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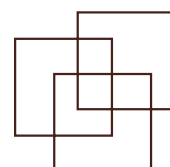
International
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Organization



AFGHANISTAN

National child labor strategy and action plan

2018-2030



National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2030

Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD)
Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch (FUNDAMENTALS)
International Labour Organization (ILO)

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Foreword

Continued terrorist activity in Afghanistan has affected the Government's ability to expand services provision, more importantly to those categories of population that are disadvantaged. This prolonged instability has necessitated shifting a significant portion of the national budget and human resources to security sector rather than country's development. However, the stability challenges cannot and will not deter us from our resolve to enhance the well-being of the most vulnerable of our citizens, particularly of children at risk. Children in child labor, especially in its worst forms, are a seriously disadvantaged group that needs our urgent attention. Over the past 17 years, we have made significant strides in the promotion and protection of the rights of our children, particularly of those at risk. Challenges remain. Key targets towards the protection of our children remain unmet. But we are making progress on all particular indicators of the well-being of our population.

Despite this challenged context, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and our social partners have made commendable efforts in developing this national strategy and action plan to combat child labor, more importantly, its worst forms.

I would like to acknowledge the support of the ILO Country Office and especially the United States Department of Labor "County Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor (CLEAR)" Project Team in the development of this strategy and action plan and all those individuals and organizations implementing it to uphold the noble cause of saving children from harms associated with child labor

Elimination and prevention of child labor is not only our constitutional obligation but also a universal rights agenda for the Government of Afghanistan. This promotes children going to school rather than engaging in work that is deemed hazardous thereby making it an investment in the future of Afghanistan.

Developing the National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan is the first step in the long journey towards eradication of child labour. The Strategy and the Plan is a comprehensive Government-led effort consistent with our national and international commitments towards sustained eradication of child labor. An important recognition in the Strategy is that child labor remains prevalent due to poor economic conditions of families who send their children into labor. Therefore, the Strategy rightly focuses on poverty reduction as a pre-requisite towards the elimination of child labor. The subsequent successful implementation of this Strategy and Plan will require all the relevant government ministries, legislature, law enforcement agencies, and social partners and the citizens of Afghanistan to work collectively.

Implementing this strategy and action plan is fully in line with the religious as well as national and international obligations of Afghanistan. I, therefore, urge the Afghan nation, private and public sector institutions and our development partners to contribute to the elimination of child labor by every means that they can. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is committed to allocating sufficient resources and focused attention towards the prevention of child labor in its strategic action plan the revision of which is currently underway. This Strategy and Plan offer a pathway forward for our collaboration in specific areas towards ending the menace of child labor. Our children are our future; they are our treasure. Their well-being is critical for our human capital development and employment promotion agendas. It is high time to start investing in their education and training for a better tomorrow.

Towards a better future for our children.

Faizullah Zaki

Minister of Labour & Social Affairs

Preface

Since the formation of the International Labour Organization, prevention of child labor has been at the core of its mandate. The adoption of the ILO Minimum Age (Industry) Convention No. 5 in 1919 gave the mandate to the ILO to develop measures for combating child labor, which laid down specific procedures for children's employment in the industrialized world. The ILO core conventions C138, C182 and respective recommendations together with other instruments on child labor enabled the ILO to provide support to its constituents through technical cooperation programs to achieve the desired objective of eliminating child labor in all its forms and manifestations.

Afghanistan joined the ILO in 1934 and is therefore known as an original member state. It has so far ratified 19 ILO conventions including five out of the eight fundamental conventions. The ratified conventions include the two core conventions relating to the Minimum Age and the Worst Forms of Child Labor which demonstrates the commitment of the government to be part of the global action against Child Labor.

The Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labour (CLEAR) Project has been implemented by ILO in Afghanistan from January 2017 to January 2019, with the financial support of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). Through the CLEAR Project the capacity of national constituents and stakeholders was built to develop, and validate National Child Labor strategy including a national action plan on the elimination of child labor. The National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan proposes the next steps to be further developed by the government and other national stakeholders to implement it.

This key national policy document continues to depict the continued commitment of the government of Afghanistan and its social partners to tackle child labor including its worst forms in a systematic way.

Manzoor Khaliq
ILO Country Representative
Afghanistan

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Abbreviations

ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries	MOHRA	Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs
ADB	Asian Development Bank	MOIA	Ministry of Interior Affairs
AGO	Attorney General's Office	MOIC	Ministry of Information and Culture
ANPDF	Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework	MOLSAMD	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
CHW	Community Health Worker	MOPH	Ministry of Public Health
CLMS	Child Labor Monitoring System	MOPW	Ministry of Public Works
CPAN	Child Protection Action Network	MOU	Memorandum of understanding
CPiE	Child Protection in Emergency	MOWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
CRAF	Child Rights Advocacy Forum	MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
CSO	Central Statistics Organization	N-CPAN	National Child Protection Action Network
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
FUNDAMENTALS	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch (ILO)	NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance	OCHA	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons	OSH	Occupational Safety & Health
IGDOK	Independent General Directorate of Kuchi	PPP	Public-private partnerships
ILO	International Labour Organization	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
LI	Labor Inspection	SSN	Social Safety Nets
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock	SW	Social worker
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey	TiP	Trafficking in Persons
MOCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industries	TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
MOE	Ministry of Education	UN SCR	United National Security Council Resolution

UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund	WBG	World Bank Group
		WFP	World Food Programme



Executive summary

The rationale for developing the national child labor strategy and action plan lies in Afghanistan's legal framework which stipulates for the protection of children and upholding of human rights, as well as the existing obligation of Afghanistan under ratified international treaties such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions No. 182¹ and No. 138,² the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) targets 8.7 and 16.7, and the ILO's Decent Work Country Programme.

The Afghan Government, through the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD) once again reiterated its commitments at the IV Global Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in November 2017 on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor to eliminate the worst forms of child labor by 2025 and child labor as a whole by 2030.

The primary custodian of this strategy and action plan is MOLSAMD. As the lead agency, MOLSAMD will be responsible for the implementation of the strategy and action plan in coordination and collaboration with other social partners, government, and non-governmental actors.

During the strategy development, strong emphasis was placed on factors that could affect its overall implementation. These factors include practicality, sustainability, and financial affordability.

Attention has been paid to the overall context of the country including the current socio-economic conditions, security limitations, and social norms.

The strategy has been designed as five different phases in order to combat the obstacles posed by security concerns. Moreover, to ensure that all angles

of child labor issues are addressed appropriately, a holistic and multi-sectoral approach was adopted so as to integrate the question of child labor into various national programs, strategies and incorporate it into the national budget. The total cost of the strategy is estimated at USD 62.4 millions.

Incorporating the cost of preventative measures to combat child labor into the national budget should not be viewed solely from a budgetary or spending perspective, but rather from an investment point of view. A greater investment in the elimination of child labor today will result in a healthier and more productive population in the future. Child labor prevention efforts are an investment in the future of Afghan children, in the quality of the Afghan human capital, and are an integral element of social cohesion and broader stabilization agendas.

For the development of this strategy and action plan, a consultative process was adopted in which 58 key stakeholders were identified and consulted in order to integrate indigenous visions and opinions. The findings from these consultations were enhanced by incorporating best practices used in similar countries.

Key stakeholders were trained on the technical aspects of the strategy and action plan development to ensure sustainability. Efforts were also made to align the strategies and major activities with existing government efforts and programs to establish synergies, reduce costs, and maximize impacts.

The prevalence of child labor in Afghanistan is due to four decades of war, poverty, and population structure, all of which have resulted in poor economic conditions and the existence of many vulnerable groups throughout the country. Other contributing factors include social norms, poor education systems, and weak law enforcement and prosecution as well as an inadequate social protection system.

¹ The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182).

² The Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No.138).

Child labor is a direct threat to the future of Afghanistan and an area of particular concern for global prosperity and security in general. Child labor and poverty are directly proportional – as child labor increases so does poverty, and vice versa.

Child labor negatively impacts children's mental and physical well-being and deprives children of mental, social, and physical development. It exposes children to an increased risk of physical injuries and even death. In Afghanistan, consequences of child labor include exposure to deception and exploitation by terrorist and criminal groups; involvement in illicit agriculture, poppy cultivation and harvesting, and increased risk of drug addiction; exposure to sexual exploitation; and exposure to long working hours in extreme weather conditions. This leads to malnutrition and other health conditions, deprivation from the right to play, and limited access to health services, food, and shelter.

Even though Afghanistan has achieved specific milestones in the areas of child protection, there is still room for improvement. Afghanistan has improved its legislation, become a party to most of the international human rights treaties, and tackled the issue of bonded labor in eastern Afghanistan, but the particular issue of child labor at the national level has not been given sufficient attention. Afghanistan's overarching priorities have overlooked the issue of child labor due to insufficient financial resources and reliable nationally representative data, as well as a lack of understanding of the concept of child labor and its correlation with poverty, human capital, and development.

Child labor is not only a moral problem, but also a violation of children's rights. It is a public health, socio-economic, and basic education issue that threatens Afghanistan's national security. Since the root causes run deep, effectively addressing it requires a long-term coordinated approach and massive social mobilization.

Though the child labor issue needs to be looked at from the child rights perspective, its relationship to the country's economic performance cannot be ignored. Children's rights and poor economic conditions are not separate issues and need to be addressed together.

Economic growth will result in increased resources for dealing with the problem of child labor.

Although currently not very impressive, the projection of Afghanistan's economic performance is promising for the coming 12 years, with the annual economic growth projected to reach 7.5 per cent by 2030. By considering this projected growth and maintaining an optimistic outlook on the situation, the problem of child labor can be effectively tackled if a holistic approach is adopted with determination and commitment.

The strategy is developed under the principles of prevention, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration while taking gender sensitivities into consideration. The strategy for the prevention and elimination of child labor and its worst forms include the following specific strategies:

1. Establish/maintain a child labor knowledge base;
2. Take a holistic approach, where social partners, government, and non-governmental actors work together toward the prevention and elimination of child labor including its worst forms;
3. Improve law, law enforcement, and prosecution;
4. Improve social work and social protection mechanisms;
5. Improve child laborer households' economic conditions; and
6. Improve the institutional and technical capacities of relevant actors.

Awareness, contextualized intervention, and gender are crosscutting issues and are included in every proposed strategy.



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Children are invaluable assets of a society, play an important role in nation building, and are considered to be the human capital of a country. A country's socio-economic conditions have a direct impact on children's development, and how they are going to assume their future responsibilities. Due in part to poor socio-economic conditions, some children take up work at a very young age. Children who should be in school are often found to be working instead, often in harsh conditions in order to generate income for his/her family. Not only are these children deprived of basic education, they are also exposed to conditions that are detrimental to their mental and physical development, which further contributes to poverty and underdevelopment.

There are 218 million working children worldwide who are between the ages of seven and 17 years old. Of this group, 152 million (69.72 per cent) are involved in child labor and 73 million are engaged in the worst forms of child labor.³

³ ILO. (2017). Global Estimates of Child Labour. Retrieved April 12, 2018, from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575499.pdf
ILO defines worst forms of child labour as:

- All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; and
- Work, which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Child labor is widespread and widely accepted in Afghanistan, mainly due to social norms and economic realities as well as a lack of understanding of its consequences. Many families, particularly those led by women, rely on their children to work and generate income. Employers also prefer to employ children because they are cheaper and easy to exploit. Afghanistan is one of the youngest countries in the world where approximately 58.6 per cent of the population is below the age of 19. Over 47 per cent of the entire population is made up of children below the age of 15.⁴ With such a young population, the situation has created a burden for the relatively small number of adults in the productive age range. As a result, this has compelled young children aged five to 14 to find work which has an adverse effect on their health and their development, thus jeopardizing their prospects in life.

Children are more prone to child labor and exploitation in Afghanistan as compared to other least developed countries. In Afghanistan, 29 per cent of total children aged five to 17 years are engaged in child labor.⁵ The Constitution of Afghanistan provides for citizens' access to free education, health services, and standard

⁴ Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2017-18, Central Statistics Organization, April 2017.

⁵ A child is considered to be involved in child labour under the following conditions: (a) children 5–11 years old who, during the reference week, did at least one hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of household chores, (b) children 12–14 years old who, during the reference week, did at least 14 hours of economic activity or at least 28 hours of household chores, (c) children 15–17 years old who, during the reference week, did at least 43 hours of economic activity or household chores, and (d) children aged 5–17 years old in hazardous working conditions.

living conditions. Article 49 specifically prohibits forced labor. Although the interest of children is safeguarded in the Constitution, child labor exists as a chronic socio-economic problem that requires immediate action. Despite governmental and non-governmental efforts to tackle the issue of child labor and child protection in general through targeted projects, there remains a need for a long-term comprehensive strategy that is holistic and sustainable. It is for this reason that the National Strategy and Action Plan for the elimination of child labor including its worst forms has been conceived.

The development of the strategy and action plan comes at a critical time. On one hand, Afghanistan has yet to deliver on its commitment to end the worst forms of child labor; and on the other, Afghanistan is reassessing its social protection policies and inter-ministerial programs including job creation and youth engagement, which are interconnected with child labor. This allows for an opportunity to take advantage of the current circumstances and to change the status quo through long-term planning in the form of a child labor strategy that is integrated into other more prominent strategies and programs of national significance.

The strategy, while complementing existing strategies and priority programs, proposes a series of strategic objectives and essential action areas with specific benchmarks that, if achieved collaboratively by all actors, will make Afghanistan a child labor-free society by 2030.

During the development of the strategy, strong emphasis was placed on factors that could jeopardize its overall implementation. These factors include practicality, sustainability, and financial affordability. Furthermore, attention was also given to the overall country context including socio-economic conditions, security limitations, and social norms. For instance, in order to combat security-related obstacles, the idea of implementing the strategy in phases is proposed. The first phase will cover 66 urban areas where security conditions are relatively good, law enforcement is comparatively satisfactory, and population density is high. For more

details, please see the contextualized intervention section under Section B, paragraph 7 below.

For the conservative, insecure, and conflict-prone areas, a community-based approach is advised, taking into account micro-level social details. Engagement of influential figureheads to support the cause through raising public awareness about the consequences of child labor is given considerable importance.

Due to the multi-sectoral nature of the issue, the prevention and elimination of child labor is beyond the capacity (human, technical, and financial) of one agency. Therefore, a holistic approach is proposed as an integral factor of the strategy's success. MOLSAMD, the primary custodian of the strategy, will be working in coordination and collaboration with other governmental, non-governmental, and social partners to tackle the issue of child labor including its worst forms.

To ensure sustainability, the strategy recommends that a significant portion of the cost of strategy implementation should be derived from the national budget supplemented by international aid.

For conceptual clarity, the definition of terms related to child labor are provided in Annex A. Similarly, the legal and policy framework, the institutional framework, and the existing programs for the prevention of child labor are provided in Annex B.

The National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan was developed after a series of deliberations using a participatory approach during which key local and international stakeholders were consulted.

