March 2021

Building the Evidence Base for Effective Antislavery Governance

Afghanistan Country Profile

Dr Ana Valverde-Cano, Dr Katarina Schwarz, Dr Daniel Ogunniyi

About this report

This report was prepared by Dr Ana Valverde-Cano (Rights Lab Research Fellow in Antislavery Law and Policy), Dr Katarina Schwarz (Rights Lab Associate Director), and Dr Daniel Ogunniyi (Rights Lab Research Fellow).

The report is based primarily on research conducted from 2020-2021 and may not therefore consider more recent emerging evidence.

About the project

The report was produced to support the research project 'Building the Evidence Base for Effective Antislavery Governance in the UK and the Top 20 UK Source Countries', funded by the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre. The research team consisted of Dr Katarina Schwarz (Rights Lab, University of Nottingham), Dr Ana Valverde-Cano (Rights Lab), Dr Daniel Ogunniyi (Rights Lab), Alexandra Williams-Woods (CSIS, University of Liverpool), and Prof Jean Allain (Wilberforce Institute, University of Hull).

The **Rights Lab** is a University of Nottingham "Beacon of Excellence" and home to the world's largest and leading group of modern slavery researchers. Through its five research programmes, impact team, and INSPIRE project, the Rights Lab is underpinning antislavery with an advanced research agenda, collaborating with civil society, business, and government, and elevating survivor-informed research as a key part of knowledge production to help end slavery.

The **Wilberforce Institute** at the University of Hull aims to advance fundamental knowledge of slavery and emancipation, informing policy, business practice and public debate at local, national and international levels. The Wilberforce Institute brings together experts in humanities, law and social sciences to help tackle this global problem head on

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1.1. GSI rankings and government response ratings[1]

	Vulnerability		Prevalence			Government response	
	Ranking[2]	Score[3]	Ranking[4]	Absolute[5]	/ 1000[6]	Ranking[7]	Rating[8]
2013	**4** /162	79.23	**58** /162	86,089	2.88	-	-
2014	**10** /167	75.1	**62** /167	132,800	4.35	**119** /167	CC
2016	**4** /167	67.06	**6** /167	367,600	11.3	-	XXX
2018	**3** /167	93.9	**5** /167	749,000	22.2	-	XXX

Although the nature of modern slavery makes measuring the phenomenon an inherently difficult task, the Walk Free Foundation's Global Slavery Index (GSI) aims to provide the 'best available data and information about the scale and regional distribution of modern slavery'.[9] This includes **national prevalence estimates** of the number of people experiencing modern slavery in each country, calculated on the basis of a predictive model that accounts for individual and country-level risk factors.

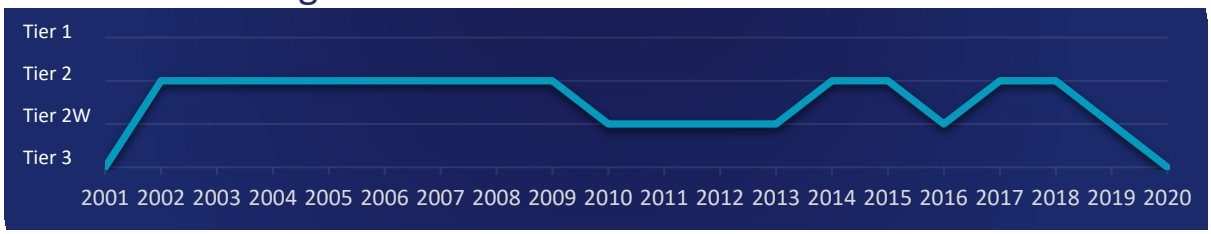
National prevalence estimates are analysed in the context of results of Walk Free's **Vulnerability Model**. This model uses 'statistical testing and processes to identify the factors that explain or predict the prevalence of modern slavery'.[10] The 2018 Vulnerability Model features five factors, made up of 23 distinct variables: governance issues, lack of basic needs, inequality, disenfranchised groups, and effects of conflict.

Walk Free also tracks **government responses** to modern slavery, tracking government efforts across five milestones: (1) survivors of slavery are identified and supported to exit and remain out of slavery; (2) criminal justice mechanisms function effectively to prevent modern slavery; (3) coordination occurs at the national and regional level, and governments are held to account for their response; (4) risk factors such as attitudes, social systems, and institutions that enable modern slavery are addressed; and (5) government and business stop sourcing goods and services produced by forced labour.[11]

It should be noted that the scope, methodology, and sources underpinning GSI findings has changed over the years. This means that data between different reporting years is not directly comparable.

[1] Walk Free Foundation, 'The Global Slavery Index 2013' (2013), available here; 'The Global Slavery Index 2014' (2014), available here; 'The Global Slavery Index 2016' (2016), available here; 'The Global Slavery Index 2018' (2018), available here.
[2] Note: a higher ranking (closer to 1) indicates high vulnerability relative to other countries.
[3] Note: a higher score indicates increased vulnerability to modern slavery, with a median country score of 47.28 in 2018.
[4] Note: a higher ranking (closer to 1) indicates a high number of people experiencing modern slavery per 1000 in the overall population relative to other countries.
[5] Note: absolute prevalence measures the estimated number of people experiencing modern slavery in the country.
[6] Note: prevalence /1000 measures the number of people estimated to experience modern slavery per 1000 people in the overall population.
[7] Note: a higher ranking (closer to 1) indicates better government responses to modern slavery relative to other countries.
[8] Note: government response ratings are broken into scoring bands, with an A rating representing the strongest government response to modern slavery (with a score of 70-79.9), followed by BBB (60-69.9), BB (50-59.9), B (40-49.9), CCC (30-39.9), CC (20-29.9), C (10-19.9), and D (<0-9.9).
[9] Walk Free Foundation, 'Global Findings' (2018), available here.
[10] Walk Free Foundation, 'Methodology: Vulnerability' (2018), available here.
[11] Walk Free Foundation, 'Methodology: Government Response' (2018), available here.

1.2. TIP Rankings 2001-2020



The Trafficking in Persons report ranks countries into one of four tiers, as mandated by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act 2000 (TVPA). A country's ranking is based on an assessment of the government's efforts to address trafficking in persons, rather than on the extent of trafficking within the country, and considers government action against the TVPA's minimum standards.[12]

Tier 1: Countries whose governments fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. To maintain a Tier 1 ranking, the country must continue to make progress in its anti-trafficking efforts each year.

Tier 2: countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

Tier 2 Watch List: Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards, and for which:

(a) the absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing;
(b) there is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year, including increased investigations, prosecution, and convictions of trafficking crimes, increased assistance to victims, and decreasing evidence of complicity in severe forms of trafficking by government officials; or
(c) the determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take additional steps over the next year.

