

# Cutting the Threads



## Assessing Child Labour in Afghan Carpet Production

FINAL REPORT



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>BOXES, FIGURES AND TABLES.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3. NATURE OF CHILD LABOUR IN CARPET WEAVING .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>4. IMPACT OF WEAVING ON CHILDREN’S WELL-BEING .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>ANNEXES.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>74</b>

## BOXES, FIGURES AND TABLES

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Box 1.1 - Understanding the legal situation: which types of work are permissible for children? .....	7
Box 3.1 - Key definitions in hazard assessment.....	21
Box 5.1 - Addressing households where weaving is a secondary versus primary income generating activity ....	51
Box 5.2 - Addressing the worst forms of child labour: ILO International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) Programming Guidelines.....	52
Table 3.1 - Key findings on child labour in carpet weaving from Phase 1 .....	15
Table 4.1 - Injuries sustained by children in the past twelve months, weaving vs. non-weaving children .....	27
Table 4.2 - Parts of body injured, weaving vs. non-weaving children .....	28
Table 4.3 - Illnesses and health problems suffered by children over the past twelve months, weaving vs. non-weaving children .....	30
Table 4.4 - Mental health problems suffered by children over the past twelve months .....	33
Table 4.5 - Reasons for child absenteeism .....	36
Table 4.6 - Challenges faced in school, weaving vs. non-weaving children .....	37
Figure 1.1 - Prevalence of child labour in carpet-related households, based on Phase 1 of research.....	8
Figure 2.1 - Research framework .....	10
Figure 3.1 - % of children, in households employing child labour to weave, who are working in weaving .....	19
Figure 3.2 - % of children aged 5-17 in weaving households who weave .....	19
Figure 3.3 - Reasons given for having children weave, % of weaving households interviewed.....	23
Figure 3.4 - % of weaving households for whom weaving is a traditional activity.....	26
Figure 3.5 - % of households giving "putting children in our household to work outside of the household" as a past or potential coping mechanism .....	25
Figure 4.1 - Body parts where respondent felt aches and/or pains .....	29
Figure 4.2 - Actions taken in response to health problems, weaving vs. non-weaving children.....	33
Figure 4.3 - % of interviewed children saying they attend school, weaving households vs. non-weaving .....	38
Figure 4.4 - % of children reporting hitting as a method of discipline, weaving vs. non-weaving .....	40
Figure 4.5 - % of children answering "none of the above" when asked about social interactions .....	40
Figure 4.6 - % of households where all children lack birth certificates .....	40
Figure 5.1 - Summary of Recommendations .....	45

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AREU</b>	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
<b>DMoYA</b>	Deputy Ministry of Youth Affairs
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person / People
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>IPEC</b>	International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour
<b>MoLSAMD</b>	Ministry of labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
<b>MoPH</b>	Ministry of Public Health
<b>MRRD</b>	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>NRC</b>	Norwegian Refugee Council
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>USDOL</b>	United States Department of Labour

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 A WIDESPREAD SCOURGE IN AFGHANISTAN: SITUATING CHILD LABOUR IN CARPET WEAVING IN THE BROADER CONTEXT

**Child labour is an inescapable reality in Afghanistan.** The 2010-2011 Afghanistan Multiple Cluster Index Survey (AMICS) reports 25% of children aged 5 to 14 participate in labour activities.<sup>1</sup> As a point of comparison, the 2010 MICS survey in neighbouring Balochistan (Pakistan) found 17% of children aged 5-14 involved in child labour.<sup>2</sup> **In Afghanistan, carpet weaving is a sector that particularly lends itself to child labour:** a home- and family-based activity in which both girls and boys can participate without contravening social norms. The skill level required is such that children can easily reach a level allowing them to earn money. In more rural areas, it has the additional appeal of security, providing an excuse to keep children in the home where they are safe. As the situation stands, carpet weaving is in the economic interest of players at several levels of the value chain: producers of input, weaving households in precarious economic situations and carpet sellers looking for profit in a logistically challenged market. From GoodWeave's perspective, combating child labour in carpet weaving presents a particular challenge when compared to other forms of child labour **as home-based nature of carpet weaving in Afghanistan can appear more benign, obscuring the very real negative impacts on the children involved.**

Child labour in carpet weaving in Afghanistan is, in fact, demonstrably hazardous for the children involved, corresponding to the definition of the worst forms of child labour by ILO Convention 182. **One of the challenges of this report is to balance the need for eliminating child labour in carpet weaving with a pragmatic approach that responds to the challenges confronting poor households in Afghanistan.** To do so, this research has focused on carpet weaving in urban and peri-urban areas of Afghanistan that remain accessible for interventions despite the evolving security situation in the country and are the focus of the USDOL's grant to GoodWeave. It is both encouraging and troubling that here, in most cases economics are the primary driver of carpet weaving: although this means that awareness raising and community pressure will most likely not suffice to eliminate it, it provides for a clear path to do so by providing opportunities for the families concerned to improve their economic situation.

In accordance with the goal of both GoodWeave and the ILO, the ultimate goal of programming in Afghanistan in this sector is the elimination of child labour. In the immediate term, however, this is simply not feasible. Keeping in mind that the well-being of the children involved is what we are concerned about, **this report examines the nature of child labour in carpet weaving, its impact on the children involved, and provides recommendations to improve their well-being through viable, alternative programming.** It is the most comprehensive studies on the effects of child labour in carpet weaving to have been conducted in Afghanistan.

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<sup>1</sup> CSO/UNICEF (2012), *Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010-2011*, Kabul, Afghanistan, p. xxii

<sup>2</sup> Government of Balochistan / UNICEF (2011), *Balochistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010*, p. xxiv

Box 1.1 –

Understanding the legal context: what constitutes permissible work for children?

**Some types of child (under 18) labour are legally permissible under both national and international law. Afghanistan ratified Convention 138 in 2010**, allowing for limited work by children under 18. The corresponding Afghan law, Article 13 of the Labour Code, sets the minimum age of regular work has been set at 18 years. Children can be hired as apprentices from the age of 14 and can engage in ‘light work’ from the age of 15-17 as long as they do not work in ‘hazardous’ conditions. Legal restrictions, however, focus on work outside the home rather than homework, which is less clearly regulated and not strictly covered by the Law.

These guidelines are in accordance with Convention 138, which set the following guidelines around light work and minimum ages:<sup>3</sup>

- **Light work:** “Children between 13 and 15 years old may do light work, as long as it does not threaten their health and safety, or hinder their education or vocational orientation and training.” (Article 7)
- **Basic minimum age:** “The minimum age for work should not be below the age for finishing compulsory schooling, and in any case not less than 15.” This can be initially specified as 14 years. (Article 2)
- **Hazardous work:** “Any work which is likely to jeopardize children’s physical, mental or moral health, safety or morals should not be done by anyone under the age of 18.” Under strict conditions, this can be brought down to 16. (Article 3)

Making this difficult to enforce is the fact that the laws themselves defines neither ‘light work’ nor ‘hazardous’ conditions. To aid with this, the government does identify some “worse forms of child labour”, which are prohibited by ILO Convention 182, also ratified by Afghanistan.

This is relevant to the current project as the updated guidelines on the worst forms of child labour released by the Government of Afghanistan’s Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in February 2014 now officially include “working as more than four hours a day in carpet producing”.<sup>4</sup> It also reiterates that according to article 120 of the Labour Law and articles of Convention 182, hazardous work among children in Afghanistan is strictly prohibited.