To achieve a desirable outcome, the following steps were taken in the process:

- a. Pre-strategy consensus building through the creation of a technical group including various departments (Policy and Planning, Labor Inspector and Social Protection Directorates, and Child Secretariat) of the primary custodian, MOLSAMD;

social partners; and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

- b. Creation of a comprehensive work plan to guide the day-to-day tasks, assignments, and deliverables.
- c. Training and pre-strategy engagement workshops with key stakeholders to train them on child labor concepts and at the same time benefit from their local and field knowledge in order to bolster the strategy.
- d. Wide-ranging consultations with stakeholders including various Afghan Government ministries, social partners, UN, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other donor agencies.
- e. Consolidation of gained knowledge and inputs in the form of strategies, expected outcomes, and activities that as a whole will lead to the prevention and elimination of child labor.
- f. Presentation of the draft strategy to a broad and selected audience, and incorporating comments and inputs to further enrich the strategy and action plan.
- g. Organization of a validation workshop, during which the revised version of the strategy and action plan was presented.
- h. Adoption plan for the Strategy and Action Plan to prepare the way forward.

A. Guiding principles

The guiding principles and the driver for this national strategy and action plan are grounded in the recognition of Afghanistan's:

- a. National legal frameworks that contain stipulations for the protection and safeguarding of children and human rights⁶ and
- b. Existing obligations under ratified international treaties.

The major driving factors for the development of a national strategy to eliminate child labor are the provisions which exist under the supreme law of the country: the Constitution, as well as the Labor Law, the Child Act, and the Penal Code. Ratification of international treaties including the UNCRC and ILO Conventions No. 182 and No. 138 requires Afghanistan to fulfill its obligations, which can only be achieved through a long-term and systematic approach.

The national child labor strategy is closely aligned with the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) and its ten key national programs.⁷ Furthermore, SDGs 8.7⁸ and 16.7⁹ and the ILO's Decent Work Country Programme also contain binding principles that have led to the inception of this strategy.

⁶ The Afghan Constitution, Article 7 provides: "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..."

⁷ Private Sector Development; Effective Governance; Justice Sector Reform; Comprehensive Agriculture Development; Infrastructure and Connectivity; National Mineral and Resource Development; Human Capital Development; the Citizen's Charter; and Women Economic Development.

⁸ Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

⁹ Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

B. Background information

1. Demographic structure

The total population of Afghanistan in 2018–19 (1397 Afghan year) is estimated to be about 31.6 million, of which approximately 16.1 million (50.8 per cent) are men and 15.5 million (49.2 per cent) are women.¹⁰ Over 22.6 million people (71.5 per cent) live in rural areas while over 7.5 million (23.7 per cent) are settled in the urban areas. The nomadic population is around 1.5 million, (4.8 per cent).¹¹

Afghanistan is a country with a young population. According to official figures released by the Central Statistics Organization (CSO), 15,083,088 (47.7 per cent) of the young population is under the age of 15 years. The large proportion of young people means that there is a high dependency ratio which was 101 in 2016–17 (1396 Afghan year), declining from an even higher ratio of 105 in 2007–2008. This means that for every 100 persons in the productive ages of 15 to 64, there are 101 in the dependent age groups below 15 and over 65.¹²

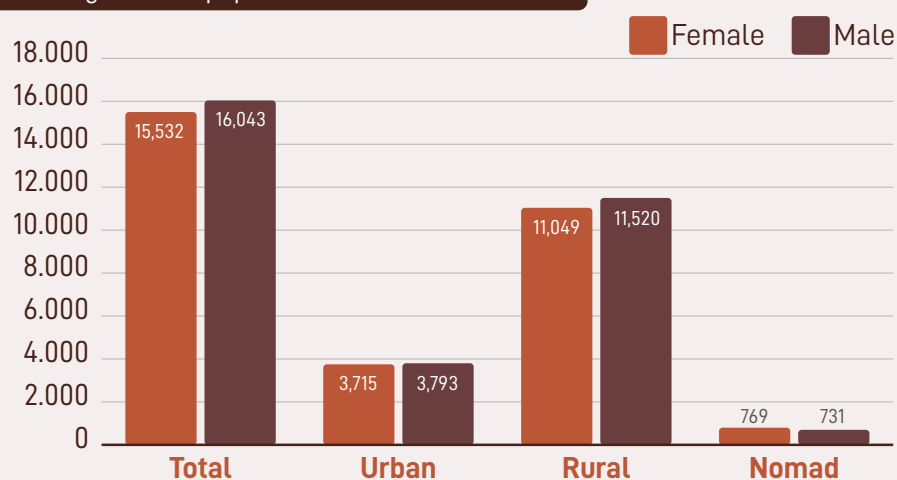
Afghanistan's households are generally composed of about six to eight persons, though more than half of Afghan households have nine or more members. The population structure associated with child labor is described in the Nature and Dynamics of Child Labor section (C.).

2. Economic background

Afghanistan's gross domestic product (GDP) is projected to have a growth rate of 3.4 per cent in 2018, almost one percentage point more than the previous year.¹³ GDP growth averaged 8.78 per cent from 2003 to 2016 with an all-time high of 28.6 per cent in 2003.

In the 2018 Economic Freedom Index, Afghanistan was ranked as the 154th freest economy with an economic freedom score of 51.3. Its overall score has increased by 2.4 points because of notable increases in investment freedom, financial freedom, and monetary freedom and a higher property rights score. Among the 43 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Afghanistan is ranked 38th, and its overall score is below the regional and world averages.¹⁴

Afghanistan population estimates 2018–2019



¹⁰ Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2018–19, Central Statistics Organization.

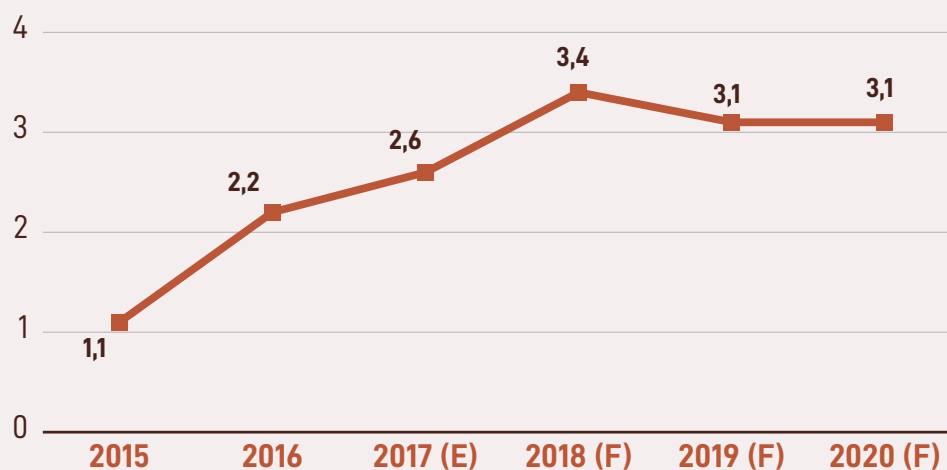
¹¹ Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2018–19, Central Statistics Organization.

¹² Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey Mid-Term Result Highlight 2016–2017.

¹³ Global Economic Prospects, World Bank.

¹⁴ Economic Freedom Index, 2018.

Afghanistan's GDP growth projections (%)



Note: (E) Estimates; (F) Forecast.

Withdrawal of international forces in 2014 had an adverse effect on the behavior of the general public and the overall economy of the country. According to a representative survey carried out in 2015, 29.7 per cent of Afghans said that their financial situation had grown worse during 2014 compared to 21 per cent who claimed that it had improved.¹⁵

The labor market in Afghanistan is characterized by a relatively low labor force participation. Among the working-age population, men's participation in the labor market is higher than that of women – 81 per cent and 29 per cent, respectively. Afghanistan has an extremely youthful labor force, with just over 50 per cent made up of young people between 14 and 29 years of age. Nearly six million of the 8.5 million-strong workforce is under 40 years of age. Approximately one-fourth of this youthful workforce is made up of women.¹⁶

The majority of Afghanistan's economy is based on the agricultural sector which is the largest source

of employment whether full time or seasonal. Some 45 per cent of Afghan households report agriculture as a primary source of income, of whom 28.5 per cent consider agriculture a major source of income.

More women than men work in agriculture with two-thirds of employed women engaged in agriculture with 21 per cent involved in farming or crop growing.¹⁷

3. Education

Afghanistan is one of the countries with the lowest rate of youth literacy in the world presenting a national youth (15 to 24 years old) literacy rate of 53.6 per cent.¹⁸ This figure shows a modest improvement since the last NRVA survey in 2011–2012 when the national literacy rate was reported at 47 per cent for the same age group.

Overall, the national Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) for primary education for both sexes is 54.5 per cent, respectively, 62.4 per cent for boys and 45.5 per cent

¹⁵ Afghanistan 2015: A Survey of the Afghan People, Asia Foundation.

¹⁶ Central Statistics Organization, Labor Market Outcomes, 2014.

¹⁷ Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey Mid-Term Result Highlight 2016–2017.

¹⁸ Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016–2017.

for girls. However, the NAR is dropping considerably in secondary and tertiary education for both sexes, particularly for girls in rural areas.

According to the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey of 2017, around 2.3 million primary school-age children in Afghanistan miss out on basic education. The number of secondary and tertiary education-aged children who do not participate in education is similar to that of primary education. Access to education is attributed significantly to the population settlement – over three-quarters of primary school-age children attend school in urban areas while this figure drops to one half in rural areas.

The opportunity for girls and women to access education, particularly for rural and nomadic populations, is an area of concern as it will prevent Afghanistan from achieving gender-equity targets by 2020.¹⁹ The relationship between education and child labor is explained in the following section.

C. Nature and dynamics of child labor

1. War and poverty

The root causes of child labor in Afghanistan can largely be attributed to prolonged war poverty. In the case of Afghanistan, poverty itself is a product of war. Decades of war have destroyed Afghanistan's wealth, social protection systems, economy, and infrastructure. Development efforts over the past 17 years show that development without peace, and peace without both stability and security has no impact. Afghanistan's poverty rate increased from 36.5 per cent in 2010 to 54.5 per cent in 2017.²⁰

2. Population structure, economy, and vulnerability

As seen above, nearly half of the population of Afghanistan (47.7 per cent) is under the age of 15. The population structure itself can be considered a contributing factor in increased child employment. The age composition coupled with poor economic conditions²¹ often compel households to send their children (below the age of 18) to look for employment and generate income. This practice seems to be common among vulnerable segments of the population such as female and elderly-headed households, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees.

3. Social norms

Low participation of women in gainful economic activities due to social structures and barriers also further child labor. Afghanistan's social norms are very clear about the roles and responsibilities of male and female members of a household. The male member of the household is responsible for generating income, which often happens to be outside of the house, while female members play an active role in domestic activities around the house. This socially accepted division of roles promotes the idea that only men are breadwinners despite the fact that women are often intensely engaged in domestic work, though it is unpaid. This perception also negatively affects girls' attendance in school.

The social perception that the sooner a child is put to work, the sooner he/she will be able to assume more responsibilities in life leads families to send their children, particularly boys, to traditional apprenticeships such as mechanical work, painting, and metal work or even to gain employment as child laborers. The population growth rate of 2.4 per cent per year is also attributed to social norms, which suggest that families should have many children. This growth increases the labor supply while labor demand remains low.

¹⁹ Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016–2017.

²⁰ Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016–2017.

²¹ 2.6% in 2017, Global Economic Prospects, World Bank.

4. Education

The popular measure for the prevention and elimination of child labor is education. However, Afghanistan's high illiteracy rate among the youth as well as the general population contributes to child labor in the country. Recently, school dropouts have become a serious source of concern for child rights activists. Currently, there is no system to track children's activities and lives once they drop out of school. The most likely scenario for these children is engagement in child labor activities.

One of the main reasons parents tend to send their children to apprenticeships, which in reality is child labor, is the poor quality of the education system and the poor payoff subsequently. The causes of the poor quality of education in the country include an inadequate number of qualified teachers; low compensation for qualified teachers; teacher absenteeism, particularly in rural areas; scarce learning materials; and remoteness and poor school infrastructures.

5. Law enforcement, prosecution and social protection

Other contributing factors to child labor include poor law enforcement and prosecution mechanisms. Although legal frameworks protect the rights of the child, law enforcement is weak. The absence of robust social protection mechanisms and parents' lack of knowledge about their legal responsibilities towards their children are also contributing factors to child labor in Afghanistan.

D. Consequences of child labor

Child labor is a direct threat to the future of Afghanistan and in particular, an area of concern for global prosperity and security in general. Child labor and poverty are directly proportional – as child labor increases so does poverty, and vice versa. Child labor impacts children's mental and physical well-being, and deprives children

of mental, social, and physical development. It exposes children to the risk of physical injuries. In Afghanistan, consequences of child labor include:

- ➔ exposure to deception and exploitation by terrorist and criminal groups;
- ➔ involvement in illicit agriculture, poppy cultivation and harvesting, and higher chances of drug addiction;
- ➔ involvement in hazardous jobs and exposure to permanent injuries, poor health, and even death;
- ➔ heightened risk of sexual exploitation and HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as loss of self-esteem and confidence;
- ➔ exposure to long working hours in extreme weather conditions, leading to malnutrition and other health conditions;
- ➔ prevention from attending school and negatively affecting retention and performance; and
- ➔ deprivation from the right to play, the right to be protected from harm, and access to health services, food, and safe shelter.

E. Current and emerging gaps in response

Progress has been made in the areas of child protection, legislation, correction facilities, and tackling the problem of bonded laborers in eastern Afghanistan. However, the particular issue of child labor on the national scale has not been given sufficient importance and attention. This is due to many factors, but mainly the lack of a comprehensive strategy. Such a strategy has the potential to motivate social partners, government, and non-governmental actors to change social norms through public awareness and emphasize the correlation between child labor and poverty, as well as human capital and development.

An overwhelming majority of Afghan parents are not aware of their legal responsibilities towards their children, and the legal consequences they could face if they do not meet these responsibilities. Moreover, differentiation between child work and child labor and its worst forms are not evident even among decision-making bodies, let alone the less educated or even uneducated segments of the population.

Other areas that require improvement include inadequate law enforcement and implementation of child labor policies and strategies; lack of inter-ministerial coordination on issues of child labor; and insufficient public awareness of the implications of child labor. Poor quality and unresponsive education, inadequate social protection mechanisms, and lack of alternatives are also associated with child labor, which requires contextual and targeted interventions.



CHAPTER 2

Strategy for the prevention and elimination of child labor

In Afghanistan, child labor is the outcome of four decades of persistent war which has damaged the country's basic infrastructures and negatively affected social values, kinship, and education, as well as social protection systems. The country's poor socio-economic and security conditions coupled with the overall population structure have affected the already pressured labor market, resulting in an unstable and uneven demand and supply for labor. Outward and inward migration is also an important factor when considering the issue of child labor in Afghanistan.

Child labor is not only a moral problem, it also involves the issues of child rights violations, public health, and basic education, all of which threaten Afghanistan's national security and the long-term social and economic development of the country. Since the root causes run deep, effectively addressing child labor requires a long-term coordinated approach. Therefore, MOLSAMD as the lead agency in this area is determined to further its current efforts to prevent and eliminate child labor, including its worst forms.

On behalf of the Afghan Government, MOLSAMD is committed to the elimination of the worst forms of child labor, and to its moral and legal obligations regardless of the country's unstable economic conditions, pervasive poverty, and ongoing conflict. It has realized that the cost of not addressing the issue of child labor will prove more catastrophic than the cost of intervention.