Tier 3: Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so. Countries ranked as Tier 3 may be subjected to restrictions on non-humanitarian, non-trade foreign assistance from the US. Impositions of such restrictions are determined by the President.[13]

1.3. Quantitative measures on anti-trafficking governance (TIP Reports)[14]

Measure	Year	Qty	
Individuals investigated and prosecuted for trafficking	2019	16	[1]
Trafficking suspects investigated	2018	138	[1]
Trafficking suspects prosecuted	2018	64	[1]
Traffickers convicted	2018	34	[1]

[12] Minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking are found in section 108, Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act 2000 (United States), available here.
[13] See further Department of State (2020), above n **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, 40-41.
[14] Sources:
[1] US Department of State (2020), above n **Error! Bookmark not defined.**.
[2] US Department of State (2019), above n **Error! Bookmark not defined.**.

Trafficking suspects investigated	2017	132	[2]
Trafficking suspects prosecuted	2017	73	[2]
Traffickers convicted	2017	33	[2]
Individuals trained on anti-trafficking	2018	1850	[2]
Trafficking cases investigated	2018	138	[2]

2. Treaty commitments[15]

Instrument	Ratification date
1926 Slavery Convention	9 Nov 1935
1953 Protocol to the Slavery Convention	16 August 1954
1930 Forced Labour Convention	N/A
2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention	N/A
1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery	16 Nov 1966
1957 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention	16 May 1963
1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	24 January 1983
1966 Optional Protocol to the ICCPR	N/A
1990 Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families	N/A
1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court	7 Nov 2004
1999 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention	7 April 2010
2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children	15 August 2014
2000 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	19 September 2002
2000 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict	24 September 2003
2011 Domestic Workers Convention	
Key International Commitments	
1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights	
1985 Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power	
2005 UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law	
2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals (5.3, 8.7)	
2017 Call to Action to End Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking	

[15] UN Treaty ratification info sourced from UN Treaty Collection available here; ILO Convention ratifications available here; Rome Statute ratification status available here.

3. General country context

3.1. Law and Governance Frameworks

Afghanistan is a mixed legal system composed of civil, customary, and Islamic law.[16] Although Afghanistan has a centralised constitutional system, in reality, the country is highly decentralised, with power often recognised as residing in informal institutions, patronage networks, local government officials or a combination of these entities.[17] Afghanistan has a bicameral legislature consisting of a 102 seat Meshrano Jirga or House of Elders and a 250 seat Wolesi Jirga or House of People. President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is the chief of state and head of government. The Afghan president is directly elected by absolute majority popular vote for a 5-year term, with possibility of re-election for a second term.[18] The Supreme Court or Stera Mahkama is the highest court in Afghanistan. The Afghan president with the approval of the Wolesi Jirga appoints the Supreme Court Chief and other justices to serve single 10-year terms.[19]

3.2. Political context

Afghanistan has experienced decades of political instability and insecurity amid successive wars and violent conflicts.[20] The country's president Ashraf GHANI has been in office since 29 September 2014, and won re-election in the September 2019 general elections.[21] The result was however rejected by former presidential candidate and Afghanistan's former Chief Executive Officer, Abdullah.[22] Claiming the election results were 'fraudulent and illegal', Abdullah held a parallel inauguration ceremony on 9 March, the same day Ashraf Ghani was sworn in as president.[23] Following long disagreements, president Ghani and Abdullah concluded a power-sharing arrangement on 17 May 2020, effectively resolving a political impasse that lasted for three months.[24] The agreement specifies a 50% share in the Government for Mr. Abdullah, including political appointments to ministries, provincial governors, and other government agencies. Further, agreement was reached to establish a High Council of Government and a High Council for Peace and National Reconciliation. The former would consist of political leaders and national stakeholders and will focus on building political consensus and advising the President on national issues, while the latter, which is headed by Abdullah, would chart the roadmap for the management of the peace process.[25]

In terms of its democratic processes, Afghanistan ranked 141 of 167 countries in the 2019 Democracy Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit, suggesting that the system remains fraught with many challenges.[26]

During 2018, military campaigns by insurgent groups, government forces and foreign powers intensified and led to more than 10,000 civilian deaths in various locations across the country.[27] Insurgents carried out the vast majority of the killings, although an increase

[16] Central Intelligence Agency, 'The World FactBook: Afghanistan' (2020), above n here.
[17] Robert D. Lamb and Brooke Shawn, 'Political Governance and Strategy in Afghanistan' (Centre for Strategic & International Studies, 2012) 16, above n here.
[18] Central Intelligence Agency, above n 16.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Suparva Narasimhaiah, 'A Mapping Study: Institutional Mechanisms to Tackle Trafficking in Persons in Afghanistan' (2017) 23, available here.
[21] Central Intelligence Agency, above n 16.
[22] Khaama Press, 'Ghani dissolves Office of the Chief Executive' *Khaama Press* (2020), available here.
[23] UN Security Council, 'The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security Report of the Secretary-General' (A/74/897–S/2020/549, 17 June 2020), available here.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] The Economist Intelligence Unit, 'Democracy Index 2019: A year of democratic setbacks and popular protest' (The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited, 2020).
[27] Human Rights Watch, 'Afghanistan: Events of 2018' (2019), available here.

in airstrikes by US and Afghan forces also caused hundreds of civilian deaths.[28] Between January and March 2020, the United Nations' Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) recorded 1,293 civilian casualties (533 killed and 760 injured) – a 29% decrease from the same period in 2019.[29] The UN Secretary General has recently noted in a report that 'the conflict in Afghanistan continues to be one of the deadliest in the world for civilians.'[30]

Press freedom is also increasingly stifled, and accompanied by killings of journalists and media workers.[31] The 2020 World Press Freedom Index ranks Afghanistan as 122 of 180 countries.[32]

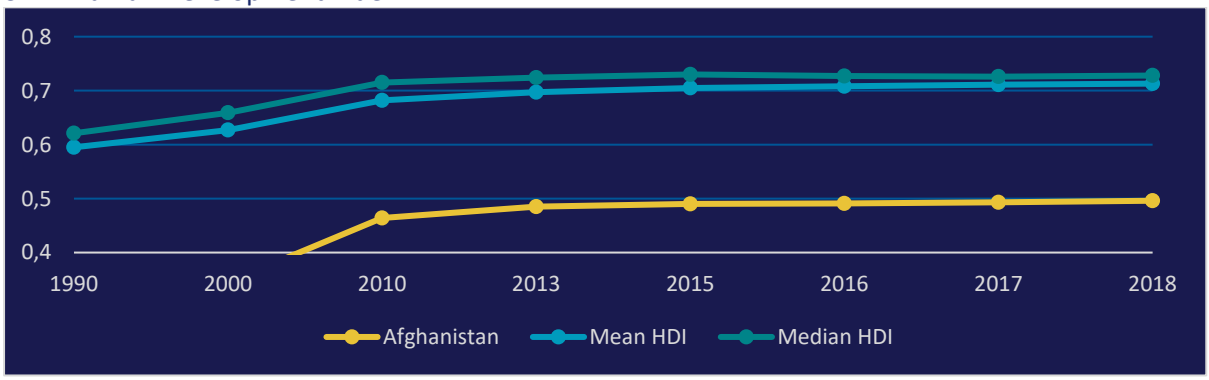
3.3. Migration profile

During the last four decades, Afghanistan has witnessed an unprecedented scale of population movements, mainly due to war and conflicts between rival powers and their proxies.[33] As of mid-2019, there were 149,000 international migrants in Afghanistan, while the total number of Afghan emigrants in foreign countries was 5.1 million.[34] Aside from conflict-induced migration, a research by IOM has noted that Afghans are forced to migrate either internally or to countries such as Iran and Pakistan, because of natural disasters, poverty, and human trafficking.[35]