**This research confirms that child labour in carpet weaving in Afghanistan does not fulfill the conditions for the limited permissible types of child labour, and so legally should not be allowed.**

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<sup>3</sup> Full text of the Convention can be found at :  
[http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C138](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C138)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.acci.org.af/component/content/article/38-news/467-molsamd-announces-list-of-prohibited-jobs-for-child-labours.html>

## 1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In September 2013, the U.S. Department of Labour awarded GoodWeave International (GoodWeave) a \$2 million, four-year grant to address child labour in home-based carpet production in Afghanistan. GoodWeave began implementing a set of pilot activities in Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif starting in 2011, including loom inspections, carpet certification and labelling, home-schooling and early childhood education programs. The USDOL grant will enable GoodWeave to implement a series of mutually reinforcing efforts to:

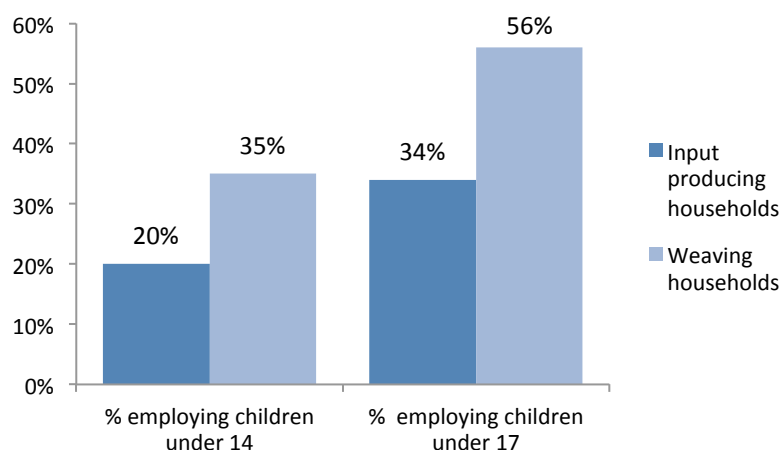
1. *Expand implementation of its social compliance monitoring system to reach hundreds more looms in areas of the country's "carpet belt" region, which includes Kabul Valley, Herat, and potentially Faryab;*
2. *Build consumer demand for ethically-produced Afghan rugs;*
3. *Provide remediation services to 3,500 beneficiaries (child weavers and their families);*
4. *Make significant contributions to the body of knowledge on child labour in the Afghan carpet sector;*
5. *Raise awareness of child labour and its consequences within target communities; and*
6. *Promote transparency and accountability among key community, government, and industry stakeholders.*

To make future programming as effective as possible, it is critical to understand where and how children work in the overall process of making and selling carpets/rugs. GoodWeave partnered with *Samuel Hall Consulting* to implement the research portion of the project (Objective 4), which investigates the problem in two phases:

**Phase 1:** *The incidence and prevalence of child labour in the carpet/rug supply chain (from manufacture to sale); and*

**Phase 2:** *The nature and impact of child labour in home-based carpet weaving environments.*

**Figure 1.1 - Prevalence of child labour in carpet-related households, based on Phase 1 of research**





During the first phase of the research, the actors, processes and linkages in each stage of the carpet/rug value chain were mapped, and the prevalence of child labour was identified.

**This second phase of the research focuses more closely on child labour in home-based carpet production, to provide actionable recommendations for policymakers and GoodWeave programming.** The second phase of research will:

1. **From a conceptual perspective:** complete information from the first phase of the research on the nature and incidence of child labour in home-based carpet production;
2. **From an evaluative perspective:** Evaluate the impact of home-based carpet production on the well-being of children involved; and finally,
3. **From a programming perspective:** Deepen understanding of the factors that drive child labour to provide actionable alternatives and examine the feasibility of suggested interventions.

This research comes as a logical follow-up to the first phase of research, a specific deep-dive on the **production** aspect. **This report presents detailed data and offers nuanced analysis of the nature and impact of child labour in carpet weaving and include recommendations to move forwards. The results of this study are designed to:**

1. **Inform and guide** GoodWeave programming efforts, and
2. Support local and international **advocacy efforts** to address all forms of child labour in Afghanistan, including in the carpet sector.

### **1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

This report provides research and analysis in three key sections:

1. **Nature of child labour:** How can child labour in weaving households be characterized?
2. **Impact of child labour:** What is the impact of weaving on the children involved?
3. **Recommendations:** What recommendations can be drawn from phases one and two of the research to provide feasible, effective, sustainable and replicable support to these children?

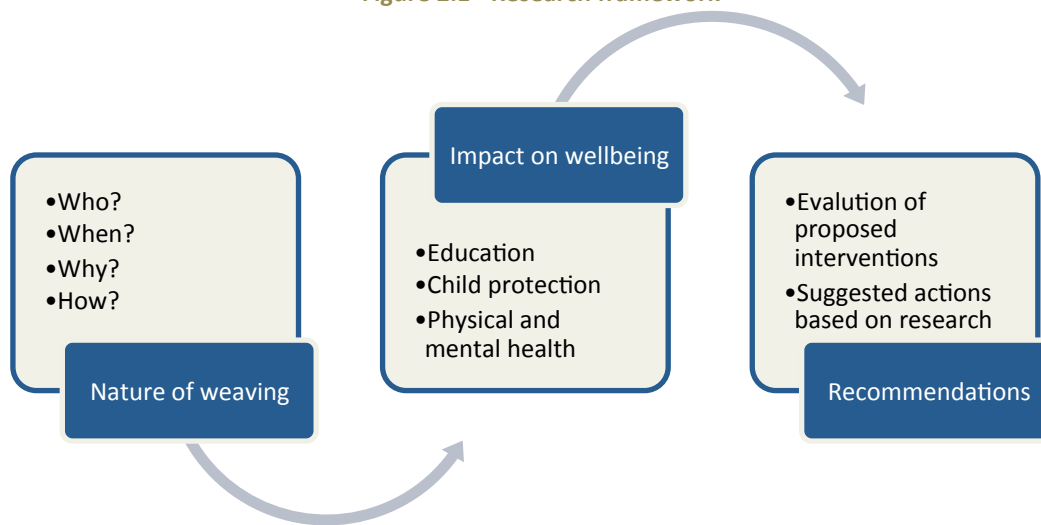
## 2. METHODOLOGY

This section will provide a brief presentation of the research framework developed to allow for a rigorous data-collection despite the limitations imposed by the context. Further methodology details can be found in ANNEX 1 – Addenda to methodology

### 2.1 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The research team constituted by Samuel Hall gathered information about the **nature** and **impact** of child labour in carpet weaving in key provinces in Afghanistan.<sup>5</sup> **This research focused on three components to measure impact**, identified based on the first phase of the research as well as evaluations of the impact of weaving on both children and adults in neighbouring countries.<sup>6</sup>

Figure 2.1 - Research framework



**Several of the concepts referred to above present challenges in evaluation:**

**In considering impact, research will, where possible, take into account both the short and long-term impacts of child labour:** In the short term, child labour often has a positive impact on levels of household productivity. While children may not be as productive as adults, the effect of encouraging (or forcing) your children to work is such that the sum-productivity level of the household increases, generally improving its economic situation.

However, households make trade-offs by allowing their children to work, consciously or not. The short-term productivity benefit (which, in and of itself, is limited given the low remuneration of carpet weavers) comes at the cost of missed opportunities further down the road, both for children and for their society.

<sup>5</sup> The research team consisted of one international consultant, two team leaders and 13 enumerators (3 men and 10 women)

<sup>6</sup> See for example Choobineh, A., Lahmi, M. and Shahnava, H. (2004), "Major Health Risk Factors in Iranian hand-woven Carpet Industry", *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics*.

## 2.2 METHODOLOGY

This research used quantitative and qualitative tools to evaluate child labour in carpet weaving.

