forced to perpetrate these atrocities and some suffer serious long-term psychological consequences. The reintegration of these children into civilian life is a complex process. The United Nations documented the recruitment and use of 68 children (65 boys, 3 girls) of which 22 were verified (all boys), one each by the Afghan National Police and the Afghan local police and 20 associated with the Taliban and other armed groups. This marks a decrease in child recruitment and use in Afghanistan compared with 2013, when 97 children were reportedly recruited and used. However, owing to widespread underreporting, these figures do not accurately reflect the situation. In a worrisome trend, the Taliban continued to recruit children to carry out suicide attacks and to plant improvised explosive devices, and used them in active combat and as spies. For example, on 9 February 2015, a 14-year-old suicide bomber detonated explosives near an Afghan National Security Forces checkpoint in Sharan district, injuring six civilians and five national police officers where Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.¹²

In 2015 alone, the pilot Child Protection Units established by the ANP in four provinces reportedly prevented 156 children from enlisting, indicating a potential for a large and beneficial impact if such units are replicated across the country. In addition, the local police reported 55 cases of rejected underage applicants. As of December, according to the Ministry of Justice, 258 boys were held in Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres (JRC) across the country on national security-related charges, including association with armed groups. Of 105 child detainees interviewed by the United Nations between February 2013 and December 2014, 44 reported having been subjected to ill-treatment or torture.¹³

The increase in child casualties in 2015 included at least 710 children killed and 1,792 injured in 1,091 separate incidents. Armed groups, including the Taliban and the Hizb-e-Islami, were responsible for 1,343 child casualties (392 killed, 951 injured), Afghan national security forces for 396 (126 killed, 270 injured), and international military forces for 38 (24 killed, 14 injured). Cross-border shelling from Pakistan resulted in 57 child casualties (5 killed, 52 injured).¹⁴

Forced Marriage of Girls

Based on AMICS findings, 15% of women aged 15-49 years were married before the age of 15, while 46% were married before the age of 18. Girls forced marriages research undertaken by AIHRC shows that most of the respondents were married at the age of 14 or earlier. Around 40% of the respondents were married at an age between 10-13 years, 32.5% at 14 and 27.5% at 15.¹⁵ Up to 80 % of marriages were forced marriages on girls. The same research also shows that most of child marriages are arranged by the parents. Marriages subsequent to an exchange are the second type of child marriages mentioned by the same study undertaken by AIHRC. The third typology is marriages organized in exchange for money. The fourth type is marriages as a result of the influence and power of the husband followed by giving the girls into baad and the marrying girls to pay family debts. AIHRC shows that girls are nine times more exposed to early marriage than boys. The findings of AIHRC's regional monitoring show that 36.4% of child marriages have taken place to settle economic problems, and that 41.3% of 'exchange' marriages were also meant to solve economic problems. Children are often forced to early marriage by violent means and it is widely accepted with a complete absence of cases indicting parents for having children married at an early age.¹⁶

Based on AMICS, urban girls and women (13%) are less likely to marry early than rural girls and women (22%). The same survey found that early marriage is also strongly related to the level of education of the girl or woman. Young women without education are more than three times as likely to be married before the age of 18 than are their counterparts who have secondary education or higher. Significant differences among the regions were also found. The Western region has the highest marriage rate (33%) of young women aged 15-19 years, while the Central region has the lowest rate (12%).¹⁷

¹² Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council (A/69/926-S/2015/409) issued on 5 June 2015, http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF-CF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2015_409.pdf

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ UNAMA, "Report on civilian casualties", 2015

¹⁵ AIHRC, "Children Situation Summary Report", 2013, http://www.aihrc.org.af/home/research_report/2115

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ AMICS

Sexual Abuse of Children

AIHRC report shows that many children in different age groups were facing sexual assault in 2013 with girls more prone to it.¹⁸ The total number of sexual assault on children recorded by AIHRC was 470 cases, which represented a 28% increase if compared to the previous reporting year.¹⁹ In general, there are no exact and accurate statistics on sexual assault on children and especially other forms of sexual exploitations. The USA Embassy in its annual report on human rights has claimed that during 2012, the Ministry of Interior Affairs has recorded approximately 100 cases of sexual assault on children in Kabul province only.²⁰ According to the findings of the AIHRC report, sexual abuse is perpetrated both non – relatives, relatives and those having close relationships with children like neighbours. Additionally, local commanders and the powerful people are among the perpetrators, including practices like bacha bazi.²¹

2.1 Child Protection in Afghanistan

Issues of child protection intersect with goals enshrined under the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and the Millennium Development Goals. Both the ANDS and the MDGs address child protection ensuring the protection of children against any perceived or real danger/risk to their life, their personhood and their childhood. They address the need to reduce child vulnerability to any kind of harm or harmful situations and protect children against social, psychological and emotional insecurity and distress. Child protection must ensure that no child falls out of the social security and safety net and those who experience problems receive necessary care and protection. The Committee of the Rights of the Child, investigates the implementation of the CRC (Child Rights Convention), which was ratified by Afghanistan in 1994.

In May 2006 the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disables (MoLSAMD), supported by UNICEF, launched the National Strategy for Children at Risk (NSFCAR). NSFCAR outlines a vision for the network of services, policies, and programs necessary to protect children at risk and enable them to reach their full potential free from violence, exploitation, and abuse, enabling their full participation as citizens of Afghanistan. The NSFCAR provides a road map for building a sustainable child protection and family support response system based at the community level. In line with NSFCAR, MoLSAMD with support from UNICEF established a model Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) initially in 11 provinces in 2007. The network was further scaled up to 26 provinces in 2008 and then to 28 provinces in 2009. This network regularly functions in 28 of the 34 provinces and in 58 districts across the regions in Afghanistan.

Purpose and Objective of the Study

The present study assesses the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) on violence and harmful practices against children in SCI targeted provinces. The KAP survey identifies knowledge gaps, cultural beliefs or behavioural patterns, practices and any other socio-cultural and economic factors that facilitate understanding or create barriers for protecting children in SCI target communities. The also assess communication processes/channels that are appropriate for promoting child protection activities. Based on the findings, MoLSAMD and SCI will design and implement an awareness raising campaign that will raise the general public awareness on the protection needs of children.

18 AIHRC, “Children Situation Summary Report”, 2013, http://www.aihrc.org.af/home/research_report/2115.

19 Ibid.

20 According to the findings of the AIHRC report

21 UNICEF, Conflict threatens access to children by humanitarian organizations in Afghanistan, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/afghanistan_44707.html

The KAP survey assesses the following:

- a. Knowledge of parents and members of CPANs on children's protection rights and the existence of legislation or resources to protect them; knowledge of the risks posed by harmful child labour, migration, corporal punishment and alternative forms of discipline in schools and in communities;
- b. Attitudes towards the use of corporal punishment for discipline; beliefs about when it is appropriate for a child to work; approval or discouragement of early marriage;
- c. The common practices and prevalence of the use of physical and humiliating punishment for disciplining children at homes and in schools; other harmful practices that negatively impact the growth and development of children in the communities; if and where caregivers seek help for a child in need of protection; and the factors that influence harmful practices towards children.

3.1 Research Methods

The study took a mixed-methods approach where the survey measures the attitudes, knowledge, and practice on violence against children and the qualitative data provide in-depth information on causation of such practices.

Surveys

A survey was administered to male and female community members, who were primary caregivers of at least one child that was at least 5 years old. A survey was also administered to children 10 to 17 years old. And finally, a survey was also conducted with CPAN members- at community, district, and provincial levels - street working children and their parents/caregivers.

Household Survey

The household survey with male and female community members explored the attitudes and practices towards corporal punishments and disciplining of children. Respondents were confronted with scenarios involving children of different age that explored whether parents adopt positive disciplining techniques for raising children. The same section also explored child marriage with questions on the most appropriate age for engagement and marriage of both girls and boys and the problems of pregnancy for adolescent girls. The parent/caregiver survey includes The Parent-Child Communication Scale, which is adapted from the Revised Parent-Adolescent Communication Form of the Pittsburgh Youth Study, which is a 20-item measure which assesses primary caregivers' perceptions of their openness to communication and their children's communication skills. The answers are coded on 5-point scales where 1 represents "almost never" and 5 represents "Almost always."

In order to exhaustively explore psychological, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse of children, elements of the ICAST tools were included in the survey. The ICAST is a self-report measure to assess child abuse prevalence and frequency. There are three ICAST tools: a child version for ages 11-18 (ICAST-C), a parent version (ICAST-P) (and a young adults' retrospective version (ICAST-R) that does not apply to the present study). The ICAST-P measures a caregiver's current (past year) and lifetime physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, and harsh parenting perpetration for an index child. The ICAST-C measures a child current (past year) and lifetime experience of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, domestic violence and community violence. The ICAST was developed for use internationally and different versions have amongst others been used in Saudi Arabia, Columbia, India, Russia, Iceland, Egypt, Lebanon, Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Taiwan, China, Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Korea. While these are usually administered to mothers/female caregivers, for the present study, these are administered to both parents due to reporting requirements as outlined by the log-frame.

The survey also explored perceptions on the sexual, physical and emotional abuse of children in the community. Additionally, it explores respondent's willingness and barriers to reporting different types of abuses. The last section explores child labour of all the children present in the household, who were 5 – 17 years old, which is in part based on questionnaires from standardized national surveys like the Afghanistan Multi – Cluster Survey and the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey. The demographics sections include information on assets, displacement, and disability as major factors influencing the vulnerability of a household and are included in all questionnaires.

A survey was also administered to boys and girls residing in the target communities. The survey included the same Parent – Child communication Scale administered to male and female adults and the ICAST – C (developed for children), here

adapted for exploration at home and at school. The survey further explored the causes, effectiveness, and effects of violence on children. Sexual abuse was also explored directly but only after children had the chance to answer general questions on sexual abuse in the community. Peer to peer violence and witnessing of household violence were also explored with tools adapted from the preliminary evidence of an instrument developed for assessing exposure to victimization and maltreatment among youth.²² The following sections explored perceptions on sexual violence presence in the schools and communities, child marriage, and knowledge and availability of protective measures available to children. Child labour was also explored, based on the same tools included in the questionnaires for adults.

CPAN/CBPCPN members

A survey was also conducted with CPAN/DCPAN and CBPAN male and female members. The survey explored whether and when providers have discussed violence with clients; how many cases of violence were handled and solved; an assessment on whether different types of violence against children are considered as violence by CPAN members; child marriage; what they think are the barriers for protecting children; what they do when they discover that a child has experienced violence; knowledge on conventions, laws, policies, and institutions protecting children; some examples that explore CPANs knowledge on the CRC; the major challenges and barriers for protecting children; coordination with other institutions on protection issues; and whether these have undertaken any advocacy initiatives. The survey further inquired on the trainings received and the trainings required for improving their work as CPAN members. The survey also included The “MVP Efficacy Scale”, which is a ten-item scale that was developed for use in a programme evaluation of a Mentors in Violence Programme in 1994, consisting of ten items assessing self-efficacy related to gender violence prevention,²³ which was already pre-tested and adopted in the Afghan context in the consultant’s previous work.

Working children and their parents/caregivers in Kabul

The survey explored whether children attend school and the barriers they experience for regular attendance due to work. It was followed by a section on the current work undertaken by children in terms of working hours, working environment, abuse at work, and earnings. A parent was also administered a survey that included information on parent’s perceptions of child labour/working children followed by household assets, income, and other household information.

Focus Groups

Focus groups with male and female CPAN members were conducted at provincial level. The latter explored violence against children, the challenges of the CPAN networks, and the solutions for improving child protection by especially highlighting aspects of the issues addressed that are peculiar to girls and boys. Focus groups were also conducted with girls and boys in order to explore violence against children, challenges for reporting it, the mechanisms in place, and the role of children in child protection. These were explored at home, school, and in the community. Focus groups with working children (boys and girls) and their parents (mothers and fathers) were also held in Kabul. These explored the challenges and needs that working children experience and the possible solutions for improvements.

3.2 Sampling

Surveys

The household survey with men, women, girls, and boys was administered in the target communities of Nangarhar, Sari Pul, Jawzjan, and Balkh. Based on the number of the total populations as estimated in the target communities and apportioned based on the weight of each province in terms of population, the final sample based on a 95% confidence interval and 4% margin of error was 636 with a response distribution of 50%.

²² Christine A. Walsh, Harriet L. MacMillan, Nico Trocm c, Ellen Jamieson, Michael H. Boyle, “Measurement of victimization in adolescence: Development and validation of the Childhood Experiences of Violence Questionnaire.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 32 (2008) 1037–1057, https://www.mcgill.ca/crcf/files/crcf/2008-CEVQ_Validation.pdf

²³ Victoria L. Banyard, Elizabeth G. Plante, and Mary M. Moynihan, “Rape Prevention Through Bystander Education: Bringing a Broader Community Perspective to Sexual Violence Prevention,” National Institute of Justice, 2005, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/208701.pdf>.

CPAN members at different levels were sampled based on a list of CPAN members for each province with the percentage of CPANs belonging to each level (province, district, community) apportioned based on their percentage in the total number of CPANs. Out of a population of 1109 CPANs in total, 313 CPAN members were surveyed (79 in Balkh, 80 in Jawzjan, 76 in Nangarhar, and 78 in Sari Pul) with a 95% confidence interval and a 4.7% margin of error.

The survey with working children and caregivers was administered in District 1, 4, and 10 in Kabul. The participants were randomly selected from a list of participants (300) provided by Save the Children to the consultant where 162 working children/parents were surveyed (at 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error).

Focus Groups

Focus groups with male and female CPAN members were conducted at provincial levels in Balkh, Nangarhar, Sari Pul and Jawzjan. These also included some members of CPANs at district level. In each province 2 focus groups were conducted with girls and boys from rural and urban areas, 4 in total for each province.

Focus groups with working girls and boys was conducted in Kabul along a focus group with mothers and fathers. The latter was conducted directly by the consultant.

Table 1: Sampling Frame

Type	Provinces	Number
Survey parents/caregivers and children	Nangarhar, Sari Pul, Balkh, Jawzjan	636
Survey working children along a parent/caregiver	Kabul	162
Survey CPANs (different levels)	Nangarhar, Sari Pul, Balkh, Jawzjan	313
Total surveys		1099
Focus group CPANs	Nangarhar, Sari Pul, Balkh, Jawzjan	4
Focus group Child Groups	Nangarhar, Sari Pul, Balkh, Jawzjan	16
Focus Group working children	Kabul	2
Focus group mothers and fathers working children	Kabul	2
Total focus groups		24

3.3 Survey Implementation

The fieldwork was implemented by SCI where the consultant provided detailed field guidelines along sampling frames. A one - day training was given to provincial coordinators, who in turn trained and supervised the enumerators. The latter also conducted focus groups. Data were entered by a team of data entry clerks in Kabul.

In order to ensure the quality of data, the child protection coordinators monitored and supervised the surveyors in the field and provided them with feedback. The forms were checked and reviewed by child protection coordinators at the end of each working day. The child protection coordinators contacted the community elders to check on the surveyors whether these were conducting the surveys in the communities and whether any problems arose due to the survey implementation. In each community, the chairperson of the CBCPN additionally supported the surveyors in conducting the surveys, who were in touch with the child protection coordinators in each province. Data were again checked by the MEAL coordinator in Kabul before these were entered into the database.

3.4 Challenges

Insecurity caused delays to data collection, especially in Aqcha district of Jawzjan where the data collection was suspended for two weeks due to fighting in the area. Another problem was the availability of CBCPAN members as some of the randomly selected participants were not available. These were replaced by a backup list provided by the consultant. Some villages were apart from each other, which caused some delays to data collection and logistical problems, especially due to insecurity in remote areas. Some villages were out of network coverage areas, which impeded coordination of the field teams.

3.5 Analysis

While the difference in the answers provided by girls and boys (or men and women) are reported mostly in the charts, the actual analysis mostly explores statistically significant differences. Statistical significance means that the differences between different groups (i. e. boys and girls) likely reflect real differences in the entire population of people represented by the sample and are not due to chance because of the particular people the surveyors happened to survey.

Different scales are also adopted and explained throughout the report. These are often measured on a scale from 1 to 5 and only reported if the coefficient of internal reliability is sufficiently high. Details of each scale used are found in Annex A.

3.6 Study Limitations

A major study limitation is represented by the negligence in data filling and data entry with inconsistent reporting that required a lot of data cleaning. In order to calculate the prevalence of child labour and determine working children, information on hours of economic activity and hours of household activities undertaken (intersected with child age) are needed. In the survey administered to parents/caregivers – who had to answer a series of questions exploring child labour for all the children 5 to 17 years old present in the household - for only the first child mentioned by adults, 15% of data on children's economic activity and 40% of data on household activity undertaken by the child is missing. Missing data considerably increase for all the subsequent children mentioned by the parent/caregiver. Child labour and the percentage of working children was also difficult to calculate based on the survey administered to children due to missing data, inconsistencies in questionnaire filling with 11% of missing information on child age. Nonetheless, some estimates are attempted based on the available data.

In some occasions, the question was wrongly administered. 46% of children were aware of at least one law, policy, or institution that protects children and mentioned: the Law on the Rights and Privileges of People with Disability and Martyr's Family (31%); the EAW Law (23%); Law on Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres (10%); Education Law (36%); Law on Counter Abduction and Human trafficking (8%); Labour Law (16%); Law of Public Health (30%); Juvenile Code (28%); Child Rights Convention (42%); CEDAW (2.1%); ILO Conventions (4.8%); Convention on the Status of Refugees (6.2%); Inter- ministerial Steering Committee on Children and Armed Conflict (2.1%); Afghanistan National Development Strategy (3.4%); National Action Plan of Action against Trafficking and Kidnapping of Children (2.75); AIHRC (10%); and CPANs (25%). In this case, possible responses were read to participants, who very likely reported knowing a law/institution even if it was unknown. Based on previous research experience of the consultant, even subject matter experts (like police, lawyers, etc.) usually are not well acquainted with interested laws/institutions in such high percentages. Also considering the limited knowledge of children on CPANs, who are present in children's communities (which increases their likelihood of being acquainted with them), the latter is very unlikely, especially considering that CPANs are mentioned in much higher percentages if compared to the question on the places where children can go when in need of protection.

Focus groups provide information that is essentially quantitative in nature. Consequently, often these do not provide information needed for explaining the findings of the survey. When an explanation of a survey finding is attempted, it is often speculative and based on the previous research experience of the consultant. Additionally, the translation of the focus groups is poor with many sentences that are entirely incomprehensible. Focus groups transcriptions mostly captured short answers where complete dialogues should have been transcribed as per guideline provided by the consultant. Short answers provided by the focus group participants often lack follow up questions that would determine the reasons for participants in providing such answers. In many occasions, the answers do not reflect the question asked. Additionally, slightly over half of the focus groups lacked basic details on location such as province and district, which were difficult to recover after these were dispatched to Kabul for translations.

The Parent Child Communication Scale is sub-divided into different scales, including Parent Communication, Parent Restricted Topics, Child Empathy/Listening, and Child Emotional Expression. Aside the Parent Communication Sub-scale, due to low internal reliability these scales could not be calculated. Nonetheless, items could be still analysed separately and provide some insights into the dynamics of the children's communication with parents.

Sexual abuse is a difficult topic to explore, especially when the latter is assessed in terms of personal experiences. While self-administration of the survey facilitates answering these types of questions, the latter was not possible in a household survey (where this would have been possible if the surveys were implemented in schools, for example). Instead, the questions exploring sexual abuse were preceded by questions on the presence of sexual abuse in the community, which prepared the respondents for more personal questions on the topic. Additionally, these served for triangulation purposes in case of sexual abuse underreporting.