In 2016, countries hosting Afghan legal residents include Pakistan (1,352,160), Iran (951,142), Germany (46,292), Austria (20,220), Sweden (16,558), Italy (16,033), Greece (11,440), United Kingdom (9,752), Switzerland (5,675), and Turkey (3,423). This data does not include Afghans residing abroad without documentation.[36] Aside from Afghan migrants in foreign countries, over 1.5 million individuals are believed to internally displaced within the country.[37]

3.4. Development profile

3.4.1 Human Development Index[38]



The Human Development Index (HDI) measures average life expectancy, level of education and income for each country in the world. Each country is given a score between 0 and 1 - the closer a country gets to 1, the more developed it is.[39] Afghanistan's scores place it in the 'Low Human Development' grouping.

[28] Ibid.
[29] UN Security Council, above n 23.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Reporters without Borders, 'Afghanistan: Will press freedom be sacrificed?' (2020), available here.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Matthew Willner-Reid, 'Afghanistan: Displacement Challenges in a Country on the Move' (2017), available here.
[34] Migration Data Portal, 'Afghanistan' (2020), available here.
[35] International Organisation for Migration, 'Afghanistan: Migration Profile' (IOM, 2014) 22, available here.
[36] Matthew Willner-Reid, above n 33.
[37] Ibid.
[38] UNDP, 'Human Development Indicators – Afghanistan' (2019), available here.
[39] UNDP, 'Human Development Reports', available here.

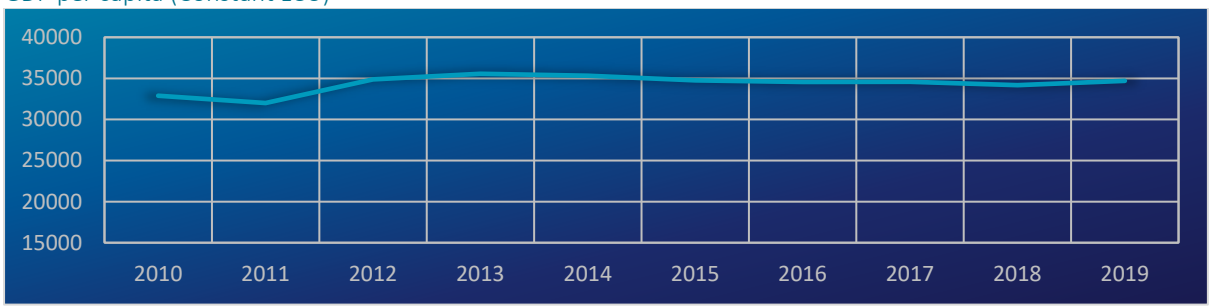
3.4.2 Afghanistan's achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals[40]

Year	Rank	Score
2020	139	54.22
2019	153	49.6
2018	151	46.2
2017	150	46.8
2016	139	39.5

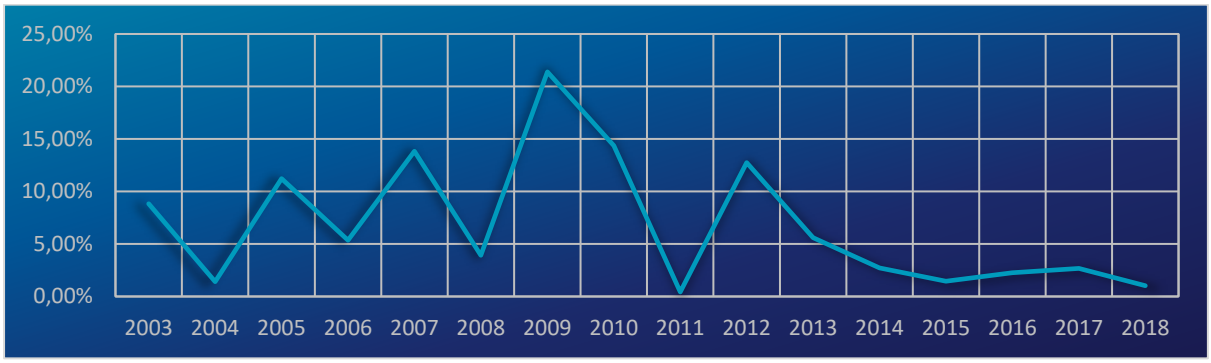
The Sustainable Development Reports assess implementation of, and progress towards, the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals. The SDG Index and Dashboards summarise countries' current performance and trends across the 17 SDGs. All SDGs are weighted equally in the index. Changing indicators, data, and methodology used to determine rankings and scores mean that SDG index results are not comparable over time.[41]

3.4.3 Afghanistan's GDP Rates

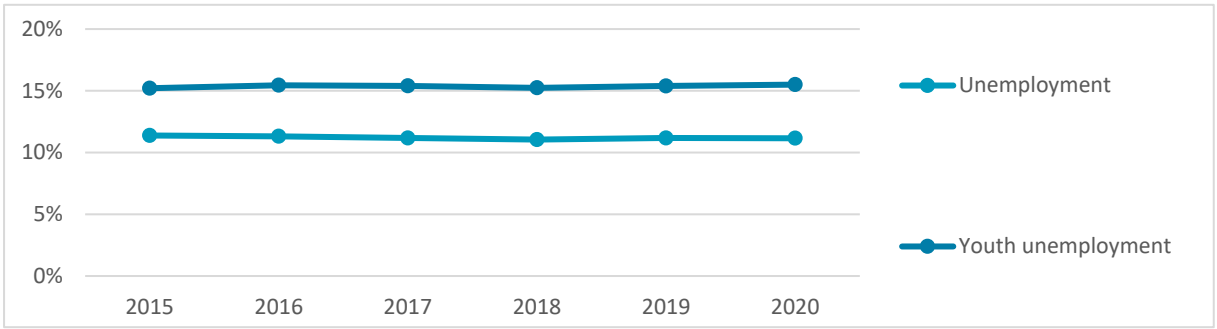
GDP per capita (Constant LCU)[42]



GDP Growth Rate[43]



3.4.4 Other relevant indicators[44]



[40] Sustainable Development Report (2020), available here.
[41] Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 'Sustainable Development Report 2019' (June 2019) 19.
[42] World Bank, 'GDP per capita (constant LCU) – Afghanistan', available here.
[43] World Bank, 'GDP Growth Rate – Afghanistan', available here.
[44] World Bank, 'Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate) – Afghanistan', available here; World Bank, 'Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate)', available here.