The quantitative component includes:

- Weaving households and a control group
  - 317 weaving households (with one adult and two child interviews)
  - 317 non-weaving households (with one adult and one child interview)<sup>7</sup>
- **Parent surveys** focused on decision-making processes, household demographic and socio-economic information, exploring weaving alternatives, and their children's physical well-being.
- **Child surveys** included descriptions of work accomplished, other activities in which they participate (including school) and perception of physical and mental well-being.

The qualitative component consists of:

- **6 focus group discussions** - Focus group discussions brought together parents from weaving and non-weaving households to gather more information about the risks involved for children working in weaving as well as deepen understanding of what motivates families to send their children to weave and which alternatives might be acceptable.
- **21 case studies** – weaving children, weaving- and non-weaving parents and adult weavers whose children do not weave were interviewed.
- **3 child weaving observation checklists** - researchers completed an observation checklist based on their time spent in the field, evaluating work-specific risk factors, work conditions and parent/ employer attitudes. These allowed researchers to capture their overall impressions in a systematic way.
- **19 key informant interviews** - Samuel Hall researchers interviewed relevant actors (NGOs, IOs, government officials) at the local and national level when necessary to understand context and identify potential areas for action.

These qualitative tools allowed researchers to gain insight into the factors driving child labour, more information about the conditions in which it occurs, and perceptions among parents and children. It also allowed researchers to evaluate the relevance of GoodWeave's proposed interventions. This is necessary to allow GoodWeave to implement interventions that are accepted by the community and function in the Afghan context.

### 2.2.1 Geographic Scope

Research took place around the district centres of Kabul (Central region) and Herat provinces (Western region) during the months of September and October 2014. Researchers spoke with carpet-sellers and community leaders to identify areas within the cities with high concentration of carpet weavers.

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<sup>7</sup> These households were selected at random, and so could contain children who worked. However, because the child interviewed had to be present for the interview, the child-level data contains more children who do not work.

## 2.2.2 Sampling methodology

Samuel Hall researchers conducted preliminary assessments in Herat and Kabul to complete knowledge from Phase 1 of locations with high concentrations of weaving families. For each weaving household interviewed, interviewers sought out a neighbouring control household. These non-weaving households were selected to allow researchers to evaluate the impact that weaving had on the children involved.

### Box 2.1 – Rationale in identifying control households

The criteria for the control households were purposefully kept broad:

- a. household is not involved in weaving,
- b. household contains children between 5 and 17, and
- c. household is in same or neighbouring community as weaving households

Enumerators were able to find control households in every community visited. After visiting weaving households, enumerators knocked on the doors of their neighbours to find households fulfilling criteria a and b. Keeping the selection criteria broad limited selection bias in the choice of control group, which presents an average of families living close to households where children weave. By choosing neighbours for the control group, we also limited the environmental and cultural biases between weaving and non-weaving groups, which could have affected the responses and findings. In considering whether or not this methodology would allow for a valid comparison between weaving and non-weaving groups, researchers looked closely at several points identified as potentially significant biases, and found that they should not prevent this comparison from being made:

- **Labouring children in household:** As at least one child had to be home for the interview, the control group may be less likely to include children who work than the average family in the communities. That being said, as only one child aged 5-17 had to be home for the interview, families with children who worked were included in this group, avoiding significant bias between the weaving and non-weaving groups.
- **Material differences between non-weaving and weaving households:** Weaving households actually reported **slightly higher** incomes than non-weaving households, suggesting that even when poverty plays a role in making families and children weave, these households are not significantly poorer than their neighbours, and the comparison between the two groups is valid.

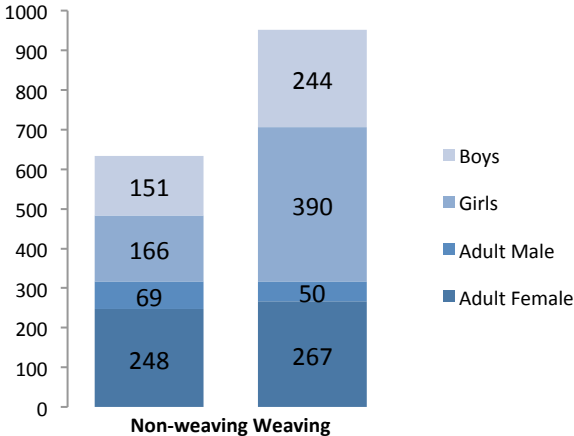
The differences noted between weaving and non-weaving children, especially around physical and mental health symptoms, are material. On the physical side, these correspond to problems noted in other countries. Therefore, given the similarity of weaving households and non-weaving households on environmental, material and cultural points, it seems highly unlikely that these problems should be attributed to external factors: the primary differentiator is the labour performed around carpets.

**It is important to note that tables comparing weaving to non-weaving children are comparing those children interviewed in weaving households (who had to weave as well to be selected) and those children interviewed in non-weaving households (who could not weave). Other children in the weaving households may not have been involved in the weaving.**

### 2.2.3 Ensuring quantitative rigor

The quantitative survey consisted of 300 sets of paired surveys (one adult and two children per household), of 67 questions to ask each adult interviewed and 39 questions for each child interviewed. **It was designed with the help of researchers at the University of Montreal with whom Samuel Hall had worked on a previous evaluation of health impacts of child labour in brick kilns to ensure: a) scientific rigor of survey and b) use of generalized indicators for health evaluation.**

**Figure 2.3 - Quantitative survey respondents by gender and type, weaving and non-weaving households**



## 2.3 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Research on child labour presents challenges: is important to take into account the following:

- **From an ethical perspective:**
  - Adhering to a “do no harm policy”, researchers must both a) take into account probable reactions of supervisors/employers and b) make sure questions are not hurting children.
- **From a practical point of view,**
  - **Accessibility:** access to many parts of Afghanistan where carpet weaving is prevalent, for example, Faryab province, is limited due to insecurity. The choice was made to concentrate the research in Herat and Kabul, the other two areas specified in the USDOL’s grant to GoodWeave, to gain information about areas where GoodWeave could later implement projects. This should be kept in mind while reading the report as key informant interviews confirmed the influence of different drivers of child labour in more rural areas and certain additional problems – such as drug use.
  - **Sampling:** true randomized sampling is prevented by the often hidden nature of child labour: as children primarily weave carpets in their own households, it is difficult to identify.<sup>8</sup>
  - **Parental presence:** parents were nearly always in the same room as the children being interviewed, if not always sitting right next to them. While necessary to allow researchers to speak with the children, this may have introduced bias to some of the answers.
  - **Time:** children may not be allowed to take time off to speak to interviewers.
  - **Finding men:** for practical and security purposes, interviews were conducted during the day. Most fathers in both the weaving and non-weaving households do not work at home, making it difficult to speak to them. This led to the replacement of planned focus group discussions with several case studies. Male respondents generally have a broader understanding of familial financial situations in Afghanistan; however, as both non-weaving and weaving groups are biased towards female respondents this should not have affected any comparisons between the two groups.
  - **Questionnaire modifications:** as per GoodWeave’s request, several questions were added to the quantitative questionnaire after the start of research. Respondents from the first three days of fieldwork were called back for these but in some cases were not reachable.

That being said, such research is necessary to evidence the breadth of the problems child labour can cause, the frequency of the labour itself and to provide material for advocacy and improvement of the lives of the children involved. **In the case of child weaving in Afghanistan, while the practice and trend have been documented, this is the first scientific examination of the nature and impact of child labour in the Afghan carpet weaving industry.**

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<sup>8</sup> In several instances households which neighbors had identified as having weaving children denied it.