FINDINGS

Demographics

The present section provides some basic demographic information from all the surveys administered. In the children's survey 45% of respondents are girls, 48% of respondents are boys and for the remaining data is missing. 21% are Pashtun, 17% Tajik, 27% Uzbek, 4.7% Hazara, 13% Turkmen, 6.3% Arab, 2.2% Pashayee, and other. 79% are attending school and 17% are not (with the remaining data missing). 18% are also earning an income (with 76% not earning it). 14% mentioned having a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity (with 80% not having any sort of illness and the remaining not providing an answer). Parents are mostly uneducated with 57% of illiteracy recorded among fathers and 75% among mothers. 18% of children are from 10 to 11 years old (with a small percentage of children, who are younger than 10 years), 34% are from 12 to 14 years old, and 37% are from 15 to 17 years old.²⁴

Children Household Survey Age Range

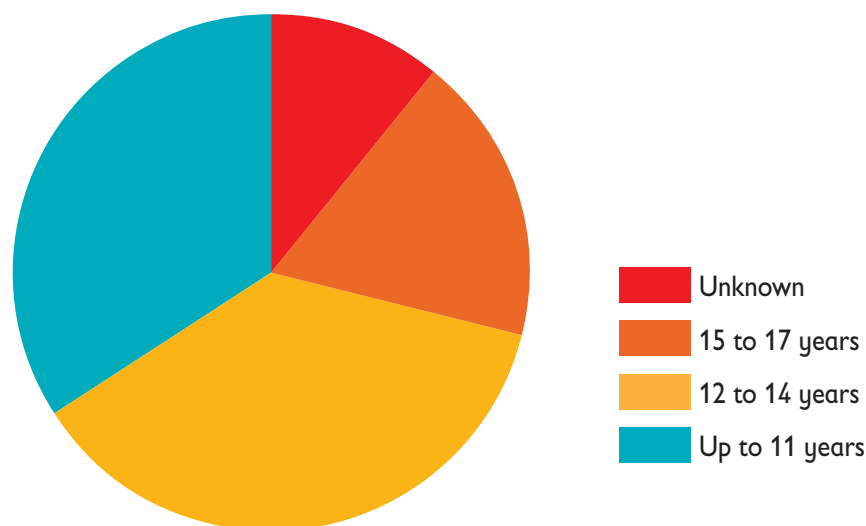


Chart 1: Children age groups in the survey administered to children

In the parent/caregiver survey, 50% of respondents were male and 47% were female (with 3% of data missing, which – as per the sampling framework - are likely female). 22% are Pashtun, 18% are Tajik, 26% are Uzbek, 4% are Hazara, 14% are Turkmen, 6% are Arab, and the remaining belong to other ethnicities present in Afghanistan. 25% defined themselves as unemployed, 18% as day labourers, 13% as self-employed, 8% as unpaid family workers, 24% as working at home, 2.8% as salaried worker in the public sector, and the remaining mentioned other non-specified occupations. 58% are illiterate, 9% have madrasa education, and 16% are semi-literate with the remaining small percentage having various degrees of education. 15% mentioned having a disability and 14% as having a disabled household member. 6% mentioned being currently displaced and 32% as having a history of displacement.

A total of 162 working children in Kabul were surveyed, 61% boys and 39% girls. These were from 10 to 17 years old (with 3 children being, 7, 8, and 9 years old respectively). The average respondent's age was 12 where 92% were younger than 15 and 8% were 15 or 16 years old. Along children, a parent or caregiver was also surveyed where 80% are women, 8% are men, and 11% of data is missing. CPANs from the interested communities were also surveyed where 56% were men and 44% were women.

²⁴ Data on children's age is missing for 11% of the children.

1. Communication Children - Parents

Children and parents were asked a series of questions regarding their relationship in terms of closeness, openness, and time spent together, supportiveness, and parents acting as role models for their children. 82% of children feel close or very close to their parents and more parents (92%) feel very close or close to their children.²⁵ 74% of children feel very open or open with their parents, including discussing more personal things where 86% of parents share the same opinion.²⁶ 29% spend a lot of time and 37% quite some time in talking to their parents where 28% of parents spend a lot of time and 33% quite some time in talking to their children.²⁷ 82% feel their parents are very supportive or supportive where slightly more parents think they are very supportive or supportive of their children (85%).²⁸ 80% of children think their parents represent a role model for them with slightly more parents (85%) thinking they represent a role model for their children.²⁹ 70% of children think they are understood by their parents with a similar percentage of parents thinking they understand or very much understand the problems of their children (73%);³⁰ and 83% of children feel very loved or loved by their parents where the same question was not asked to parents due to the predictability of answers provided.³¹ There were no statistical differences between responses provided by girls and boys with the exception of closeness where boys on average felt closer to their parents if compared to girls.³² There were also no statistically significant differences in the responses provided by mothers and fathers except in one example where, on average, mothers spend more time talking to their children, which is plausible considering the strict gender roles prevailing in Afghanistan that relegate women to their domestic roles.³³

Parent – Child Communication Scales (Parent and Child Versions)

The Parent Communication Scale (Child Version) that reflects the child's perception of the primary caregiver's effort to maintain an open communication with him/her, provided some additional information on the relationship between parents and children and the way it is perceived by children since it captures the frequency with which the child communicates his/her feelings and problems with the primary caregiver. On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents the absence of communication ("Almost never") between parents and children and 5 a very frequent communication ("Almost always"), on average, children scored $M=3.10$ ³⁴, which represents a slightly over 'sometimes' but tending towards 'rarely' in terms of children's perceived openness of communication with their parents. The Parent-Child (Parent version) that was administered to parents, contains 20 items. On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means very often and 5 never, on average parents scored $M=2.99$ ³⁵, which means that sometimes (but tending towards often) these openly communicate with their children. Despite coding of the two scales being inverse and already underscored in the findings on different aspects of communication explored in the previous section, it is apparent that parents feel they have better communication with their children than children feel about the communication with their parents, which could indicate that adults overestimate their communication skills.

25 12% of children feel nor close nor unclosed, 2.5% not close, and 2.2% not close at all with a small number of respondents, who did not provide the answer. 7.5% feel neither close nor unclosed and 0.3% do not feel close at all.

26 20% of children do not feel nor open nor not open discussing with their parents, 3.8% do not feel open, and 1.6% do not feel open at all with the remaining small number of respondents failing to provide an answer. 12% of parents do not feel neither open nor not open in discussing with their children, 2.2% do not feel open, and 0.6% do not feel open at all.

27 19% of children spend average, 11% limited, and 2.2% no time in talking to their parents with the remaining small number of respondents failing to provide an answer. 36% of parents do not spend neither a lot nor little time talking to their children, 2.2% spend little time and 0.6% no time at all.

28 10% of children think their parents are neither supportive nor unsupportive, 3.2% think they are unsupportive, 2.8% very unsupportive with the remaining small number of respondents failing to provide an answer. 12% of parents feel they are neither supportive nor unsupportive, 1.9% feel their unsupportive, and 0.3% very unsupportive of their children. 0.3% did not know.

29 10% think their parents are neither a role model neither they are not; 5.1% think they are a role model to a very limited extent, 2.8% they are not a role model at all. 1.3% did not know and the remaining did not provide an answer. 13% of parents think they are neither a role model nor not a role model for their children, 0.6% feel they are not, and 0.9% feel they are not at all. 0.9% data is missing.

30 17% feel their neither understood nor misunderstood, 8% think their parents understand them a little bit; and 1.6% not at all with the remaining small number of respondents failing to provide an answer. 23% of parents think they neither understand nor do not understand the problems of their children, 2.5% think they do not understand them, and 0.3% think they do not understand at all. 0.9% data is missing.

31 10% feel neither loved nor lacking love, 3.8% feel slightly loved, nor 1.6% do not feel loved at all with the remaining small number of respondents failing to provide an answer.

32 Boys ($M = 1.52$, $SD = .76$), girls ($M = 1.79$, $SD = .985$); $t(291) = -2.63$; $p = .009$

33 Fathers ($M=2.28$, $SD=.882$), mothers ($M=1.95$), $t(309) = 3.324$, $p = .001$

34 ($N = 320$, $s.d = .52$)

35 $N=320$, $SD=.726$

Average Scores Children Parents Scale Referring to Mothers and Father (1=Never, 5= Always)

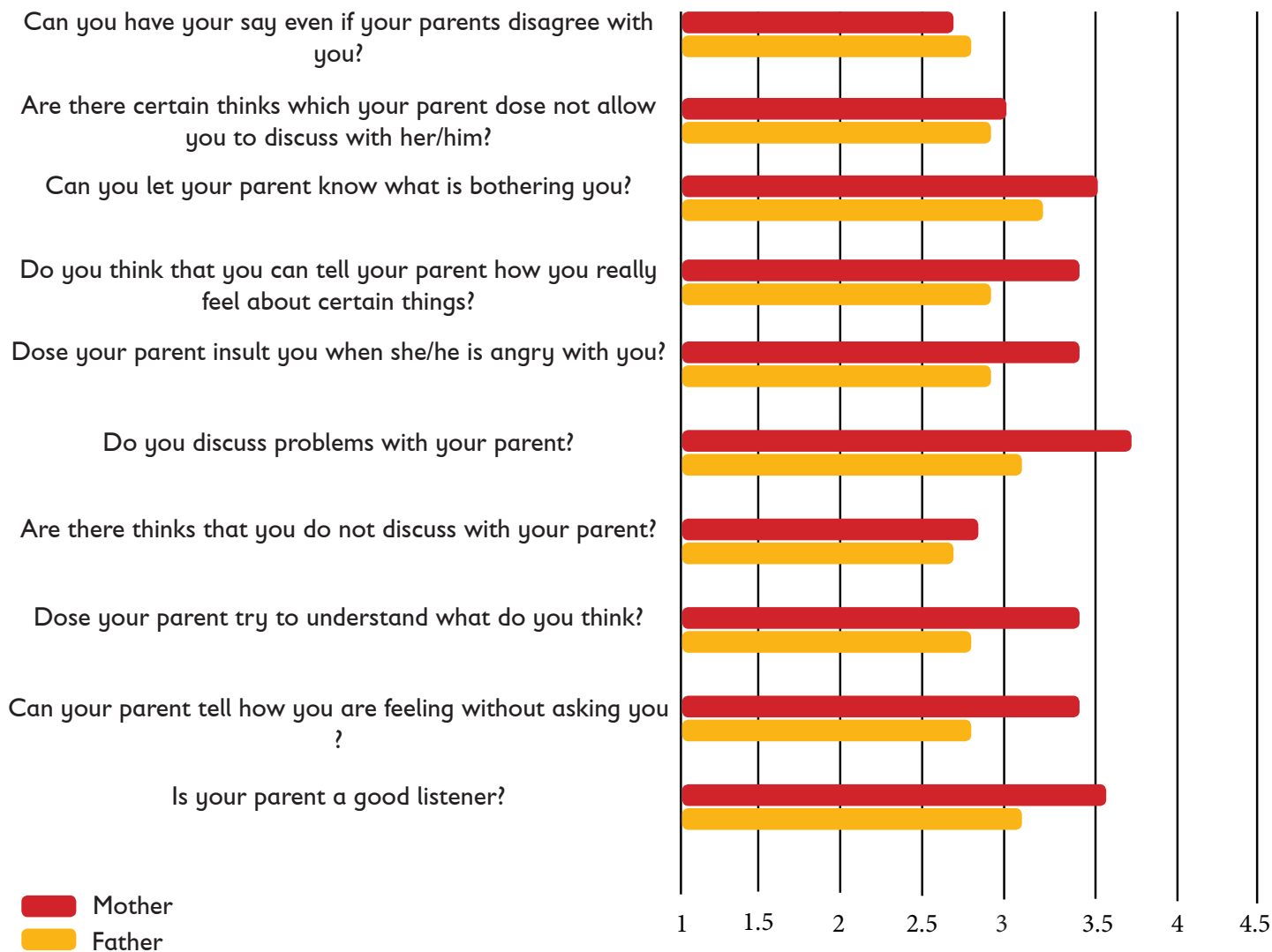


Chart 2: The chart captures the average answers provided by children on the questions from the Child Parent Scale. The average scores provided are referring to answers provided when children were answering the questions for mothers and when they were answering for fathers (randomly selected). Differences in average scores that are statistically significant are marked with a red border with the results reported in the footnotes.

The Parent Child Communication Scale that was administered to children could be also analysed based on whether responses are provided from boys or girls' perspectives or whether these refer to mothers or fathers where only statistically significant differences are reported. In general, girls have better communication on many issues with their parents if compared to boys and when analysed based on whether answers provided by children refer to mothers or fathers, mothers are perceived as having a better communication with their children when compared to fathers.

When asked about whether parents can tell how children are feeling without asking directly, on average girls felt it happened more frequently than boys.³⁶ Also when children were asked whether they feel their parents try to understand what they think, on average it happens more frequently to girls if compared to boys.³⁷ When children were asked whether they discuss problems with their parents, on average girls are more likely to discuss them.³⁸ On average, girls feel they can tell their parents how they really feel more often than boys.³⁹ On average, girls felt that there are certain things that their parents less likely discuss with them (if compared to boys), which inversely means that boys are more likely to discuss certain things with their parents (if compared to girls).⁴⁰

When children were asked whether their parents are good listeners, on average, mothers are more likely to listen to their children if compared to fathers; ⁴¹mothers are more likely to better understand how their children feel;⁴² mothers are better at understanding what their children think;⁴³ mothers are more likely to be told about the problems that children experience;⁴⁴ and mothers are more likely told how children really feel about certain things.⁴⁵

36 Boys (M= 2.87, SD=1.38), Girls (M = 3.47, SD=1.15); t (287) = -4.73; p = .000

37 Boys (M= 2.85, SD=1.008), Girls (M = 3.47, SD=1.31); t (285) = -4.57; p = .000

38 Boys (M=3.07, SD=1.19), girls (M=3.63, SD=1.15); t(291) = -4.22; p = .000

39 Boys (M=2.89, SD= 1.13), girls (M = 3.35, SD=1.1); t (281) = -3.51; p=.001

40 Boys (M=2.86, SD=1.14), girls (M= 3.14, SD = 1.08); t (279) = -2.09; p=.037

41 Fathers (M=3.13, SD = 1.43), Mothers (M = 3.60, SD = 1.44), t (296) = -2.86, p = .004

42 Fathers (M=2.92, SD = 1.06), mothers (M=3.43, SD = 1.12), t (298) = -4.04, p = .000

43 Fathers (M= 2.90, SD= 1.06), mothers (M=3.43, SD = 1.14), t (296) = -3.95, p = .000

44 Fathers (M = 3.07, SD = 1.15), mothers (M = 3.68, SD = 1.08), t (301) = -4.7, p = .000

45 Fathers (M=2.86, SD = 1.10), Mothers (M = 3.43, SD = 1.07), t (288) = -.339, p=.000

Parent's Average Scores on the Parent Child Communication Scale Referring to Their Daughters/Sons (1=Very Often, 5=Never)

Daughters
Sons

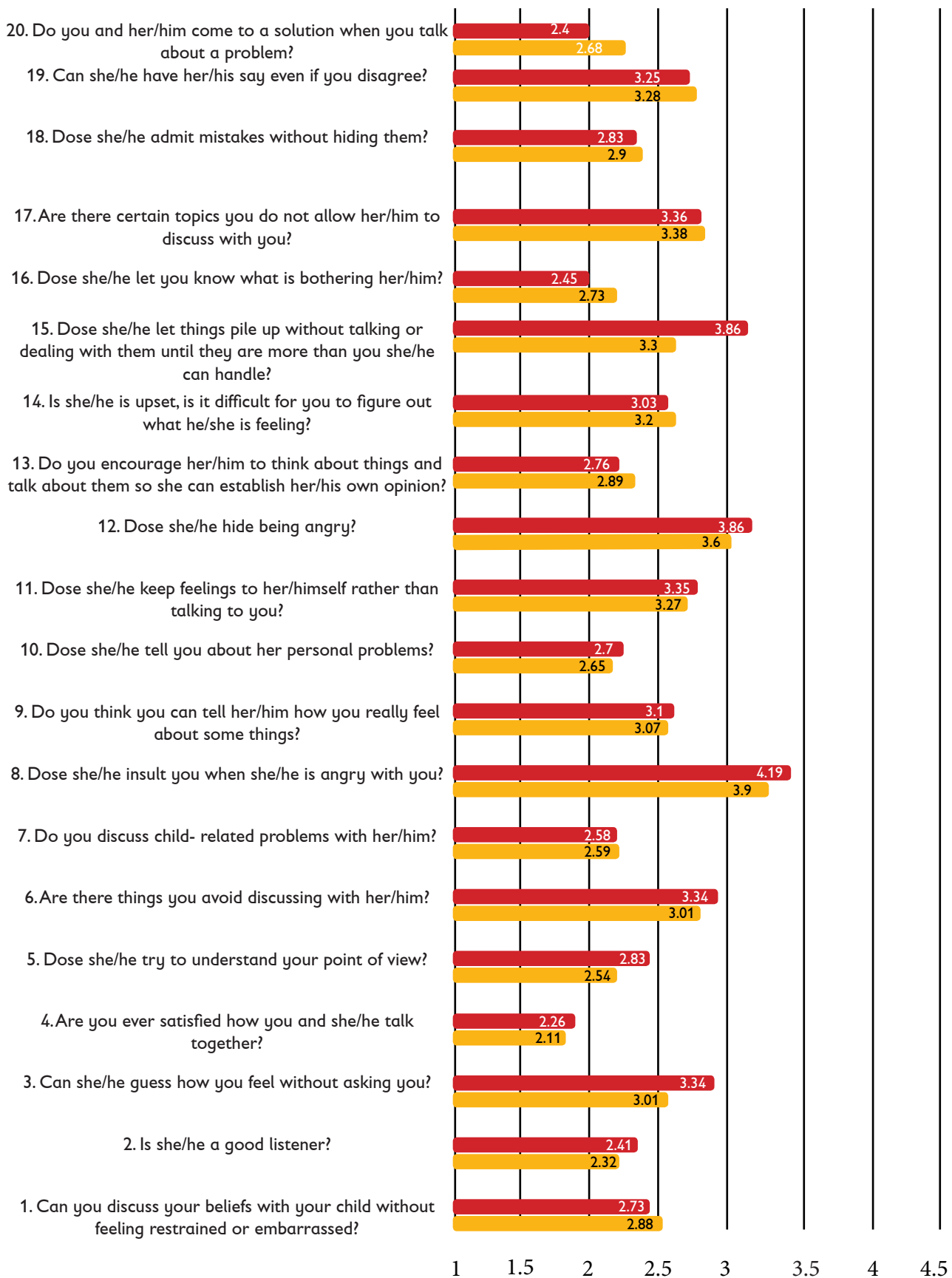


Chart 3: The chart captures the average answers provided by parents when these were answering the questions from the Parent Child Scale referred to daughters and sons, who were randomly selected. Statistically significant differences in the average scores referring to daughters and sons are marked in red.

Similarly to the scale administered to children, The Communication Scale (Parent Version) could be also analysed based on whether responses refer to sons or daughters or whether these are provided by mothers or fathers. In parent's view, daughters are in many respects better communicators compared to sons. In terms of children insulting their parents when they are angry, on average sons more often insult their parents if compared to daughters.⁴⁶ In terms of letting things to pile up without talking or dealing with them until they are more than children can actually handle, on average,

parents think that sons more often than daughters let piling up happen.⁴⁷ In terms of telling their parents what is bothering them, on average, parents think that daughters are more likely to be straightforward about it.⁴⁸ Also with girls, on average, parents are more likely to come to a solution when they discuss a problem.⁴⁹ However, when parents were asked whether children could tell how they (parents) feel, on average sons can better tell about their parent's feelings if compared to daughters.⁵⁰ In terms of trying to understand the parent's point of view, on average, sons also score higher than daughters in terms of understanding.⁵¹

A closer look at responses from the Parent Child Communication Scale reveal that on average, mothers can discuss beliefs with their children without feeling restrained or embarrassed more often than fathers actually can.⁵² On average, fathers are more often insulted by their children when these get angry where, inversely, mothers are less likely to be insulted by their children.⁵³ In terms of telling their personal problems, on average mothers are more likely to be told about them if compared to fathers.⁵⁴ Mothers on average feel that they are more likely to be told by their children what is bothering them.⁵⁵ In two aspects fathers perform better than mothers: openness in discussing certain topics and empathy. When it comes to restricting certain topics, on average, mothers more often than fathers do not allow their children to discuss certain topics with them.⁵⁶ If the child is upset, on average for mothers it is more often difficult to figure out what their children are feeling if compared to fathers.⁵⁷

-
- 46 Boys (M=3.90, SD=1.12), girls (M=4.19, SD=1.198), $t(306)=-2.040$, $p=.044$
- 47 Boys (M=3.30, SD=1.1), girls (M=3.83, SD=1.07), $t(248)=-3.79$, $p=.000$
- 48 Boys (M=2.73, SD=1.25), girls (M=2.45, SD=1.18), $t(305)=.118$, $p=.045$
- 49 Boys (M=2.68, SD=1.22), girls (M=2.40, SD=1.20), $t(294)=1.98$, $p=.048$
- 50 Boys (M=3.01, SD=1.27), girls (M=3.34, SD=1.27), $t(294)=-.662$, $p=.029$
- 51 Boys (M=2.54, SD=1.26), girls (M=2.83, SD=1.178), $t(297)=1.09$, $p=.044$
- 52 Fathers (M=3.10, SD=1.31), daughters (M=2.50, SD=1.17), $t(298)=4.16$, $p=.000$
- 53 Fathers (M=3.86, SD=1.133), mothers (M=4.19, SD=1.12), $t(298)=-2.33$, $p=.02$
- 54 Fathers (M=2.89, SD=1.48), mothers (M=2.32, SD=1.14), $t(3014)=3.80$, $p=.000$
- 55 Fathers (M=2.89, SD=1.20), mothers (M=1.203, SD=1.20), $t(300)=4.08$, $p=.000$
- 56 Fathers (M=3.51, SD=1.19), mothers (M=1.3.32, SD=1.19), $t(301)=2.046$, $p=.042$
- 57 Fathers (M=3.28, SD=1.10), mothers (M=2.96, SD=1.20), $t(3011)=2.38$, $p=.018$

5. Violence against Children

The present study adopts the definition of violence as outlined in Article 19 of the CRC: “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.” It also draws on the definition in the World Report on Violence and Health (2002): “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a child, by an individual or group, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity.” The present section also elaborates on the five different settings where violence against children occurs: the family, school/community (with work-place related violence explored in the section on Child Labour).