3.5. Afghanistan's Human Rights Record

Afghanistan is grappling with a myriad of human rights issues, including unlawful civilian killings by the Taliban and the Islamic State group. Islamic State Khorasan Province frequently targeted Shia Muslims, including those belonging to the Hazara ethnic group. In August 2019, the group attacked a wedding ceremony in Kabul killing 63 civilians and injuring more than 200. The Taliban also claimed responsibility for another attack in western Kabul where at least 14 people were killed and 145 injured in a suicide attack in a predominantly Shia neighbourhood.[45]

Although the government acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture in 2018, it failed to hold the police and personnel of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) accountable for systematic torture and extrajudicial killings.[46] Following an interview of prison detainees, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has stated that 79 persons or 12% of the 621 interviewees reported being tortured, to elicit confessions as well as punishment.[47] Other human rights issues in Afghanistan include corruption by government officials, sexual abuse of children, violence against members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community, and violence against journalists.[48]

Further, human rights defenders and activists are under intensifying attacks from both the authorities and non-state armed groups. These individuals face intimidation, harassment, threats, and have been killed in attacks that were never investigated or prosecuted by the authorities.[49] Also, there is continued impunity for violence against women and girls in Afghanistan, with police and prosecutors regularly pressuring victims to accept mediation rather than prosecuting the perpetrators.[50]

3.6. Social support systems

The main legislation governing social security in Afghanistan is the Labour Code.[51] The statute provides in article 134 that employees, and in some instances, members of their family can benefit from social securities, including food allowance, transportation means, support in finding shelter, and medical services. Old age retirement aid, work related disability and sickness aid are also provided, which must be equal to 10 months of salary along with its allowances and supplements as per the last monthly salary. Article 134 also makes provision for aid after giving birth, financial aid for a deceased employee's family to support with the burial ceremony, an amount which must be equal to 10 months salary along with its allowances as per the last salary, retirement pension on the basis of old-age, illness, disability and other related conditions. Article 135 of the Labour Code further provides that social securities would be achieved through the financial participation of organisations and their employees; while the nature of support provided to employees would be determined by the state of the national economy.

Under article 14 of the Afghan constitution, the state undertakes, within its financial means to design and implement effective programs to develop agriculture, and improve the socioeconomic conditions of farmers. The provision further states that the 'state shall adopt necessary measures for provision of housing and distribution of public estates to deserving citizens in accordance with the provisions of law and within financial possibilities.' Under article 75, the government also undertakes to devise and implement social, economic and other development programs.

[45] Amnesty International, 'Afghanistan 2019' (2020), available here.
[46] Human Rights Watch, above n 2727.
[47] US Department of State, '2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Afghanistan' (2018), available here.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Amnesty International, 'Afghanistan: Human rights defenders under attack' (2019), available here.
[50] Human Rights Watch, above n 27.
[51] Labour Code available here.

4. National modern slavery context

4.1. Modern slavery profile

Modern slavery, especially trafficking in persons is widespread across Afghanistan. Trafficking mainly occurs internally and to a lesser degree across borders, with Afghans of different ages and genders exploited in diverse sectors.[52] More specifically, over 60% of women and child trafficking takes place within Afghanistan, while cross-border trafficking accounts for 40% of cases.[53]

The security and cultural context in Afghanistan generally makes it difficult to understand the actual situation of modern slavery in the country, as many of the practices are hidden from view, while entrenched cultures prevent victims from reporting cases of abuse or exploitation.[54] Nevertheless, a study by the Walk Free Foundation indicates that Afghanistan is among the top 10 countries for modern slavery prevalence globally.[55] In some instances, traffickers compel entire families to work in the brick-making industry, mainly in eastern Afghanistan and in carpet weaving in different regions across the country under bonded labour conditions.[56] The majority of trafficking victims in Afghanistan are children compelled to work in brick kilns, carpet making factories, domestic servitude, commercial sex, salt mining, transnational drug smuggling, and truck driving, among others.[57] Many Afghan boys are also forced to perform *bacha bazi*, or boy play, where men including members of the military and police force, tribal leaders, warlords, and mafia heads, exploit them to provide social and sexual entertainment. These boys are often used as dancers at parties and ceremonies, where they may be sexually exploited.[58]

There is further evidence that some Afghan children are trafficked abroad, to countries such as Germany, Macedonia, Hungary, Serbia, Iran, and Pakistan.[59] Afghan victims have also been detected in the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, and the UK.[60] For the most part, Afghan boys are trafficked abroad for forced labour in construction and the agricultural sector, while girls are often trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation and domestic work.[61] Forced displacement, induced by conflict and persecution has made many Afghans vulnerable to modern slavery,[62] while some children were offered to traffickers to settle their family's debt.[63] Many of the victims are trafficked for labour exploitation and sexual exploitation.[64] With regard to trafficking inflows into Afghanistan, the 2020 TIP Report notes that traffickers lure women and girls from Iran, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, and China to sex trafficking in Afghanistan.[65] Workers from South and Central Asia are also subjected to forced labour in Afghanistan, following false promises of employment contracts.[66]

[52] Samuel Hall Consulting, 'Old Practice, New Chains, Modern slavery in Afghanistan: A study of Human Trafficking from 2003-2013' (2014) 34, available here.
[53] UNODC, 'GLOTIP Report: West and South Asia' (UNODC 2018), available here.
[54] Samuel Hall Consulting, above n 52, 34.
[55] Walk Free Foundation, '2018 Global Findings' (2018), available here.
[56] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 67.
[57] Ibid.
[58] US Department of Labour, '2018 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour' (2018), available here.
[59] Ibid.
[60] UNODC, 'Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018' (2019) 54, available here.
[61] US Department of State (2019), above n 12, 61.
[62] UNODC, above n 60, 12.
[63] US Department of Labour, above n 58.
[64] Samuel Hall Consulting, above n 52, 20.
[65] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 68.
[66] Ibid.