### 3. NATURE OF CHILD LABOUR IN CARPET WEAVING

#### KEY FINDINGS

Table 3.1 - Key findings on child labour in carpet weaving from Phase 1

KEY FINDINGS FROM PHASE 1	FINDING CONFIRMED BY PHASE 2?
<b>Work without pay – children work for the collective good</b>	<b>Yes</b> – the vast majority of children are employed in their own households and their work is not financially differentiated from that of other family members; only 9% of households reported having children from other families working there (most of whom were related), and of these less than half paid those children a wage. <sup>9</sup>
<b>Girls are much more likely to be employed in carpet-weaving than boys</b>	<b>Yes</b> , although the gender differential is less significant in urban and peri-urban areas. In the interviewed households where children weave, 81% of female children were said to weave, vs. 65% of male children. Ethnicity (and the attendant traditions) seem to play a role as gender “parity” was higher amongst Hazara families.
<b>Family-based work of approximately 36 hours per week on average</b>	<b>Yes</b> – across all weaving children in households surveyed, average time spent weaving per week was of 33.5 hours (this figure includes the youngest children who bring down the average).
<b>A very young start to carpet weaving</b>	<b>Yes</b> – although not all children start very young, the fact that 8% of children aged 5-6 in these weaving households and 66% of children aged 7-10 weave shows that many children do begin weaving at a young age.
<b>Children are involved in activities that can lead to serious health hazards</b>	<b>Yes</b> – work tools present potential for serious injury and weaving children report higher rates of injury and illness than non-weaving children.
<b>Child weaving and education are not incompatible</b>	<b>Yes</b> – 73% of children in weaving households attend school at least some of the time.

<sup>9</sup> While the sample was not large enough to conclude that these households were not trafficking households, anecdotally, these households reported that children were either a) more distant relatives or b) there to learn a skill rather than as a result of debt.

Child labour in carpet weaving in Afghanistan presents a different profile than in some of the other countries where GoodWeave has intervened: rather than factory work, **here the industry is primarily home- and family- based**. Therefore, although the primary impetus for child labour in weaving is similar to that in other industries in Afghanistan and to child labour in carpet weaving abroad, the secondary factors bear close examination.

This chapter will explore **who** the children involved in carpet weaving are, under **which** conditions they work, and **why** they do so. Understanding the nature of child labour in carpet weaving is necessary to a) establish its incompatibility with the forms of under-18 work allowed by the Afghan legal system (see Box 1.1) and international law, and b) to enable programming to improve the situation of these children and prevent further child labour.

*Basira, an all too typical story in the carpet industry*

Basira is 11 years old. On an average day, she spends six hours weaving on the loom at home, four hours attending school, and the rest looking after her siblings and performing other household chores. She began weaving when she was five years old because her family is poor and her mother forced her to. Most likely, despite her dream to study and become a police officer to “serve the people,” she will one day marry, have children and teach her children to weave. Basira’s story is representative of the broader trends among weaving children: a child forced to weave primarily for economic reasons, supervised by parents who they themselves learned to weave as children, they split their time between household tasks, weaving and school. The addition of education to the mix differentiates these children from their parents, providing encouragement that this weaving cycle may not continue; nonetheless, their current situation as working children cannot, outside of the positive financial impact for their families, be said to be a positive.



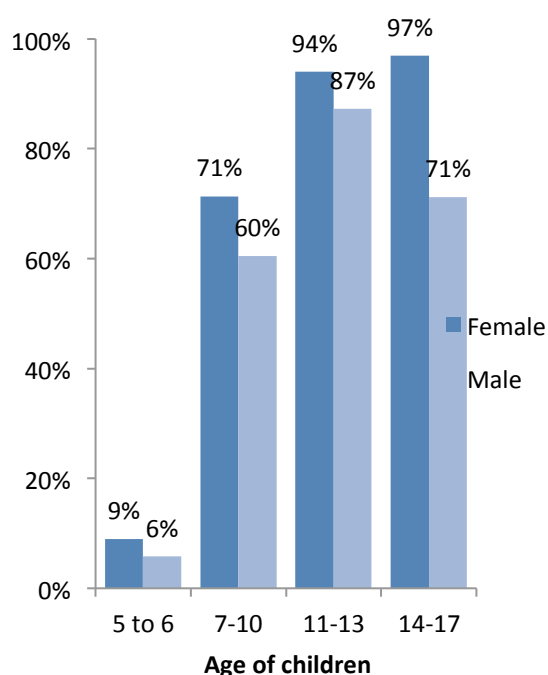
### 3.1 A PROFILE OF WEAVING CHILDREN

**Both boys and girls weave. However, even in the urban centres of Herat and Kabul, they are not treated the same in their weaving:** girls start weaving at a younger age, and continue weaving until an older age. Despite the precarious situation of households whose children weave, economics are therefore clearly not the only factor in this decision-making process. Provincial differences in weaving rates suggest the likely role that ethnicity plays in these gendered decisions. The decision to put girls to work earlier and longer does not stem from the children: both boys and girls have clearly expressed ambitions to do nearly anything but weave.

#### ***Household precarity leads to early work.***

Although not significantly worse off than their neighbours, weaving households employing children are financially precarious. 80% of weaving households interviewed report being in debt, 43% for their daily needs. 85% of weaving households interviewed report that they could meet their basic needs without borrowing for less than one month if the main income earner of the household lost his/her source of income. Although the majority of children begin weaving between ages 7 and 10, some start as young as 5. This is not necessary to be able to learn the skill properly: according to a carpet-weaving trainer in Herat, starting at 15 or 16 is enough to be able to acquire the skill properly.<sup>10</sup> Rather, this decision reflects economics: children are likelier to begin weaving at a very young age (5-6) in the poorest households (12% of children in that age group and in the first quartile of household incomes versus 7% overall).

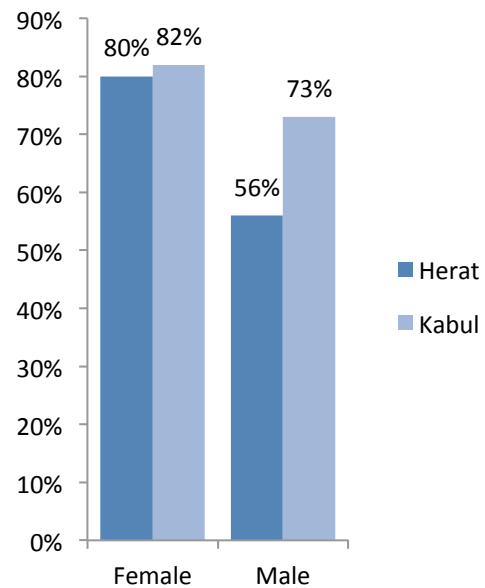
Figure 3.1 - % of children, in households employing child labour to weave, who are working in weaving



<sup>10</sup> Key informant interview with HELP (Herat) vocational trainer for carpet weaving, Oct. 13, 2014

**Girls weave more.** Although both boys and girls work in carpet weaving, there are some clear differences in their work. Even in the more “liberal” carpet weavings centres of Kabul and Herat, weaving households employing their children are less likely to employ their male children in weaving, and when they do, it is not viewed as a long-term occupation. As boys age, they shift towards other occupations outside the house, as can be seen in Figure 3.1: in households where children weave, boys between 14 and 17 are actually **less** likely to weave than their younger counterparts. On the other hand, as can be observed again in Figure 3.1, by its very nature as a home-based occupation, carpet-weaving is even more appealing for girls as they age. In Afghanistan, cultural norms dictate that girls generally stay at home after puberty; in the cases of other types of child labour, this actually decreases its incidence amongst girls at that age, whereas in carpet weaving it has the opposite effect.<sup>11</sup>

Figure 3.2 - % of children aged 5-17 in weaving households who weave



The significant gender differential in weaving rates in Herat as compared to Kabul confirms the cultural trend described above. While 73% of boys aged 5-17 in weaving households employing children in Kabul weave, only 56% of those in Herat, a more conservative region, do. This is at least partially due to cultural traditions among the ethnic groups of Afghanistan: while among Hazara households interviewed 69% of boys aged 5-17 weave, among the Tajik households only 36% do and in Turkmen households 45% do.<sup>12</sup> However, even among Hazara families boys are slightly less likely to weave in Herat (64% do so, versus 73% in Kabul). This underlines the need to keep in mind non-economic factors in considering child-labour alternatives, as both geography and ethnicity here seem to play a role.