The present study captured the multi-dimensionality of violence against children, including exposure to violence, psychological violence, physical and emotional neglect, physical violence, and sexual abuse. In total, after being asked several questions on the different types of violence, which will be explored more in detail below, only 9% of children reported not experiencing any type of violence; 21% experienced from 1 to 3 types; 16% from 4 to 6 types, 10% from 7 to 9 types; 13% from 10 to 15 types, 9% from 16 to 20 types, 20% from 21 to 30 types, and 2.5% more than 31 types.

Surprisingly, children from urban areas reported experiencing more violence than children in rural areas where in the former the average of the type of violence experienced is 14 types and in the latter is 10 with a difference that is statistically significant.⁵⁸ Overall, accounting for all types of violence, there is no statistically significant difference between the numbers of types of violence experienced by boys and by girls, which means that these experience similar levels of violence.⁵⁹ Also there is no statistically significant differences in the number of different types of violence committed by men and women where, to put it simply, fathers are not more violent towards their children if compared to mothers. Nonetheless, the latter will be explored in detail for each categorization of violence.

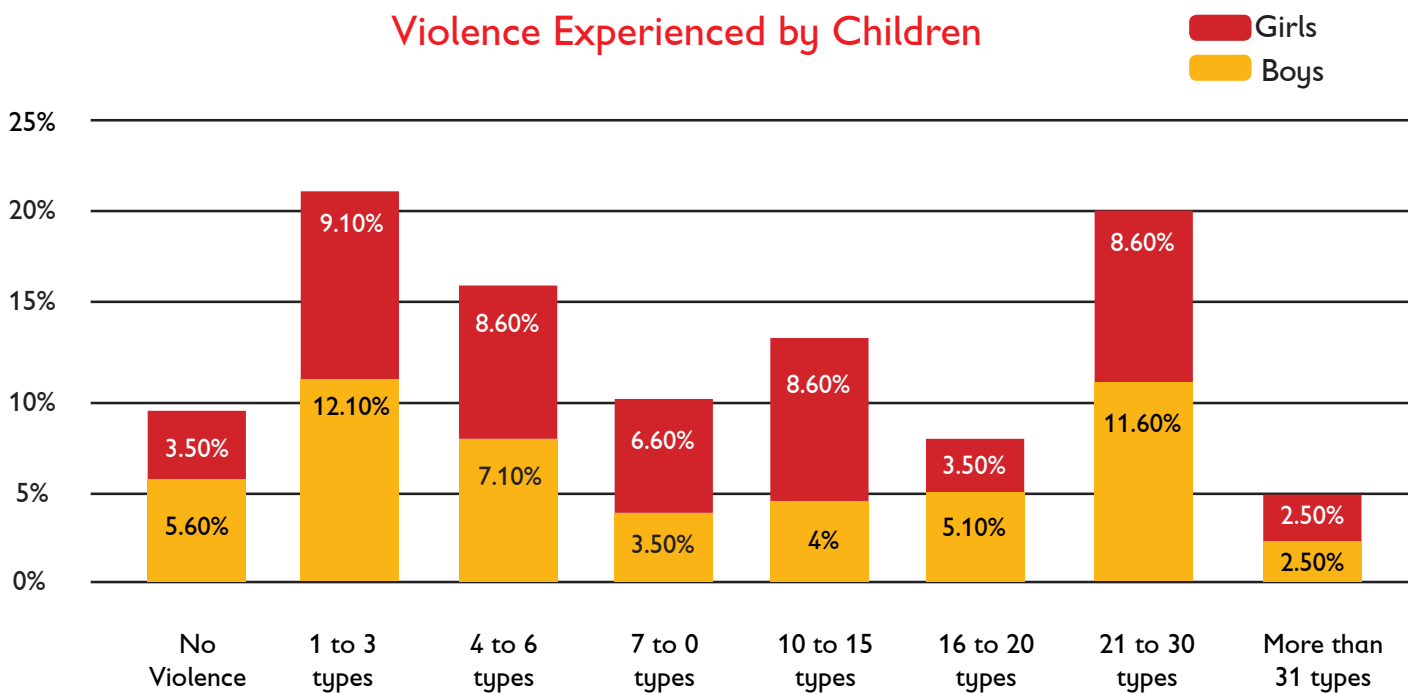


Chart 4: Number of different types of violence experienced by girls and boys

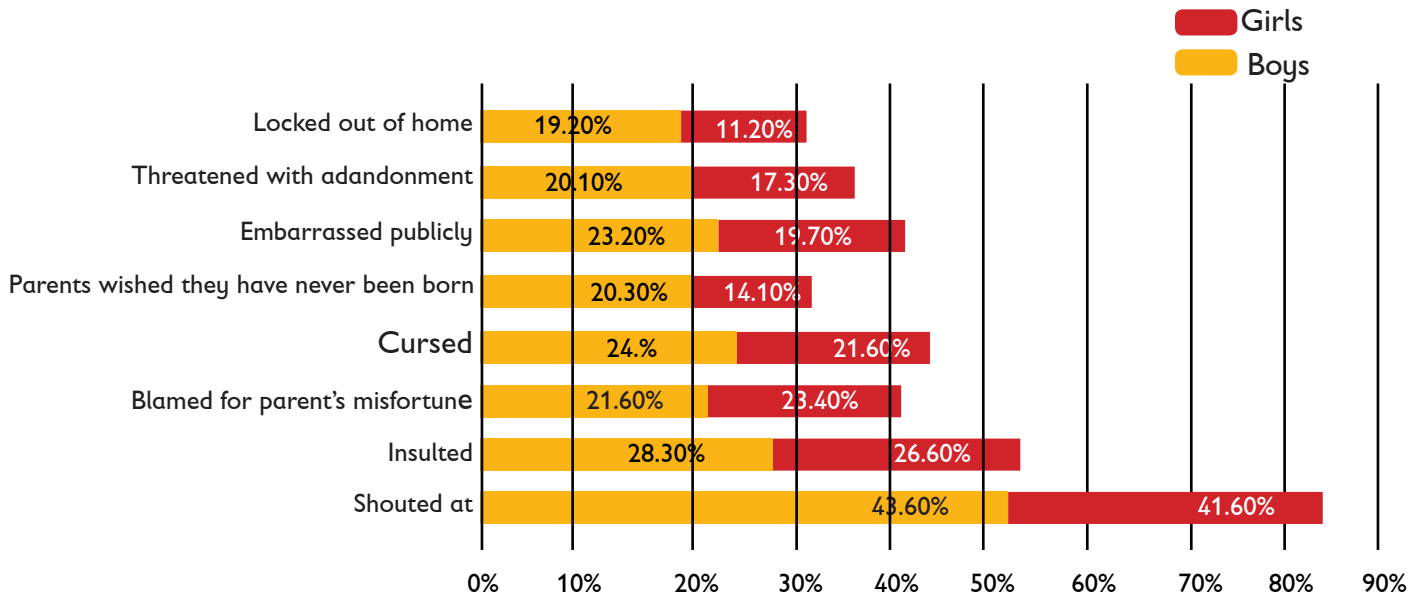
⁵⁸ While the mean is reported for easiness of interpretation due to a non-normal distribution of data a non-parametric test was used since the data is skewed representing 2 peaks, one between 1 and 5 types of violence and the other between 25 to 29 types. (Mann Whitney U, $z = -2.889$, $P = .004$) embers correctly identified 82% of the different types of violence that children can be exposed to.se experien

⁵⁹ Due to a non-normal distribution of data a non-parametric test was used since the data is skewed representing 2 peaks, one between 1 and 5 types of violence and the other between 25 to 29 types. (Mann Whitney U, $z = -2.45$, $P = .807$) embers correctly identified 82% of the different types of violence that children can be exposed to.se experien

Psychological Victimization

Approximately 46% of children have experienced some forms of psychological victimization. 83% experienced shouting, yelling or screaming at home (with the 81% of parents reporting it);⁶⁰ 56% reported being insulted by being called dumb, lazy, or other names (with 60% of parents reporting it);⁶¹ 46% were cursed (with 52% of parents reporting cursing their children);⁶² 44% were blamed for their parent’s misfortune or bad things that happened to them in the course of their life where only 28% of parents reported it;⁶³ 43% were embarrassed publicly with 35% of adults reporting embarrassing their children;⁶⁴ 35% were told by their parent or caregivers they wished they have never been born where 32% of parents reported saying it;⁶⁵ 36% were threatened with abandonment with 31% of parents admitting it;⁶⁶ and 28% were locked out of home with 30% of parents reporting it.⁶⁷ There was no statistically significant differences in the responses provided by girls and boys with the exception of being locked out of the house, which more often affects boys if compared to girls.⁶⁸ Similar percentages in the answers provided by children and by adults could be interpreted as indicating acceptability of such practices where there is no effort in downplaying the actual psychological violence that children were exposed to.

Psychological Victimization Reported by Girls and Boys



⁶⁰ 14% of children never experienced it, 1 refused to answer, and the remaining did not provide an answer. 18% of parents never shouted at their children and 0.9% of data is missing

⁶¹ 44% of children were never insulted and 0.9 did not provide an answer. 39% of parents never insulted their children and 0.6% of data is missing.

⁶² 44% of children were ever cursed and 0.9% did not provide an answer.

⁶³ 50% of children were never blamed for their parents’ misfortune, 3.8% did not know, 1.9% did not provide an answer. 59% of parents did not blame their children, 8.4% did not know, 0.9% refused to answer, and 3.8% did not provide an answer.

⁶⁴ 54% of children were never embarrassed publicly and 0.9% did not know. 61% of parents did not embarrass their children publicly, 0.9% did not know, and 2.2% data is missing.

⁶⁵ 62% of children were never told by their parents they wished they have never been born, 1.3% did not know, 0.9% did not provide an answer. 66% of parents threatened to abandon their children, 0.6% did not know, 2.5% data is missing.

⁶⁶ 61% of children were not threatened with abandonment, 1.3% refused to answer, and 0.9% did not provide an answer. 66% of parents never threatened their children with abandonment, 0.3% did not know, 2.5% of data is missing.

⁶⁷ 66% of children were never locked out of home, 1.6% did not know, 0.9% refused to answer and the same percentage did not provide an answer. 68% never locked their children out of home, 1.3% refused to answer, and 0.6% of data is missing.

⁶⁸ Boys (M=4.35, SD=1.05), girls (M=4.60, SD=1.05); $t(284)=-2.19, p=.029$

Chart 5: Types of psychological violence reported by boys and girls. Differences that are statistically significant are marked with a red border.

On a scale that included the same 8 items mentioned above - from 1 to 5 where 1 means very often and 5 never, children on average answered $M=4$, which can be interpreted as rare psychological victimization of children in terms of frequency.⁶⁹ The same scale was also administered to adults where the average score reported was $M=4.10$.⁷⁰ The latter could be interpreted as parents psychologically victimizing their children less often than reported by children. On average, parents are more likely to shout, yell or scream at daughters/girls.⁷¹ On average, parents are more likely to embarrass daughters/girls publicly.⁷²

Neglect

Due to low internal reliability a scale for neglect could not be calculated. Neglect as reported from parents had an acceptable internal reliability with a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means very often and 5 never the average reported by parents was $M=4.43$, which indicates parents rarely neglecting their children.⁷³

Slightly less than 30% of children experienced at least one form of neglect. A closer look at each item of the neglect scale revealed: 23% did not get enough to eat or went to bed hungry⁷⁴ with 19% of adults reporting it for their children.⁷⁵ 32% had to wear clothes that were dirty, torn, or inappropriate for the season⁷⁶ with 38% of adults reporting it;⁷⁷ 33% were not taken care when they were sick or injured⁷⁸ with much higher percentages of adults reporting it about their children (43%).⁷⁹ 34% did not feel cared for where adults were not administered the same question.⁸⁰ 34% of children were made feel unimportant⁸¹ with 36% of parents refusing to talk for their children.⁸² 64% of adults think that they were not always able to provide a safe place to live for their children.⁸³ There was no statistically significant difference in the responses provided by girls and boys.

69 N=314, SD=.7

70 N=320, SD=.723

71 Boys ($M=3.14$, $SD=1.30$), girls ($M=2.82$), $t(313)=2.152$, $p=.032$

72 Boys ($M=4.57$, $SD=1.22$), girls ($M=4.12$, $SD=.89$), $t(305)=-3.58$

73 N=287, $SD=1.02$

74 71% never went to bed hungry, 2.2% did not know, 1.6% refused to answer, and 1.6% did not provide an answer.

75 79% of parents never left their children without enough food or drink, 1.3% did not know, 0.6% of data is missing.

76 63% never wore dirty or torn clothes and the remaining did not provide an answer.

77 59% were not, 2.5% did not know.

78 62% were always taken care of when they were sick or injured, 1.3% did not know, 0.6% refused to answer, and the remaining did not provide an answer.

79 55% of parents never experienced not taking care of their children when these were sick of injured, 0.9% did not know, and 0.3% of data is missing.

80 62% never felt they were not cared of, 2.5% did not know, and 2% did not provide an answer.

81 62% never felt unimportant, 1.9% did not know, 0.6% refused to answer, 3.2% did not provide an answer.

82 58% did not, 2.2% did not know, 3.4% of data is missing.

83 34% always provided a safe place for their children, 1.3% of data is missing.

Neglect Reported by Girls and Boys

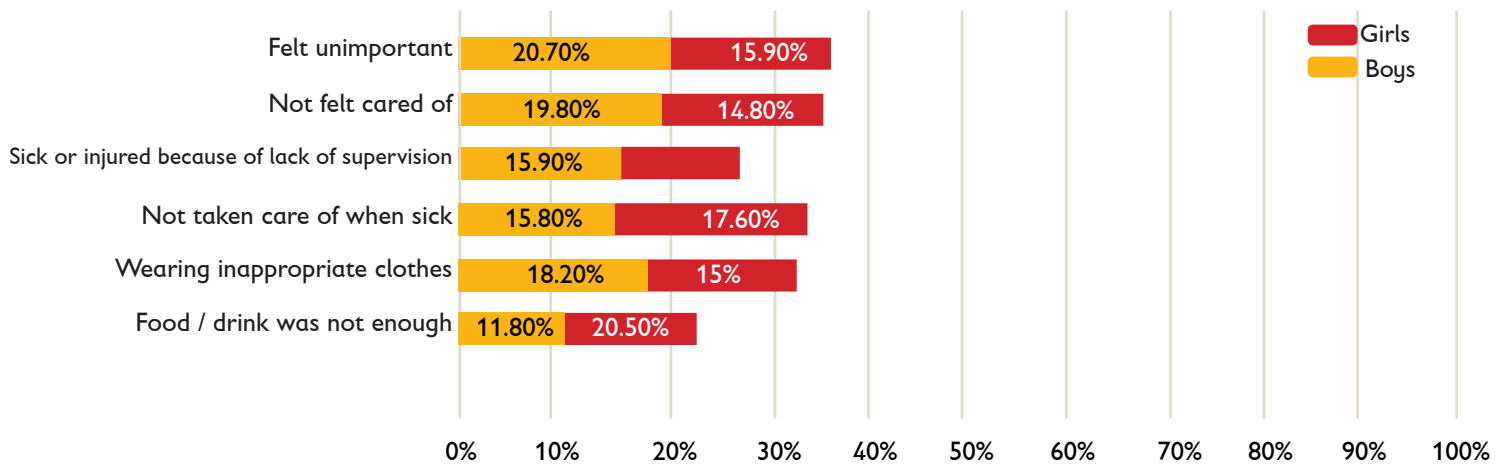


Chart 6: Percentage of girls and boys reporting a type of neglect.

On average, parents in some aspects neglect girls more than boys. Parents are more likely to not provide girls with appropriate clothing compared to boys⁸⁴ and were more likely to not provide girls with a safe place to live.⁸⁵

Physical Violence

Children were asked a set of questions that explored physical violence with staggering percentages reporting experiences of at least a form of violence. 47% were threatened by invoking harmful people, ghosts or evil spirits against them⁸⁶ with 53% of adults reporting it;⁸⁷ 35% were threatened with being hurt or killed⁸⁸ with a much higher percentage of parents reporting threatening their children (44%).⁸⁹ 40% of children were kicked⁹⁰ where 36% of adults reported kicking their children;⁹¹ 43% were shook aggressively⁹² with 39% of parents reporting shaking aggressively their children;⁹³ 53% were slapped on the face or on the back of the head⁹⁴ with 49% of parents admitting to commit such acts on children;⁹⁵ 41% of children were hit on the head with knuckles⁹⁶ with only 34% of adults admitting to do it.⁹⁷ 51% were spanked on the bottom with bare hands⁹⁸ where only 42% of adults admitted spanking their children.⁹⁹ 44% were hit on the buttocks with an object (such as a stick,

84 Boys (M=4.54, SD=.969), girls (M=4.19, SD=1.08), $t(307)=2.99$, $p=.003$

85 Boys (M=4.68, SD=.899), girls (M=4.40, SD=1.11), $t(311)=2.44$, $p=.015$

86 51% were not invoked with harmful people and evil spirits and 2.2% did not provide an answer.

87 44% did not, 0.6% did not know, and 1.9% of data is missing.

88 62% were not and 2.8% did not provide an answer

89 54% did not threaten to kill their children, 0.9% of data is missing.

90 54% were not kicked and 6.3% did not provide an answer

91 57% did not kill their child, 0.3% did not know, 0.6% refused to answer, and 5.95 of data is missing.

92 55% were not shook aggressively and 2.2% did not provide an answer.

93 58% did not shake their children aggressively, 0.6% did not know, 0.9% refused to answer, 0.9% data is missing.

94 45% were not and 1.9% did not provide an answer.

95 47% did not slap them on the back of their head, 0.6% did not know, 2.2% refused to answer, 1.6% of data is missing.

96 55% were not and 4.4% did not provide an answer.

97 60% did not, 1.9% did not know, 2.2% refused to answer, 2.2% of data is missing.

98 48% were not spanked and 1.9% did not provide an answer.