Though the child labor issue needs to be seen from a rights-based perspective as described in the guiding

principles section of this strategy, its interconnection with the country's economic performance cannot be ignored. Therefore, economic factors are also important components in the development of a strategy to abolish child labor. Projections for Afghanistan's economic performance are promising over the coming 12 years: annual economic growth is projected to reach 7.5 per cent by 2030.²² By taking these projections into account and maintaining a determined and optimistic outlook on the situation, the issue of child labor can be effectively tackled if a holistic approach is adopted.

A. Vision, mission, and strategic objective

1. Vision

The vision of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is to have a child labor-free society.

2. Mission

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is committed to effectively implementing its national legislation, in compliance with its international commitments on children's rights including the prevention and elimination of child labor, as well as to take the best interests of children into account. Afghanistan is also

²² Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF).

determined to create an enabling environment for parents to raise their children in a manner that ensures their overall well-being.

3. Strategic objective

The overall objective is to end child labor by 2030 with a special focus to end the worst forms of child labor by 2025.

The strategy has been developed under the principles of prevention, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration while taking into consideration gender sensitivities. As a comprehensive document, the Strategy for the prevention and elimination of child labor and its worst forms includes the following strategies:

1. Establish/maintain a child labor knowledge base;
2. Take a holistic approach where government and non-governmental actors together with social partners work together in coordination and collaboration toward the prevention and elimination of child labor including its worst forms;
3. Improve law, law enforcement, and prosecution;
4. Improve social work and social protection mechanisms;
5. Improve economic conditions of child laborer households; and
6. Improve institutional and technical capacities of relevant actors.

Awareness, contextualized intervention, and gender are crosscutting issues and are included in every proposed strategy.

B. Strategy

1. Establish/maintain child labor knowledge base

Any targeted intervention through which child labor can be abolished needs to be based on reliable data. Accurate and reliable quantitative data help in understanding the magnitude of the issue of child labor including specific situations of boys and girls in child labor, evaluating the effectiveness of policy intervention in preventing and eliminating child labor, and providing insights into socio-economic costs.

Over the past 17 years, there have been numerous assessments and surveys in the area of child labor in Afghanistan, including a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) that was conducted in 2011–2012. Nevertheless, either most of the existing data are outdated or they are qualitative. Reliable quantitative data on child labor that are nationally representative, comprehensive, and disaggregated by age, sex, sector, and geography are not available.

Lack of reliable and accurate data has complicated policy-level dialogue and decisions and has thus deprived the issue of child labor of the attention and urgency it deserves as a national priority. Assessment of the socio-economic impact of child labor is not possible without accurate data and thus no effective intervention mechanism has been developed thus far. Furthermore, the absence of reliable data makes it difficult to budget for child labor interventions and available funds are insufficient for an appropriate and coordinated approach. Therefore, there is a dire need for a consistent, transparent, and independent framework to survey and register all child laborers in order to come up with the required data.

A Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS) is an important aspect of tracking and consistent monitoring of the severity of the issue. A CLMS will be established, and child labor data will feed into the system for effective monitoring purposes. The victims of the worst forms of child labor will also be identified in the process. This will allow for better monitoring

and their withdrawal and reintegration back to the education system, where appropriate. With sufficient and reliable data, appropriate intervention programs such as skills training and other support packages can be undertaken. It is worth mentioning, that a CLMS is not a one-size-fits-all mechanism, it has to be contextualized to the needs on the ground.

2. Take a holistic approach toward tackling child labor

The holistic approach covers two different angles of the issue: 1) multi-sectoral and 2) multi-dimensional. It requires social partners, governmental, and non-governmental actors to work together toward achieving one shared goal that is the prevention and elimination of child labor through using and sharing their resources.

1) The multi-sectoral²³ slant can be achieved through the establishment of a mechanism in which the roles and responsibilities of every agency are clearly defined. This can be attained through the signing of a series of memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or through a Presidential Decree to encourage the relevant agencies to integrate child labor issues (awareness and responses) into their programs, budgets, and strategies as well as set mutual expectations. The establishment of a joint taskforce made up from the relevant entities, with joint terms of reference, joint reporting mechanism, and collective accountability will further streamline the multi-sectoral approach.

Incorporating the cost of preventative measures for child labor into the national budget should not be viewed solely from a budgetary or spending perspective, but rather from an investment point of view. A greater investment in the elimination of child labor today will result in a healthier and more productive population in the future.

The following agencies are identified as initial key actors that can contribute to a multi-sectoral approach

for the prevention and elimination of child labor and its worst forms in Afghanistan:

Government

- ➔ Ministry of Education (MOE)
- ➔ Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)
- ➔ Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs (MOHRA)
- ➔ Ministry of Public Health (MOPH)
- ➔ Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG)
- ➔ Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL)
- ➔ Ministry of Commerce and Industries (MOCI)
- ➔ Ministry of Culture and Information (MOIC)
- ➔ Ministry of Interior Affairs (MOIA)
- ➔ Attorney General's Office (AGO)
- ➔ Afghanistan's judicial system
- ➔ Ministry of Women Affairs (MOWA)
- ➔ Ministry of Public Works (MOPW)
- ➔ Independent General Directorate of Kuchi (IGDOC)
- ➔ Afghanistan Independent Commission of Human Rights

Non-government

- ➔ United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF)
- ➔ World Food Programme (WFP)
- ➔ International Labour Organization (ILO)

²³ Multi-sectoral here refers to socio-economic sectors whereby government, non-government and social partners come together to work toward achieving a common goal, the prevention and elimination of child labor.

Social partners

- ➔ Afghan civil societies
- ➔ Employers' unions
- ➔ Workers' unions

2) The multi-dimensional aspect of child labor includes law enforcement and prosecution; social work and social protection; economic conditions of child laborer households; and institutional capacity, which are all covered in the form of separate strategies in later sections. Nonetheless, under the multi-dimensional approach here, education and donor coordination aspects of child labor are strategized.

One of the key global best practices for the prevention and elimination of child labor is the provision of quality and responsive education. The term education in the context of child labor comprises both the conventional education system (schools and universities) where the focus is on targeted groups (particularly children), and also general public awareness, which plays a critical role in creating an enabling environment. However, the latter barely exists in Afghanistan while the former falls short of meeting the current and emerging needs.

To overcome the issue of child labor, Afghanistan needs to improve and invest in the types of education mentioned above. Improved public awareness is required to change harmful social norms, which guide the social structure and behaviors. This can only materialize if Afghanistan engages in massive social mobilization. To organize such a mobilization, Afghanistan needs to train social change agents in concepts relative to child labor. These agents are social workers, civil society and human rights activists, community health workers (CHW), teachers, and religious leaders as well as government and non-government officials dealing with communities.

The social change agents, through a strategic communication plan, will work to inform the public about child labor and its links to poverty prevalence, increased population, and high pregnancy rates.

They will also raise awareness about parents' legal responsibilities towards their children.

Although the law makes basic education compulsory, there is no enforcement mechanism in place. Similarly, there is no system to track school dropouts who end up as child laborers. There is a need for a strong collaboration between MOLSAMD and MOE to develop a mechanism which would address inequalities in girls' access to quality education and training. The mechanism must be able to follow up on school dropouts and their reintegration back into the education system – particularly girls, who make up the larger proportion of dropouts. Girls are mostly involved in household chores, and this often prevents girls from attending school.

One of the main reasons that parents tend to send their children (usually boys) to apprenticeships, which in reality is child labor, is the poor quality of the education system and the subsequent payoff. The causes of poor quality of education in the country include an inadequate number of qualified teachers; lack of fair compensation for qualified teachers; teacher absenteeism, particularly in rural areas; scarce learning materials; and remoteness and poor school infrastructures.

In addition to the poor quality of education, a higher rate of unemployment among the educated population is another contributing factor to child labor. Because of this, parents often conclude that the role of education is minimal in terms of employment and earning a living. This phenomenon is mainly due to the existing education system that is struggling to meet the needs of the labor market. There is a disconnect between the education system and the needs of the private sector when it comes to human capital development. In terms of labor supply and demand, the education system supplies a labor force that is not in demand in the labor market. For example, the agribusiness sector is in dire need of food technologists, but the education system is unable to supply the labor force which is needed. This compels the Afghan agribusiness sector to recruit the required laborers from neighboring countries.

Therefore, the education system must become more strongly aligned with the requirements of the private sector. Improvements in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) program quality and certification is also essential to meet the demands for labor in domestic and international markets.

Coordinating international aid with national priorities is vital. Child labor elimination as a national priority requires donors' assistance, the Afghan Government as an implementing partner, social partners as oversight bodies, UN agencies as capacity builders, and NGOs as implementing partners at the community level.

3. Improve law, law enforcement, and prosecution

Afghanistan's national legislation, policy, and program review on child labor found that it is not the legal framework that is deficient but rather weak law enforcement and prosecution that impedes combating child labor in Afghanistan. The exception to this is the labor inspection (LI) component, where the legal framework falls short compared to international standards. Examples include the absence of an enacted labor law on labor inspection procedures, authority, and company obligations to meet Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) standards, as well as required qualifications for being a labor inspector. Furthermore, there are administrative and functional barriers, which include the absence of labor inspector offices at the provincial and district levels, poor tools and equipment (or none at all), and an inadequate number of labor inspectors. See details in the institutional framework section in Annex B.

The law enforcement agencies believe that the problem of child labor rests with post-law enforcement rather than law enforcement itself. For instance, on one occasion an Afghan police force collected all street children in one area,²⁴ but there was no entity to take responsibility for these children. Similarly, the

Afghan judiciary system applies the maximum penalty for children in conflict with the law, which overloads the correction facilities. These facilities are designed to help children to correct themselves, but due to poor oversight and mismanagement of the facilities, children usually end up reoffending once they are released and continue to be in conflict with the law.

Weak law enforcement and prosecution are both the result of inadequate institutional capacity as well as a public mentality formed by difficult living experiences. In harsh living conditions such as in Afghanistan, the majority of people tend to adopt a survival strategy rather than a rights-based approach toward living. Law enforcement and judiciary officials are no exception. In such cases, less attention is paid to causes and effects of violating the rule of law, and this therefore, leads to social injustice and public mistrust in the law. Because of weak law enforcement, violation of the laws pertaining to labor and child labor in particular become prevalent.

Strong law enforcement and prosecution of offenders are key for changing public perceptions about the government effectively preventing and eliminating child labor. To tackle the worst forms of child labor, strict enforcement of the policy is needed to prevent underage recruitment in armed forces and human trafficking, while prosecuting pedophiles and child sex offenders is crucial.

4. Improve social work and social protection mechanisms

In addition to the need for improved law enforcement and prosecution, Afghanistan is also in dire need of social work and social protection systems.

a) Social work

Social work has long been recognized for its essential role in poverty reduction, improving health, improving children and families' well-being, and increasing employment. The primary function of social work is to link individuals, targeted groups, and communities with available resources and advocate for the implementation of laws.

²⁴ These street children were begging in the streets, which is considered against the laws of Afghanistan. The purpose of street children collection was either to reunite the children with their families or refer them to social welfare, particularly those children who did not have legal guardians.

The number of social workers in developed countries is exceptionally high compared to that of underdeveloped countries, while arguably this should be vice versa. Given the prevalence of poverty, high rate of unemployment, and poor health conditions as well as children and family issues in underdeveloped countries, there is a clear demand for social workers. This is linked partly to a nation's priorities and financial resources, but also to the difference in conceptual understanding of developed and underdeveloped countries as to how they tackle poverty, health, employment, and child and family issues.

In 2017, for the first time, Afghanistan witnessed the graduation of 20 young men and women from the faculty of social work. This is a significant accomplishment, but the number of professional social workers in Afghanistan is still not comparable with that of other underdeveloped countries, such as Cambodia and Myanmar, where the ratio of social workers is one to 25,000 people.²⁵ In Afghanistan, the same ratio is one to 300,000 people.²⁶

Having robust social work systems would benefit the CLMS in terms of improved individual case management and tracking of dropout children from school, as well as improved response program targeting. Afghanistan needs to widen its Child Protection in Action Network (CPAN) and child protection systems coverage through significant increase in its social workforce over the coming years. A strong campaign to attract recent graduates and current university students is necessary. This will help generate entry-level employment for job seekers while keeping the costs low. If, due to financial constraints the CPAN and child protection coverage cannot be increased, then one alternative is to use and invest in the MOPH's CHWs, who are sufficient in numbers (29,000 people).

b) Social protection

At the global level, social protection has become an important focus particularly in countries with high poverty levels, national disasters, and a high unemployment rate. The first goal of the SDGs is to end poverty in all its manifestations by 2030, and there are several targets specifically regarding social protection. Target 1.3 encourages countries to have appropriate social protection mechanisms to cover a substantial proportion of the poor and vulnerable population. Target 1.5 motivates countries to have adjustable social protection that can increase the resilience of vulnerable segments of the population to shocks.

According to the World Bank, the number of developing countries with social safety nets (SSN) has doubled from 72 to 149 countries in the last two decades. This shows that nearly every developing country is engaged in some sort of social protection. About 97 per cent of countries in Europe, Central Asia, and sub-Saharan African provide cash transfers as a form of social safety net response

Some 77 per cent of countries provide unconditional cash transfers through their social protection programs, while 42 per cent provide conditional cash transfers. As many as 78 per cent of countries provide school feeding. Public works and various free waivers are also common social protection mechanisms that are used in 58 per cent and 56 per cent of countries, respectively.

Globally, efforts are underway to increase spending on SSN. Underdeveloped countries and transitioning economies spend an average of 1.6 per cent of their GDPs on SSN. According to the World Bank, SSN programs reduce poverty and lower income inequality. The tangible results of SSNs are evident in Europe and Central Asia. This encouraging result has increased the World Bank Group's portfolio for social protection to \$12.5 billion as of April 2017.

Afghanistan spends nearly 6 per cent of its national budget on social protection including on pensioners, people with disabilities, and on the survival of martyrs' families and beneficiaries. Currently, Afghanistan is

²⁵ Global Alliance, Gillian Huebner, review the legislation and policies that support the social service workforce in low and middle-income countries, October 2016.

²⁶ This was calculated by dividing the total population by the number of available social workers.

reassessing its social protection policy. To become a child labor-free society, Afghanistan needs to improve its current social protection targeting and mechanisms and gradually increase spending on social protection over the coming 12 years. *A social protection mechanism is needed to prevent the entry of vulnerable children into the worst forms of child labor as well as to prevent reentry.*

However, Afghanistan's limited financial resources do not allow for a significant increase in social spending in the foreseeable future.

5. Improve child laborer households' economic conditions

The poor economic condition of households is one of the important factors that cause children to engage in child labor. Female-headed households, households headed by the elderly, and households of returnees or IDPs are particularly prone to risks of child labor. Improving households' economic conditions can be achieved through economic development at the micro and macro levels.

a) Micro level

Providing child laborers' households with alternatives

As previously mentioned, poor economic conditions of households contribute to increased child labor. If provided with alternative sources of income or in-kind support, parents/households will not compel their children to engage in economic activities. Customized alternatives can be tested in certain low-income communities with high numbers of children involved in child labor, especially among high-risk households. Alternatives can include access to microfinance, household or community-level cash voucher/food assistance, and providing employment opportunities to low-skilled workers by matching them with employers. The role of social workers can be vital in the process of linking vulnerable households with available resources.

b) Macro level

The macroeconomic discussion is a somewhat controversial issue in developing a strategy for child labor prevention and elimination. Some argue that macroeconomic dialogue is a deviation from the main issue of child labor and it increases the cost of the strategy. Others argue that a macroeconomic perspective is a crucial aspect of child labor which needs to be considered while developing such a strategy. In respecting both sides of the argument, an attempt is made to discuss the macro-economy in addition to micro-level interventions.