**A labour not driven by the children involved.** Only 18% of weaving children say that they weave because it is their own choice, and just 12% say that they wish to continue this activity when they are older – despite coming from households where this is the primary activity. Both boys and girls gave a wide variety of ambitions when asked about future plans: what is clear is that the desire to learn and achieve is very present among these children.

“I want to become a teacher to teach others’ children and serve the people” (12 year old female weaver, Herat)

“I want to be a doctor in the future and have a better life and have a good apartment and car.” (11 year old male weaver, Herat)

“My last hope is to become a tailor and earn more money and have a good economy and a good house as well” (Kabul, 14 year old female weaver)

<sup>11</sup> See Samuel Hall/ILO (2011), *Buried in Bricks: A Rapid Assessment of Bonded Labour in Brick Kilns in Afghanistan*, p. 43, for a description of how this affects children employed in the brick kiln industry.

<sup>12</sup> NB that the figure for Tajik households is anecdotal as the sample was only of 25 households.

## 3.2 CONDITIONS AND RISKS OF CHILD LABOUR IN CARPET WEAVING

At first glance, the working conditions of children labouring in carpet weaving may appear relatively benign, especially when compared to other forms of child labour in Afghanistan:

- The vast majority of these children are working in their homes.
- Most children weave with relatives: 87% of households employing weaving children stated that they taught their children, and only 6% are supervised by an employer rather than parents or siblings. In the case of the 9% of interviewed households who employed children other than their own, 24 of the 26 households said that the children were other relatives.
- The children are generally not bound to an employer for work.
- 73% of children in weaving households also attend school.

Deeper investigation, however, reveals that the conditions under which they work do not correspond to the conditions of that “light work” legally permitted to older children. **Weaving children work long hours, are required to use dangerous tools and work in conditions harmful to their health.**

### 3.2.1 Weaving vs. leisure: a negative trade-off in time use

**Long hours worked – two lives in one:** while most children interviewed both worked and attended school, the average number of hours worked by children (33.5) nearly reaches the 35 hour work week of fully-employed adults in some industrialized countries. They are therefore moving past the “light work” legally allowed. The clear effect of these hours worked is the compromise on children’s leisure time.

**Sacrificing children’s leisure time.** Between work, school, and household chores, children who weave are left with little time for leisure. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted in 2013 the General Comment #17 explaining that “rest and leisure are as important to children’s development as the basics of nutrition, housing, health care and education. Without sufficient rest, children will lack the energy, motivation and physical and mental capacity for meaningful participation or learning.”<sup>13</sup> Yet, lack of leisure time was cited in many of the case studies with children.

“No, I don’t [spend time playing]. I just go to school and right after school start weaving. (...) I am very depressed since I do not find time to play and study well.” (13 year old female weaver, Kabul)

“I never go outside to play with children.” (11 year old male weaver, Herat)

“I never spend my time playing outside because I don’t have spare time” (15 year old male weaver, Kabul)

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<sup>13</sup> UNCRRC General comment #17, accessed at [http://develop.ipaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/IPA-Summary-of-UN-GC-article-31\\_FINAL1.pdf](http://develop.ipaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/IPA-Summary-of-UN-GC-article-31_FINAL1.pdf) November 20, 2014



***Additional hazards from lack of sleep.*** In addition to preventing children from participating in leisure activities, the hours worked prevent children from getting enough sleep – necessary for child development. 36% of children report having worked between the hours of 8pm and 5am in the past. Of these, 18% report doing so “always.” 26% of child weavers report having felt “extreme fatigue”, as opposed to only 8% of the control children. Given the sharp tools they are handling while reporting “extreme fatigue”, this presents clear potential health hazards.

Picture 1 - Children playing, Kabul

### 3.2.2 Health hazards and risks

The definitions in Box 3.1 make clear that weaving children are exposed to health hazards and risks.

#### Box 3.1 - Key definitions in hazard assessment

##### Key definitions

*Hazard* – “Anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer, etc.”

*Risk* – “The chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be”<sup>14</sup>

The impact of these hazards and risks will be discussed at length in Section 4.1. Here are discussed **what these hazards and risks consist of** – which informs later health-related recommendations.

Children who weave face health hazards from several fronts:

1. *Long term health effects from weaving movements, inputs and looms:* Children who weave face injury and illness from the tools and materials to which they are regularly exposed. Copious studies have documented the headaches and respiratory difficulties caused by breathing in dust, chemicals (for example,

Picture 2 and Picture 3 - Tools used in carpet weaving



dyes in the wool) to which weavers may be exposed, and joint and back pain that can occur from repetitive and/or physically stressful movements (at the core of weaving - observers recorded as many as 25-30 knotting and cutting movements per minute).<sup>15</sup> The type of loom

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<sup>14</sup> From UK Government “Health and Safety Executive: Five steps to risk assessment” as cited in Samuel Hall/ ILO (2014), *Breaking the Mould: Occupational Health Hazards Faced by Children Working in Brick Kilns in Afghanistan*

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Saeed Awan and Muazzam Nasrullah (2011), “Use of better designed hand knotting carpet looms and workplace interventions to improve working conditions of adult carpet weavers and to reduce hazardous child labour in

used also creates potential for long-term injury. Horizontal looms necessitate sitting in a position with a posture that can “result in deformity in the back and hip bones and other kinds of musculoskeletal problems,” while vertical looms pose problems as well.<sup>16</sup> The specific health impact of weaving on the children involved will be examined more closely in Section 4.1.

2. *Immediate and potentially long term injuries from the tools used:* researchers observed two dangerous tools in the majority of children’s work:
  - a. A knife to cut thread after knotting.
  - b. A comb-like object to ensure that threads are firmly pressed down.

As can be observed in Picture 2, children not only use these sharp tools for work but were observed casually playing with them more than once. The potential for injury these pose is corroborated both by the injury rates to fingers and hands reported by children (common) and also by several key informant interviews and case studies. One current NGO worker who wove as a child recounted the story of a friend who, on the upwards movement of the knife after cutting a thread, had stuck it in her face just above the eye, barely missing it.<sup>17</sup> The children observed often bore marks on their fingers from the tools.

3. *Hazardous work conditions.* The clear dangers stemming from **fatigue** (tired people are more likely to make careless mistakes; of particular concern when looking at children using dangerous tools) have been touched on in the previous sections. **Night work** poses concern as it can exacerbate eye problems: weavers are often dependent on external light from windows, and night work causes eye strain. Even in cases where there is electric lighting this may not suffice, as the power supply in both Kabul and Herat suffers from frequent cuts. These rooms lack proper air circulation mechanisms – even when fans exist, they are limited also by the power. **Proper supervision** is not always present, as mothers who supervise their children are simultaneously conducting household chores. Finally, **no protective material** is used, for example, dust masks to prevent lung problems.

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carpet weaving in Pakistan”, *Work*, Reading, USA, and also A. Choobineh, H. Shahnava and M. Lahmi, (2004) “Major Health Risk Factors in Iranian Hand-Woven Carpet Industry”, *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 65-78.

<sup>16</sup> A. Choobineh, H. Shanavaz and M. Lahmi, “Major Health Risk Factors”, pp.67-68.