99 53% did not, 1.9% did not know, 0.95 refused to answer, 1.6% of data is missing.

broom, belt, etc.)¹⁰⁰ with 41% of parents mentioning it.¹⁰¹ 41% of children were hit elsewhere with an object¹⁰² and 38% of adults admitted hitting their children elsewhere with an object.¹⁰³

34% were hit with an object or fist repeatedly (or 'beaten up')¹⁰⁴ where adults reported the same percentage.¹⁰⁵ 21% were choked to be prevented from breathing¹⁰⁶ with 14% of adults reporting it.¹⁰⁷ 15% were burned, scalded or branded¹⁰⁸ with 11% of adults reporting it.¹⁰⁹ 14% were put hot pepper, soap, or spicy food in their mouth to cause them pain¹¹⁰ with 16% of adults reporting it.¹¹¹ 30% were locked up or their movement was restricted¹¹² with 31% of adults reporting it.¹¹³

46% had their ears twisted¹¹⁴ with 53% of parents reporting it.¹¹⁵ 44% had their hair pulled¹¹⁶ with higher percentages of parents reporting it.¹¹⁷ 42% were pinched to cause them pain¹¹⁸ with 38% of parents reporting it.¹¹⁹ 35% were forced to stand, sit, or kneel in a position that caused pain¹²⁰ where similar percentages of adults would admit to force their children to it.¹²¹ 23% of children had a meal withheld as punishment¹²² with 17% of parents admitting withholding a meal.¹²³ 15% were given drugs¹²⁴ with 13% of parents also mentioning giving drugs to their children.¹²⁵ 27% had their finger twisted with a pencil in between¹²⁶ with 22% of adults admitting it.¹²⁷

On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means very often and 5 never, children on average scored $M=4.34$, which could be interpreted as the different types of physical violence on average occurring rarely at home.¹²⁸ On the same scale, administered to adults these scored $M=4.53$, which is higher than children's average that could be interpreted as adults thinking they commit physical violence less often than children reported experiencing it.¹²⁹

Based on responses provided by children and adults, boys are more likely to experience some forms of physical violence

100	54% were not and 1.6% did not provide an answer.
101	58% did not do it, 0.3% did not know, 0.6% data is missing.
102	57% were not hit elsewhere and 2.5% did not provide an answer.
103	58% did not and 0.9% data is missing.
104	64% were not and 1.6% did not provide an answer
105	61% did not, 0.6% did not know, 3.8% of data is missing.
106	76% were not and 3.2% did not provide an answer.
107	80% did not, 2.2% did not know, 0.6% refused to answer, 2.85 of data is missing.
108	81% were not and 4.1% did not provide an answer.
109	84% did not burn or scald their children, 2.2% did not know, 3.1% of data is missing.
110	81% were not and 5.1% did not provide an answer.
111	79% did not, 2.5% did not know, 2.55 of data is missing.
112	65% were not and 4.7% did not provide an answer.
113	67% did not, 0.95 did not know, 1.6% of data is missing.
114	52% not and 2.5% did not provide an answer.
115	46% did not twist their child's ears, 0.6% data is missing.
116	55% did not and 1.3% did not provide an answer.
117	45% did not, 2.2% of data is missing.
118	56% were not and 1.9% did not provide an answer.
119	41% did not, 21% of data is missing.
120	62% were not and 2.5% did not provide an answer.
121	60% did not, 0.6% did not know, 2.8% of data was missing.
122	62% were not and 4.7% did not provide an answer.
123	79% did not withhold a meal, 0.9% did not know, 3.1% of data is missing.
124	80% were not and 4.4% did not answer.
125	85% did not give their children drugs, 2.5% of data is missing.
126	70% did not and 2.2% did not answer.
127	73% did not, 1.6% did not know, 2.5% of data is missing.
128	$N=315, SD=.635$
129	$N=184, SD=.92$

compared to girls. On average, boys are more likely to be threatened of being hurt or killed if compared to girls;¹³⁰ are more likely to be hit on the head with knuckles;¹³¹ are more likely to be choked to prevent them from breathing;¹³² are more likely to have their fingers twisted with a pencil in between.¹³³ On average, girls were more often scared by invoking harmful people, ghosts or evil spirits against them if compared to boys.¹³⁴

Boys and Girls Reporting a Type of Physical Violence

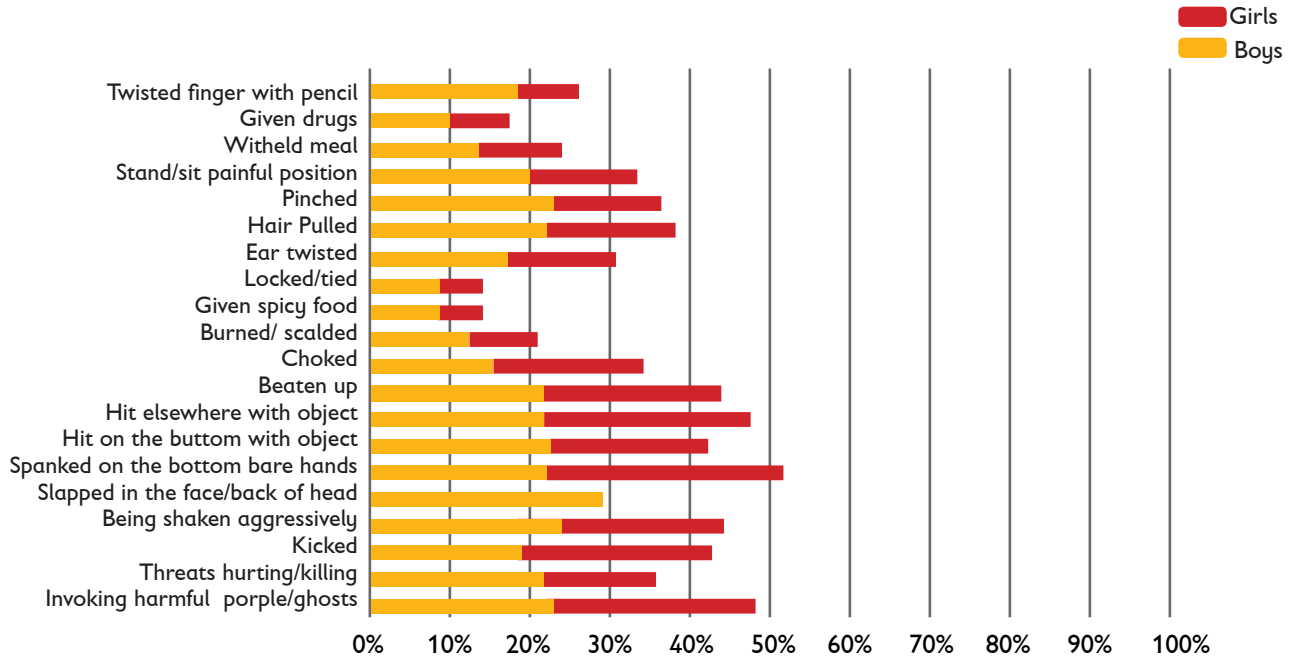


Chart 7: The percentages reported in the chart reflect the percentages of boys and girls reporting a type of physical abuse. Statistical significance of differences reported by girls and boys is marked in red.

When it comes to physical violence parents are more likely to hit boys on the head with knuckles;¹³⁵ hit boys elsewhere that are not buttocks with an object;¹³⁶ beat them up;¹³⁷ pinch them;¹³⁸ force them to seat or kneel in a painful position;¹³⁹ and twist their fingers with a pencil in between.¹⁴⁰

Sexual abuse

Despite answers on personal experiences of sexual abuse are very likely underreported, sexual abuse at home is high. 11% of children watched videos or pictures with people with no or little clothes on;¹⁴¹ 7% admitted that they had to look at adult's

130 Boys (M=4.23, SD=1.09), girls (M=4.50, SD=.91); t(285) = -2.16, p=0.031
 131 Boys (M=4.03, SD=1.18), girls (M=4.38, SD=1.04); t(289)=-1.59, p=0.07
 132 Boys (M=4.579, SD=.823), girls (M=4.788, SD=.5663); t (284) = -2.34, p = .020
 133 Boys (M=4.48, SD=.949), girls (M=4.69; SD=.800), t(287)=-1.34, p=0.41
 134 Boys (M=4.30, SD=1.16); girls (M=4.01, SD=1.13); t(287)=2.203, p=0.028
 135 Boys (M=4.15, SD=1.21), girls (M=4.52, SD=1.02), t(295)=-2.82, p=.005
 136 Boys (M=4.19, SD=1.094), girls (M=4.51, SD=1.06), t(308)=-2.59, p=.01
 137 Boys (M=4.25, SD=1.19), girls (M=4.57m SD=.92), t(301)=-2.56, p=.01
 138 Boys (M=3.96, SD=1), girls (M=4.40, SD=1.04), t (247)=-3.56, p=.002
 139 Boys (M=4.20, SD=1.17), girls (M=4.61, SD=.891), t(304)=-3.34, p=0.001
 140 Boys (M=4.49, SD=1.04), girls (M=4.75, SD=.729), t (302)=-2.40, p=.017
 141 685 did not watch such videos or pictures, 3.5% did not know, 1.6% refused to answer, and 16% did not provide an answer.

private parts or adults looked at theirs;¹⁴² 7% reported being touched on their private parts in a sexual way or being forced to touch other's private parts¹⁴³ with 10% of adults reporting the same for their children.¹⁴⁴ 4.7% were forced into sexual intercourse¹⁴⁵ with 12% of adults reporting that their children were forced into sexual intercourse.¹⁴⁶ Focus groups also compound the underreporting of sexual abuse as children never listed sexual abuse as a type of violence against children. A sexual abuse scale was calculated where 1 represents very frequent and 5 the absence of sexual abuse with an average of $M=4.77$, which could be interpreted as very rare occurrence of sexual abuse.¹⁴⁷

As it was already mentioned above, questions on sexual abuse are very likely underreported and therefore unreliable (and consequently data were not further explored). In fact, when children were asked about sexual abuse in the community, the presence of sexual abuse appears considerably higher in comparison to results from administration of personal experiences. 56% of children¹⁴⁸ and adults¹⁴⁹ reported the presence of child marriage at community level. Unwanted touching of private parts was reported by 12% of children¹⁵⁰ with a staggering 63% of adults reporting it.¹⁵¹ Rape was reported by 18% of children¹⁵² and from a much higher percentage of adults (66%).¹⁵³

Forcing children into sexual relations was reported by 12% of children¹⁵⁴ and 59% of adults.¹⁵⁵ Sexual harassment was reported by 17% of children¹⁵⁶ and 69% of adults.¹⁵⁷ Bacha bazi or keeping of boys was reported by 22% of children¹⁵⁸ and 68% of adults.¹⁵⁹ Children also reported baad (37%)¹⁶⁰ and abductions (28%).¹⁶¹ Adults also think that showing children magazines and movies with nude scenes and telling children dirty stories and jokes is high in the communities, mentioned by 54% and 59% of respondents, respectively.¹⁶² On average, girls more often reported the presence of a type of sexual abuse in the community if compared to boys (with differences being statistically significant), which indicates, how girls might be disproportionately affected by sexual abuse, in line with levels of sexual and gender-based violence experienced by girls (and women) in Afghanistan.¹⁶³

However, 38% of children think that both girls and boys are equally at risk of sexual abuse. 29% of children think girls are more at risk of sexual abuse and 7% think boys are more at risk, 21% did not know, and 2.2% refused to answer (with the remaining data missing). Children were also asked regarding the groups most at risk of sexual abuse and 78% provided at least an answer. According to these, the groups at risk are: children from poor families (57%); orphans (61%), street children (45%), children from marginalized communities (25%); IDP children (30%); children with disabilities (36%); children released from Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre (6.5%), and other (8.5%). Focus groups discussions overwhelmingly confirmed these findings where respondents mentioned the same groups as being victims of different types of violence.

142 73% denied such experiences and 20% did not provide an answer.

143 70% denied such experiences, 1.3% did not know, and 22% did not provide an answer.

144 87% of parents do not think that their child was touched in a sexual way, 1.9% did not know, and 0.9% is missing.

145 72 denied being forced having sex, 1 did not know, 3 refused to answer, 22% did not provide an answer.

146 78% reported that their children were not forced into a sexual intercourse, 6.6% did not know, 0.9% refused to answer, and 1.9% of data is missing.

147 $N=265$, $Sd.762$

148 38% said there was no child marriage, 4.1% did not know, 1.6% did not provide an answer.

149 32% of adults reported there was no child marriage, 7.2% of data was missing.

150 85% said there was no touching of private parts, 4.4% did not know, 12% did not answer.

151 0.6% did not know, 0.3% refused to answer, 8.1% of data is missing.

152 65% said there was no rape, 4.4% did not know, 3 refused to answer, and 12% did not answer at all.

153 25% of adults mentioned there was no rape, 8.1% of data is missing.

154 67% denied forcing children into sexual relations, 4.4% did not know, 1.3% refused to answer, and 15% did not answer at all.

155 31% think there is no sexual relations with children, 1.95 did not know, 8% of data is missing.

156 82% denied sexual harassment, 4.4% did not know, and 13% did not answer at all.

157 0.6% did not know and 5.3% of data is missing.

158 62% denied there was bacha bazi, 2.5% did not know, 13% did not answer at all.

159 25% think there is no bacha bazi, 0.6% did not know, 4.7% of data is missing.

160 52% said there was no baad, 1.6% did not know, and the remaining 11% did not provide an answer.

161 58% said there were no abductions, 3.8% did not know, 11% did not provide an answer.

162 33% of adults think that such movies and photos are not showed to children, 4.75 did not know, 8.45 of data is missing. 28% think that dirty jokes are not told to children in the community, 3.4% did not know, 0.3% refused to answer, and 9.4% of data is missing.

163 Global Rights, Domestic Abuse in Afghanistan, 2008,

Types of Sexual Abuse Reported by Boys and Girls at Community Level

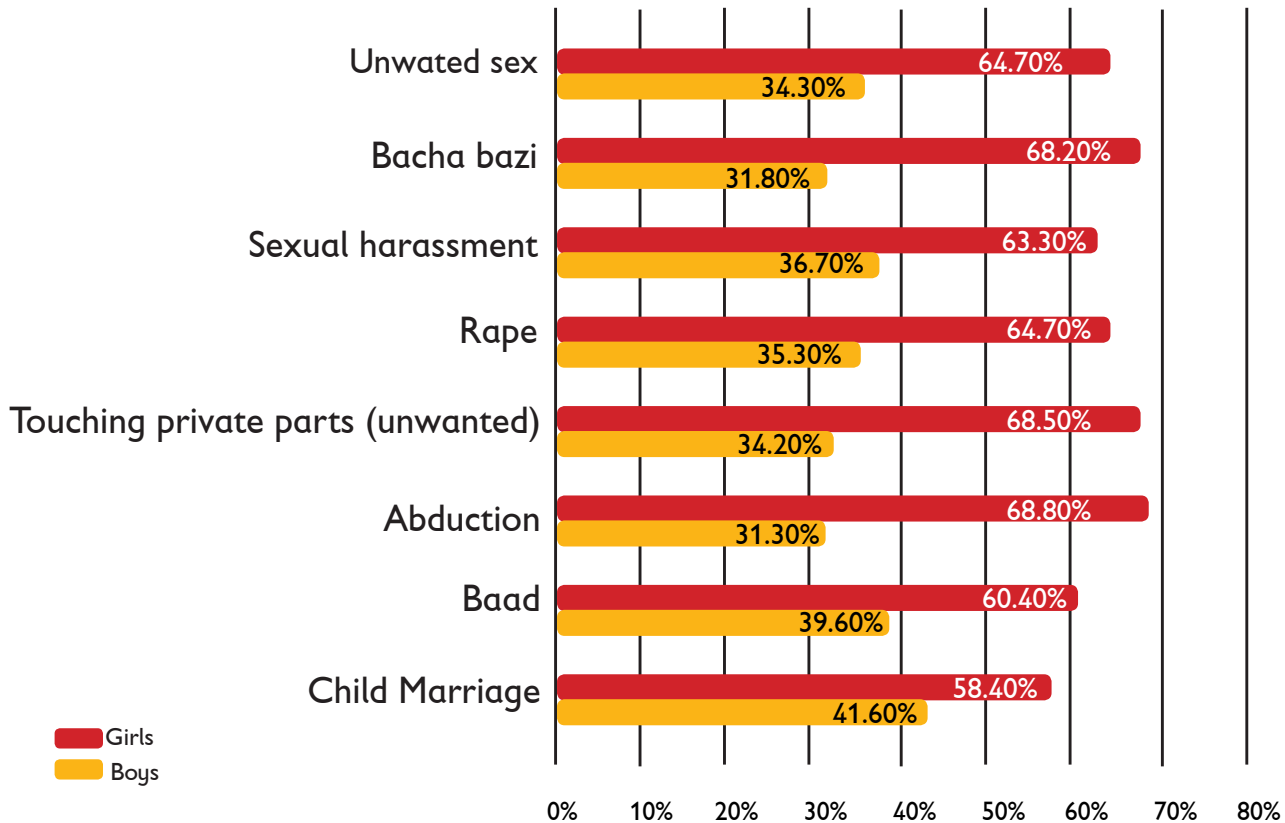


Chart 8: The percentages reported in the chart reflect the percentages of children reporting a type of sexual abuse perceived as being present in the community within gender. All differences are statistically significant.

Exposure to Violence

Violence exposure was measured as exposure to home violence and general violence at societal level. Violence exposure was measured by asking questions on whether a family member has been murdered in the past year where 38% of children reported being exposed to such event;¹⁶⁴ 31% of children have lived in a place where they have seen people being shot, bombs going off, people fighting, or rioting;¹⁶⁵ and 17% reported someone has come to their home and stolen something.¹⁶⁶ Exposure to peer to peer violence and family violence was measured with a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 represents an absence of exposure to violence (“Never”) and 5 a very frequent exposure to violence (“It happened more than 10 times”) where the average calculated was 1.96, which could be interpreted as exposure to violence, despite happening, being a rare occurrence among children.¹⁶⁷

Peer to peer violence is high. 63% of children got hassled or picked by other kids, who said hurtful and mean things to them.¹⁶⁸ The majority reported brothers or sisters hassling them (17%), boys from the community (17%), boys at school (12%), girls at school (6%), girls from the community (3.2%), and others (1.9%).¹⁶⁹ 57% of children get pushed around or beaten by other children or group of children.¹⁷⁰ On average, boys get pushed around and are beaten more frequently if

164 50% were not exposed to murder and the remaining data is missing with very small percentages not knowing or refusing to answer.

165 53% were not living in such a place and the remaining data is missing.

166 62% reported nobody has come to their home and stole something and the remaining data is missing.

167 (N=312, SD = .88)

168 45% were never picked or hassled by other children, 3.5% did not know, 1 refused to answer, and the remaining data is missing.

169 2.8% did not provide an answer and for 39% the question does not apply as these never experience picking or hassling.

170 57% never get pushed around, 2.2% did not know, 3 refused to answer, and 3.8% did not provide an answer.

compared to girls (despite slightly more girls reported having fights).¹⁷¹ A staggering 16% of all the children surveyed had seen a doctor because of these fights.¹⁷²

39% of children heard parents or other adults saying hurtful things to each other or to another adult in the household.¹⁷³ 31% of children saw their parents or caregivers hitting each other or another adult at home.¹⁷⁴ 12% of children surveyed reported that help from an external person, such as elder, police, or neighbour was required because of fighting at home.¹⁷⁵

5.1 Violence in School and in the Community

On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 represents almost always and 5 never, the frequency of psychological violence was on average $M=4.15$, which could be interpreted as psychological violence occurring rarely.¹⁷⁶ Nonetheless, children experience considerable psychological violence also in school. Children reported the following types of psychological violence in schools: shouting, yelling, or screaming at them (73%);¹⁷⁷ being insulted, called dumb, or lazy (52%);¹⁷⁸ being cursed (44%);¹⁷⁹ being ignored (42%);¹⁸⁰ being blamed for the teacher's misfortune (38%);¹⁸¹ being embarrassed publicly (38%);¹⁸² being referred to their gender/religion/culture in a hurtful way (24%);¹⁸³ being embarrassed because of being an orphan or without a parent (23%);¹⁸⁴ as being prevented from being with other children to make them feel bad

and lonely (34%);¹⁸⁵ their belongings being broken or ruined (33%);¹⁸⁶ being threatened with bad marks that were not deserved (42%);¹⁸⁷ being forced to write sentences several times (45%).¹⁸⁸ On average, boys get embarrassed publicly in schools more frequently than girls.¹⁸⁹ Other types of psychological violence do not present statistical significance in responses provided by girls and boys.