The Afghan Government has already acknowledged the factors that influence the country's economy and has started some investment in this regard. Thus, this strategy envisions the prevention and elimination of child labor in achieving the objectives of already existing national priority programs outlined in the ANPDF, which focuses on projects that have the highest payoff. Afghanistan requires inclusive economic growth to create employment, as economic growth without job creation has no effect in tackling child labor.

c) Job creation

A solution for immediate job creation is through attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Afghanistan's \$1 trillion worth of untapped mineral deposits. The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum's (MOMP) efforts are underway in this regard. However, this seems unlikely to be achieved in the short term due to many factors including ongoing insecurity. Nevertheless, small- and medium-scale mining contracts under strict government regulation and oversight can be issued to private investors. The direct impact of such contracts will be employment generation at the local levels for low- and medium-skilled workers.

Import substitution by producing some of the needed commodities locally can lead to increased employment. The value of Afghanistan's imports is estimated at \$6 billion per year while its total export is worth around

\$700 million.²⁷ Creating an enabling environment would allow local investors to feel comfortable investing in domestic production, which could increase gainful employment for adults and positively impact child labor prevention and elimination while ensuring the country's projected economic growth. This could be realized through engaging in public-private partnerships (PPP) for which efforts are underway by the Afghan Government and Ministry of Finance.

Agriculture production makes up about 30 per cent of the total GDP in Afghanistan. The annual export of agricultural produce (mainly fruits and nuts) is currently estimated at \$684 million, which is insignificant compared to import levels. If Afghanistan increases its exports, it helps increase households' incomes and consequently reduces child labor.

According to a WBG study, major constraints to the export of horticulture products are as follows:

- ➔ Border and transit issues
- ➔ Access to high-value markets
- ➔ Political and security issues
- ➔ Electricity availability issues
- ➔ Land availability issues
- ➔ Taxes and tariffs
- ➔ Transportation issues
- ➔ Financing issues
- ➔ Human capital issues
- ➔ Agrochemical availability issues

The most critical challenges that constrain the private sector in Afghanistan are border and transit issues and the inability to access high-value markets. Access to electricity and land are also hindrances to the

expansion of the private sector. If these challenges are tackled, Afghan exports will increase substantially.

Given the high annual rate of the emerging workforce, 400,000 per year, and the current high unemployment rate of 24 per cent,²⁸ labor migration to Gulf countries can be very beneficial to Afghanistan not only in the area of employment creation but also in terms of remittances on which MOLSAMD has been working for quite some time. In order to produce a migration-ready labor force, it is essential to improve the quality of vocational training and its certification in order to meet regional and international standards.

d) Women empowerment

For Afghan women to be able to play an active role in gainful economic employment, their empowerment and labor market participation is essential. Access to education and training of girls and women and their participation in gainful economic activities will likely reduce the financial burdens of their male counterparts in a household. This will increase household income and consequently prevent child labor in the society. Efforts to redistribute unpaid care responsibilities – currently heavily borne by women – should be simultaneously improved by improving basic infrastructure and promoting sharing of care responsibilities. Afghanistan is a signatory to the UN SCR-1325, which requires governments to provide for public participation of women. Additionally, the Afghan Government is committed to spending \$250 million in the coming 15 years for women's economic empowerment under the Women's Economic Empowerment National Priority Program – one of the 10 national priority programs of the government and a strategic commitment to transforming the social and economic conditions of women.²⁹ Establishing mechanisms to set clear mandates and to monitor and evaluate proper implementation of government programs for women is of immense importance.

²⁷ World Bank, prospect.

²⁸ National labor Conference documents and Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey.

²⁹ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework.

e) Regulatory reform

Regulatory reform of economic activities is essential. For instance, attracting FDI or private sector investment in national projects requires certain regulatory adjustments in order to create an enabling environment. It is not only regulatory reform pertaining to the economy that is needed, but regulations are also necessary to uphold the rights of children and laborers as a whole through provisions for labor safety and health.

6. Improve institutional and technical capacities of relevant actors

The implementation of this strategy will not be effective without the necessary institutional and technical capacity. Different actors will require different levels of technical ability to be able to effectively contribute to the prevention and elimination of child labor.

a) Improve the technical capacity of relevant departments

Technical capacity of relevant actors at various levels needs to be developed. For the policy-making agencies such as MOLSAMD, it is necessary to improve not only its data collection and monitoring mechanisms, but also its staff through the provision of customized trainings.

Priority should be given to enhancing the technical capacity and improving the awareness of child labor, including its gender dimensions, of AGO, judges, prosecutors, police, and frontline responders involved in trafficking cases.

Social workers as social change agents need to be recruited and trained on concepts relative to child labor, possible outcomes, and its correlation with poverty. Training on the handling of individual child labor cases is also essential.

Staff of relevant ministries must also receive training on child labor concepts including its gender dimensions so that they can then share the information with communities. A public awareness campaign which includes community-level engagement in spreading the word is of great importance.

Training of the trainers is required to ensure sustainability of the education and reduce costs.

b) Creating and training of an inter-ministerial technical team

An inter-ministerial technical coordination working group needs to be formed. It would meet regularly and discuss implementation progress and challenges. They would also provide solutions and recommendations in a coordinated manner.

This technical working group will also be tasked with developing a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the strategy and its action plan strictly and to report on its impact. This is envisioned to be led by the Planning and Policy Department of MOLSAMD.

7. Contextualized intervention

Contextualized interventions are necessary for the implementation of the strategy, as well as to assess current and potential institutional capacities, security conditions, and availability of resources. For it to be contextually feasible, the timeframe of the strategy implementation is divided into five phases:

PHASE	TIMEFRAME	DESCRIPTION
1	Nov 2018 – Dec 2019	National child labor strategy endorsement; integration into national programs; and building up child labor knowledge base.
2	Jan 2020 – Dec 2022	Implementation of strategy in 66 urban locations, covering 7.5 million of the Afghan population, starting from Herat city.
3	Jan 2023 – Dec 2025	Implementation of strategy in rural areas of eight provinces, covering 5.2 million rural population.
4	Jan 2026 – Dec 2028	Implementation of strategy in rural areas of 10 provinces, covering additional 6.6 million of rural population.
5	Jan 2029 – Dec 2030	Implementation of strategy in rural areas of 16 provinces, covering 10.6 million of the remaining rural population.

While this strategy proposes the targeting of specific areas in a given phase, non-governmental organizations can simultaneously tackle child labor issues in close coordination with the government. Particular focus should be placed on the Afghan nomadic population (1.5 million people), which is a relatively underserved segment of the population due to their way of living.



CHAPTER 3

Action plan

The strategy and action plan are designed for a period of 12 years. However, the action plan outlined in this section will need to be reviewed and revised every three years.

A. Establish/maintain child labor knowledge base

MOLSAMD needs to begin by establishing and maintaining a child labor knowledge base. A well-designed knowledge base is essential for understanding the magnitude of the child labor problem, evaluating the effectiveness of policy intervention in preventing and eliminating child labor, and providing insights into socio-economic costs.

1. Develop baseline data, and publish analytical reports on child labor (Target 1.1)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Initiate working agreement with CSO and other relevant social and non-governmental organizations
- ➔ Conduct periodic nationally representative surveys on child labor
 - Design survey methodology (for both quantitative and qualitative components) and approach

- Determine technical aspects of the survey
- Develop and test questionnaire
- Train enumerators
- Data collection
- Design and develop child labor database
- Data entry
- Data screening and clean up
- Store and compile data
- ➔ Develop analytical reports on child labor, based on survey findings
 - Analyze data, disaggregating by sex, age, location, sector etc.
 - Identify specific vulnerabilities or challenges experienced by girls and boys involved in child labor
 - Publish periodic reports

2. Establish Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS) (Target 1.2)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Design multi-sector and gender-responsive monitoring and referral process
- ➔ Develop policies and procedures
- ➔ Sign MOUs and agreements to include community education and advocacy around child labor with relevant stakeholders (government, public, private sector, employers and teachers)
- ➔ Train women and men as social workers and/or CHWs
- ➔ Design and test CLMS
- ➔ Continuous registration of child laborers in CLMS by sector and geographical area
- ➔ Establish and implement periodic monitoring mechanisms
- ➔ Prepare and publish periodic reports on child labor abuses and risks faced by boys and girls
- ➔ Initiate the withdrawal process through provision of alternatives and facilitate reintegration into social support systems of boys and girls working as child laborers
- ➔ Conduct post-withdrawal visits

B. Take a holistic approach toward tackling child labor

Any intervention by one individual agency for tackling child labor will have minimal impact unless all actors work together in a coordinated and coherent manner. Taking a holistic approach means multiple agencies work together to achieve one shared goal by

integrating their efforts and resources. In this context, the issue of child labor needs to be integrated into national programs and priorities by government, non-government, and social partners.

1. Integrate the issue of child labor into national programs (Target 2.1)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Sign MOUs and agreements with relevant social partners, government and non-government agencies
- ➔ Support relevant stakeholders in identifying and implementing action points to eliminate child labor

2. Assistance provided by MOLSAMD to eliminate barriers to education, particularly for girls and vulnerable populations (Target 2.2)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Public education

- ➔ Identify local/national harmful social norms that adversely affect social construction and behaviors related to child labor, particularly its worst forms
- ➔ Develop specific strategic communications by which harmful social norms can be tackled in effective and efficient manners
- ➔ Train social change agents in child labor concepts, who can then bring about social mobilization with a heavy focus on the worst forms of child labor

Conventional Education

- ➔ Work with MOE to enhance education policy so that it addresses current and future demands; find ways for nomadic and displaced children to be able to waive the requirement for official documentation of previous schools; and provide for age-grouping mechanisms to promote increased children participation

CONTENT OF MOUS WITH RELEVANT AGENCIES (SUMMARIZED VERSION)							
AGENCY	AREA						
	Training	Child labor free program/project	Awareness	Inclusion in strategies	Referral/reintegration	Technical support/resource sharing	Law enforcement
MOE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
MRRD	✓	✓	✓		✓		
MOHRA	✓		✓				
MOPH	✓		✓			✓	
IDLG	✓	✓	✓			✓	
MAIL	✓	✓	✓				
MOIC/ Youth	✓		✓	✓			
MOCI	✓		✓				
MOIA	✓						✓
AGO and Judicial system	✓					✓	✓
MOWA	✓			✓			
MOPW	✓					✓	
IGDOK	✓		✓				
UNICEF	✓					✓	
ILO	✓					✓	
WFP					✓	✓	
Employers' and workers' Unions	✓		✓			✓	
Afghan civil societies	✓		✓				
AIHRC	✓		✓	✓	✓		

- ➔ Adopt a community-based social mobilization plan in order to identify and link qualified teachers, particularly female teachers, with MOE
- ➔ Provide support to MOE for school maintenance through social mobilization at the community level
- ➔ Promote and encourage MOE in building school boundary walls and separate toilet facilities, and

providing access to drinking water; all factors which prevent parents from sending their children (particularly daughters) to school

- ➔ MOLSAMD to actively participate in TVET and higher education strategies and policies aimed at matching labor market's supply and demand and improve certification

3. Donor aid coordination is improved (Target 2.3)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Develop evidence-based concept notes and design programs/projects to target child labor and its worst forms
- ➔ Develop a coordinated mechanism to channel donor funds through on-budget and off-budget programs/projects

including Labor Law Article 13, Clause 2, regarding the prohibition of hazardous child labor

- ➔ Develop inspection support tools consisting of a manual, checklists, and reporting sheets
- ➔ Plan and conduct strategic labor inspections in child labor-prone industries and enforce the law
- ➔ Review, analyze, and publish the inspection results in order to strengthen national policy developments
- ➔ Establish a national tripartite OSH committee to monitor the progress and launch the National OSH Action Program, including the prohibition of hazardous child labor

C. Improve law, law enforcement, and prosecution

Afghanistan's national legislation, policy, and program review on child labor found that it is not the legal framework that is deficient but rather it is the weak law enforcement and prosecution that impedes combating child labor in Afghanistan. The exception to this is the labor inspection component, where the legal framework falls short compared to international standards. Nevertheless, law enforcement agencies believe that the problem lies with the post-law enforcement situation by not providing an alternative for child laborer households. Technically, both arguments are true, which is why law enforcement should go hand in hand with social protection. Either way, law enforcement needs to be improved as it brings about social justice, which leads to peace. Consequently, peace generates stability and development.

1. Increase the number of female and male labor inspectors, improve occupational safety and health, and streamline law enforcement (Target 3.2)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Strengthening labor inspection

- ➔ Recruit female and male labor inspectors and train them so that they obtain essential OSH knowledge,

Eliminating hazardous child labor and improving OSH at the workplace

- ➔ Public awareness raising campaign to eliminate hazardous child labor in association with the national safety week, or ILO's World Day for Safety and Health at Work (28 April)
- ➔ Develop a training program and carry out the training for employers and workers to eliminate hazardous child labor and establish workplace OSH committees for continuous improvement of safety and health at the workplace
- ➔ Train Afghan OSH trainers to increase training coverage in cooperation with the government and employers' and workers' organizations

2. Improve mechanisms that ensure social justice through a rights-based approach (Target 3.1)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Justice sector training

- ➔ Undertake capacity building and training programs including raising awareness on child labor including its gender dimensions among justice sector staff (e.g. lawyers, judges, prosecutors)

- ➔ Train provincial and district level attorneys, judges and police on the new penal code, child rights conventions, child labor concepts, and gender issues related to child labor

- ➔ Improve and change behavior and attitudes of law enforcers, particularly frontline responders toward issues of child labor

Prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labor

- ➔ Strictly monitor underage recruitment into armed forces through the in-placed mechanism - UNAMA's Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, which not only helps law enforcement but also identifies the victims
- ➔ Prosecute the offenders in the light of enacted laws
- ➔ Identify/register children involved in the worst forms of child labor and hazardous work including children recruited into armed forces/groups
- ➔ Withdraw children from the worst forms of child labor and hazardous work
- ➔ Refer the victims to rehabilitation and reintegration programs
- ➔ Establish a mechanism to identify and verify sexually exploited children and strictly monitor sexual oriented videos of children in the markets and prosecute the offenders
- ➔ Improve coordination with post-enforcement actors

D. Improve social work and social protection mechanisms

Social work has long been recognized for its essential role in poverty reduction, improving health, improving children and families' well-being, and increasing employment. The primary function of social work is to link individuals, targeted groups, and communities with available resources and advocate for the implementation of laws. Afghanistan's current social workforce is insignificant, which requires serious attention. In the absence of an adequate number of social workers, MOLSAMD can invest in CHWs, which are sufficient in number and in terms of national coverage.