<sup>17</sup> Key informant interview, Elaha, HELP, Herat, Afghanistan, October 13, 2014

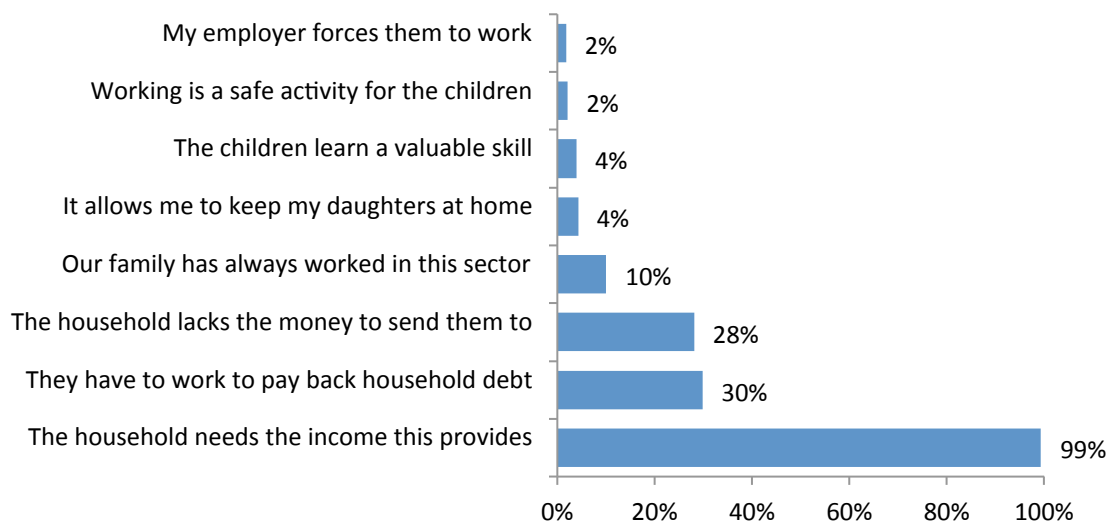
### 3.3 FACTORS MOTIVATING CHILD LABOUR IN CARPET WEAVING

Money, money, money: when asked why their children weave, all but two households interviewed indicated increased household income as a reason for why the children in the household weave. The primary factor motivating child labour in carpet weaving is no different from that motivating child labour in brick kilns or retail labour. That being said, child labour in carpet weaving is also prompted by some unique secondary drivers. Understanding how the motivations behind child labour in carpet weaving differ and resemble that for other forms of child labour in Afghanistan is crucial to designing effective programming to mitigate and counter it.

#### 3.3.1 Primary driver of child labour: household finances

As noted in Section 0, households which employ children to weave are generally financially insecure. This is reflected in the frequency of the second and third most popular answers as to why children weave (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 - Reasons given for having children weave, % of weaving households interviewed



This information is corroborated by the qualitative work: every single mother of weaving children interviewed as part of a focus group discussion, in both Herat and Kabul, gave financial need as a, if not the, reason for their children's work.

**Debt** is also frequently given as a reason prompting child labour. Of the 70% of children who say their parents are either directly or indirectly forcing them to work, 23% say that it is because their parents owe money to someone. However, one nuance is critical to note: this research agreed with the anecdotal results from Phase 1 of the research that in the cases observed, child labour in **carpet weaving does not consist of bonded labour**. The 1956 UN Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery notes specific conditions for bonded labour (see Appendix for full definition):

- The work being done by the worker must be as a security for a debt,
- The reasonably assessed value of the work is not applied towards the debt, or
- The length and type of this work is not limited and defined.

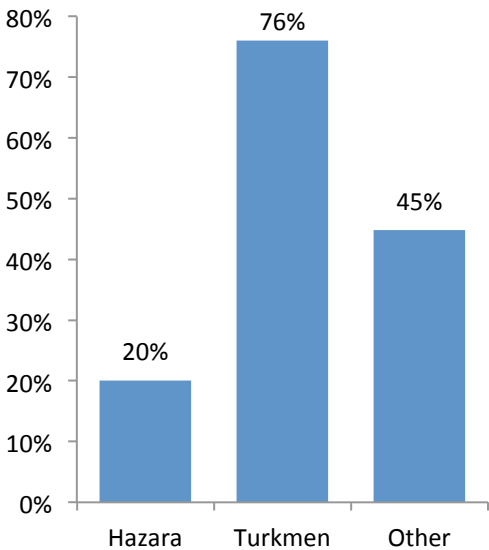
While debts may prompt the work done by these children, it does not appear to be tied specifically to the debt, nor are weavers trapped in a cycle of dependency from which they are not free to leave. The children, as well as the parents, receive money for the carpets they sell and do not complain about a failure to pay on the part of employers (although weavers accused carpet sellers of retaining the majority of profits).

**Income is thus the primary driver of child labour in carpet weaving in the urban areas of Herat and Kabul.** However, the percent of boys and girls in the weaving households involved in carpet weaving remains similar across income brackets, ranging from 62% to 71% of boys aged 5-17 and 77%-84% of girls those ages. When asked what would stop children from working, only 50% of weaving households respondents gave “sufficient income for the family” as the main reason for children to stop working (an additional 33% stated “enough money for education”). This suggests that **economics are not the sole driver of child labour.** Other factors were evoked by respondents, and secondary research suggests that these may gain in importance in more rural and insecure areas.

**3.3.2 Secondary drivers of child labour: tradition and cultural norms**

**Weaving as a traditional skill.** 28% of households interviewed listed weaving as a traditional skill in their family. This is clearly connected to ethnicity: of the Hazara households interviewed, only 20% stated that weaving was a traditional activity in their family. In contrast 75% of the 25 Turkmen households interviewed said so, as did 40% of all other ethnicities.

**Figure 3.4 - % of weaving households for whom weaving is a traditional activity**



The 10% of respondent households saying that their families weave because it is a traditional activity would therefore presumably increase in the more rural areas of Herat province where Turkmen and Tajik weavers are more common, such as in the northern provinces of Balkh and Faryab.

**Security and the desire to keep girls at home.** Previous *Samuel Hall* research on girls’ education has shown that security is frequently a barrier to girls going to school. This comes into play when girls’ schools are located too close to boys schools, and also when the schools are too far from the homes, and is more common in rural areas.<sup>18</sup> While not intrinsically tied to weaving, this suggests that the low percentage of households citing desire to keep their girls at home as a reason for weaving is likely to increase in more rural and insecure areas.

<sup>18</sup> See Samuel Hall, (2014), “School Management Shuras: A bridge between girls’ education and the communities? – Case Study on Community Mobilization for the promotion of girls’ education” for the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

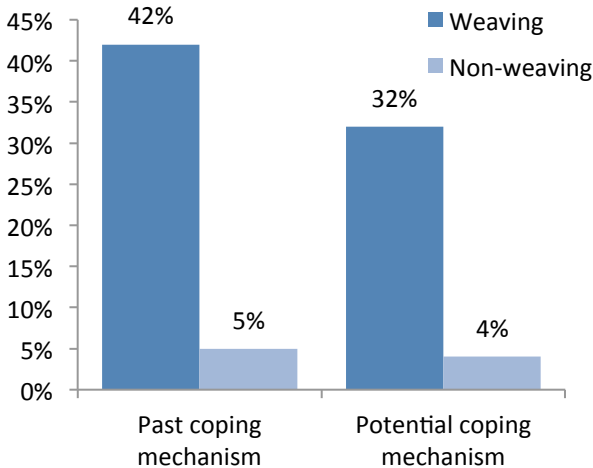


**Social influences.** The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) has highlighted the role of “social influences” and community norms in the decision making process around child labour, stating that,

Community norms, embedded in social networks, exert considerable influence on individual households and their respective decisions concerning child labour or schooling. In some settlements, norms pertaining to child labour predominate, while in others education-related norms prevail. A household is concerned about what others in the community think about the behaviour of its members, both male and female, and fear of negative gossip is common, with parents often anxious about how their children’s behaviour, achievements or failures are interpreted by larger society.<sup>19</sup>

Families are therefore strongly influenced by those around them. If an action has been accepted in the past by the community, it is likely that the household will repeat it. For example: households where children weave are more likely to cite putting children to work outside the home as a coping mechanism they would employ than non-weaving households (where children may not work). At first glance, this may seem counterintuitive: households where children weave already have an in-house income generating activity for their children. In fact, as the weaving households were much more likely to contain children who already worked, this suggests a social component to child labour. Once households have already put their children to work (in this case, in weaving) they are more likely to consider having children work as a solution to economic problems. Programming to eliminate child labour would therefore benefit by creating a social opprobrium around the action, making it clear that this is not an acceptable solution to financial difficulties.