On a scale from 1 to 5, with a very high internal reliability, the average score for the frequency of physical violence in school is $M=4.37$, which could be interpreted as overall happening very rarely. Nonetheless, along psychological violence also physical violence remains high. Children reported experiencing the following types of physical violence in schools: twisting fingers with a pencil in between (39%);¹⁹⁰ being threatened by invoking harmful people or ghosts (38%);¹⁹¹ threats of being hurt and killed (36%);¹⁹² being kicked (36%);¹⁹³ being shook aggressively (39%);¹⁹⁴ being slapped on the face or on the back

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- 171 Boys ($M=1.97$, $SD = 1.12$), girls ($M=2.25$, $SD=1.17$); $t(278)=-2.015$, $p=.045$
- 172 75% did not see a doctor, 1.6% did not know, 5.1% did not provide an answer, and for the remaining the question does not apply as they never get picked.
- 173 44% never heard saying their parents saying hurtful things to each other, 7.3% did not know, 0.9% refused to answer, and 6% did not provide an answer.
- 174 29% never saw their parents or caregivers hitting each other, 8% did not know, 3.5% refused to answer, and 6.3% did not provide an answer.
- 175 22.5% mentioned that external intervention was not required, 3.8% did not provide an answer, and for 58% does not apply as they do not have fight between adults at home.
- 176 $N=311$, $SD=.729$
- 177 25% denied being yelled at, 0.9% did not know, and for 1.3% data is missing.
- 178 45% denied being called dumb or lazy, 0.3% did not know, 0.6% refused to answer, and for 2.8% data is missing.
- 179 52% were never cursed, 0.6% did not know, and 2.5% data is missing.
- 180 54% were not ignored, 0.6% did not know, 0.3% refused to answer.
- 181 56% were blamed, 3.2% did not know, 1.3% refused to answer, and for 1.9% data is missing.
- 182 58% were not, 0.9% did not know, 0.3% refused to answer, and 2.8% data is missing.
- 183 70% were not, 1.9% did not know, and 2.8% were missing.
- 184 70% were not, 1.95 did not know, and 4.7% of data is missing.
- 185 62% were not, 0.9% did not know, and 2.5% data is missing.
- 186 64% were not, 0.3% did not know, 0.9% refused to answer; and 2.5% of data is missing.
- 187 54% were not, 1.9% did not know, 0.3% refused to answer; and 2.5% of data is missing.
- 188 54% were not, 0.3% did not know, 0.3% refused to answer, and 3.2% of data are missing.
- 189 Boys ($M=4.22$, $SD=1.80$), girls ($M=4.48$, $SD=1.034$), $t(282)=-2.057$, $p=0.041$
- 190 59% did not report twisting of fingers; 4.4% data is missing.
- 191 58% were not, 1.3% did not know, 2.5% data is missing.
- 192 62% were not, 0.9% did not know, and 2.5%
- 193 60% were not, .09% did not know, 2.2% data is missing.
- 194 0, 3% refused to answer and 2.2% data is missing.

of the head (48%);195 hit on the head with knuckles (37%);196 being spanked on the bottom with bare hands (48%);197 being hit on the buttock with an object (40%);198 being hit elsewhere with an object (39%);199 being beaten up (34%);200 being choked (20%);201 being burned or scalded (15%);202 being put hot pepper or spicy food to cause them pain (17%);203 being locked up to restrict movement (28%);204 their hair being pulled (41%);205 being pinched to cause pain (36%);206 being forced to stand sit or kneel in a painful position (36%);207 being withheld a meal as punishment (22%);208 given drugs (15%);209 being ordered to slap another child (27%);210 being ordered to perform heavy manual work (27%).211 On average, boys have their fingers twisted between a pencils more often than girls;212 are more likely to be threatened with being hurt or killed;213 are more likely to be hit on the head with knuckles;214 and are more likely of being ordered to slap another child.215 Children were also asked about the presence of sexual abuse in schools. 19% of all children surveyed reportedabductions;7% reported unwanted touching of private parts;216 8% reported rape;217 7% reported sexual harassment. 218

While adults were not asked about the presence of violence in schools, these were asked in general in the community, which could also partially refer to schools. In terms of physical violence against children adults confirmed findings at home and in school with high percentages of violence against children. 74% mentioned hitting with a hand;219 26% mentioned twisting fingers in between a pencil;220 32% biting;221 59% hard pinching;22258% mentioned hitting with an object;223 51% shaking;224 36% mentioned pulling hair of children;225 18% mentioned burning with a match;226 and 21% forcing children in an uncomfortable position.227 Psychological abuse is also high: 63% mentioned bad name calling;228 73% mentioned

- 195 50% were not, 2.2% data is missing.
- 196 61% were not, 2.2% data is missing.
- 197 49% were not, 2.8% data is missing.
- 198 56% were not, 0.9% did not know, and 2.5% data is missing.
- 199 56% were not, 1.95 did not know, and 2.8% data is missing.
- 200 63% were not, 0.3% did not know, and 2.8% data is missing.
- 201 76% were not, 1.6% did not know, 1.3% refused to answer, and 2.5% data is missing.
- 202 79% were not, 1.3% did not know, 1.6% refused to answer, 2.5% data is missing.
- 203 78% were not, 1.3% did not know, 1.3% refused to answer, and 2.5% data is missing.
- 204 67% were not, 1.6% did not know, 0.9% refused to answer, 2.5% data is missing.
- 205 56% did not report their hair being pulled, 2.8% data is missing.
- 206 60% were not, 0.3% did not know, 2.8% data is missing
- 207 59% were not, 0.9% DK, 0.6% refused to answer, and 2.8% data is missing.
- 208 72% were not, 0.9% did not know, 1.9% refused to answer, and the remaining data is missing.
- 209 80% were not given drugs, 1.3% did not know, 2.8% data is missing.
- 210 70% were not, 0.65 did not know, 0.3% refused to answer, 2.5% data is missing.
- 211 27% were not, 0.9% did not know, 6.6% data is missing.
- 212 Boys (M=4.11, SD=1.16), girls (M=4.47, SD=.983), t(282)=-2.740, p=.003
- 213 Boys (M=4.18, SD=1.07), girls (M=4.54, SD=.975); t(285)=-2.94, p=.003
- 214 Boys (M=4.09, SD=1.01), girls (M=4.42, SD=1.04); t(288)=-2.39,p=.017
- 215 Boys (M=4.38, SD=1.24), girls (M=4.38, SD=.793); t (269)=-1.31, p=.016
- 216 80% reported there was no touching of private parts, 3.8% did not know, and 13% did not provide an answer.
- 217 77% reported there is no rape, 2.8% did not know, and the remaining 11% did not provide an answer.
- 218 91% reported there is no sexual harassment in schools, 3.8% do not know; 12% did not provide an answer.
- 219 22% mentioned there was no hitting with the hand, 1.6% did not know, 1.0% of data is missing.
- 220 67% denied its presence, 2.5% did not, and 3.7% of data is missing.
- 221 59% denied its presence, 4.7% did not know, 4.7% of data is missing.
- 222 36% denied its presence, 2.85 did not know, 4.6% of data is missing.
- 223 36% did not mention it, 5.2% of data is missing.
- 224 44% said no and 5.1% of data is missing.
- 225 57% did not mention it, 2.7% of data is missing.
- 226 74% said it was not present, 1.2% did not know, 6% of data is missing.
- 227 72% said it was not present, 6.85 of data is missing.
- 228 32% did not mention it, 0.6% did not know, 0.3% refused to answer, and 4% is of data is missing.

yelling and shouting;²²⁹ 36% mentioned saying to children that nobody loves them;²³⁰ 31% mentioned isolating children into confined spaces;²³¹ and 52% mentioned threats to children.²³² 38% of adults mentioned emotional neglect of children.²³³ 26% mentioned parents abandoning their children.²³⁴

5.2 Punishment and Positive Disciplining at Home and in Schools

Physical punishment and emotional punishments are the most common forms of corporal punishment. Both are forms of violence against children. They violate children’s rights as human beings to respect, dignity, equal protection of the law, and protection from all forms of violence. 62% of respondents think that their community is very tolerant or tolerant of physical punishment of children.²³⁵ 41% of adults strongly agree or agree that in order to bring up, raise or educate children properly, the child needs to be physically punished where responses from men and women do not differ significantly.²³⁶ 64% of adults stated using non-violent methods for disciplining children at home with 13% saying they use only violent methods.²³⁷ Considering the percentages of violence reported by both adults and children, the latter relatively low perception of adoption of violent methods is likely due to a misconception on what actually constitutes violence.

Very positively, a very high percentage of children reported positive disciplining techniques used at home: 72% were explained why something they did was wrong²³⁸ with 71% of adults reporting explaining to their children why they did something was wrong.²³⁹ 79% of children were given a reward for behaving well ²⁴⁰ with much higher percentages of parents mentioning it (88%).²⁴¹ 66% of children were given something else to do in order to change their behaviour²⁴² with 80% of adults reporting it.²⁴³ 50% of children were taken away privileges or money²⁴⁴ with 34% of parents mentioning it.²⁴⁵ 40% of children mentioned being put in time-out²⁴⁶ with the same percentage reported by adults.²⁴⁷ On average, girls are more likely to be rewarded for behaving well if compared to boys.²⁴⁸

On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means very often and 5 never, children scored on average 3.62 on the scale on positive disciplining techniques, which is between sometimes and rarely children are disciplined using positive techniques.²⁴⁹ On the same scale, adults reported on average more often using positive disciplining techniques with M=3.51.²⁵⁰ Comparing the positive discipline scale with other scales, positively, positive disciplining techniques are used more frequently than violent methods of disciplining.

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- 229 19% said it was not present, 2.2% did not know, 8% of data is missing.
 - 230 54%, 2.2% did not know, 8% of data is missing.
 - 231 57% said it was not present, 1.35 did not know, 9% of data is missing.
 - 232 39% said there were not threats, 105 of data is missing.
 - 233 50% said children are not neglected and 12% of data is missing.
 - 234 635 do not think children are abandoned, 10% of data is missing.
 - 235 16% think is neither tolerant nor intolerant, 6% very intolerant, 1.9% did not know, 1.2% of data is missing.
 - 236 12% neither agree nor disagree, 25% disagree, and 185 strongly disagree. 1.3% did not know and 1.3% of data is missing.
 - 237 2.5% did not know, 10% refused to answer, 10% of data is missing.
 - 238 27% were and the remaining did not provide an answer.
 - 239 22% did not, 5.9% did not know, 1.2% of data is missing.
 - 240 20% were not given a reward and the remaining did not provide an answer.
 - 241 11% did not give a reward, 1.6% of data is missing.
 - 242 30% were not and 4.7% did not provide an answer.
 - 243 15% did not gave children something else to do, 5% of data is missing.
 - 244 47% were not and 2.8% did not answer.
 - 245 17% did not, 49% of data is missing.
 - 246 57% were not and 2.8% did not provide an answer.
 - 247 58% did not put them in time-out, 1.3% did not know, 0.6% of data is missing.
 - 248 boys (M=3.25, SD=1.35), girls (M=2.84, SD=1.39); t (288) = 2.57; p=.011
 - 249 N=315, SD=.85
 - 250 N=, SD=

Positive Discipline at Home Reported by Girls and Boys

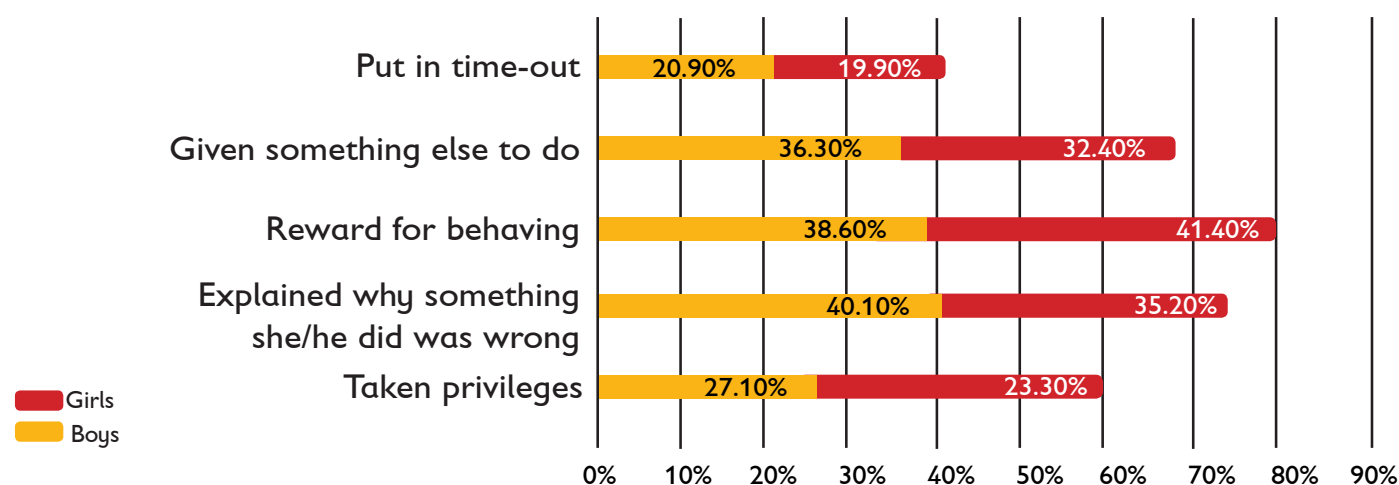


Chart 9: Positive discipline reported by girls and boys. Statistically significant differences are marked in red.

Parents are more likely to reward boys for behaving well.²⁵¹ Parents are more likely to give girls something else to do in order to change their behaviour²⁵² or to take their privileges or money away.²⁵³

Adult respondents were also confronted with scenarios that measured parent's knowledge on positive disciplining techniques. Respondents had to imagine that their 10 – weeks old baby has been crying for 30 minutes. 81% answered correctly: they would try to feed her/him, rock her/him, sing, and cuddle the child. 5% would spank the baby and 9% would ignore her/him so she/he does not become spoiled.²⁵⁴ More men (54%) answered correctly if compared to women (46%). The second example involved a toddler (2 years old), who was very active. She/he walked quickly all around the house. Wherever she/he went, she/he touched things. She/he suddenly reached a pair of scissors on the table. In this situation, 74% of parents correctly answered that they would gently take the scissors away and show her/him how they cut paper and explain how they can hurt her/him. Then distract her/his attention with a toy. 13% would scold him loudly to scare the child away from scissors and 8% would slap the child's hand to teach her/him not to touch dangerous things.²⁵⁵ More men answered correctly (53%) if compared to women (47%).

A child (2 –3 years old) has begun to resist going to bed at night. She/he cried and cried when left alone. Bedtime became a time of conflict between the parent and the child. The parent noticed that she/he becomes angry with the child that refuses to go to bed. 70% correctly identified the answer in telling the child that it is bedtime and that she/he needs sleep to have energy for next days' activities and that they would stay with her/him till she/he falls asleep. 17% would tell the child she/he is bad and if she/he doesn't go to sleep the monsters will get her/him. 5% would put the child in the room, close the door, and walk away.²⁵⁶ More men (55%) answered correctly if compared to women (45%). In the fourth example, the parent was sitting outside in the yard. The child (5 years old) was playing with a ball nearby. Suddenly the ball rolled onto the road, just as a car was coming. The child ran into the road to get the ball. 49% correctly answered that they should explain that cars can really hurt her/him and let her/him touch a car to feel how hard it is. They should practice stopping, looking and listening before stepping onto the street. 20% would tell the child that she/he won't be able to play outside for 2 weeks and 23% think that considering the child life was in danger, they would slap her/him hard so that the child learns to never do that again.²⁵⁷ More women (55%) answered correctly if compared to men (45%).

251 Boys M(2.84, SD=1.28), Girls (M=2.84, SD=2.51), t (310)=2.32, p=.021

252 Boys (M=3.33, SD=1.48), girls (2.99, SD=1.33), t (299)=2.013, p=.042

253 Boys (M=3.76, SD=1.37), girls (M=m=3.34, SD=1.26)=2.01, p=.046

254 3.4% did not know and 1.9% of data is missing.

255 2.85 did not know, 1.8% of data is missing.

256 1.9% of data is missing, 4.1% did not know, 2.2% refused to answer.

257 3.8% did not know, 3.1% refused to answer, and 0.6% of data is missing.

A child (7 years old) and a friend were playing with toy animals. There was only one horse and both of them wanted it. When the other child took it, the child hit her and took the horse from her. 25% would put all the toys away, tell the children that if they can't play nicely they can't play at all. They would send the other child home. 56% would correctly explain that hitting hurts other people. They would show the child how to ask politely for what she/he wants.

They would have her/him practice asking politely for the horse and reward her for it. 10% would slap the child to show her/him how it feels to be hit.²⁵⁸ More women (60%) answered correctly if compared to men (40%).

The child (13 years old) came home from school in a very bad mood. She/he didn't want to talk to the parent and she/he had an angry voice. 62% would correctly tell to their child that they can see that something had upset her/him and would let her/him know that they will listen and try to help when she/he would be ready to talk. 10% would send the child to her/his room without supper and 4% would slap their child for being rude.²⁵⁹ The correct answers were answered in similar percentages by men (51%) and women (49%).

Men and Women Reporting Using Positive Disciplining Techniques

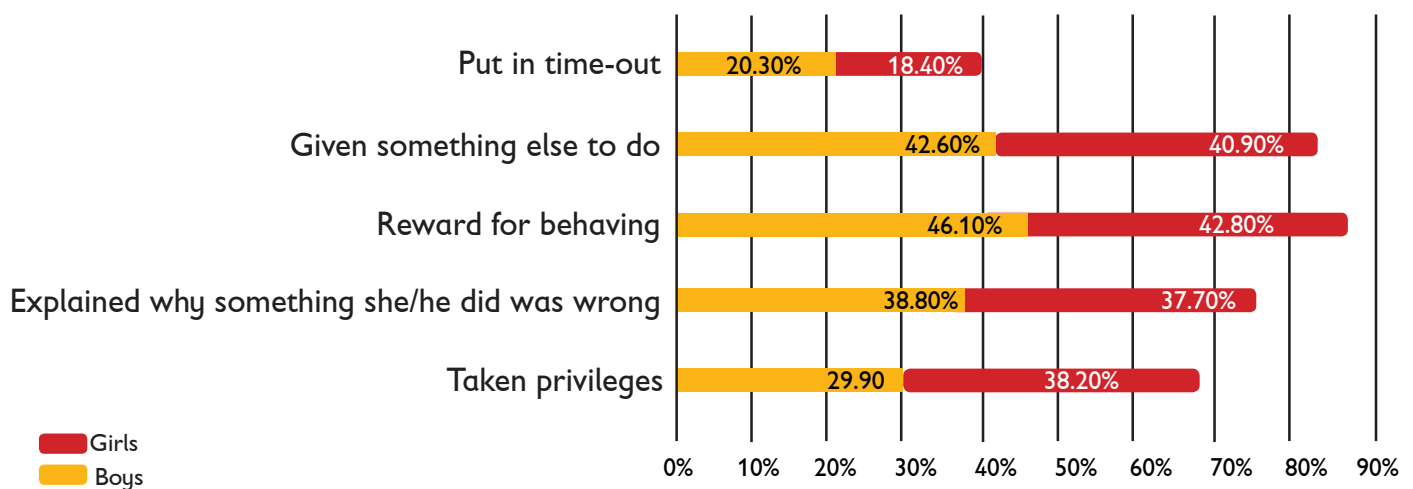


Chart 10: Male and female adult respondents, who reported adopting positive disciplining techniques. Statistically significant differences between men and women are marked in red.

Positive approaches to disciplining in schools were reported by the following percentages of children: 63% were explained why something they did was wrong;²⁶⁰ 67% were given a reward for behaving well;²⁶¹ 56% were given something else to do to change their behaviour;²⁶² and 30% were put in time out.²⁶³ On average, boys are more likely to be explained why they did something was wrong in school.²⁶⁴ On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is almost always and 5 is never, on average

²⁵⁸ 4.4% did not know, 2.85 refused to answer, 1.6% did not answer.

²⁵⁹ 4.45 did not know, 1.9% refused to answer, 18% of data is missing.

²⁶⁰ 33% were not, .06% did not know, 2.2% data is missing.

²⁶¹ 30% were not, .06% did not know, 2.2% data is missing.

²⁶² 35% were not, 3.5% did not know, 0.6% refused to answer, and 4.4% data is missing.

²⁶³ 64% were not, 3.5% do not know, 2.5% data is missing.

²⁶⁴ Boys (M=3.36, SD=1.388); girls (M=3.78, SD=1.317)

children scored $M=3.8$, which indicates that teacher sometimes (but tending to rarely) uses positive disciplining techniques.²⁶⁵ Comparing the findings of the means of the scale on positive disciplining with adults and parents, schools score the worst in terms of positive disciplining techniques as these are less frequently adopted than reported from children and adults at home.

32% of children felt they have been punished for an offence they do not accept with 62% never experiencing it.²⁶⁶ 16% think they received excessive and unnecessary punishment;²⁶⁷ and 56% think these punishments are not effective as they did not learn to not commit the same offence again.²⁶⁸ In the latter, on average boys are less likely to learn to not commit the same offence again if compared to girls.²⁶⁹

5.3 Perpetrators of Violence and Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse Perpetrators According to Children

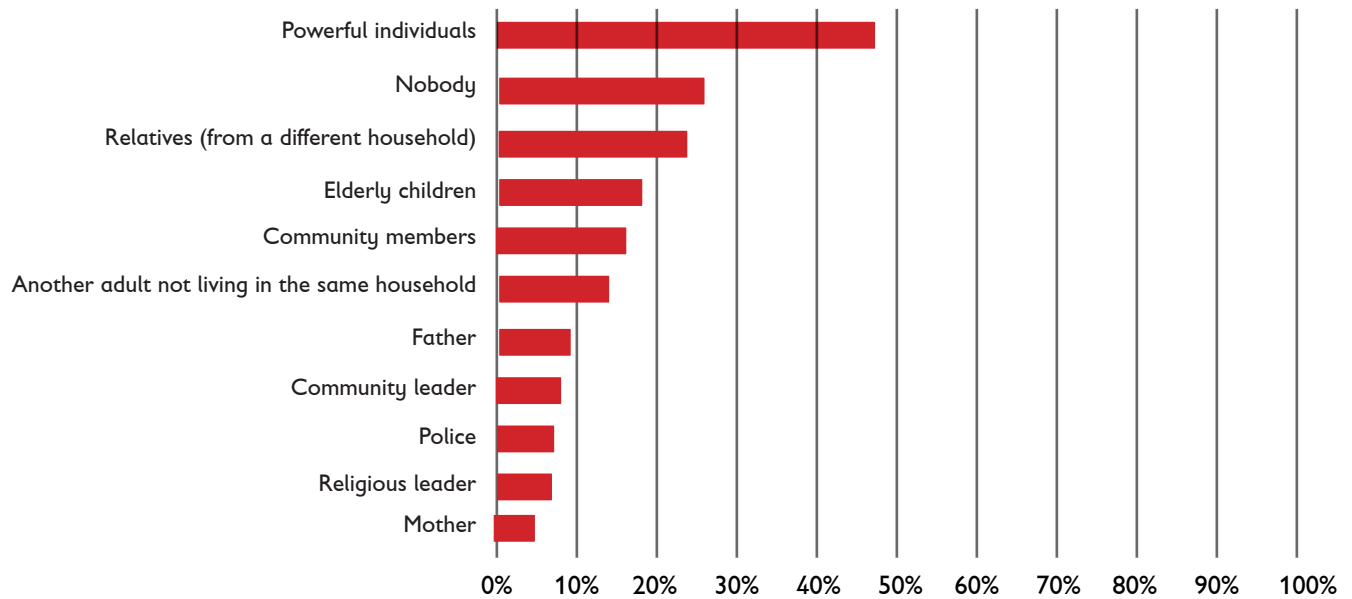


Chart 11: Sexual abuse perpetrators at home and in the community as reported by children.