At the global level, social protection has been given special attention particularly in countries with high poverty rates, national disasters, and high rates of unemployment. It is also the focus of several targets of SDG1, which aims to end poverty in all its manifestations by 2030. However, Afghanistan's spending on social protection is extremely low compared to other underdeveloped countries. A gradual increase in social protection spending is necessary to effectively tackle child labor, poverty, and income inequality.

1. Streamline social work, improve the referral system, and increase public awareness (Target 4.1)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Train social workers and CHWs on child labor issues including the gender dimensions
- ➔ Engage MOE to provide awareness about child rights, gender equality, parental responsibilities towards children, and child labor outcomes to the public through SW and CHWs
- ➔ Work with SWs and CHWs to identify child laborers including those working as invisible child laborers (e.g. girls in domestic work)

2. Improve social protection targeting and mechanisms (Target 4.2)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Carry out a strong lobby at the technical and political levels about the roles of social workers in tackling child labor
- ➔ Collaborate with other relevant agencies to reassess Afghanistan's social protection policies
- ➔ Improve targeting mechanisms and establish strict monitoring systems

For the prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labor

- ➔ Prioritize the victims of the worst forms of child labor and hazardous work for social protection, particularly children with no parents or whose parents are unable to adequately provide for them

E. Improve child laborer households' economic conditions

The poor economic condition of households, especially female-headed, elderly headed households, and households of returnees and IDPs, is a key predictor of child labor engagement. Improving household economic conditions can be achieved through economic development at the micro and macro levels.

1. Increase child laborer households' access to alternative/improved economic conditions (Target 5.1)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Improve/enhance access to microfinance through low interest rates and easy procedures

- ➔ Improve child laborer households' access to food assistance/cash vouchers through better targeting

- ➔ Increase child laborer households' adult employment in low-skilled jobs by facilitating employment in national and government projects

- ➔ Work with MOE to provide basic adult education to the households

2. Improve macroeconomic conditions that ensure job creation (Target 5.2)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Increase foreign direct investment in the Afghan mining sector

- ➔ Facilitate small-scale investment under strict government regulation and oversight

- ➔ Increase/improve domestic production capacity through PPP and effective business enabling environments

- ➔ Increase Afghan exports through the elimination of trade barriers

- ➔ Facilitate Afghan labor migration to Gulf countries

- ➔ Promote and facilitate girls' and women's equal access to quality education and training

- ➔ Link women to employment opportunities in collaboration with employers' organizations

- ➔ Provide entrepreneurship training to women

- ➔ Support women entrepreneurs in business development

3. Streamline regulatory reforms (Target 5.3)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Create an enabling environment for the private sector through reforms and improvements in the ease of doing business indicators
- ➔ Adhere to labor rights and promote child labor elimination

F. Improve institutional and technical capacities of relevant actors

The implementation of child labor strategies will not be effective without institutional and technical capacity. Different actors will require different levels of technical capacity to effectively contribute to the prevention and elimination of child labor.

1. Enhance key stakeholders' capacity (Target 6.1)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Train 55,000 people (50 per cent women and 50 per cent men) on child labor and gender-related issues
- ➔ Train MOLSAMD/Child Secretariat and Social Protection Directorates on gender, child labor survey design, questionnaire development, survey methodologies, and database development and maintenance

2. Establish technical committee (Target 6.2)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Establish an inter-ministerial technical committee, where the Policy and Planning Director of each

of the key stakeholders will actively take part in the integration of child labor issues into national programs. The technical committee will also be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the national child labor strategy.

3. Train trainers (Target 6.3)

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Provide Training of Trainer sessions to educate male and female trainers on relevant concepts on child labor including its contributing factors such as gender discrimination etc.
- ➔ Contextualized intervention

4. Strategy and action plan rolled out in phases

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Emphasize practicality by considering security, institutional capacity, and budget

Based on security conditions, lack of available institutional capacity, and scarce resources, MOLSAMD has rolled out the target areas for the implementation of the national child labor strategy and action in phases as follow below:

CHAPTER 4

Action plan log frame

STRATEGY 1: ESTABLISH/MAINTAIN CHILD LABOR KNOWLEDGE BASE							
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Frequency	Responsible institutions		Timeframe	
				Lead	Support		
Key result 1: Baseline data and useful knowledge base on child labor made available							
Sign working agreement with CSO, and other relevant parties and entities	Hold meetings to discuss survey scale, cost and timeframe	Agreements signed	Five times during the strategy implementation	MOLSAMD	CSO and other relevant agencies	Dec 2018	
Conduct periodic nationally representative surveys on child labor	Design survey methodology (for both quantitative and qualitative components) and approach	Survey instruments finalized	Five times during the strategy implementation			Jan-Feb 2019	
	Determine technical aspects of the survey						
	Develop and test Questionnaire						
	Train enumerators	Survey conducted					March- August 2019
	Data collection						
	Design and develop Child labor database	National Database functional					
	Data entry	Accurate data accessible					
	Data screening and clean up						
	Store and compile data						
	Develop analytical reports on child labor, based on survey findings	Analyze data and disaggregate by sex, age, location, sector etc.					
Identify specific vulnerabilities or challenges experienced by girls and boys in child labor							
Report is published							

Strategy 1: Establish/maintain child labor knowledge base						
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Frequency	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 2: Child Labor Monitoring System established						
Design multi-sector and gender-responsive monitoring and referral process and mechanism	Develop policies and procedures	Policies and procedures developed and adopted	One time	MOLSAMD	ILO, UNICEF, MOPH	Dec 2019
	Train women and men social workers and/or CHWs	Number of people trained	In five phases			
	Design and test CLMS	CLMS operational	Multiple time with no cost			
	Continuous registration of child laborers in CLMS by sector and geographical area	Number of child laborers registered	Continuous			
	Establish mechanism and conduct periodic monitoring	Monitoring reports	Continuous			
	Prepare and publish periodic reports on child labor abuses and risks faced by boys and girls	Reports published	One time but repeated with no cost		ILO, UNICEF	Jan-April 2020
	Initiate withdrawal process through provision of alternatives and facilitate reintegration into social support systems of boy and girls working as child laborers	Number of children withdrawn and integrated into social systems	Continuous			
	Conduct post withdrawal visit	Number of visits	Continuous			

STRATEGY 2: TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH TOWARD TACKLING CHILD LABOR						
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 1: The issue of child labor is tackled at the national level by integrating it into national programs						
Sign MOUs and agreements with relevant social partners, government and non-government agencies	MOE	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MOE	Aug 2018
	MRRD	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MRRD	Aug 2018
	MOHRA	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MOHRA	Sep 2018
	MOPH	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MOPH	Sep 2018
	IDLG	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	IDLG	Oct 2018
	MAIL	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MAIL	Oct 2018
	MOIC/Youth and Culture affairs	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MOCI/ Youth and Culture affairs	Nov 2018
	MOCI	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	Ministry of Commerce and Industries	Nov 2018
	MOIA	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MOIA	Dec 2018
	AGO and judicial system	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	AGO and judicial system	Dec 2018
	MOWA	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MOWA	Jan 2019
	MOPW	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	MOPW	Jan 2019
	Independent General Directorate of Kuchi (IGDOK)	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	Independent General Directorate of Kuchi (IGDOK)	Feb 2019
	UNICEF and ILO	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	UNICEF and ILO	Sep 2018
	WFP	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	WFP	Feb 2019
	ACCI and workers' associations	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	ACCI) and workers' associations	Mar 2019
	Afghan civil societies	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	Afghan civil societies	Marc 2019
	AIHRC	MOU signed		MOLSAMD	AIHRC	March 2019

STRATEGY 2: TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH TOWARD TACKLING CHILD LABOR						
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Support relevant stakeholder in identifying and implementing action points to eliminate child labor	MOE	Contents of MOU implemented, monitored, and verified	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOE	2018-2030
	MRRD		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MRRD	2018-2030
	MOHRA		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOHRA	2018-2030
	MOPH		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOPH	2018-2030
	IDLG		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	IDLG	2018-2030
	MAIL		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MAIL	2018-2030
	MOIC/ Youth and Culture affairs		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOIC	2018-2030
	MOCI		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOCI	2018-2030
	MOIA		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOIA	2018-2030
	AGO and Judicial system	Impact assessment conducted	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	AGO and Judicial	2018-2030
	MOWA		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOWA	2018-2030
	MOPW		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOPW	2018-2030
	IGDOK		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	IGDOK	2018-2030
	UNICEF and ILO		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	ILO and UNICEF	2018-2030
	WFP		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	WFP	2018-2030
	ACCI and workers' associations		Quarterly	MOLSMND	ACCI	2018-2030
	Afghan civil societies		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	ACS	2018-2030
	AIHRC		Quarterly	MOLSAMD	AIHRC	2018-2030
Key result 2: Assistance provided by MOLSAMD to eliminate barriers to education, particularly for girls and vulnerable populations						
Improve public education (public awareness for social mobilization)	Identify local/national harmful social norms that adversely affect social construction and behaviors related to child labor, particularly its worst forms	Context-specific harmful social norms are identified	In different phases	MOLSAMD	UNICEF/ILO	2018-2030
	Develop specific strategic communications through which harmful social norms can be tackled in an effective and efficient manner	Context-specific strategic communications are developed	In different phases	MOLSAMD	UNICEF/ILO	2018-2030
	Train social change agents in child labor concepts, who can then bring about social mobilization with a focus on the worst forms of child labor	Number of social change agents are trained	In different phases	MOLSAMD	UNICEF/ILO	2018-2030

STRATEGY 2: TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH TOWARD TACKLING CHILD LABOR

Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Improve conventional education	Work with MOE to enhance education policy that would address current and future demands; find ways for nomadic and displaced children to waive the requirement for official documentation of previous school and provide for age-grouping mechanism to promote increased children participation	Policy change proposed, advocated for, and adopted	Due course	MOLSAMD	MOE	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Adopt a community-based social mobilization plan in order to identify and link qualified teachers, particularly female teachers, with MOE	Plan developed and adopted Number of teachers hired	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOE	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Provide support to MOE for school maintenance through social mobilization at community level	School maintenance projects designed and budget secured	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOE	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Promote and encourage MOE in building school boundary walls and separate toilet facilities and provide access to drinking water, all factors which prevent parents from sending their children (particularly daughters) to school	Facilities rehabilitated/constructed	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOE	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Contributing to MOHE and TVET strategies	Policies adopted; International standard certificates issued	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOHE and TVET	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
Key result 3: Donor aid coordination improved						
Design programs/projects to target child labor and its worst forms	Develop evidence-based concept notes and design programs/projects to target child labor and its worst forms	Program document completed	On need-basis	MOLSAMD	Donors	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Develop a coordinated mechanism to channel donor funds through on-budget and off-budget programs/projects	Funds raised and channeled through on-and off- budget programs	On need-basis	MOLSAMD	Donors	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030

STRATEGY 3: IMPROVE LAW, LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND PROSECUTION						
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 1: Labor inspection strengthened, number of labor inspectors increased, labor safety and health improved, law enforcement streamlined						
Strengthen Labor Inspection systems	Recruit female and male labor inspectors and train them so that they obtain essential OSH knowledge, including Labor Law Article 13 Clause 2, regarding prohibition of hazardous child labor	Number of labor inspectors hired	Quarterly	MOLSAMD/ Department of labor inspector	Social partners	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Develop inspection support tools consisting of a manual, checklists and reporting sheets	Number of tools, checklist and reporting sheets developed	Quarterly	MOLSAMD/ Department of labor inspector	Social partners	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Plan and conduct strategic labor inspection to child labor- prone industries and enforce the law	Number of offenders prosecuted and number of children withdrawn	Quarterly	MOLSAMD/ Department of labor inspector	Social partners	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Review, analyze, and publish the inspection results for stronger national policy development	Number of reports published per year	Quarterly, semi- annually and annually	MOLSAMD/ Department of labor inspector	Social partners	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Establish the national tripartite OSH committee to monitor the progress and launch the national Action Program, including prohibition of hazardous child labor	Establishment and functional tripartite OSH committee	Semi-annually and annually	MOLSAMD/ Department of labor inspector	Social partners	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
Eliminating hazardous child labor and improving OSH at the workplace	Public awareness raising campaign to eliminate hazardous child labor in association with national safety week, or ILO's World Day for Safety and Health at Work (28 April)	Annual campaign	Annually	MOLSAMD/ Department of labor inspector	Social partners	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Develop a training program and carry out the training for employers and workers to eliminate hazardous child labor and establish workplace OSH committee for continuous improvement of safety and health at the workplace	Number of trainings and establishment of OSH committee at workplace	Continuous	MOLSAMD/ Department of labor inspector	Social partners	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Train Afghan OSH trainers to increase training coverage in cooperation with the government and employers' and workers' organizations	Inspection reports	Monthly	MOLSAMD/ Department of labor inspector	MOLSAMD	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030

STRATEGY 3: IMPROVE LAW, LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND PROSECUTION						
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 2: Mechanisms that ensure improvement of social justice						
Promote citizens' rights	Undertake capacity building and training programs including awareness raising on gender and child labor to justice sector staff (e.g. lawyers, judges, and persecutors)	Number of trainees and districts covered	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Supreme court, AGO and MOI	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Train provincial and district levels attorneys, judges and police on the new penal code, child rights conventions, child labor concepts and gender equality	Number of judges, attorneys and police officers trained	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Supreme court, AGO and MOI	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Improve and change behavior and mentality of law enforcers, particularly frontline responders toward issues of child labor	Number of judges, attorneys and police officers trained	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Supreme court, AGO and MOI	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
Prevent and eliminate the worst forms of child labor	Strictly monitor underage recruitment in armed forces through, UNAMA's Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism	Number of children prevented from entering armed forces and number of offenders prosecuted	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Supreme court, AGO and MOI as well as MOD and NDS	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Prosecute the offenders in the light of enacted laws	Number of offenders prosecuted	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Supreme court, AGO and MOI as well as NDS	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Identify/register children involved in the worst forms and hazardous work	Number of children withdrawn	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Every citizen SWs, CHWs and LIs	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Withdraw children from the worst forms of child labor and hazardous work	Number of children withdrawn	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Every citizen SWs, CHWs and LIs	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Refer the victims to rehabilitation and reintegration programs	Number of children referred and reintegrated	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Every citizen SWs, CHWs and LIs	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Strictly monitor the underage dancing videos in the markets and prosecute the offenders	Number of offenders prosecuted and number of videos confiscated	Continuous	MOIA	Every citizen SWs, CHWs and LIs	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Improve coordination with post law enforcement actors	Number of children referred and reintegrated	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Every citizen SWs, CHWs and LIs	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030