**Figure 3.5 - % of households giving "putting children in our household to work outside of the household" as a past or potential coping mechanism**



<sup>19</sup> Pamela Hunte, for Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) (2009), *Beyond Poverty – Factors Influencing Decisions to Use Child Labour in Rural and Urban Afghanistan*, p. viii.

## 4. IMPACT OF WEAVING ON CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

### KEY FINDINGS

**This research focused on the impact of weaving on three key aspects of children's well-being, based on Phase 1 of Samuel Hall's research for GoodWeave and other research on child labour:**

1. Health (physical and mental)
2. Education, and
3. Child protection

The **results gathered here make it clear that carpet weaving is hazardous to the children involved and has material negative impacts on their wellbeing.** The results should be used both for advocacy purposes as well as to design programming that can **immediately** improve the conditions under which children work and mitigate the impact of carpet-weaving on their lives, and **ultimately** contribute to the elimination of child labour in carpet-weaving.

- **Weaving leads to child injury and illness, compromising long-term health outcomes.** These children also show more symptoms of mental health problems. These findings provide opportunities for partnerships to help the children involved given the current focus on a National Youth Health Strategy and on mental health by the Afghan government.
- **Carpet weaving has a negative impact on children's ability to make the most of their education, yet education is not incompatible with carpet weaving.** Children in weaving households attend school at comparable rates (73%) to children from non-weaving households (69%), and in line with the national average (78% of children of primary school age and 54% of those of secondary school age). But weaving children have less time to do schoolwork and report fatigue and higher rates of absenteeism. Older weaving girls are also less likely to attend school.
- **Children who weave are at higher risk on several child protection indicators – particularly physical violence, most notably for boys.** Weaving in and of itself places children in a situation where physical violence is likely to occur (47% of weaving boys report hitting as a method of discipline). By keeping children home, weaving is detrimental to their social development.
- **Anecdotally, opium usage among children was directly linked to pain-relief from weaving in several communities.**

Photograph 1 - Boy and loom, Kabul



## 4.1 INJURED AND ILL: WEAVING’S NEGATIVE PHYSICAL HEALTH IMPACTS

“Sometimes, I have headaches, and sometimes, my heart aches and sometimes, I have a pain in my upper back when I stretch my back. It makes a sound. Many times, I injured my hands with the weaving knives. But, I have to continue weaving.” (11 year old male weaver Herat)

**The combination of child labour with the weaving industry is a “perfect storm” of conditions for short- and long-term health problems.** This section builds on previous work done by Samuel Hall – see for example *“Breaking the Mould: Occupational Safety Hazards Faced by Children Working in Brick Kilns in Afghanistan”* (Samuel Hall for the ILO, 2014) – to test the incidence of health hazards in the carpet weaving sector. **As the quote at the start of this section illustrates, weaving was shown in our research to have clear and negative impact on the physical health of the children involved, both in terms of immediate injuries and long-term problems. This is consistent with previous studies on the health problems which weaving causes to children in other countries.**<sup>20</sup>

Carpet weaving is well documented as a high-risk occupation from a health perspective. Studies have identified a number of health problems stemming from weaving - from musculoskeletal problems and skin diseases to respiratory diseases and impaired vision.<sup>21</sup> The problems are more acute for children who research has shown are more susceptible to health risks in labour than adults. Child labour in weaving is dangerous because of high risk of fatigue and injury due to use of tools designed for adults, under developed sweat glands compared to adults making it harder for children to cope with temperature extremes and lack of safety and health training as making children more susceptible to illness and injury due to child labour.<sup>6</sup>

### 4.1.1 Injuries

Overall, more than three quarters of children surveyed report not having sustained any injuries in the previous twelve months. Of the ones who did, however, the vast majority were weaving children, who were three times as likely to have sustained injuries, of one type specifically: cuts, bruises and open wounds (see Table 4.1 below).

Table 4.1 - Injuries sustained by children in the past twelve months, weaving vs. non-weaving children

	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING
Cuts, bruises or open wounds	4%	25%
Broken bones	2%	2%
Sprains, strains or dislocations	2%	2%
Burns, scalds, frostbite	3%	2%
None of the above	90%	70%

<sup>20</sup> See for example, Saeed Awan; Muazzam Nasrullah; Kristin J Cummings, “Health Hazards, Injury Problems and Workplace Conditions of Carpet Weaving Children in Three Districts of Punjab, Pakistan”, *Pakistan International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health*, Vol. 16, #2, which reports higher incidence of both acute injury and repetitive injury and respiratory problems among carpet weaving children than their non-weaving counterparts.

<sup>21</sup> A. Choobineh, H. Shanavaz and M. Lahmi, “Major Health Risk Factors”, p. 69

**85% of weaving children said that these injuries occurred while working.** They were not, however, blamed on employers: **90% of children blamed themselves for their injuries.** Unsurprisingly, given the risk factors, weaving children were much more likely to report injuries to the arms and hands than non-weaving children. Non-weaving children were much more likely to report injuries to the legs and feet – likely as a result of playing outside (see Table 4.2 below).

Table 4.2 – Parts of body injured, weaving vs. non-weaving children

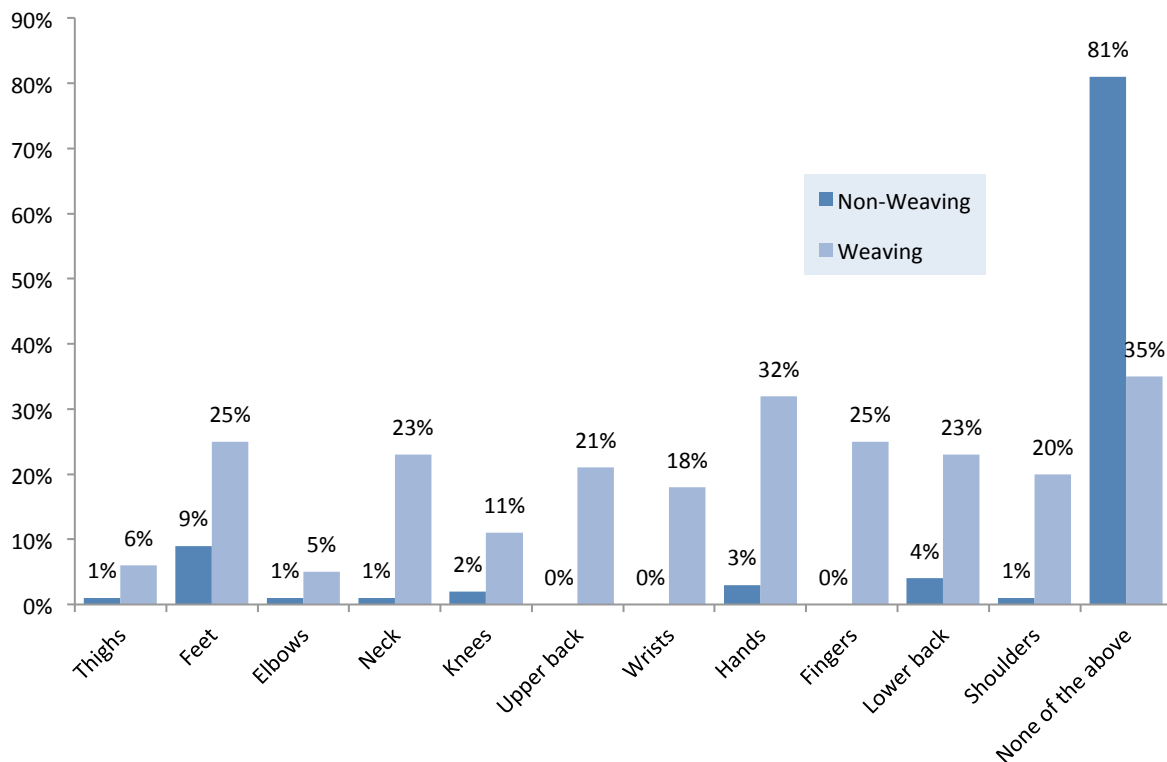
	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING
Leg or foot	42%	14%
Arm or hand	29%	82%
Head	10%	9%
Neck	0%	8%
Back	7%	8%
Eyes or ears	16%	8%
Stomach	0%	2%
Lungs (respiratory problems)	10%	2%