Adults were asked regarding sexual abuse perpetrators and these reported: male strangers (67%); commanders/powerful individuals (46%); armed groups (45%); insurgency (43%); neighbours (16%); friends (11%); police (7%); uncles (1.7%), brothers (1.4%); fathers (4.9%); religious leaders (3.8%); elders (2.1%), and others (10% not specified). Much lower percentage of children (65%) mentioned at least a perpetrator: father (9%); mother (3.9%); another adult living in the household (15%); relatives not living in the same household (22%). In terms of community children reported: powerful individuals (48%); police (5%); armed groups (32%); religious leaders (4.4%); community leader (6%); community members (18%); elderly children (19%). 26% of children also mentioned that nobody in the community commits sexual abuse.

62% of children mentioned the responsible for sexual abuse in schools: male teacher (10%), female teacher (4%), guards/cleaners (2.6%), school principle (8.2%); powerful individuals (15%), elderly children (11%). Considering that 57% of children also mentioned that nobody commits acts of sexual violence in schools, the data on sexual abuse in schools are unreliable.

²⁶⁵ N=4, SD=1.278

²⁶⁶ 2.8% did not now and 1.9% did not provide an answer.

²⁶⁷ 82% do not think they received unnecessary and excessive punishment, 3.8% did not know, 1 refused to answer, and the remaining did not provide an answer.

²⁶⁸ 28% have learned to not commit the same offence again, 7% did not know, 1.9% refused to answer, and the remaining did not provide an answer.

²⁶⁹ Boys ($M=.26$, $SD=.391$), girls ($M=.39$, $SD=.489$); $t(246)=-2.087$, $p=0.038$

Sexual Abuse Perpetrators According to Children

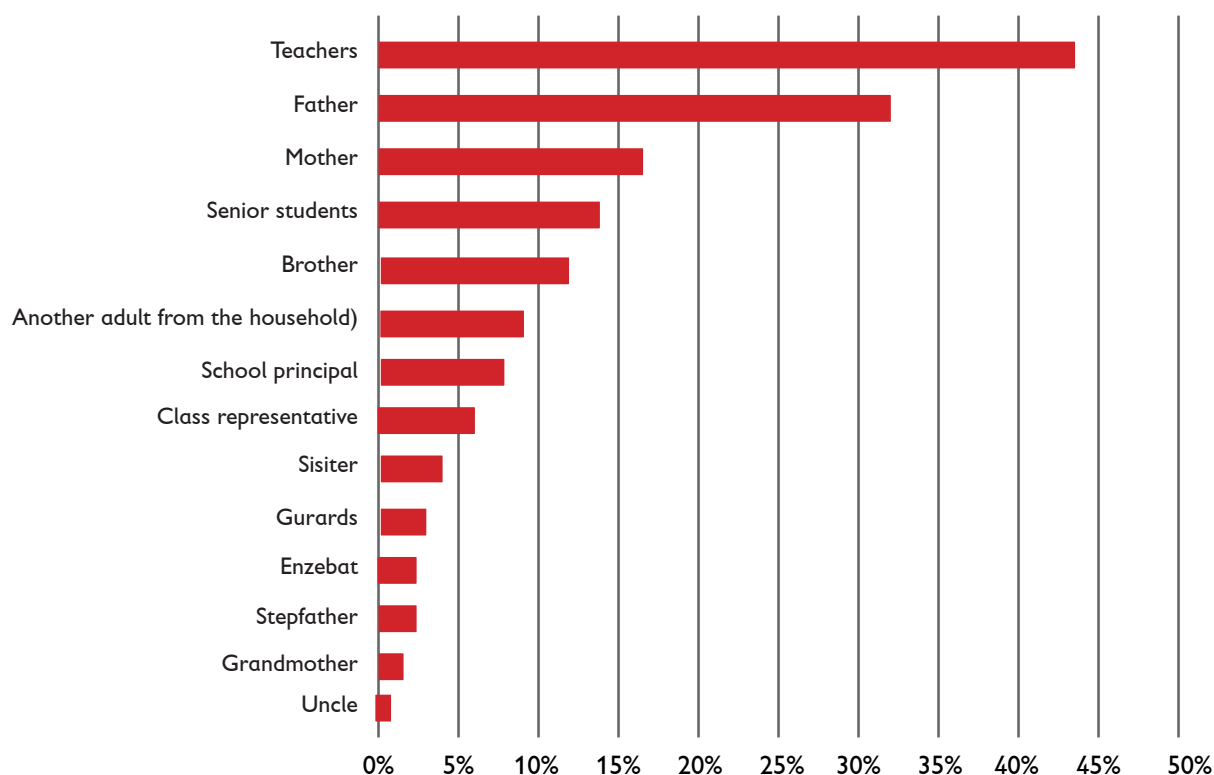


Chart 12: Individuals committing acts of violence at home and in schools according to children.

In terms of who commits most violence at home, children reported father (32%), mother (16%), brother (12%); grandmother (0.9%), grandfather (2.5%); uncle (0.6%); another adult from the household (9%); sister (4.1%); stepmother (1.3%); stepfather (1.9%); other (2.5%).²⁷⁰ In school most punishment is committed by teachers (44%), school principals (7%); guards or cleaners (2.5%), senior students (14%), class representatives (6%); enzebat or children acting as guards at the entrance of the school (1.9%); and other (7.6%).²⁷¹ Focus groups also overwhelmingly mentioned as perpetrators children belonging to richer families: “Yes, there are children, who are afraid of the children of directors, commanders, and rich people because they beat the poor and helpless children.”²⁷² And also: “Children from poor families are often tortured by children from richer families.”²⁷³

²⁷⁰ 10% did not know, 5% refused to answer, and the remaining small percentage did not provide an answer.

²⁷¹ 12% did not know, 5% refused to answer, and 2 children did not provide an answer.

²⁷² Sari Pul, Gosfandi, Focus groups with boys

²⁷³ Sari Pul, City, Focus groups with boys

5.4 Knowledge on Causes and Consequences of Violence against Children

Considering the finding of minor differences in the types of violence adults committed on their children and the types of violence children reported, the lack of effort in downplaying the levels of violence from the side adults is telling on, among other important aspects, on an actual lack of knowledge on what constitutes violence against children. Even CPANs, whose mandate is protecting children from violence, on average 1 in 5 was not able to recognize a type of violence (for more details see section on Protection Mechanisms).

While what constitutes violence remains unclear, respondents are knowledgeable on the effects of violence with 90% of adults and 80% of children listing at least a type of effect of violence on children: physical damage, injury or death (reported by 41% of adults and 27% children); low self-worth (44% adults and 30% children); sadness (59% adults and 68% children); shame (39% adults and 46% children); anger (38% adults and 36% children); inability to trust (34% adults and 24% children); anxiety (16% adults and 18% children); despair (32% adults and 28% children); aggressiveness (33% adults and 18% children); poor self-control (14% adults and 18% children); problems forming relationships (8% both), mental health problems (19% adults and 18% children); antisocial behaviour (7% adults and 10% children); abuse of spouse or child during adulthood (12% adults and 4.6% children); drug addiction (9% adults and 11% children); and other (3.5% adults and 11% children).

Causes Violence Against Children

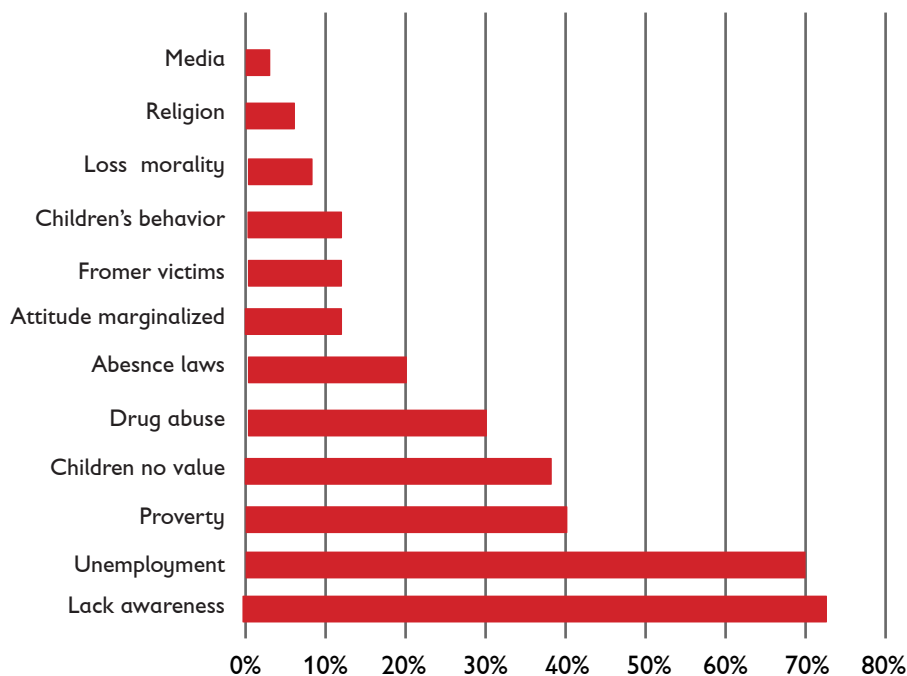


Chart 12: Causes of violence against children as mentioned by children

Children were asked to list the reasons for violence against children with 90% of children reporting at least a cause. Among these, the causes reported were: lack of awareness and/or education (73%); unemployment (70%); drug abuse (30%); poverty and social exclusion (49%); low value given to children (39%); absence of laws protecting children (20%); absence of institutions protecting children (20%); negative attitudes towards children from marginalized groups (11%); because people were victims of violence in their childhood (11%); loss of moral values (9%); media (2.1%); religious belief (6%); other (2.5%).

11% of children also blamed themselves or the children's behaviour as being the cause of violence. Focus group discussions yielded some information on the persistence of violence in the communities where among the issues listed in the survey these stressed the centrality of insecurity in the perpetuation of violence, mentioned by the majority of focus groups with CPANs and children. A male CPAN member commented: "Violence against children is customary. Now it has been worsened by the absence of security and the opponents of the government."²⁷⁴ 3 focus groups also reported on violence being committed to strengthen children, especially boys as these "in order to strengthen them so will better deal with problems."²⁷⁵ And: "My brother and father say that we should be punished from childhood so we become stronger when we grow up."²⁷⁶

Despite child marriage remains high in the communities, the best age - on average - for a girl to get engaged reported by adults is 18.6 years and for getting married is 20.6. Children reported a higher average age for girl's marriage, 21.3 years. For boys the average recommended age for engagement and marriage is higher, 21.20 and 23.2, respectively. Children reported a considerably lower marriage age for boys: 19.54. Considering the risks that pregnancy brings to women from 15 to 19 years of age, the average ages reported, could be considered a positive finding in terms of respondent's knowledge on the negative effects of child marriage and conceiving for girls in their teens. 73% of adults also reported that there are reasons for girls for avoiding becoming mothers in their adolescent years with 18% explicitly mentioning there are no bed effects because of early pregnancy.²⁷⁷

The reasons reported by adults are: maternal death (74%); premature birth (54%); overweight new-borns (32%); spontaneous abortions (54%); still-birth (44%); low birth weight (32%); bleeding (40%); high levels childhood illnesses (12%); mental and physical disabilities of children (30%). 26% of adults think that girls, who are engaged should not continue their education (reported at 17% for boys). In the latter cases, women are more likely to be against education after engagement of both, girls²⁷⁸ and boys.²⁷⁹

274 Sari Pul, Interview with CPAN member

275 Ibid.

276 Sari Pul, Gosfandi, Focus groups with boys

277 3.1% did not know, 0.6% refused to answer, and 4.7% of data is missing.

278 Men (M=.80, SD=.4), Women (M=.63, SD=.48); t(286)=3.13, p=.002

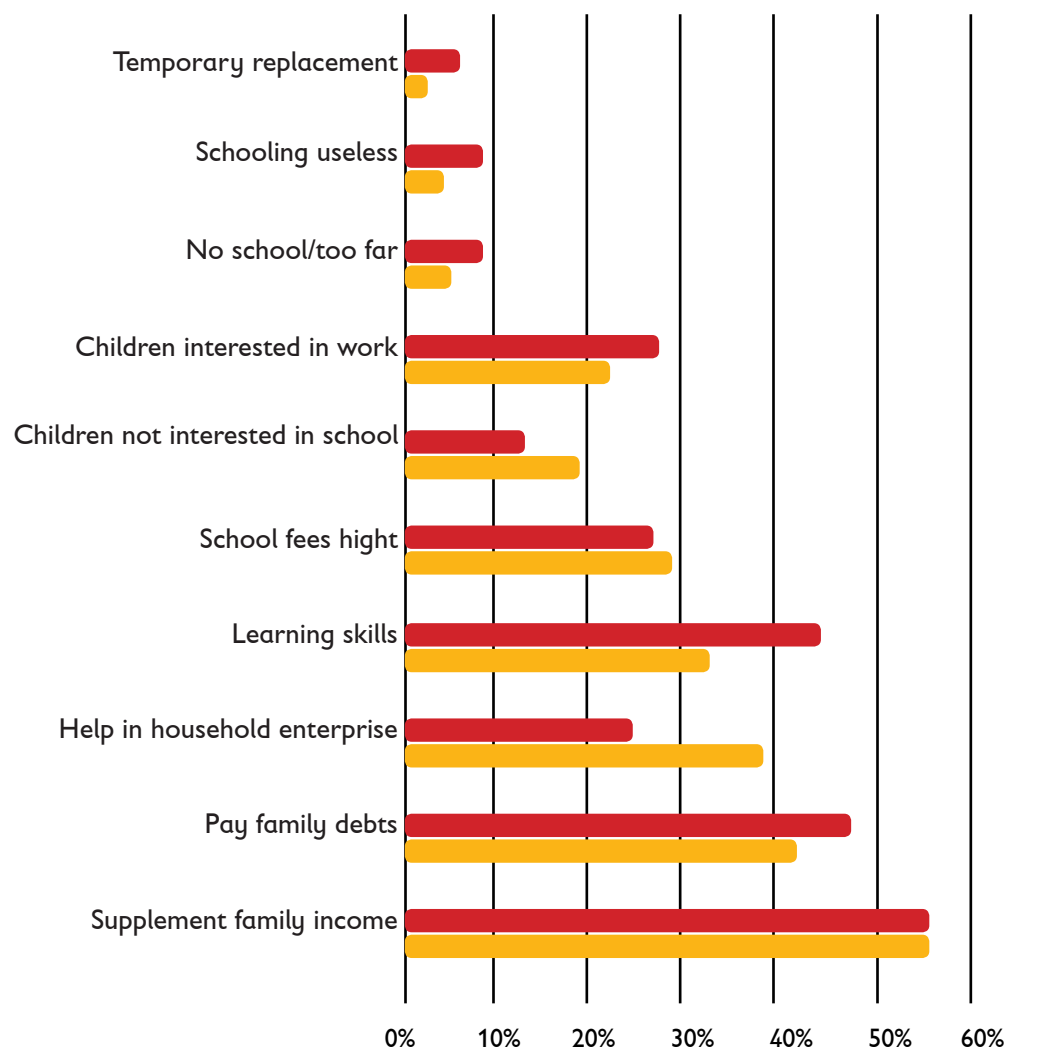
279 Men (M=.88, SD=.35), women (m=.78, SD=.41); t (306)=2.09, p=.037

6. Child Labour and Working Children

6.1 Child Labour in Targeted Communities in Balkh, Jawzjan, Sari Pul, and Nangarhar

While the problems of calculating the percentage of child labour and working children due to missing data are discussed in the Study Limitations sections, some conclusion (despite being reductionist and not capturing the multi-dimensionality of child labour), could be drawn. Considering that approximately 30% of children perform a work that is hazardous, estimating child labour at 30% is reasonable, in line with national statistics that set it at about 25%.²⁸⁰ Almost a third of school-age children in the communities do not attend school. These were reported at 30% by adults²⁸¹ and at 33% by children.²⁸² It is therefore reasonable to assume that these children work, which strengthens the previous approximation of child labour. Additionally, despite the missing data, 22% of parents/caregivers and 38% of children mentioned having children under the age of 15 contributing to their monthly income, which would again confirm the rough estimate of 30% child labour/working children.

Reasons for Letting Children to Work (Children and Adults)



280 CSO, AMICS, 2013, <http://cso.gov.af/content/files/amics.pdf>

281 63% said no, 0.6% did not know, and 6% of data is missing.

282 59% said no, 1.95 did not know, and 6.3% of data is missing.

Chart 13: Reasons for allowing children to work mentioned by adults and parents.

Almost 75% of adults and children reported the following reasons for letting children to work: supplement family income (55%); help for paying debts (mentioned by 41% of adults and 46% of children); help in household enterprise mentioned by 38% of adults and 24% of children); in order for children to learn a skill (33% of adults and 42% of children); schooling is not considered useful (2.9% of adults and 8% of children); no school or school is too far (5.5% of adults and 8% of children); families cannot afford school fees (29% of adults and 25% of children); child not interested in school (19% of adults and 12% of children); children are interested in work (14% of adults and 24% of children); temporarily replacing someone unable to work (0.8% of adults and 4.3% of children); preventing him/her from making bad friends and being led astray (3.8% of adults and 8% of children); other (7%). 14% of adults and 7% of children explicitly said that children are not allowed to work. 66% of adults and children reported children experiencing problems because of work where its negative impact on education was the most prominent. Poor grades in school were reported by 49% of adults and children with drop out from school/no time for school was reported by 42% of adults and 30% of children. Other impacts of child labour mentioned were: extreme fatigue (reported by 49% of adults and 45% of children); injury or illness (reported by 33% of adults and children); emotional harassment (36% of adults and 21% of children); no play time (30% of adults and 27% of children); physical violence (15% of adults and 16% of children); sexual abuse (6% of adults and 2.9% of children); and other (6% of adults and children). 23% of adults and 19% of children also mentioned that there are no effects because of children working.

6.2 Street Working Children in Kabul

While child labour was explored in the 4 provinces the present study more specifically addresses street working children in Kabul with some insights on their workplace, the hazards they are exposed to, working hours, travelling time to work, abuse, income, and problems that children experience because of work. Obstacles for attending schools and the negative effect work has on education is also assessed with an exploration of the factors that influence children’s works and the factors that would deter them from work, followed by some information related to the households of children.

The jobs that children mentioned performing are the following: washing cars (6%), cleaning (1.9%), cleaning shoes (3.7%); washing vegetables (1.9%) mentioned by girls only; laundry (3.7%); selling food and beverages (like bolani, burgers, chutneys, eggs, juice, water, etc.) 17% (evenly distributed among boys and girls); selling mittens, which was mentioned by girls only (6.2%); 28% selling plastic (where approximately 10% of girls mentioned it); selling vegetables (2.5%); tailoring (3%); selling cigarettes (1.2%); selling chewing gum (3.7%). Some provided more general descriptions as ‘working hard’ (1.8%); working at home (2.5%), which was mentioned by girls only); working in the market 1.2%; and one identified as daily worker, one as a shopkeeper. Among the jobs listed, girls were involved in cleaning; laundry, selling food and beverages, cigarettes; selling plastic; tailoring; washing vegetables, and working at home.