STRATEGY 4: IMPROVE SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL PROTECTION MECHANISMS						
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 1: Social work streamlined, referral system improved, public awareness increased						
Streamline social work	Train social workers and CHWs on gender equality and child labor issues	Number of SW and CHWs trained	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOPH	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Engage MOE and other stakeholders to provide awareness about child rights, gender equality, parental responsibility towards children and child labor outcomes to the public through SWs and CHWs	Number of awareness programs conducted; number of attendees	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOPH	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Work with SWs and CHWs to identify child laborers including those working as invisible child laborers (e.g. girls in domestic work)	Number of child laborers identified	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	MOPH	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
Key result 2: Social protection targeting and mechanism improved						
Streamline social protection	MOLSAMD to carry out a strong lobby at the technical and political levels about the roles of social workers in tackling child labor	Securing funds and integration of child labor issues in national priority	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Whole of government	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Collaborate with other relevant agencies to reassess Afghanistan's social protection policies	Policy revision document	Continuous	MOLSAMD	MOF	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Improve targeting mechanism and establish strict monitoring system	Targeting improved; % accuracy	Continuous	MOLSAMD	MOF	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
Prevent and eliminate the worst forms of child labor	Prioritize the victims of the worst forms of child labor and hazardous work for social protection, particularly children with no parents or whose parents are unable to adequately provide for them	Number of victims withdrawn from worst forms and hazardous work	Continuous	MOLSAMD	Whole of partners	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030

STRATEGY 5: IMPROVE CHILD LABORER HOUSEHOLDS' ECONOMIC CONDITIONS						
	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 1: Increase child laborer households' access to alternative/ improved households' economic condition						
Improve economy at micro level	Improve/enhance access to microfinance through low interest rates and easy procedures	Number of families obtained microfinance loans etc.	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	Private Sector (Banks)	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Improve child laborers households' access to food assistance/cash vouchers through better targeting	Number of families obtained food assistance and cash vouchers	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	WFP	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Increase child laborers households' adult employment in low-skilled jobs by facilitating employment in national and government projects	Number of people employed (geographically distributed)	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	WFP	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
Key result 2: Improved macroeconomic conditions that ensure job creation						
Improve economy at macro level	Increase foreign direct investment in the Afghan mining sector	Number of FDI attracted	Annually	Whole of government	Investors	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Facilitate small-scale national investment under strict government regulation and oversight in mining sector	Number of contracts awarded	Annually	MOMP	National Investors	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Increase/improve domestic production capacity through PPP and effective business enabling environment	% decrease in imports (or in terms of amount)	Annually	MOCI	MOF	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Increase Afghan exports through elimination of trade barriers	Total annual export values	Annually	MOCI	MOF	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Facilitate Afghan legal labor migration to Gulf Countries	Number of laborers legally migrated	Annually	MOLSAMD	MOFA ADB WBG	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Promote and facilitate girls' and women's equal access to quality education and training	Number of girls and women trained	Annually	MOWA	MOLSAMD	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Linking women employment opportunities in collaboration with employers' organization	Number of women employed	Annually	MOLSAMD	MOWA	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Support women entrepreneurs in business development	Number of women in business sector increased	Annually	MOCI	MOWA and MOLSAMD	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030

STRATEGY 5: IMPROVE CHILD LABORER HOUSEHOLDS' ECONOMIC CONDITIONS						
	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 3: Regulatory reform streamlined						
Improve regulatory reform and adhere to labor rights and elimination of child labor	Create enabling environment for private sector through reforms and improvements in the ease of doing business indicators	Laws and regulations reformed and adopted	Annually	MOLSAMD	MOCI and MOEC	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Adhere to labor rights and child labor elimination	Number of child laborers withdrawn and number of violators convicted	Annually	MOLSAMD	MOCI and AGO, COURTS	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030

STRATEGY 6: IMPROVE INSTITUTIONAL AND TECHNICAL CAPACITIES OF RELEVANT ACTORS						
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 1: Key stakeholders' capacity enhanced						
Build capacity of social change agents and institutions	Train 55,000 people (50 % women and 50% men) on child labor and gender related issues	Number of people trained in each phase	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	All ministries	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030
	Train MOLSAMD/Child Secretariat and Social Protection Directorate on gender, child labor survey design, questionnaire development, survey methodologies and data base development and maintenance	Number of people trained	Phase base	ILO and UNICEF	MOLSAMD	Dec 2018
Key result 2: Technical committee is established and operational						
Create mechanism for the implementation of the National Child Labor Strategy	Establish inter-ministerial committee, where the Policy and Planning Director of each key stakeholder will actively take part in the integration of child labor issues into national programs. The technical committee will also be responsible to monitor and report on the implementation of the national child labor strategy	Committee established and TOR developed; functional	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	All ministries	Sept 2018

STRATEGY 6: IMPROVE INSTITUTIONAL AND TECHNICAL CAPACITIES OF RELEVANT ACTORS						
Major Activity	Sub activities	Indicator	Reporting	Responsible institutions		Timeframe
				Lead	Support	
Key result 3: Trainers are trained						
Ensure sustainability	Provide Training of Trainer sessions to educate male and female trainers on relevant concepts including gender and child labor	10 trainers	Quarterly	MOLSAMD	All ministries	Sep 2018 – Dec 2030

CHAPTER 5

Estimated budget

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION	COST IN U.S. DOLLARS				
		Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
1.1	Knowledge base	700,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	700,000
1.2	Child Labor Monitoring System	60,000				
2.1	Social mobilization/awareness/training		1,375,000	1,375,000	1,375,000	1,375,000
2.1	Trainers	86,400	86,400	86,400	86,400	86,400
2.1	Transportation/per diem	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
3.1	Labor inspectors	2,367,360	2,367,360	2,367,360	2,367,360	2,367,360
6.1	MOLSAMD capacity building	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	
6.1	Equipment	30,000			30,000	
6.2	Monitoring and evaluation		100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
4.2	Social/child protection		10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
	S. Total	3,393,760	14,778,760	14,778,760	14,808,760	14,678,760
	G. Total	62,438,800				



CHAPTER 6

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are an integral part of this strategy and action plan; they safeguard its successful implementation, and allow for necessary adjustments and modifications.

Monitoring entails systematic data collection, analysis and reporting related to the prevention and elimination of child labor in the course of the implementation of the strategy and action plan. A cross-ministerial and quarterly-based reporting mechanism is envisaged for this exercise. Altogether, there will be 48 monitoring reports over the period of 12 years.

Evaluation criteria include relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Altogether, there will be ten evaluations; five mid-term and five final phase evaluations.

- ➔ **Relevance:** to assess whether or not the intervention was a national priority and relevant to the targeted audience
- ➔ **Effectiveness:** to assess whether or not the intervention achieved its goal
- ➔ **Efficiency:** to assess the intervention's cost-effectiveness

- ➔ **Impact:** to assess the overarching impact of the strategy's vision in addition to the strategic objective
- ➔ **Sustainability:** to answer the question of whether or not the impact of the intervention endures; in this context, what happens to child laborers once they withdraw from child labor

The technical committee and the heads of policy and planning departments of various governmental agencies will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the strategy and action plan. Children's voices need to be heard during the evaluation, and their opinions will be solicited on an ongoing basis through group interviews, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and the establishment of a forum/platform for ideas.

It is recommended that the final phase of evaluation be undertaken by an external collaborator since an independent view will prove beneficial in that things will be seen differently by such an external viewpoint than by those directly involved.

Annex A. Definitions

Child

Any person who is under the age of 18 years old is considered a child under the laws of Afghanistan. This definition is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Child Labor

Child labor refers to any work that is harmful to a child's mental, social and physical development. It also negatively affects children's morale, school attendance, retention, and overall school performance.

Child work

Child work refers to legally permissible work undertaken by a child aged 14 and above which is considered non-hazardous and is not one of the worst forms of child labor.

Light Work

ILO Convention No.138, defines Light Work as child work that should, "(a) not be harmful to a child's health and development and, (b) not prejudice attendance at school and participation in vocational training or the capacity to benefit from the instruction received".

Worst Forms of Child Labor

ILO defines worst forms of child labor as:

- ➔ All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- ➔ The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- ➔ The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; and
- ➔ Work, which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Hazardous work

Hazardous work is any work which has the potential to do harm. ILO defines hazardous work as work, which by its nature or the circumstances in which it's carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. MOLSAMD prohibits 30 hazardous jobs in Afghanistan for which no child can be employed.

Forced labor

Any involuntary work or services exacted from a person under threat or compulsion is considered forced labor under the Afghan Labor Law. This is consistent with ILO Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour.

Child domestic work

ILO Convention No. 189 defines domestic work as work that is undertaken for a third party/employer and not work undertaken in one's own home. Domestic work undertaken at the home of the child is considered "light work" assuming it involves general household chores, is safe, and does not interfere with schooling.

Annex B. Legal and policy frameworks

In the aftermath of the civil war and post-Taliban era, Afghanistan has made significant progress in terms of adopting laws and policies to protect human rights, including children's rights.

1. National legal frameworks

The Constitution

Afghanistan redrafted its Constitution in 2004,³⁰ which guarantees the protection of human rights including children's. It ensures citizens' rights of access to free education, health services, and standard living conditions.

Labor law

A Presidential Decree endorsed the Afghan Labor Law in 2007. The law is mostly consistent with ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age. Revision of the Labor Law is underway with a view to making the Law more consistent with the prevailing socio-economic conditions and with Afghanistan's obligations under international law.

Prevention of underage recruitment in armed forces

UN Security Council Resolution 1612 stimulated the adoption of the legislation which criminalizes the recruitment of children in armed forces. Child recruitment in the armed forces in any capacity is considered among the worst forms of child labor.

Anti-harassment Act

To protect women and children from any harassment, the Afghan State formed a high inter-ministerial commission in 2017 and has passed the anti-harassment act.

Comprehensive Child Act

The Comprehensive Child Act consolidates the various fragmented pieces of legislation related to children in one comprehensive document with some additions. This Child Act is consistent with the UNCRC and is awaiting parliament approval.

Penal Code

The new Afghan Penal Code, enacted in March 2018, includes penalties for sexual exploitation of children, trafficking in persons, harassment, harsh punishment, forced labor, and child labor.

2. International Treaties

United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Based on its obligations under the UNCRC which it ratified in 1994, Afghanistan took steps to develop national laws such as the Child Act and to modify the Penal Code.

ILO Conventions No. 138 (Minimum Age Convention) and No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention)

Afghanistan's commitments under these two conventions which it ratified on April 7, 2010, inspired the inception of the Afghan Labor Law.

UN Security Council Resolution 1612

The UNSCR 1612 of 2005 guided the establishment of a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on six grave

³⁰ The Constitution was written in the light of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Geneva Convention and its additional protocols and Convention Against Torture, Convention on the Rights of the Child, especially as concerns the sections dealing with civil and human rights and judiciary matters.

violations³¹ committed against children in the time of armed conflicts. In line with this Resolution, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan under the leadership of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the country and the UN Resident Coordinator leads the Country Taskforce in Afghanistan together with UNICEF as a co-chair. Members of the taskforce include UNHCR,³² UNDP,³³ ILO, OCHA,³⁴ WFP,³⁵ UNFPA,³⁶ and UNESCO.³⁷

Palermo Protocol

On August 15, 2014, Afghanistan ratified the Palermo Protocol - Trafficking in Persons in order to prevent, investigate, and prosecute cases of trafficking and also to protect the victims, particularly women and children, which led to the adoption of the Afghan trafficking in person law. Additionally, in accordance with the Palermo Protocol, the Afghan Government established units of Counter-Traffickers in every province. Its members consist of representatives from the Ministry of Interior Affairs, MOLSAMD, and the border police as well as international and local NGOs.

3. National policies and strategies

In the past 17 years, the Government of Afghanistan has developed and adopted numerous policies and strategies to tackle issues related to children. These policies and strategies include the National Strategy for Street Working Children; National TVET Strategy; National Youth Policy; National Labor Policy; and National Strategy for Children at Risk. Various specialized international agencies provided technical support in the process. Very recently, MOLSAMD with the technical support of the ILO reviewed national

legislation, policy, and programs to identify legal, policy and institutional gaps, and to provide recommendations for improvement on matters related to child labor and child protection in general.

Similarly, numerous small-scale projects have also been implemented to ensure child protection. Examples of the programs with nation-wide coverage include nutrition, health, and education.

4. Institutional framework for the prevention of child labor including its worst forms

Child secretariat

In 2015, MOLSAMD established a Child Secretariat, which is mandated to report to the offices of the First Lady and second Vice-President of Afghanistan about all child-related issues. The Child Secretariat works hand in hand with the Directorate of Social Protection, which plays a major role in CPAN.

Labor inspection

According to ILO's brief assessment of labor inspection in April 2017, Afghanistan's current labor inspection system is one of the weakest in South Asia.

The labor inspection system lacks both a documented national policy, and a clear implementation strategy on labor inspection and OSH. Labor inspection activities are implemented without any coordination or collaboration with other concerned institutions.

As with other institutional activities, labor inspection activities are also affected by ongoing politics and insecurity.

The legal deficiencies that adversely affect labor inspection are:

- ➔ Lack of clarity in the labor law on interviewing workers and administrative staff during labor inspection of enterprises.

³¹ The six violations include killing and maiming children; recruitment and using children in armed forces or groups; attacking schools or hospitals; rape or other sexual violence against children; children abduction; and denial of humanitarian access.

³² United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

³³ United Nations Development Programme.

³⁴ Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

³⁵ World Food Programme.

³⁶ United Nations Population Fund.

³⁷ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

- ➔ The labor law lacks clear standards and criteria for selection, qualification and recruitment of labor inspectors and OSH specialists.
- ➔ Employers are not legally obliged to appoint OSH specialists/supervisors or to have OSH committees at enterprise level.
- ➔ The labor law does not state/describe explicitly the authority and obligations regarding labor inspectors or OSH specialists.
- ➔ The labor law does not authorize labor inspectors to take any deterrent action against the employers who breach legal provisions.

The labor inspection organization structure, tools and equipment deficiencies are:

- ➔ The Labor Inspection Department and Occupation Safety and Health are entirely located in the country's capital, which makes it extremely difficult to inspect at provincial and district level.
- ➔ The LI and OSH current checklists are too concise, preventing the collection of the minimum required information which would enable the LI to address compliance issues.
- ➔ The LI do not have the required monitoring equipment to assess environmental hazards in case of workplace pollutants.
- ➔ The LI inspectors' reports are rarely followed up and the department does not produce annual reports which could put pressure on companies through the general public.

Of the 26 labor inspector positions which exist for the entire country, only 21 are occupied. This means the ratio is one labor inspector for over a half million workers, which is far below international standards, where one labor inspector serves 40,000 workers. Furthermore, the current number of labor inspectors and supervisors do not include any women.

To effectively monitor labor and child labor conditions, there is a dire need for gender balanced LI and OSH specialists.

National Child Protection Action Network (N-CPAN)

CPAN is an inclusive network of government and non-government organizations that has a mandate and performs field interventions in the area of child protection. The National CPAN is based in Kabul, covering 110 districts out of a total of 419 country districts. MOLSAMD is the lead agency with members of the network consisting of officials from various other Ministries of the Government, UNICEF, and several national and international civil society organizations.

Child Protection in Emergency (CPiE)

The CPiE operates under Afghanistan's Protection Cluster that deals with children in emergency and saves lives through the provision of food and non-food items. It also advocates for victims of child abuse resulting from an emergency as opposed to individual child case management, which is done through CPAN. The CPiE is chaired by UNICEF and co-chaired by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and has more than 50 members. Previously, CPiE was known as the Child Protection Sub-Cluster Group.