4.2. Causes and drivers of modern slavery and transnational trafficking

The high poverty rates in Afghanistan in addition to large family compositions make many individuals susceptible to modern slavery.[67] The average household size in Afghanistan is 8 members.[68] Some parents offer their children to traffickers or subject them to forced labour conditions to ensure the survival of other members of the family.[69] Related to poverty, another factor creating modern slavery vulnerabilities is debt, which is a common denominator for many Afghan families. Given limited social capital and social safety nets, households are frequently indebted to employers and shopkeepers, and in many instances to multiple lenders simultaneously. Loans are rarely taken from microfinance banks, which makes many Afghans vulnerable to trafficking in the hands of their lenders.[70] The 2020 TIP Report has further noted that, 'opium-farming families sometimes sell their children to settle debts with opium traffickers, and some drug-addicted parents subject their children to sex trafficking or force them into labour, including begging.'[71]

Protracted conflict is also contributing to the human trafficking problem in Afghanistan. In 2004, Afghanistan had the highest proportion of widows and orphan population in the world. These individuals, former regional militia members and persons handicapped by war generally lack a means of support, which makes them easy targets for traffickers.[72] Further, conflict-induced displacement often disrupts income sources and social networks in a way that many households are vulnerable to human trafficking and other forms of exploitation.[73]

4.3. Particularly vulnerable groups

Most trafficking victims in Afghanistan are children exploited in different sectors,[74] including those sold by their parents to traffickers. Children are often found in domestic servitude, carpet making, brick kilns, begging, commercial sex, poppy cultivation and harvesting, salt mining, assistant truck driving, and transnational drug smuggling.[75] Further, there is evidence that children are used in combat and non-combat operations by government forces.[76] Many Afghan boys are also forced to perform *bacha bazi*, or boy play, a practice existing in all provinces across the country, where they may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation.[77]

Restrictions around female mobility and visibility often makes men and boys more vulnerable to labour exploitation than women and girls in Afghanistan. Afghan culture largely forbids women from working outside of the home after reaching puberty, although some women are still trafficked for labour exploitation, where they work in more obscure settings or at night.[78]

The internally displaced population as well as Afghan returnees from Pakistan and Iran are also vulnerable to labour and sex trafficking.[79]

[67] Samuel Hall Consulting, above n 5252, 18.
[68] UN Economic & Social Affairs, 'Household Size and Composition Around the World 2017' (2018), available here.
[69] Samuel Hall Consulting, above n 5252, 18.
[70] Ibid 20.
[71] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 67.
[72] IOM, 'Trafficking in Persons in Afghanistan: Field Survey Report' (2008) 20, available here.
[73] Samuel Hall Consulting, above n 5252, 9.
[74] US Department of State (2019), above 12, 60
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid 61.
[77] US Department of Labour, above n 58.
[78] Samuel Hall Consulting, above n 5252, 42.
[79] US Department of State (2019), above n 12, 61.

5. Antislavery governance frameworks

5.1. Legislative measures

5.1.1. Afghanistan's Constitution 2004[80]

Article 49 of the constitution prohibits forced labour, although work may be required from Afghans in times of war or emergency threatening the life of the nation. The provision specifically states 'Forced labor shall be forbidden. Active participation in times of war, disaster, and other situations that threaten public life and comfort shall be among the national duties of every Afghan. Forced labor on children shall not be allowed.' Article 24 of the constitution also affirms the liberty of Afghans, noting that liberty and human dignity are inviolable.

5.1.2. The Law to Combat Crimes of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants 2017

The legislation criminalises sex trafficking and labour trafficking, with penalties ranging from five to eight years' imprisonment. The sentence is 10 to 15 years imprisonment in case of aggravating factors, and the death penalty if exploitation for armed fighting results in the victim's death.[81]

5.1.3. Penal Code 2018

Article 510 of the criminal code criminalises sex trafficking and labour trafficking, including the *bacha bazi* practice to which many Afghan children are subjected. Article 511 prescribes penalties ranging from five to 10 years' imprisonment for general acts of trafficking, and 10 to 16 years' imprisonment if the victim is a woman or child, or exploited in bacha bazi. Article 512 outlines aggravating factors and penalties ranging from 16 to 20 years' imprisonment for sex trafficking or forced armed fighting and between 20 to 30 years' if the victim dies while subjected to trafficking.[82]

5.1.4. The Labour Law 2007[83]

Article 4 of the Labour Law prohibits forced or compulsory labour. It specifically notes that work accompanied by threat or against the will of the victim constitutes forced labour. Article 13(4) also prohibits aspects of the worst forms of child labour, noting that 'recruiting young people less than 18 years of age for businesses that are injurious to their health and cause physical damage or disability is prohibited.'

5.1.5. The Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW) 2009[84]

The law safeguards the legal rights of women while prohibiting customs and practices that subject women to exploitation and violence. Article 5 contains a list of practices constituting violence against women, including forced labour, forcing into prostitution, and selling and buying for the purpose of marriage. The 2020 TIP report notes that authorities have sometimes used the law to prosecute and convict sex traffickers.[85]

5.1.6. Child Protection Act

In 2019, the Afghan parliament enacted the Child Protection Act, which criminalises child labour, trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children.[86] The legislation also prohibits *bacha bazi*, which exploits Afghan boys and criminalises the recruitment of children as soldiers.[87]

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[80] Constitution 2004 available here.
[81] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 64.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Labour Law 2007 available here.
[84] Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women available here.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Shadi Khan Saif, 'Afghan parliament ratifies Child Protection Act' (2019), available here.
[87] Gulabuddin Ghubar, 'Afghanistan Begins Implementing Law On Child Protection' Tolo News (2019), available here.

5.2. Prosecution

The 2020 TIP Report indicates that Afghan authorities investigated and prosecuted 16 suspected traffickers in 2019, of which 7 persons were convicted, 4 acquitted while the trial of 5 suspects continued.[88] The 2019 numbers show a significant decline from the investigation of 138 alleged traffickers in 2018. In addition, 64 suspected traffickers were prosecuted and 34 persons convicted under the 2017 anti-trafficking law and the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women during 2018.[89] During 2017, 132 suspected traffickers were investigated, 73 persons were prosecuted with 33 convictions secured.[90] In 2015, authorities recorded five cases of buying and selling of women for the purpose or under pretext of marriage under the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women.[91]

Overall, the 2020 TIP notes that Afghan officials were often reluctant to investigate or prosecute cases of bacha bazi, and if investigations were conducted, they were classed as other crimes such as kidnapping. For instance, during 2019, authorities convicted 5 civilians of bacha bazi, without using the anti-trafficking law.[92] The TIP Report further notes that, the 'government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of any allegedly complicit officials for trafficking offenses. Disregard for the rule of law and widespread official complicity in trafficking, especially *bacha bazı*, overwhelmingly impeded efforts to address these crimes.'[93] Also, some trafficking victims alleged judiciary officials and law enforcement agents requested sexual favours in exchange for pursuing cases.[94]

5.3. National policies and plans

5.3.1. Anti-trafficking National Action Plan 2018-2021

The government extended the pre-existing action plan, which initially expired in April 2018, until 2021.[95]

5.3.2. National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) 2007 -2017

Although no longer in effect, the action plan implemented the gender provisions of the Constitution and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It, *inter alia*, recognised the vulnerabilities of women and girls, noting that while men and boys are equally vulnerable, women are more susceptible to exploitation, including sexual slavery.[96]

5.3.3. National Labour Policy[97]

Apart from the objectives of protecting workers in the broader labour force, it aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, draft and adopt legislation prohibiting child labour, and effectively enforce those laws.[98]

5.3.4. National Strategy for Street Working Children[99]

The national strategy provides a framework for protecting Afghan children working on the streets while preventing others from becoming street workers, through increased monitoring and coordination with relevant agencies. It specifically aims to protect children from exploitative and abusive practices including child labour and child prostitution.