Main Types of Work Performed by Working Girls and Boys in Kabul

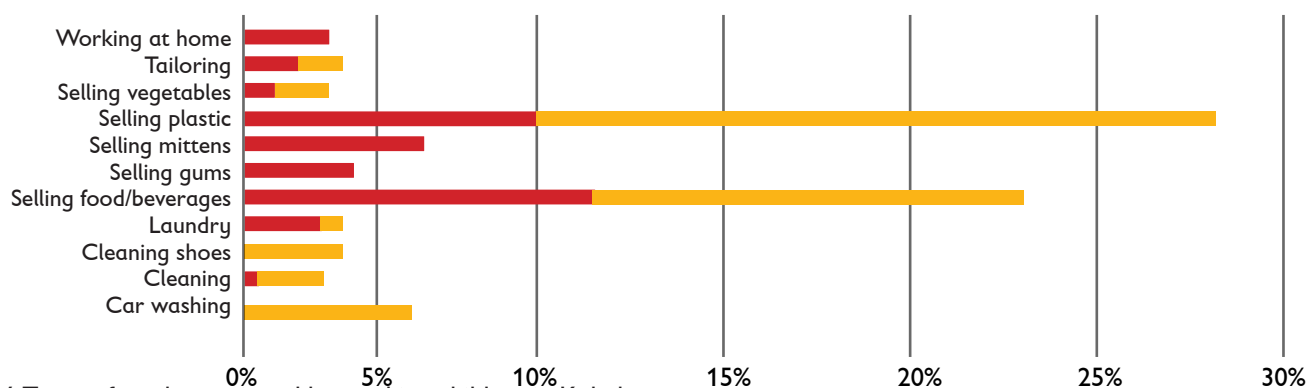


Chart 14: Types of work mentioned by working children in Kabul

18% of children work up to 2 hours a day; 25% of children work between 2 to 4 hours a day; 47% work from 4 to 7 hours a day²⁸³, and 4% work more than 7 hours a day. On average children get 15 minutes breaks. 17% of children work at night (with the remaining only during the day). On average children work 6 days a week and 8 months a year. Children mostly do not get any benefits at work (92%) with small percentages reporting food (3.8%), over time bill (2.3%), treatment (0.8%), and other non-specified benefits (1.5%).

²⁸³ 7 hours working shift was used as threshold for a full-time employment as per Afghan Labour Law, which stipulates that children 15 to 18 years of age are allowed to work 35 hours per week, which is 7 hours per day excluding week-ends.

Time to Work-Place

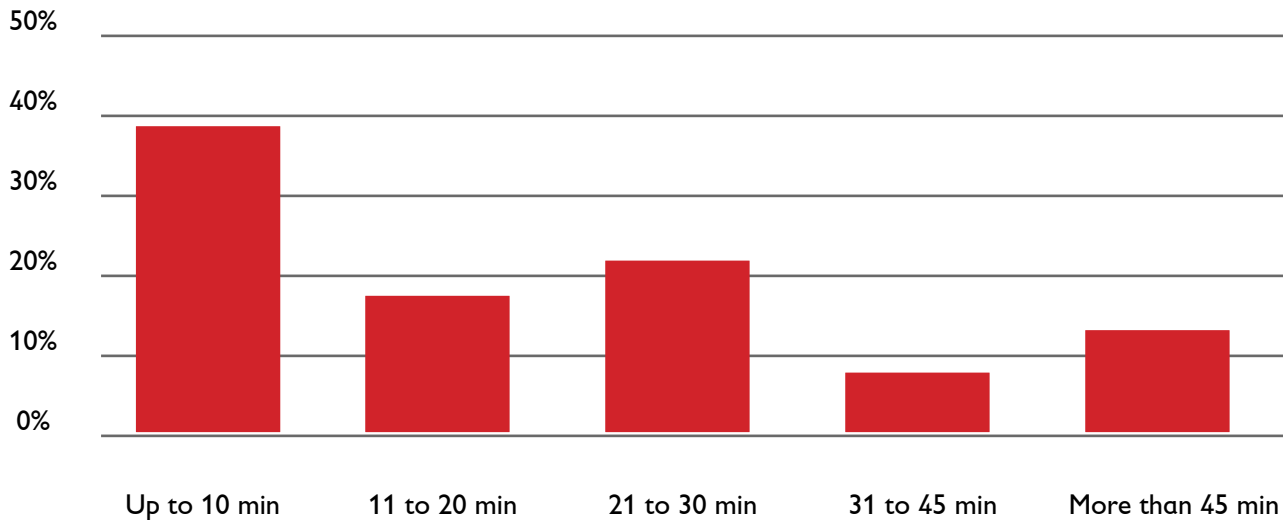


Chart 15: Time needed for reaching the work-place in Kabul

39% of children need up to 10 minutes to reach to their work-place (44% of boys and 56% of girls), 19% need from 11 to 20 minutes (71% of boys and 29% of girls); 21% from 21 to 30 min (76% boys and 24% girls), 8% from 31 min to 45 min (82% boys and 18% girls); and 14% require more than 45 min to reach their work-place (60% boys and 30% girls). 87% go to work by foot with the remaining working at home (and smaller percentages using a bus or bicycle). Considering that 22% require more than 30 min to reach their work-place and any means of transportation are barely used these adds to the already high vulnerability of children exposing them to traffic jam and other types of insecurities aside the efforts in order to reach the work-place (with the time doubling when considering the return journey). Additionally, these are rarely accompanied as 58% mentioned going to work by themselves (with the remaining mentioning a person accompanying them).

81% earned less than 200 AFN during last month, 10% between 2000 to 3000 AFN, and a small percentage more than 3000 AFN (other did not provide an answer) with no major differences between the earnings of boys and girls. 14% mentioned themselves as receivers of the payments with 83% giving it to their parents (and a small percentage to others such as relatives). Children mostly receive daily payments (67%); weekly (7%), monthly (93%); and on a piece rate basis (22%) payments.

Working children are exposed to numerous hazards at work. 77% of children work under direct sunlight for long hours; 7% work underground, under water, at dangerous heights, or in confined spaces; 11% risk falling, being struck by objects, being caught in or between objects; 15% lift or carry heavy loads; 15% use heavy or sharp implement; 22% are at risk of being cut or burned; 38% live in surroundings of dangerous animals or insects; 62% work in an unhygienic environment; 70% work in a polluted environment with smoke, vehicle, glues, or dust; 9% work with toxic gases, liquids or chemical substances, explosives, or flammable materials; 49% work under extreme temperatures, noise, vibration, or radiation; and 33% face abuse at the work-place; among these 45% mentioned experiencing physical abuse and 49% psychological abuse like yelling and shouting with the remaining non specifying the type of abuse. Boys are more likely to face abuse at work-place if compared to girls.²⁸⁴ A focus group with working boys in Kabul revealed some of the dynamics prevalent in the children's work-place:

1: Children and elders buy stuff and pay me with money. They give me back the spoon and plate in a good way. But there are people, who tease me, bother me, or return things in a bad manner. Sometimes they steal from me.

2: When we wash the car the owner will pay us. When we washed the car and the driver escaped, police arrested us and took us to the police station. They abuse us. They will make us clean the carpet for example. When we see the driver and ask for money he beats us and takes our money.

284 Boys (M=.43, SD=.49), Girls (M=.17, SD=.383), t(160)=3.52, p=.001

3: When I sell ice cream and the drivers and rich people buy ice cream I feel happy. When they don't pay I feel uncomfortable. Traffic police flattened our cart tires. To make us go away.

4: When I sell eggs and people give me money I become happy. In the gymnasium some people kick me and don't want to pay me. I'm afraid to cross the streets also, the drivers don't want to stop.

5: When I work at the tailoring shop and when I am asked to bring a button and if the button is not the right one, the tailor will beat me. When I make a mistake and there are some costs because of it, it is deducted from my salary. Then there are the addicted people. They want to steal our money. They will beat us. And they threaten us.

6: During Eid we are happy we have many customers. We get more money.

7: When the people buy plastic bags I am happy. There are some older people, they will steal the plastic. Elder boys try to get money from us. There are two types of people. Some people, if they see others escaping they will stop them and ask them to pay what is owed to us. They will help us take the money. Other people will ask for a fee to claim the money for us.

8: There are different people. Some people try to be good people, some have bad behaviour. They will punish us.²⁸⁵

When children are abused at work-place they can go to a community member's home (21%), community leader's home (12%); to the police (42%), to a relative's home (4%); and to others that were not specified (21%).

Respondents listed the following problems related to child labour: children should be going to school and focus on school (56%); children should stay at home to look after younger brothers and sisters (46%); children get tired because of work (29%); children may get injured, ill, or in general their health worsens (24%); children do not get time for playing (21%); the salary that children earn is too low (15%); the work-load is excessive (2.8%); employers behave badly with children (2.8%).

Factors Influencing Work

Children were asked about the reasons for working where 87% mentioned supplementing family income, 44% have to work to cover the expenses related to school, 31% work to help the family to pay debts, 18% mentioned helping a household enterprise, 2.5% feel the need to learn a skill, 3.8% think school is not useful for ensuring one's future, 3.1% are interested in work, 1.3% are not interested in school, 5% are replacing someone unable to work, 3.7% mentioned having a jobless parent, 1.2% mentioned working because of a death of a parent, and one child mentioned having a parent in prison. Similar percentages were also reported by parent respondents when asked the same question. 22% of parents are happy with the fact that their child is working. The remaining do not see child labour as positive.

Children would stop working if they had sufficient income for the family (79%); enough money for education (53%); if parents agreed (9%), if school was closer (0.8%) – the latter seen as a problem by 10% of parents - and free (0.8%) with the remaining mentioning availability of a good school (1.8%), being richer (1.2%), and having a father with a job (1.2%). The remaining small percentage mentioned: having a good home, having a healthy parent, and that only sickness would prevent them from working. Parents reported similar percentages when asked about the conditions that would stop children from working where some added if they owned sufficient land (11%); better security (3.5%); and if schools were closer to home (10%).

62% mentioned mother, 50% father, and 45% themselves as putting them into work. However, the latter should be taken cautiously as different non coercive means could have been used to persuade children into work. An example provided by a boy participating into a focus group can be revealing on the example of work related to manliness:

We decide ourselves! If a child works he will become a strong man. If he doesn't work, he will not. We force ourselves to work.²⁸⁶

285 Kabul, Focus group with boys,

286 Kabul, PD 4, Focus group with street working boys

Education

10% of children cannot read and write, 92% are currently attending school (with 6.2% not attending school and the remaining did not provide an answer). Among the children that attend school, 75% think that they have time to do their homework (with the remaining admitting not having time). Among these, 26 children do not have time for completing their homework because of work (or 16% of all the children) with a small number admitting having difficulties in understanding, lacking interest, or because they want to have a rest and/or play. Children were asked about the types of pressure that work puts on their schoolwork with 74% of children mentioning fatigue and lack of sleep, 41% are unable to attend class regularly, 17% as not having enough time for homework, 15% mentioned work causing sickness and pain, 6% as being stressed. A focus group with girls shed light on some other aspects of working children and how these can be perceived and treated in schools:

1: We are not going to school, because we will work till late. If we don't do our homework they will beat us in school. Penalty will be to stay outside the class.

2: When we don't know the lesson and they send us out. "Don't come back!" they tell us.

3: The teacher will write some bad words on our front and take us around from class to class.

4: When girls work on the street they will get bad names.

5: Teachers don't like children that work, they punish them, and they call them with bad names. They say: "You don't have the right to come to school." They say that our parents should marry us away.²⁸⁷

30% of children miss school once a week, 26% twice a week, 5.6% a few hours a week, 2.5% regularly, and 28% of children never miss school because of work (with the remaining not providing an answer).

Working Children's Households

Parents spend the payments that receive from children, according to responses provided by children, mostly on food (83%); education (54%), rent (45%); clothing (26%), repaying loans (10%), and 3.2% keep an amount as pocket money. In the past 12 months only 23% of parents were able to cover the costs of their child health care, 63% were not able to provide for health-care costs (with the remaining not providing an answer). Only 30% of parents were able to cover the costs of their children's education, 56% were not able to cover the costs, and the remaining did not provide an answer). Parents were also asked about any other costs related to children where 33% were able to provide for it, 53% were not able, and the remaining did not provide an answer.

7. Children in Armed Conflict

18% of children reported that children are vulnerable for recruitment into Armed Opposition groups in their community (with the highest percentage reported in Jawzjan, followed by Sari Pul, Balkh, and Nangarhar)²⁸⁸ with 13% of adults sharing the same concern.²⁸⁹ 13% of children reported that children are vulnerable for recruitment into armed groups (with the highest percentage reported in Jawzjan, followed by Sari Pul)²⁹⁰ 19% of children²⁹¹ and 30% of adults²⁹² think that children are vulnerable for recruitment into the government such as ALP, ANP, etc. (with the highest percentage reported in Jawzjan, followed by Sari Pul).²⁹³ The reasons for children to enter AOGs are the following, according to 74% of children and 71% of adults surveyed: because of income (reported by 78% of children and 90% of adults), because there is opportunity as AOGs reside in the community or in the proximity (reported by 23% of children and 32% of adults); AOGs are popular (reported by

287 Kabul, Focus group with working girls

288 57% said children are not vulnerable for recruitment into armed opposition groups, 6% did not know, and 19% did not provide an answer.

289 78% think they are not, 4.7% did not know, 4.7% of data is missing.

290 56% think they are not vulnerable, 3.8% did not know, and 28% did not provide an answer.

291 68% do not think that, 6.6% did not know, 10% of data is missing.

292 55% do not think that, 7.2% did not know, 8.1% of data is missing.

293 50% think they are not vulnerable, 3.5% do not know, and 27% did not provide an answer.

25% of children and 16% of adults); to do jihad (reported by 19% of children and 28% of adults), and other (19% of children and 13% of adults) where only one child specified because of the costs associated with weddings.

8. Protection Mechanisms

The present section explores the protection mechanisms that children have at community level and how collaborative adults are when it comes to prevent and tackle violence against children. The following section explores CPANs' knowledge, challenges, and commitment to end violence against children as the main entry point for children survivors of violence.

8.1 Community Awareness

Adults and children were asked a series of questions on the protection mechanisms available for children, knowledge on the laws protecting them, and adult's willingness and obstacles for reporting a case of abuse. Only 10% of children (70% girls and 30% boys) reported there is a place in the community where children can go to ask for help if they are abused by their parents or if they run away from home²⁹⁴ with 17% of adults reporting such place.²⁹⁵ Nonetheless, 33% of all children indicated at least a place and among these: 1.9% mentioned health workers, 8% mentioned a teacher, 7% a restaurant owner, 3.8% NGOs, and higher numbers mentioned community members' home (45%), relatives' home (37%), community leader (35%), religious leader (24%); mosque (23%); government (23%); police (28%); shuras (42%), and shelter (14%). Only 15 children were acquainted with CPANs. 33% of adults mentioned at least a place where children can turn to: community member's home (53%); community leader (26%); religious leader (35%); mosque (19%); government (18%); police (22%); NGO (6%); shelter (5%); school (0.9%); shura (21%); relatives (42%); restaurant owner (1.9%); other (8.5%). In comparison with children, a much higher percentage of adults were acquainted with CPANs (mentioned by 10% of adults).

Only 11% of children are aware of initiatives that protect children against violence, corporal punishment, and child abuse in schools with 61% mentioning that such initiative do not exist, and 15% did not know.²⁹⁶ Children's knowledge on laws and institutions protecting them could not be established (See Study Limitations).

Adults would do the following if they knew a child was experiencing abuse: report the case (69%), confront the perpetrator (28%); offer care to the child (36%); keep quiet (10%), and other (3.6%). 86% of adults also provided reasons for not reporting: 11% do not know who should they report to; 12% think that no action would be taken even if it is reported; 9% think it is not their concern; 11% think it is normal that such things happen; 15% fear retaliation; 16% would speak to the perpetrator before reporting. 25% mentioned there were no reasons that would prevent them from reporting child abuse.

8.2 Child Protection Action Network (CPAN)

CPAN members were asked a series of questions on the different types of violence against children in order to establish whether they are acquainted with the different nuances that qualify certain acts as violence, followed by knowledge on laws and institutions, the general self-efficacy they exhibit in violence prevention, and the trainings these received and still require for improving their work as child protectors. On average, CPAN members correctly identified 82% of the different types of violence (including sexual abuse) that children can be exposed to.²⁹⁷ Considering that these are the main bodies mandated for protecting children at community, district, and provincial level, the overall knowledge should be considered low and in

²⁹⁴ 81% mentioned there is no such place, 3.5% did not know, and 8.2% data is missing.

²⁹⁵ 67% said there is no such place, 4.4% did not know, 12% of data is missing.

²⁹⁶ 2.8% refused to answer and 9% did not answer at all.

²⁹⁷ 84% percent through that shouting or yelling at child is a form of violence where 16% disagreed. 84% qualified insulting, calling the child lazy or dumb as violence with 16% disagreeing. 82% correctly thought that hitting the child on the buttocks with an object constitutes a type violence with 18% disagreeing on it. 78% think that hitting the child elsewhere with an object constitutes violence with 22% disagreeing. Repeatedly hitting a child or 'beating up' is violence according to 82% of CPAN members and it is not for 18%. Violence against children is also: slapping on the back of the head (81%); cursing a child (80%); hitting the child with the hand, foot, or fist (82%); pinching the ear or other part of the child's body (80%); and tying up a child with a rope, electric wire, or rubber (78%); pushing a child (76%); throwing small objects into a child (75%); force the child to kneeling down (78%); painful physical exercise (78%); denying food to a child (83%); treats to leave or abandon the child (84%); insulting a child (81%); threatening with ghosts and invoking harmful people (88%); embarrassing the child in front of the classmates (85%); isolating a child (84%); ignoring or refuse to talk to a child (80%); destroying child belongings (81%); locking out of the home (82%); suspending a child from class (83%); ordering a child to write words or sentences several times (86%); child marriage (82%); kicking a child (79%); abducting a child (78%); sexual touching (76%); shaking aggressively (80%); rape (78%); sexual harassment (78%); locking or restricting movement (80%); twisting a child's ear (79%); pulling a child's hair (83%); pinch a child to cause pain (81%); asking the child to stand, kneel in a painful position (81%); withholding a meal (84%); giving drugs to children (78%); preventing the child from being with others to make the child feel lonely (84%); steal or ruin a child's belongings; twisting fingers with pencils (78%); and telling children dirty jokes (78%); 78% think that spanking the bottom with bare hands is a type of violence with the remaining thinking it is not an act of violence; 74% think that hitting on the head with knuckles is a type of violence.

need of improvement. In fact, for example, only 78% of CPANs considering rape as a type of violence against children (with the remaining not considering it rape or not knowing whether rape is violence or not) is alarming.

Knowledge on positive disciplining techniques is also limited among CPAN members. 59% wrongly thought that explaining to a child what she/he did was wrong was a type of violence (with the remaining answering correctly); 72% think that giving something else to do to a child in order to change attitude/behaviour constitutes violence with 28% disagreeing; 75% think that taking away privileges or money is violence; and 84% that putting the child in time – out is a form of violence.

On average, girls should be engaged when they are 18.6 years old and boys almost 21; girls should get married at 20.5 years of age and boys at 22.6. 5 respondents thought that engagement of boys under 15 is an appropriate age and 7 CPAN members thought that for girls under 15 is an acceptable age for getting married, which is illegal in Afghanistan as the minimum age for girls to get married is 15. About 90% think that there are some reasons for avoiding pregnancy for adolescent girls, which is in line with the finding of the mean age of marriage and consequently child bearing at 20.5 years. 71% listed maternal death; 55% premature birth of the child, 28% overweight new-borns; 54% spontaneous abortions; 40% still –birth; 31% low birth weight; 44% bleeding; 26% high levels of child illness; 29% mental and physical disabilities of children, and 5 % of other issues.

CPANs were asked about conventions, laws, policies that protect children in Afghanistan where 70% provided at least one answer and 25% answered do not know (with 0.9% refusing to answer) where consequently 44% were able to list at least one law, policy, or convention protecting children. CPANs mentioned: the Juvenile Code (39%); the EVAW Law (23%); the Law on the Rights and Privileges of People with Disability and Martyrs' Family (18%); the Law of Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres (15%); Education Law (30%); Law of Counter Abduction and Human Trafficking (7%); the Labour Law (15%); the Law of Public Health (20%); the Child Rights Convention (16%); CEDAW (4.8%); the ILO Conventions (2.9%); the Convention on Status of Refugees (6.4%); the Inter – Ministerial Steering Committee on Children and Armed Conflict (1.9%); and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy ANDS (4.5%).