Child Rights Advocacy Forum (CRAF)

Under the chairmanship and guidance of Save the Children, a number of international and local NGOs formed the Child Rights Advocacy Forum to uphold the rights of children. The forum advocates on behalf of Afghan Children, and its members include Aschiana, Child Fund, Children in Crisis, Family Welfare Focus, Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes and War Child Holland.

The child protection mandates of all the above-mentioned mechanisms are wider than the specifics of engaging in the issue of child labor and its worst forms. There is therefore a need for an inter-ministerial Steering Committee or Technical Group Under the Policy and Planning Directorate of MOLSAMD to focus exclusively on child labor and its worst forms.

Annex C. Content of MOUs with relevant agencies (detailed version)

AGENCY	AREA					
	Training	Child labor-free programs/projects	Awareness	Inclusion in Strategies	Referral/Reintegration	Technical support, Resource and Information sharing
Ministry of Education			Awareness about child rights, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty are provided in MOE's TV		Child laborers are reintegrated back into school, through acceleration of education system	Child labor issue is reflected in MOE new curriculum
	MOLSAMD had trained the MOE staff in child labor concepts	Child labor will not occur in any MOE construction projects	Awareness about parents' responsibility towards children, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty is given to public through MOE's 700 parental councils and weekly parental meetings	Child labor issue is reflected in MOE's health and dropout strategies	School dropouts are referred to MOLSAMD to understand motivation of dropouts	
MRRD	MOLSAMD had trained the MRRD staff in child labor concepts	Child labor will not occur in any MRRD development projects	Awareness about child rights, parental responsibility towards children, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty is given to the public through 8,000 cluster councils, Citizen Chartered, which goes hand in hand with child labor prevention strategy timeline		In case of referral, adults of child laborers' households are given high priority for employment in MRRD projects	

MOHRA	MOLSAMD had trained the MOHRA staff in child labor concepts	The 3,698 pulpitanians of MOHRA preached about child labor outcomes, child rights and parental responsibilities throughout the country	
MOPH	MOLSAMD had trained the MOPH staff in child labor concepts	Awareness about child rights, parental responsibility towards children, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty is given to the public through 28,541 CHWs, with each CHW covering 1.4 village	MOPH agreed to share its 28,541 Community Health Workers, CHWs with MOLSAMD
IDLG	MOLSAMD had trained the IDLG staff in child labor concepts	Awareness about child rights, parental responsibility towards children, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty is given to the public through IDLG Good Urban Governance initiatives as well as 34 provincial councils and upcoming district level councils	IDLG created child friendly space, playground, space for sport and rehabilitation centers through 163 provincial and district levels municipalities' funds.

MAIL MOLSAMD had trained the MAIL staff in child labor concepts Child labor will not occur in any of the 44 ongoing and potential MAIL projects Awareness about child rights, parental responsibility towards children, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty is given to the public through MAIL extension workers, National Horticulture and Livestock Project, and On-Farm Water Management as well as Kitchen Gardening and Afghanistan Agriculture Inputs Project	MOC/ Youth and Culture affairs MOLSAMD had trained the MOC staff in child labor concepts Awareness about child rights, parental responsibility towards children, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty is given to the public through MOC five newspapers MOC/ streamlined awareness about child labor through the private sector, mass media as a civic duty when issuing/renewing license for TVs, Radios and newspapers MOC/ integrated child labor issues into its advocacy and policies for youth health, youth education, and youth employment
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Ministry of Commerce and Industries MOLSAMD had trained the MOCI staff in child labor concepts	Awareness about the country's legal framework concerning child labor and penalty for its violation is given to the private sector, while issuing/renewing business licenses Awareness about labor safety and health is provided to the private sector while issuing/renewing business licenses
MOIA MOLSAMD had trained the MOIA staff in child labor concepts, particularly the TIP and children's rights departments	MOIA prevented children to travel in the absence of legal guardianship MOIA enforced law in the presence of social workers when received reports about child labor

AGO and Judicial system MOLSAMD had trained the AGO staff and judges in child labor concepts MOLSAMD facilitated/funded the training of district and provincial levels' attorneys and judges in the new penal code and its explanation	AGO and Judicial system publish the details of convicted people
MOWA MOLSAMD had trained the MOWA staff in child labor concepts	MOWA reflected child labor issue in its key functions: monitoring; awareness; and advocacy as well as 8,000 cluster women councils in citizen chartered program
MOPW MOLSAMD had trained the MOPW staff in child labor concepts	MOPW is given high priority for the employment of child laborer household adults in public work project

Independent General Directorate of Kuchi (IGDOK) MOLSAMD had trained the IGDOK staff in child labor concepts	Awareness about child rights, parental responsibility towards children, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty is given to the public through IGDOK projects: Women; Conflict resolution; Education; Health; Economic development, and Peace
UNICEF	MOLSAMD supported UNICEF in achieving its mandates UNICEF provided technical support in child protection and child labor
ILO	MOLSAMD supported ILO in achieving its mandate ILO provided technical support to child protection and child labor
WFP	WFP provided its cash vouchers and food assistance to the poorest of the poor households, who often have child laborers MOLSAMD extended its support in assisting WFP in targeting beneficiaries

Employers' and workers' Unions MOLSAMD had trained the employers' and workers' associations in child labor concepts	Awareness about child labor, child rights and the legal framework about child labor is given to the private sector by ACCI through annual and semiannual private sector gathering, which could be funded by MOLSAMD and other donors Awareness about labor safety and health and child labor is given to workers by workers' associations If asked, ACCI can undertake child labor related research/survey in the private sector which is labor intensive
Afghan civil societies MOLSAMD had trained the Afghan civil societies staff in child labor concepts	Awareness about child rights, parental responsibility towards children, child labor outcomes and its association with poverty is given to the public through civil societies in placed mechanisms

Annex D. Number of pulpitarians by province

PULPITARIAN (KHATIB) NUMBER BY PROVINCE		
	Province	Number of pulpitarians
1	Badakhshan	153
2	Badghis	89
3	Balkh	153
4	Bamyan	78
5	Bghlan	111
6	Daikundi	50
7	Farah	105
8	Faryab	136
9	Ghazni	114
10	Ghor	92
11	Helmand	72
12	Heart	244
13	Jawzjan	142
14	Kabul	135
15	Kandahar	135
16	Kapisa	103
17	Khust	94
18	Kunar	132
19	Kundoz	112
20	Laghman	122
21	Lugar	99
22	Nangarhar	172
23	Nimruz	92
24	Nuristan	91
25	Paktika	91
26	Paktya	77
27	Panshir	51
28	Parwan	101
29	Samangan	104
30	Sar-i-Pul	104
31	Takhar	115
32	Urzgan	51
33	Wardak	96
34	Zabul	82
Total		3,698

Annex E. Number of community health workers by province

2018					
S/N	Province	Number of Active CHWs			Number of Active Health Posts (HPs)
		Female	Male	Total M&F	
1	Badakhshan	442	450	892	459
2	Badghis	328	328	656	338
3	Baghlan	684	677	1,361	699
4	Balkh	1,022	783	1,805	838
5	Bamyan	533	495	1,028	503
6	Dykundi	471	327	798	434
7	Farah	464	456	920	468
8	Faryab	645	500	1,145	572
9	Ghazni	757	870	1,627	817
10	Ghor	377	368	745	479
11	Helmand	388	553	941	468
12	Hirat	1,075	1,073	2,148	1,067
13	Jawzjan	302	301	603	332
14	Kabul	615	471	1,086	641
15	Kandahar	571	550	1,121	568
16	Kapisa	266	250	516	256
17	Khost	290	362	652	334
18	Kunar	269	319	588	319
19	Kunduz	501	506	1,007	428
20	Laghman	361	361	722	325
21	Logar	175	215	390	198
22	Nangarhar	753	977	1,730	903
23	Nimroz	134	99	233	118
24	Nooristan	155	178	333	144
25	Paktika	182	244	426	258
26	Paktya	244	286	530	290
27	Panjsher	118	120	238	120
28	Parwan	392	494	886	432
29	Samangan	144	168	312	155

2018					
S/N	Province	Number of Active CHWs			Number of Active Health Posts (HPs)
		Female	Male	Total M&F	
30	Sar-e-Pul	301	316	617	307
31	Takhar	508	502	1,010	546
32	Urozgan	425	437	862	438
33	Wardak	60	251	311	225
34	Zabul	64	238	302	249
Total		14,016	14,525	28,541	14,728

Annex F. Afghanistan's urban and rural population

1. Phase 1: 66 urban locations with a population of 7.5 million, timeframe Jan 2020 – Dec 2022

URBAN LOCATION	URBAN POPULATION		
	Female	Male	Total
Kabul			
Province Center (Kabul)	2,025,158	2,092,256	4,117,414
Paghman	11,609	12,142	23,751
Kapisa			
Province Center (Mahmood Raqi)	720	966	1,686
Parwan			
Province Center (Charikar)	31,637	31,184	62,821
Jabulussaraj	1,002	965	1,967
Maidan Wardak			
Province Center (Maidan Shahr)	1,719	1,656	3,375
Logar			
Province Center (Puli Alam)	3,008	3,036	6,044
Baraki Barak	2,433	2,346	4,779
Nangarhar			
Province Center (Jalalabad)	126,119	128,893	255,012
Khugyani	2,578	2,622	5,200
Laghman			
Province Center (Mehterlam)	2,724	2,898	5,622
Baghlan			
province Center (Pul-i-Khumri)	58,581	59,330	117,911
Dahana-e-Ghuri	861	966	1,827
Nahreen	2,724	2,898	5,622
Baghlan-e- Jadeed	38,499	37,392	75,891
Bamyan			
Province Center (Bamyan)	7,155	6,899	14,054
Ghazni			

URBAN LOCATION	URBAN POPULATION		
	Female	Male	Total
Province Center (Ghazni)	32,795	32,977	65,772
Paktika			
Province Center (Sharan)	2,381	2,435	4,816
Paktya			
Province Center (Gardez)	13,461	13,522	26,983
Khost			
Province Center (Khost)	6,304	6,485	12,789
Kunarha			
Province Center (Asad Abad)	7,451	7,727	15,178
Badakhshan			
Province center (Faiz Abad)	18,332	18,489	36,821
Jurm	2,006	2,070	4,076
Takhar			
Province Center (Taluqan)	40,367	39,600	79,967
Farkhar	1,572	1,380	2,952
Khwaja Ghar	3,866	3,863	7,729
Rustaq	7,019	7,175	14,194
Chahab	13,034	13,246	26,280
Yangi Qala	5,160	5,382	10,542
Kunduz			
Province Center (Kunduz)	87,926	89,637	177,563
Khan Abad	22,490	22,905	45,395
Hazrati Imam Sahib	19,333	19,455	38,788
Dasht-e- Archi	1,723	1,931	3,654
Qala -e-Zal	10,313	10,486	20,799
Samangan			
Province Center (Aybak)	16,457	15,868	32,325
Balkh			
Province Center (Mazar-e-sharif)	225,571	228,886	454,457
Balkh	8,453	8,693	17,146
Sholgara	5,729	5,795	11,524
Dawlat Abad	5,874	6,071	11,945

URBAN LOCATION	URBAN POPULATION		
	Female	Male	Total
Khulm	27,220	27,871	55,091
Sar-e-Pul			
Province Center (Sar-e-Pul)	16,617	16,971	33,588
Sancharak	6,879	7,175	14,054
Ghor			
Province Center (Chighcheran)	3,866	3,864	7,730
Uruzgan			
Province Center (Tirinkot)	3,724	3,725	7,449
Dehraoud	1,863	1,932	3,795
Gizab	2,005	2,069	4,074
Zabul			
Province Center (Qalat)	6,162	6,241	12,403
Kandahar			
Province Center (Kandahar)	242,770	248,050	490,820
Jawzjan			
Province Center (Sheberghan)	44,813	44,429	89,242
Aqchah	13,318	13,384	26,702
Qarqin	4,155	4,278	8,433
Darzab	1,145	1,104	2,249
Faryab			
Province Center (Maimana)	45,544	45,946	91,490
Dawlat Abad	2,861	2,760	5,621
Andkhoy	18,319	17,799	36,118
Helmand			
Province Center (Lashkargah)	44,498	40,621	85,119
Nahr-i- Saraj	5,492	5,066	10,558
Badghis			
Province Center (Qala-i-Now)	8,021	8,140	16,161
Herat			
Province Center (Herat)	270,069	268,604	538,673

URBAN LOCATION	URBAN POPULATION		
	Female	Male	Total
Karrukh	3,726	3,864	7,590
Kushk (Rubat-i-Sangi)	9,587	9,244	18,831
Ghoryan	19,048	19,179	38,227
Obe	2,003	1,931	3,934
Shindand	2,724	2,898	5,622
Farah			
Province Center (Farah)	20,060	20,697	40,757
Nimroz			
Province Center (Zaranj)	14,463	14,488	28,951
Total	3,715,096	3,792,857	7,507,953

2. Phase 2: 8 rural locations with a population of 5.2 million, timeframe Jan 2023 – Dec 2025

LOCATION	RURAL POPULATION		
	Female	Male	Total
Kabul	351,509	368,206	719,715
Kapisa	232,762	237,126	469,888
Parwan	319,453	327,380	646,833
Panjsher	80,151	83,964	164,115
Bamyan	228,785	235,585	464,370
Balkh	436,791	455,893	892,684
Diakundi	242,814	256,026	498,840
Herat	709,825	727,812	1,437,637
Total	2,602,090	2,691,992	5,294,082

3. Phase 3: 10 locations with a population of 6.6 million, timeframe Jan 2026 - Dec 2028

LOCATION	RURAL		
	Female	Male	Total
Maidan Wardaw	310,345	323,914	634,259
Logar	200,571	207,983	408,554
Laghman	229,552	241,363	470,915
Baghlan	377,413	398,633	776,046
Ghazni	610,557	638,712	1,249,269
Paktya	275,334	288,351	563,685
Takhar	446,409	465,779	912,188
Badghis	251,353	263,060	514,413
Samangan	186,462	196,556	383,018
Ghor	357,152	373,342	730,494
Total	3,245,148	3,397,693	6,642,841