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[88] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 65.
[89] Ibid.
[90] US Department of State (2019), above n 12, 58.
[91] UNODC, above n 53.
[92] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 65.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid 67.
[95] It was not possible to find the plan for further analysis. US Department of State (2019), above n 12, 60.
[96] National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) available here.
[97] National Labour Policy here, also referenced here.
[98] US Department of Labour, above n 58.
[99] National Strategy for Street Working Children available here.

5.3.5. National child labour Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2030[100]

The child labour strategy and action plan seeks to establish and maintain a child labour knowledge base in Afghanistan, while taking a holistic approach to combating the phenomenon. It also aims to improve law, law enforcement, prosecution of child labour and improvement of social work and social protection mechanisms. Another objective is the improvement of the child labourer's economic conditions as well as improving the institutional and technical capacities of responders.

5.3.6. Action Plan for the Prevention of Underage Recruitment[101]

The action plan aims to prevent the recruitment of underage children into the Afghan National Security Forces, including the National Army, National Police, the National Directory of Security, and pro-government militia groups. It also aims to achieve the release of underage children from the armed forces and reintegrate them back into families and communities.[102]

5.3.7. National Strategy for Children at Risk

This policy focuses specifically on working children, child trafficking victims, children recruited into the military, and other children affected by conflict, by providing them with social support.[103]

5.3.8. Policy for Protection of Children in Armed Conflict

The policy sets out to protect children from recruitment and sexual exploitation in the armed forces, while assisting children rescued from engagement in armed conflict. It tasks the Ministry of Defence and the Afghan National Police with monitoring and safeguarding children's rights, in coordination with other national bodies.[104]

5.4. National institutions and inter-departmental coordination

The High Commission for Combating Crimes of Abductions and Trafficking in Persons, under the Ministry of Justice is the central anti-trafficking body in Afghanistan. The High Commission was established by article 4 of the repealed 2008 anti-trafficking legislation and works in concert with ministries and provincial commissions to implement anti-trafficking policies across the country. The body is specifically tasked with studying and evaluating the factors inducing the crimes of abduction and trafficking in persons at country level, while increasing public awareness on the risks of human trafficking. The body also ensures interdepartmental coordination, collects/compiles anti-trafficking data and produces relevant reports.[105]

The High Commission is composed of representatives of the Attorney General's Office, the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Work, Social Affairs, Martyred and Disabled, the Ministry of Education, and representative of the Ministry of Culture and Information. Others include representatives of the Ministry of Hajj and Awqaf, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Ministry of Refugees, the Directorate of National Security, the Kabul Municipality, and representative of Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. Two representatives of Civil Society selected by the Minister of Justice are also part of the High Commission.

During 2018, the Ministry of Justice established a Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre in the Afghan capital, Kabul, to support children previously engaged in armed conflict.[106] Also, the Ministry of Interior has created 34 Child Protection Units (CPUs) across all provinces to prevent the recruitment of children into armed forces. The CPUs reportedly prevented the recruitment of 357 children into armed forces during 2019.[107] However, the 2020 TIP

[100] National child labour strategy and action plan 2018-2030 available here.
[101] Action Plan for the Prevention of Underage Recruitment here, also referenced here.
[102] US Department of Labour, above n 58.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Article 5 of repealed 2008 legislation.
[106] US Department of Labour, above n 58.
[107] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 67.

notes that 'CPUs were not sufficiently equipped, staffed, or trained to provide adequate oversight'. It further noted that the Afghan government did not have a sufficient referral pathway for children identified by CPUs and lacked sufficient ability to provide shelter, services, and family reintegration, which made the children highly vulnerable to recruitment and use in armed organisations and other exploitative activities.[108]

Regarding overall coordination, the 2020 TIP Report indicates that the High Commission is under-funded and lacks resources and influence to coordinate with member ministries; it instead relies on NGOs to coordinate and fund meetings.[109]

5.5. Victim support and assistance frameworks

The anti-trafficking legislation and relevant action plans provide a general framework for assisting victims of modern slavery. As trafficking and other forms of exploitation disproportionately affect children, the government has taken additional steps to improve protection mechanisms. In 2019, the government ordered several ministries to establish a National Child Protection Committee to address *bacha bazi* with representatives from different governmental bodies.[110] The authorities have established Child Protection Units in all 34 provinces to prevent the recruitment of children into armed organisations.[111] Similarly, the education ministry has recently set up a child protection unit, and has developed terms of reference to facilitate responses against sexual violence in schools.[112] In 2018, the government set up the Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre in Kabul to provide psychosocial and educational support, as well as vocational training to former child soldiers.[113]

In a report submitted to the Human Rights Council, Afghan authorities noted that some 138 children deported from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Turkey between 2014 and 2016 were reunited with their families in Kabul. Also, 668 children exploited in child trafficking returned and were supported by the government.[114] The authorities further removed 84,000 children from the streets and enrolled them in educational institutions during 2014/2015. Further, 794 families living close to brick kilns received financial education, which could facilitate sending their children back to school.[115] Family guidance centres in 19 provinces offered legal and social services to women and children, including trafficking victims. The government also recruited additional social workers, to assist child victims of crime.[116] Nevertheless, at times the authorities reportedly placed child trafficking victims in orphanages, where they were subjected to re-trafficking. Also, trafficking victims were sometimes placed in prisons if there were limited shelters.

5.6. Training and capacity-building for responders

In 2018, the government in partnership with IOM and USAID developed a training program to build the capacity of Afghan law enforcement officials and key stakeholders including border police, security forces, and officials from relevant ministries. The training also targets shelter managers, community leaders and religious imams. The training seeks to enhance the knowledge of participants on the international definition of trafficking in persons, the distinction between human trafficking and smuggling, techniques for identifying victims of trafficking, and familiarisation with specific institutional actors.[117] The

[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid 66.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid 67.
[112] Ibid 66.
[113] US Department of Labour, above n 58.
[114] Human Rights Council, 'National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21' (A/HRC/WG.6/32/AFG/1, 13 November 2018) 20, available here.
[115] Ibid 21.
[116] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 66.
[117] Government of Afghanistan and IOM, 'Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Training Manual' (2018) 7, available here.