A series of questions explored CPANs knowledge of some provisions of the Child Rights Convention where these also need improvements in their knowledge. 99% correctly answered that the child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, to acquire a nationality and as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by her/his parents. 92% were correct in identifying that a child has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. 95% are correct in that children have the right to education. The Convention also recognizes the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely hazardous to the child's health and development, which was answered correctly by 92% of CPAN members. 67% rightfully think that The Convention promotes physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts.

As it was already mentioned above, out of 308 CPAN members surveyed, only 49 mentioned the CRC when asked about laws and institutions protecting children in Afghanistan, which could be interpreted as correct answers provided being more due to common sense than actual knowledge on the CRC. In fact, when it comes to provisions of the CRC that cannot be ascribed to common sense or provisions that directly challenge deeply ingrained beliefs, such as negative perceptions on disability, knowledge is considerably lower. Only 43% of CPANs were correct regarding the provision of the CRC, which establishes that children can be separated from their parents against their will in case judicial authorities decide that such separation is necessary in a particular case such as one involving abuse by parents. Only 38% correctly identified the provision regarding the opportunity of the child to be heard in judicial and administrative proceedings affecting her/him, either directly or through a representative. According to the Convention, mentally and physically disabled children should enjoy a full and decent life, which was believed as not being regulated by the convention by almost 50% of CPAN members.

CPANs were asked about the primary authority responsible for protecting children in Afghanistan where only 29% correctly identified MoLSAMD as being the main body. Others identified UNICEF (29%); Ministry of Interior (8%); Ministry of Justice (3.2%); MoWA (1.6%); AIHRC (7%); and one mentioned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 19% did not know, 2.5% refused to answer, and the remaining small percentage did not provide an answer.

On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 indicates a high level of self-efficacy in violence prevention and 5 very low self-efficacy, CPANs on average scored 2.52.²⁹⁸ This indicates a moderately high sense of self-efficacy in terms of violence prevention among CPANs. A high sense of self-efficacy can be considered a key motivating factor for undertaking work related to the prevention of violence, even in the absence of programmatic support beyond the life of the project or support in terms of an absence of remuneration for such activity.

CPANs received trainings in: referrals (20%), case management (28%); child protection (68%); best interest of children (52%); monitoring child protection (47%). 5% mentioned receiving no training at all. 82% of all CPANs surveyed mentioned as training provider Save the Children, 23% another international NGO, 14% a national NGO; 13% government, and 8% the UN. High number of CPANs acknowledged the need for trainings in “Best interest of children” (70%); referrals (31%); child protection principles (69%); monitoring child protection (54%); and case management (37%).

Activities and Challenges CPANs

20% of CPANs surveyed reported not handling any child protection cases. 24% reported handling 1 to 3 cases, 13% handled 4 to 6 cases; 4.2% handled 7 to 9 cases; 4% handled 10 to 20 cases; 3.3% handled 21 to 30 cases; and 4.5% handled more than 31 cases, overall. 10% reported not solving any cases. 37% solved more than 60% of cases they handled and a very small number of respondents reported solving from 40% to 60% of the cases they handled. 8% of CPAN members inflated the cases solved when these reported more cases solved than those they mentioned handling. For others, a calculation was not possible due to missing data.

24% of CPANs mentioned holding meetings at least once every 2 weeks; 54% at least once a month; 10% at least once every 2 months; 2.6% at least once every 3 months, 3.3% at least once every 4 months with 1.5% acknowledging that a meeting was never held. Regarding the activities undertaken CPANs mentioned: preparing the agenda and conduct monthly meetings (37%); preparing an annual plan and budget for carrying out activities (20%); case planning and management, reporting, and follow up of the cases after 24 up to 72 hours (30%); preparing workshops for raising awareness regarding child protection (42%); training of CPAN members and social workers and establishment of committees (33%); collecting baseline information related to different forms of child protection issues (49%); rehabilitation and training of delinquent children and run away children (18%); prevention of child marriages (58%); reintegration of children and paving the way for education of children (25%); mapping of services available for children (30%); referral of cases at provincial level and regional level (19%), and other non-specified activities (1.9%).

CPANs reported coordinating with the following institutions regarding child protection: community Shuras (63%); CPANs of a different level (48%); schools (49%); community leaders (40%); religious leader (30%); CPANs from a different area (28%); the health sector (23%); social workers (22%); PTSA (25%); security actors (11%); and government (5%). 7 CPAN members reported not coordinating with anyone. 32% have undertaken advocacy activities, 51% did not, 5% did not know, and the remaining did not provide an answer. Among those that advocated for children only two provided information on their activities, one advocated about child marriage and the other CPAN member of father’s violence against children.

If CPANs came across violence against children 59% would report the case to the relevant bodies, 22% would confront the perpetrator, 17% would directly offer care to the child, and 3.1% would do other activities to ensure child protection, which they did not specify. 3.4% would keep quiet or take no action, which contradicts their mandate of being a CPAN member. In fact, when asked for the reasons for not reporting a case of child abuse (with 93% providing at least one answer), 6% thought it was not their concern and 3.5% thought that it is normal that such things happen, which again is in contradiction with their mandate as child protectors. 12% do not know where should they report the case, 23% feel hopeless and think that even if they report no action would be taken. 28% fear retaliation from perpetrators and 23% would prefer to speak to the perpetrator before reporting.

298 N= 269, SD =.627

Challenges Experienced by CPANs

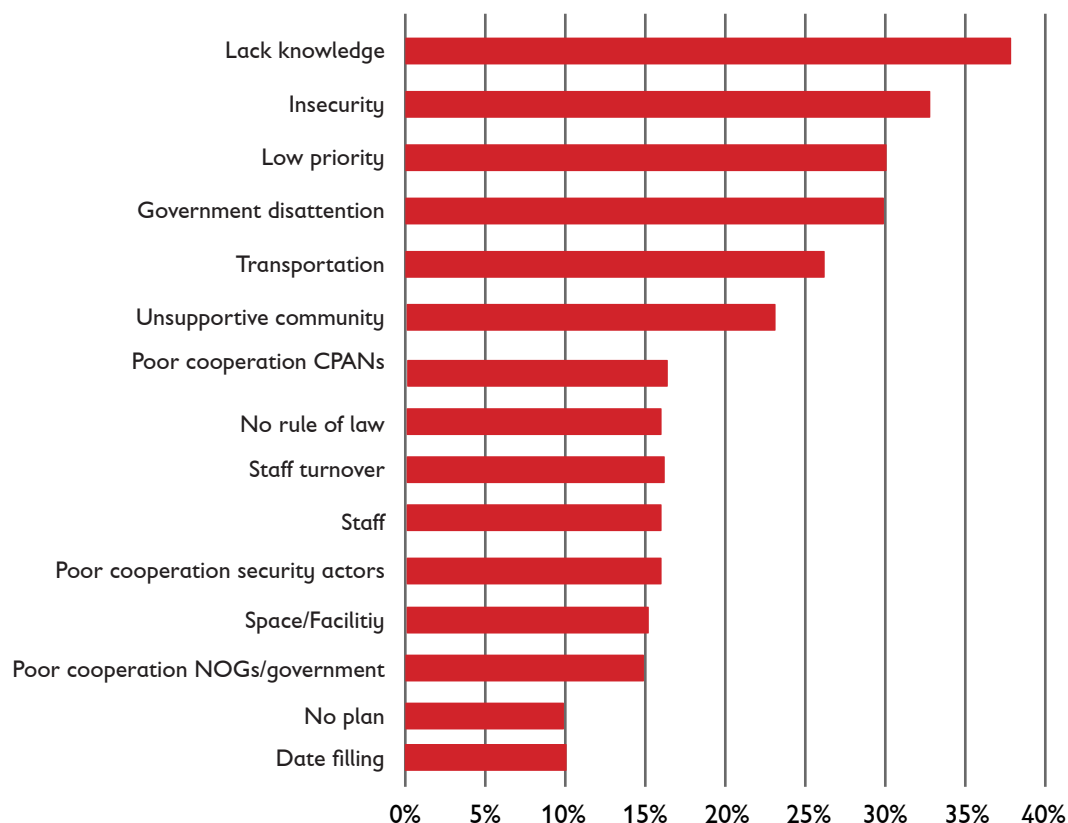


Chart 15: Challenges experienced by CPANs

CPAN members experience considerable challenges for protecting children and attending their duties where these mentioned: lack of resources (39%); lack knowledge on child rights/capacity (37%); government show poor attention to the cases (30%); low level priority in matters of child rights and child protection (30%); lack of transportation (26%); lack of personnel (16%); non – existent or poor cooperation with other bodies involved in child protection like government and NGOs (15%); lack or poor coordination with CPANS from a different level (19%); lack of permanent representatives or frequent replacements (16%); poor or lack of cooperation among security authorities (16%); disorganized system for filing and documenting (10%); lack of working plan (10%); lack of appropriate number of rehabilitation/child care home/orphanage/community (15%); lack of authority (12%); lack rule of law (16%); insecurity (33%); lack support community (23%), and other (2.9%).

Conclusion

In conclusion, girls have better communication on many issues with their parents if compared to boys and when analysed based on whether answers provided by children refer to mothers or fathers, mothers are perceived as having better communication with their children compared to fathers. On average, mothers can discuss beliefs with their children without feeling restrained or embarrassed more often than fathers actually can; are less likely to be insulted by their children; and are more likely to be told about problems and issues that bother children. In two aspects fathers perform better than mothers in communication with children: openness in discussing certain topics and empathy.

Violence against children, including physical, psychological, neglect, and exposure to violence is endemic with girls and boys experiencing similar levels of violence with children from urban areas more prone to it. Adults reporting committing similar or even higher levels of violence compared to levels reported by children could indicate that adults do not have a proper grasp on what actually constitutes violence. Despite answers on sexual abuse are very likely underreported, sexual abuse at home is high with children reporting much higher levels of sexual abuse when answering questions on the latter at community level. Adults mentioned sexual abuse of children in even higher percentages compared to children where no explanation could be derived from focus groups.

64% of adults stated using non-violent methods for disciplining children, which directly contradicts the findings on the level of violence experienced by children and violence levels reported by adults themselves. Positive disciplining techniques are reported in high percentages by children and parents. Considering the high levels of violence experienced and perpetrated, these are likely less effective. 32% of children felt they have been punished for an offence they do not accept; 16% think they received excessive and unnecessary punishment; and 56% think these punishments are not effective as they did not learn to not commit the same offence again.

While prevalence of child labour could not be established, information on causes for child labour were explored with supplementing family income, help paying debts, learning a skill, helping a family enterprise, children’s disinterest in school being the among the main reasons for working. Albeit in slightly different percentages, these findings were also confirmed by working children in Kabul.

Protection in the communities for children is limited with small percentages of respondents identifying a place offering protection for children. While CPANs represent some of the first entry points for children, these remain fairly unknown among community members, especially children and have limited knowledge in terms laws/institutions, the CRC, and experience considerable obstacles for undertaking their work. Nonetheless, self - efficacy for violence prevention is high, which is an important trait for an effective or potentially effective CPAN member.

Bibliography

ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tool Children’s Version (ICAST-C): Instrument development and multi-national pilot testing (PDF Download Available). Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/38037233_ISPCAN_Child_Abuse_Screening_Tool_Children’s_Version_ICAST-C_Instrument_development_and_multi-national_pilot_testing [accessed May 16, 2016].

Annex A: Scales

Parent – Child Communication Scale

Is your parent a good listener?
Can your parent tell how you are feeling without asking you?
Does your parent try to understand what do you think?
Are there things that you do not discuss with your parent?
Do you discuss problems with your parent?
Does your parent insult you when she/he is angry with you?
Do you think that you can tell your parent how you really feel about certain things?
Can you let your parent know what is bothering you?
Are there certain things which your parent does not allow you to discuss with her/him?
Can you have your say even if your parents disagrees with you?

a=.631	
Coding	1 = Almost never 2 = Once in a while 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Almost always
Inverse Coding	1 = Almost always 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Almost never

Parent Child Communication Scale

1. Can you discuss your beliefs with your child without feeling restrained or embarrassed?
2. Is she/he a good listener?
3. Can she/he guess how you feel without asking you?
4. Are you very satisfied how you and she/he talk together?
5. Does she/he try to understand your point of view?
6. Are there things you avoid discussing with her/him?
7. Do you discuss child – related problems with her/him?
8. Does she/he insult you when she/he is angry with you?
9. Do you think you can tell her/him how you really feel about some things?
10. Does she/he tell you about her personal problems?
11. Does she/he keep the feelings to her/himself rather than talking to you?
12. Does she/he hide being angry?
13. Do you encourage her/him to think about things and talk about them so she can establish her/his own opinion?
14. If she/he is upset, is it difficult for you to figure out what he/she is feeling?
15. Does she/he let things pile up without talking or dealing with them until they are more than you she/he can handle?
16. Does she/he let you know what is bothering her/him?
17. Are there certain topics you do not allow her/him to discuss with you?
18. Does she/he admit mistakes without hiding them?
19. Can she/he have her/his say even if you disagree?
20. Do you and her/him come to a solution when you talk about a problem?

a=.801	
Coding	5 = Almost never 4 = Once in a while 3 = Sometimes 2 = Often 1 = Almost always
Inverse coding	1 = Almost always 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never

Scale Peer to Peer Violence and Violence among Parents

Sometimes kids get hassled or picked on by <u>other kids</u> who say hurtful or mean things to them. How many times has this happened to you?	
Sometimes kids get pushed around, hit or beaten up by other kids or group of kids. How many times this happened to you?	
How many times have you heard your parents or caregivers saying mean or hurtful things to each other or to another adult in your home?	
How many times have you seen your parents or caregivers hit each other or another adult at home?	
a=.688	
Items	N = 4
Coding:	1 = Never 2 = 1 to 2 times 3 = 3 to 5 times 4 = 6 to 10 times 5 = More than 10 times

Sub-Scale Psychological Victimization Children

Shouted, yelled, or screamed at you?	
Insulted you by calling you dumb, lazy or other names like that?	
Cursed you?	
Blamed you for his/her misfortune (or bad things that happened to them in their life?)	
Embarrassed you publicly?	
Said they wished you were never been born or that you never existed?	
Threatened to leave or abandon you?	
Locked you out of the home?	
Items = 8	
A=.791	
Coding	1 = Very often 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never 6 = It happened more than year ago

Psychological Victimization (Reported by Parents)

Shouted, yelled, or screamed at you?	
Insulted you by calling you dumb, lazy or other names like that?	
Cursed you?	
Blamed you for his/her misfortune (or bad things that happened to them in their life?)	
Embarrassed you publicly?	
Said they wished you were never been born or that you never existed?	
Threatened to leave or abandon you?	
Locked you out of the home?	
Items = 8	
A=.739	

Coding	1 = Very often 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never 6 = It happened more than year ago
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Physical Violence Sub-Scale Children

A9 Threatened to hurt or kill you?	
A9 Kicked you?	
A9 Shook you aggressively?	
A9 Slapped you on the face or on the back of your head?	
A9 Threatened to invoke harmful people, ghosts or evil spirits against you?	
A9 Hit you on the head with knuckles?	
A9 Spanked you on the bottom with bare hand?	
A9 Hit you on the buttocks with an object (such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt)?	
A9 Hit you elsewhere (not buttocks) with an object (such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt)?	
A9 Hit you over and over again with object or fist (“beat-up”)?	
A9 Choked you to prevent you from breathing?	
A9 Burned or scalded or branded you?	
A9 Put hot pepper, soap or spicy food in your mouth to cause you pain?	
A9 Locked you up or tied you to restrict movement?	
A9 Twisted your ear?	
A9 Pulled your hair?	
A9 Pinched you to cause pain?	
A9 Forced you to stand, sit or kneel in a position that caused pain?	
A9 Withhold a meal as a punishment?	
A9 Give you drugs?	
A9 Twisted your fingers with a pencil in between	
N = 21	
a=.910	
Coding	1 = Very often 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never 6 = It happened more than year ago

Physical Violence Sub-Scale Adults

A9 Threatened to hurt or kill you?
A9 Kicked you?
A9 Shook you aggressively?
A9 Slapped you on the face or on the back of your head?
A9 Threatened to invoke harmful people, ghosts or evil spirits against you?
A9 Hit you on the head with knuckles?

A9 Spanked you on the bottom with bare hand?	
A9 Hit you on the buttocks with an object (such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt)?	
A9 Hit you elsewhere (not buttocks) with an object (such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt)?	
A9 Hit you over and over again with object or fist (“beat-up”)?	
A9 Choked you to prevent you from breathing?	
A9 Burned or scalded or branded you?	
A9 Put hot pepper, soap or spicy food in your mouth to cause you pain?	
A9 Locked you up or tied you to restrict movement?	
A9 Twisted your ear?	
A9 Pulled your hair?	
A9 Pinched you to cause pain?	
A9 Forced you to stand, sit or kneel in a position that caused pain?	
A9 Withhold a meal as a punishment?	
A9 Give you drugs?	
A9 Twisted your fingers with a pencil in between	
N = 21	
a=.893	
Coding	1 = Very often 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never 6 = It happened more than year ago

Neglect Sub-scale (Parents)

Refused to speak to the child	
Your child was not taken care when ill/injured	
Child not given food and drink.	
Your child was made to wear clothes that were dirty, torn, and inappropriate for the season.	
Your child was not always provided a safe place to live.	
N=5	
A=.691	
Coding	1 = Very often 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never 6 = It happened more than year ago

Sexual Abuse Sub-scale (Personal)

Made you watch a video or showed you pictures where people have little or no clothes on?
Made you look at their private parts or wanted to look at yours?
Touched your private parts in a sexual way, or made you touch theirs?
Forced you to have sex or tried to have sex with you when you did not want them to?
N=4

A=.927

Coding

- 1 = Very often
- 2 = Often
- 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely
- 5 = Never
- 6 = It happened more than year ago

Sexual Abuse Sub – Scale (Community Level)

Early marriage

Bad

Abduction

Unwanted touching in private parts

Rape

Sexual harassment (teasing with sexual content)

Bacha bazi/keeping of boys

Forcing children to have sexual relations

N = 8

A=.795

Coding

- 0= No
- 1=Yes

Positive Disciplining at Home Sub-scale

Explained to you why something you did was wrong

Gave you a reward for behaving well

Gave you something else to do change behaviour

Took away privileges or money

Put you in time – out

N=5

A=.691

Coding:

- 1 = Very often
- 2 = Often
- 3 = Sometimes
- 4 = Rarely 5 = Never
- 6 = It happened more than year ago

Psychological Violence at School Sub-scale

1. Shouted, yelled, or screamed at you?

2. Insulted you by calling you dumb, lazy or other names like that?

3. Cursed you

4. Ignored you

5. Blamed you for his/her misfortune (or bad things that happened to them in their life)?

10. Embarrassed you publicly (for example, ordering you to take shoes in your mouth, etc.)?

11. Threatened to leave or abandon you?

36. Stopped you from being with other children to make you feel bad or lonely?

Referred to your skin colour/religion/gender in a hurtful way	
37. Stole or broke or ruined your belonging?	
38. Threatened you with bad marks that you didn't deserve?	
39. Forced to write word or sentences several times	
N= 11	
A=.868	
Coding:	1 = Very often 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never 6 = It happened more than year ago

Physical Violence in Schools Sub- Scale

A12 Twisted fingers with a pencil in between	
A12 Threatened to invoke harmful people, ghosts or evil spirits against you?	
A12 Threatened to hurt or kill you?	
A12 Kicked you?	
A12 Shook you aggressively?	
A12 Slapped you on the face or on back of head?	
A12 Hit you on the head with knuckles?	
A12 Spanked you on the bottom with bare hand?	
A12 Hit you on the buttocks with an object (such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt)?	
A12 Hit you elsewhere (not buttocks) with an object (such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt)?	
A12 Hit you over and over again with object or fist (beat up)?	
A12 Choked you to prevent you from breathing?	
A12 Burned or scalded or branded you?	
A12 Put hot pepper, soap or spicy food in your mouth to cause you pain?	
A12 Locked you up or tied you to restrict movement?	
A12 Twisted your ear?	
A12 Pulled your hair?	
A12 Withhold a meal as a punishment?	
A12 Gave you drugs?	
A12 Ordered you to slap another child	
A12 Ordered you to perform heavy manual work	

N= 21	
a=.940	
Coding:	1 = Very often 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never 6 = It happened more than year ago

Positive Discipline in Schools Sub-scale

Explained to you why you did was wrong?	
Gave you a heard for behaving well?	
Gave you something else to do to stop or change your behaviour?	
Put you in time-out for example by sending you to another room to calm down?	
N= 4	
a=.700	
Coding:	1 = Very often 2 = Often 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely 5 = Never 6 = It happened more than year ago



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