4. Phase 4: 16 locations with a population of 10.6 million, timeframe Jan 2029 - Dec 2030

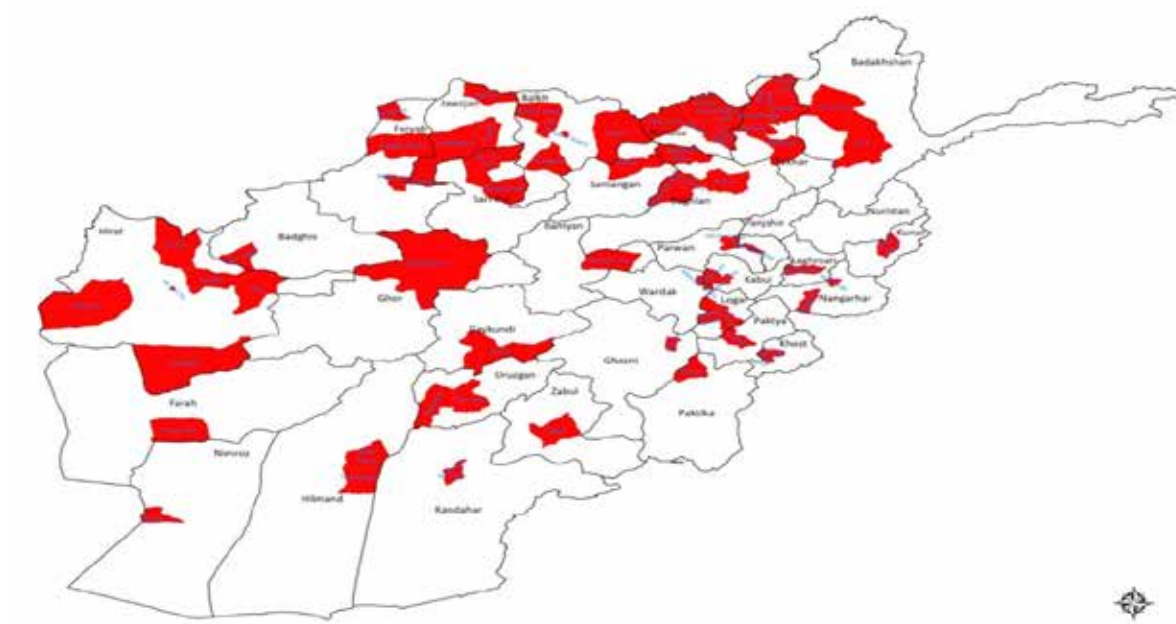
MINOR CIVIL DIVISION	RURAL		
	Female	Male	Total
Nangarhar	671,856	703,804	1,375,660
Khost	293,544	308,251	601,795
Nuristan	77,457	80,754	158,211
Kunduz	396,398	408,519	804,917
Uruzgan	197,962	207,684	405,646
Zabul	175,900	182,740	358,640
Jawzjan	222,372	230,835	453,207
Paktika	363,980	380,114	744,094
Sar-i-Pul	269,178	282,317	551,495
Faryab	457,951	478,360	936,311
Helmand	637,103	662,734	1,299,837
Kandahar	412,808	433,555	846,363
Farah	244,812	257,668	502,480
Nimroz	72,200	75,747	147,947
Badakhshan	478,855	497,747	976,602
Kunar	227,885	239,052	466,937
Total	5,200,261	5,429,881	10,630,142

Annex G. List of key stakeholders consulted

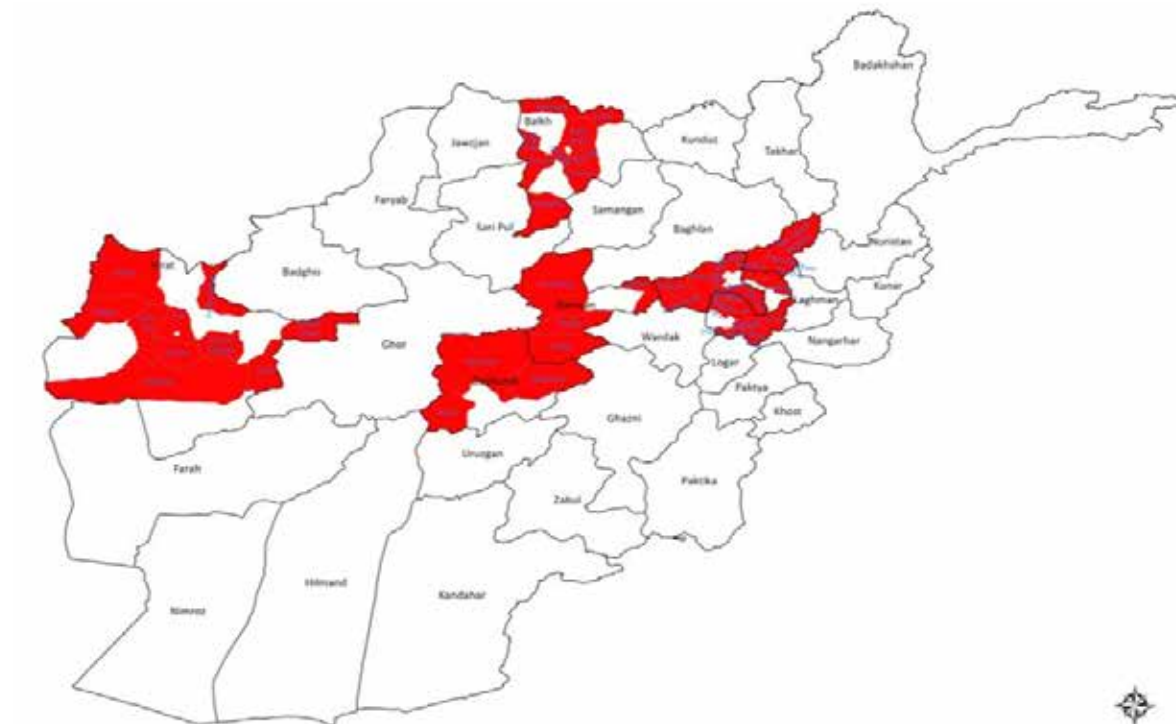
NO	AGENCY	DEPARTMENT
1	Embassy of the United States, Kabul Afghanistan	Law enforcement, Human Rights
2	Embassy of the United Kingdom, Kabul Afghanistan	Department for International Development
3	United Nations Children Fund	Child Protection Section
4	War Child Canada	Legal Department
5	Ministry of Labor, Social, Martyrs and Disabled	Policy and Planning
6	Ministry of Labor, Social, Martyrs and Disabled	Child Secretariat
7	Ministry of Labor, Social, Martyrs and Disabled	Social Projection
8	Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs	Policy and Planning
9	GoodWeave	Management
10	Attorney General Office	Child Department
11	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development	Policy and Planning
12	Terre des hommes (Tdh)	Child Protection
13	Ministry of Public Health	Integrate Management of Newborn and Child Illnesses
14	Children in Crisis	Child Protection
15	Afghan Women Education Center	Education
16	Agha Khan Foundation	Child Protection
17	Ministry of Education	Deputy Minister
18	Ministry of Interior	Gender and Child Rights
19	Ministry of Agriculture	Policy and Planning
20	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Policy and Planning
21	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission	Human Rights
22	Ministry of Culture and Information	Coordination
23	Ministry of Women Affairs	Policy and Planning

Annex H. Contextualized intervention phases mapped out

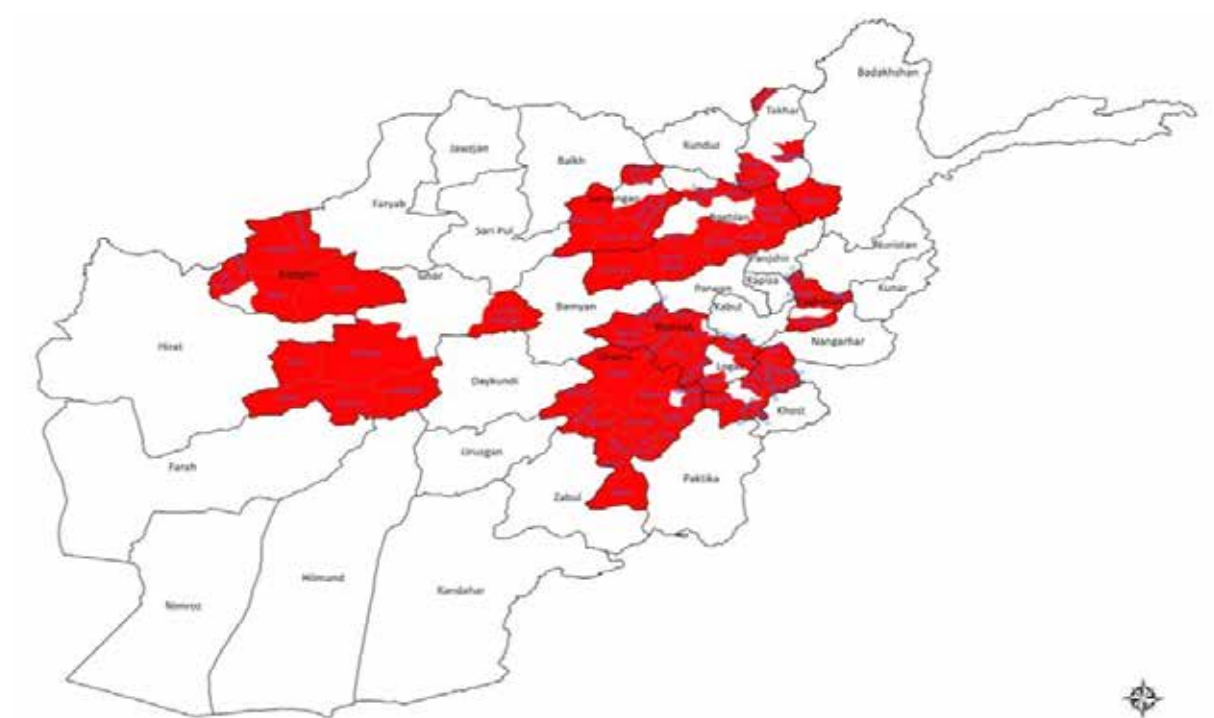
National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan - Phase 1



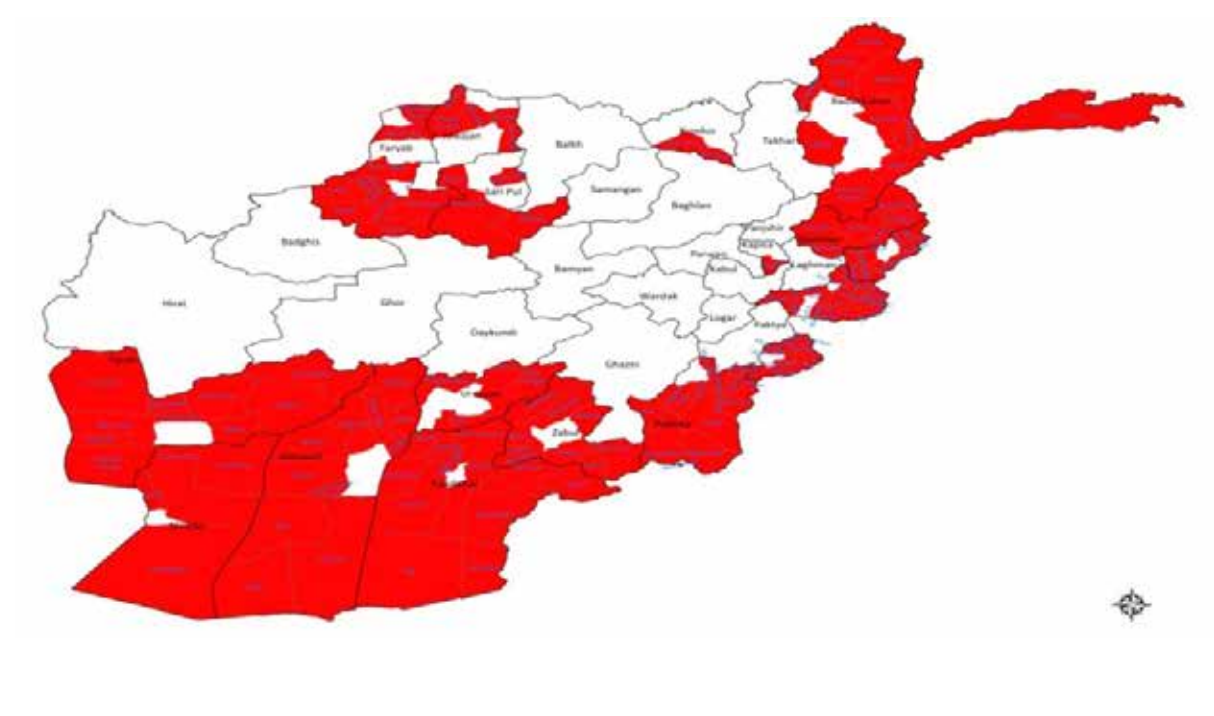
National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan - Phase 2



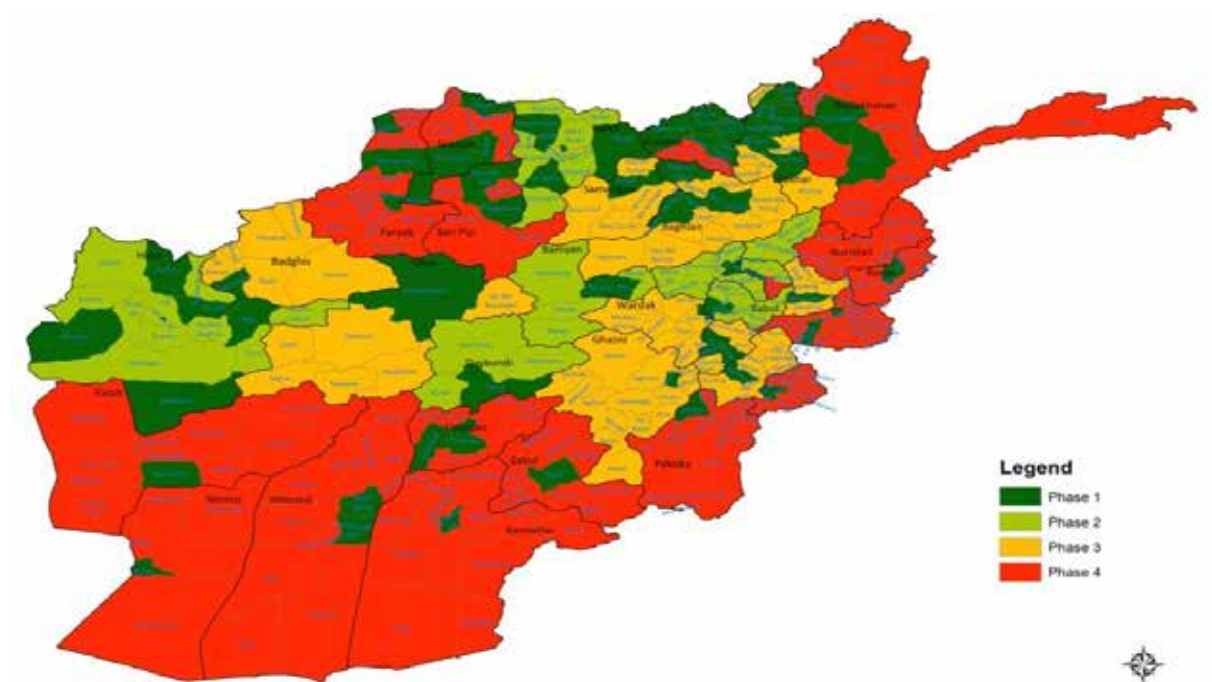
National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan - Phase 3



National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan - Phase 4



National Child Labor Strategy and Action Plan - 2018 - 2030





**Fundamental Principles and Rights
at Work Branch (FUNDAMENTALS)**

International Labour Office
4 route des Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva 22 – Switzerland
Tel.: +41 (0) 22 799 61 11

childlabour@ilo.org – www.ilo.org/childlabour

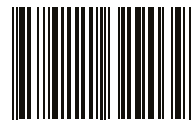
 [@ILO_Childlabour](https://twitter.com/ILO_Childlabour)

**Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs
and Disabled (MOLSAMD)**

Opposite to 1st Markroryan Market
Kabul, Afghanistan

info@molsamd.gov.af – <https://molsamd.gov.af>

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