2019 US TIP Report specifically notes that with in-kind assistance from the government, NGOs and international organisations conducted 91 capacity-building workshops in 2018. Some 1,850 members of the public, government officials, members of civil society organisations, and other stakeholders benefitted from the program.[118]

5.7. Public awareness raising

The US Bureau of International Affairs noted that Afghanistan's High Commission for Combating Crimes of Abductions and Trafficking in Persons carried out 450 awareness-raising programs, through radio, TV, and newspapers, reaching approximately 20 million individuals in 2018,[119] while the High Commission carried out 210 awareness-raising campaigns in the preceding year.[120]

The Ministry of Women Affairs also promotes gender awareness among the public. Although campaigns have not specifically focused on human trafficking, they touch on some relevant issues such as gender-based violence in the form of forced or underage marriages.[121]

5.8. Efforts to address vulnerabilities and drivers

The government has taken a number of steps to address vulnerability drivers, including by attempting to balance gender inequality. The government adopted a dedicated action plan 'National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan 2007-2017', to, *inter alia*, enable judicial actors prosecute crimes against women and provide legal support, fair trial, and humane correctional conditions to women in conflict with the law. A major aspect of the action plan is the focus on affirmative actions to address areas in which women's disadvantage is most serious.[122]

5.9. Frameworks for international coordination

To combat modern slavery, especially human trafficking, the government has signed a number or MOUs and agreements with other governments. For instance, the Afghan government and the United States have forged a strategic partnership where the latter provides extensive support in implementing and standardising Afghanistan's anti-trafficking mechanism. Since 2013, the Justice Sector Support Program (JSSP) of the US Department of State has worked closely with the Afghan Ministry of Justice, especially supporting the initial take-off of the High Commission for Combating Crimes of Abductions and Trafficking in Persons.[123] The JSSP also provided technical support in the drafting process of the 2017 anti-trafficking legislation.[124]

Further, at the regional level, Afghanistan is a member of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), where members unite to address regional problems, including human trafficking. Afghanistan is also party to the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. Since its establishment, the Bali Process has contributed to awareness raising efforts at the regional level, especially on the negative impacts of people smuggling, human trafficking and other transnational crimes. Afghanistan also has migrant labour agreements with Gulf countries to protect Afghan migrant workers in those countries.[125] Although, the extent of partnership between the government and international organisations has been very

[118] US Department of State (2019), above n 12, 59.
[119] US Department of Labour, above n 58.
[120] Ibid.
[121] IOM, above n 72, 51.
[122] National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), above n 96, 15, 19, 23.
[123] Suparva Narasimhaiah, above n 20, 37.
[124] Ibid 62.
[125] US Department of State (2020), above n 12, 67.

limited,[126] cooperation has nonetheless been developed with the IOM and USAID, with both entities undertaking several projects within the country.[127]

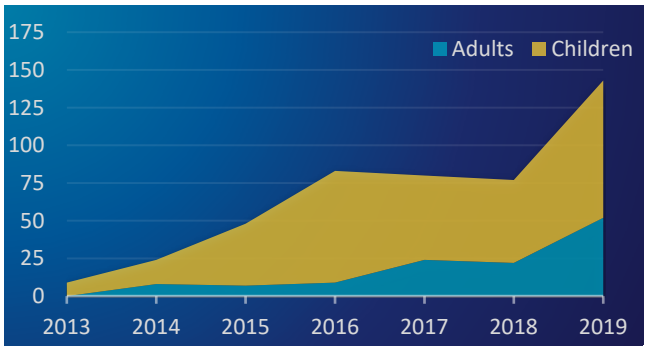
[126] Suparva Narasimhaiah, above n 20, 62.
[127] Ibid 64.

6. Experiences of modern slavery of Afghan nationals in the UK

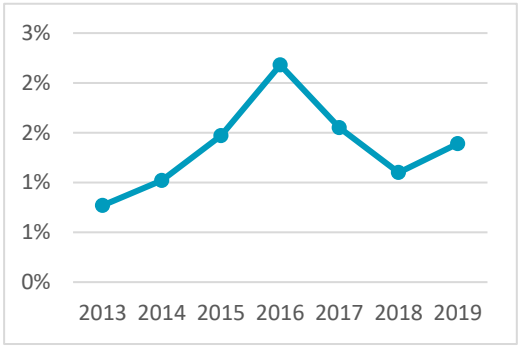
6.1. Afghan nationals in the UK National Referral Mechanism

Afghan nationals have consistently been in the top twenty nationalities represented in National Referral Mechanism referrals, although they have typically represented less than 2% of all referrals. The number of Afghan nationals referred into the NRM has varied from 9 potential victims referred in 2013, up to 148 referrals in 2019. Minors have usually made up the majority of Afghan nationals referred into the NRM, with between 9 (2013) and 91 (2019) Afghan nationals referred who were minors at the time of their exploitation from 2013-2019.[128]

Number of Afghan nationals referred into the NRM by age at time of exploitation

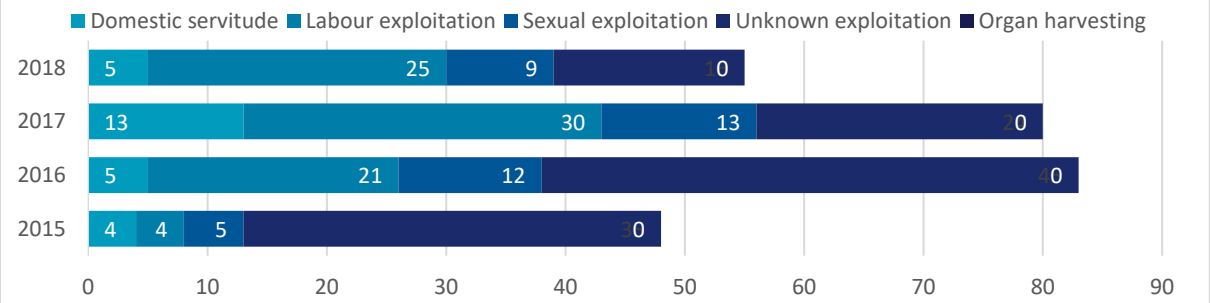


Proportion of potential victims referred into the NRM that are Afghan nationals



Afghan nationals referred into the NRM typically experience labour exploitation or unknown forms of exploitation, with only a small proportion of Afghan potential victims recorded as having experienced domestic servitude or sexual exploitation. While gender data was not disaggregated by nationality from 2015-2019, NRM reports included such data in the 2013 and 2014 reports. In these years, the majority of Afghan nationals referred into the UK NRM were male (100% in 2013 and 83% in 2014).

Number of Afghan nationals referred into the NRM by exploitation type[129]



[128] Home Office, 'National Referral Mechanism Statistics UK: End of Year Summary 2019: Data tables' 2nd edn available here; National Crime Agency, 'National Referral Mechanism Statistics – End of Year Summary 2018' (2019) available here; National Crime Agency, 'National Referral Mechanism Statistics – End of Year Summary 2017' (2018) available here; National Crime Agency, 'National Referral Mechanism Statistics – End of Year Summary 2016' (2017) available here; National Crime Agency, 'National Referral Mechanism Statistics – End of Year Summary 2015' (2016) available here; National Crime Agency, 'National Referral Mechanism Statistics – End of Year Summary 2014' (2015) available here; National Crime Agency, 'United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre: National Referral Mechanism Statistics 2013' (2014) available here.

[129] Ibid. Note that exploitation type data is not disaggregated by nationality in the 2013, 2014, or 2019 data and these years are therefore excluded.

6.2. Typical journeys from Afghanistan to the UK for trafficking victims

Data estimates that of over 1 million people arrived in Europe by sea, approximately 20% of those people are Afghan nationals.[130] Often journeys go through migrants camp such as the one in Calais, France, which serve as the final departure point for the UK.[131]

6.3. Experiences of exploitation and working conditions

Research suggest that Afghan nationals with irregular immigration statuses in the UK are vulnerable to being exploited in the workplace. Different reports have found that many Afghan nationals are often employed under poor labour conditions, in addition to the overall exclusion or racial harassment they usually felt from the labour market more generally.[132] Irregular immigration status for Afghan nationals in the UK did not only affect their employment, but also the benefits of education they received whilst residing in the UK, which were either limited or entire negated due to the instability of their immigration status.[133]

6.4. Consequent effects of trafficking on survivors

The uncertainty of immigration status among Afghan national survivors is a great source of mental strain, with a 2010 study finding that in some cases this had led to suicide.[134] Moreover, survivors who do not want to return to Afghanistan but have been denied the right to remain by the UK government sometimes 'disappear', no longer reporting to the relevant immigration officials.[135] As a result, they are left without the support they were previously given whilst awaiting their case verdict, which in turn often leads to destitution.[136] Further, young people who forcibly returned to Afghanistan face dire outcomes including 'significant violence, high levels of destitution, severe mental health difficulties, and notable barriers entering any kind of education or employment'.[137]

[130] Kate Lyons, 'The refugees who gave up on Britain' (2018), available here. International Organisation for Migration, 'World Migration Report 2020' (International Organisation for Migration, 2020) 74, available here.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Sophie Jones, 'Afghans in the UK' (ICAR, 2010) 6, available here; Catherine Gladwell, 'Young Afghan refugees and asylum seekers in the UK' (2018), available here.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Elaine Chase, 'Transitions, capabilities and wellbeing: how Afghan unaccompanied young people experience becoming 'adult' in the UK and beyond', (2019) 46(2) *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 445.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Catherine Gladwell and Hannah Elwyn, 'Broken futures: young Afghan asylum seekers in the UK and in their country of origin' (UNHCR Policy Development and Evaluation Service, 2012) 10, available here.

7. The impact of COVID-19

7.1. Government's Response to COVID-19

The coronavirus adds another layer of complexity to existing situations of poverty and internal conflict in Afghanistan. To respond to the pandemic, the government has set up an Emergency Committee for Prevention of COVID-19, which meets every two days to assess the situation and adopt relevant measures.[138] In mid-March, the government closed schools and restricted business activities to contain the spread of the virus.[139] On 27 March, the government announced partial lockdown,[140] which has been largely chaotic and difficult to implement. The ongoing conflict between government forces and Taliban militants particularly makes the pandemic impossible to control. The militant group controls more than half the districts in Afghanistan, and hardly any tests are available in these regions.[141] Although authorities initially closed air and land borders, these ports are reopening.[142] Public offices and universities are also reopening.[143] While the number of infected individuals officially stands at 37,345 as of 12 August,[144] the Afghan health ministry estimates that a third of the country (10 million people) are likely infected, but undetected given low numbers of testing.[145]

To address the economic impact of the pandemic, the government in coordination with the private sector is controlling the price of essential items such as foodstuff and consumables.[146] On 21 April, the president approved an emergency budget of $88.5 million while provincial governors were allocated funds ranging from $263,000 to $5.26 million. On 23 April, the president further presented plans to address the economic consequences of the pandemic, centred on food security, health care, public works and economic regional cooperation.[147] On 9 July, the World Bank announced a $200 million grant to support the Afghan government in responding to the coronavirus. The 'Afghanistan COVID-19 Response Development Policy Grant' is intended to assist in strengthening policies that promote faster recovery and keep basic infrastructure such as electricity and water running during the pandemic.[148]

7.2. Impact of COVID-19 on Afghan workers and vulnerable population

The coronavirus is having a devastating impact on Afghans and the national economy. A World Bank report has recently noted that the country's economy is rapidly contracting, given disruptions to local businesses, regional trade, and remittance flows.[149] Declining incomes and increasing prices of commodities are particularly increasing hardship for the most poor, with poverty rates expected to increase to 72% during 2020. Many Afghan households depend on informal activities, which are highly susceptible to economic shocks

[138] KPMG, 'Afghanistan Government and institution measures in response to COVID-19' (2020), available here.
[139] United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, 'Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict Mid-year Report: 1 January—30 June 2020' (2020) 20, available here.
[140] UN Security Council, 'The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security Report of the Secretary-General', above n 23.
[141] Masood Saifullah, 'Coronavirus in Afghanistan: Do confirmed cases depict the real picture?' (2020), available here.
[142] US Embassy in Afghanistan, 'COVID-19 Information' (2020), available here.
[143] Shadi Khan Saif, 'Over 10M Afghans infected with COVID-19' (2020), available here.
[144] Worldometers, 'Afghanistan: Coronavirus Cases' (2020), available here.
[145] Ayaz Gul, '10 Million Afghans Likely Infected and Recovered From COVID-19: Survey' (2020), available here.
[146] KPMG, above n 138.
[147] UN Security Council, above n 23.
[148] The World Bank Group, 'Afghanistan: $200 Million for COVID-19 Response Development Policy Grant' (2020), available here.
[149] The World Bank Group, 'Surviving the Storm' (2020), available here.

– around 15 million Afghans live in households that mostly derive their income from informal sector works.[150]

Afghan women and girls are disproportionately affected by the pandemic, as lockdown measures have limited their mobility, exposing them to sexual and domestic violence.[151] Afghan authorities indicate that less than a third of individuals confirmed to have contracted the coronavirus are women, which officials believe are due to a lack of female access to healthcare in a deeply conservative society.[152] The UN Secretary General has also noted that food insecurity remains an ongoing challenge in Afghanistan.[153] During April and May, around 13 million people experienced food insecurity, while an estimated 3 million Afghan women and children are acutely malnourished in 2020.[154]

In a recent report, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan noted deliberate attacks on health workers in the country, which are worsening situations for both health workers and individuals with medical needs.[155] The report highlights the difficulties of providing healthcare in a highly volatile context during a pandemic, noting particular harm to healthcare workers and damage to healthcare facilities. The Taliban reportedly carried out the majority of these attacks.[156] Afghan children are also highly vulnerable to recruitment and use by insurgents, given the economic hardships associated with lockdown measures. Many children are seeking potential means to earn money to support their families, making them vulnerable to recruitment and use by armed groups. During the first half of 2020, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan recorded the recruitment and use of 23 Afghan boys (ages 13-17) by the Taliban to perform combat functions.[157]

[150] Ibid.
[151] UN Security Council, above n 23.
[152] Reuters, 'Afghanistan faces 'catastrophe' as COVID-19 cases grow: Red Crescent' (2020), available here.
[153] UN Security Council, above n 23.
[154] Ibid.
[155][155] United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, above n 139.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.