**4.1.2 Aches, pains and illnesses**

The differences between weaving children and the control group are significant when it comes to aches, pains and illnesses.

**Aches and pains.** Weaving children suffer more chronic pain than others across the board, with a quarter of weavers suffering foot or finger pain, more than a fifth suffering neck, shoulder and upper and lower back pain, and nearly a third suffering from pain in their hands. Non-weaving children rarely report any kind of pain besides foot pain. The impact of weaving is thus very clear. **The frequency of pain in the back, neck, fingers and hands highlights a) the negative ergonomic positions that weaving imposes on the child, b) the impact of the repetitive movements on hands, and c) the potential for injury that weaving poses to the hands and fingers.** The contrast between children in weaving and non-weaving households on these (0% of children in non-weaving households reported aches or pains in the upper back, wrists and fingers) suggests that this can be clearly attributed to weaving.

Figure 4.1 - Body parts where respondent felt aches and/or pains



**Girls report more pain.** In general, we note that female children seem more prone to pain on all body parts, especially the neck, back and hands. This also is true for general health problems. While this might reflect a cultural bias preventing boys from complaining, it most likely stems at least partially from the facts that a) as seen in the previous chapter, girls weave more frequently and longer hours, and b) girls are more likely to have additional household chores to do. Mitigating interventions for health problems should therefore have a specific focus on girls.

**Weaving leads to short and long-term illness.** Secondary research, as noted above, identified several problems frequent among weavers, including respiratory and eye problems. This research confirms those findings: weaving children are nearly twice as likely to suffer from headaches, three times as likely to suffer extreme fatigue, and four times as likely to suffer eye problems or breathing problems (see Table 4.3 below).

**Table 4.3 – Illnesses and health problems suffered by children over the past twelve months, weaving vs. non-weaving children**

	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING
Breathing problems	3%	13%
Persistent cough	6%	6%
Eye problems	4%	16%
Skin problems	0%	5%
Stomach problems / diarrhoea	4%	8%
Fever	10%	10%
Headache	27%	51%
Extreme fatigue	8%	26%
Feeling weak	10%	18%
Aching all over	2%	4%
I have not suffered from any illness or health problem over the last 12 months	57%	32%

As this was not a longitudinal survey, the long-term effects of these injuries, illness and pains from weaving were not quantified. Secondary research notes, however, that these problems are likely to continue – even after the weaving stops. Weavers have been shown to have abnormalities and deformities of the backbones, arms, legs and pelvis, the last of which can necessitate caesarean sections for pregnant weavers.<sup>22</sup> The same study references others which have been done on weaver eyesight in Iran: “Ghvamshahidi declared that the average working life cycle of a highly skilled weaver is estimated at 13 years since weavers lose their eyesight, in part, due to improper lighting. Radjabi presented cases of almost total blindness occurring after 12 years of employment at this work. In his research, Kavoussi studied the relationship between the length of employment in carpet weaving and vision impairment. In this research, 63.5% of weavers had impaired vision.”<sup>23</sup>

**Weaving children are aware of the long-term health impact their work can have.** Most respondents were very aware of the impact that weaving can have on their bodies. Faced with their older relatives, who in some cases evidenced spinal deformation and eye problems, they clearly identified some of the major issues caused by weaving.

Some do persist in denial. The Turkmen father of weaving children in Herat maintained that:

“There are not any major health problems for children because Turkmen people never let themselves go hungry and always try to have good and better food. Because of this weaving does not have an adverse effect on their children.”

The accuracy of this statement is debatable on several fronts: analysis of household dietary deficiency scores and food consumption scores (see ANNEX 3 for further details) noted that while the

<sup>22</sup> A. Choobineh, H. Shanavaz and M. Lahmi, “Major Health Risk Factors”, p. 71

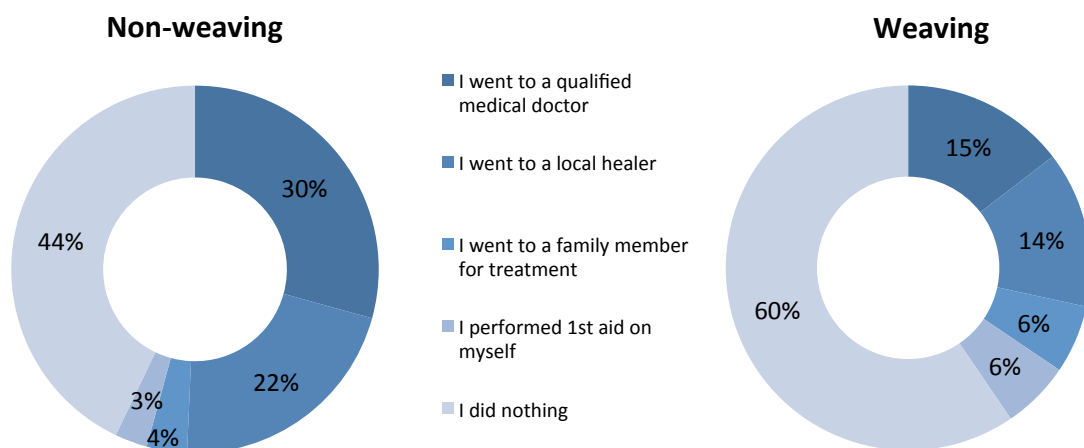
<sup>23</sup> A. Choobineh, H. Shanavaz and M. Lahmi, “Major Health Risk Factors”, p. 72

weaving households were generally no worse off than non-weaving households, food availability was a general problem. Close to three in five respondents reported being concerned about not being able to feed themselves more than ten times in the previous month.

### 4.1.3 Insufficient treatment

**Compounding the fact that weaving children are materially more likely to be injured and face long term aches, pains and illness is the fact that their households are much less likely to seek medical care when they face health problems.** Admittedly, access to medical care is generally a problem in Afghanistan, and across the board respondents only reported seeking medical attention for health problems in 56% of the cases. The difference in responses to illness between weaving and non-weaving households, however, was striking. **Weaving households were half as likely to see a doctor and fifty percent more likely to do nothing.** As a whole, it would seem that weavers have much poorer access to health care.

Figure 4.2 - Actions taken in response to health problems, weaving vs. non-weaving children



This may be a factor of the cost of healthcare – if weaving households find that they are precarious enough to require children to work, they may hold back on medical spending – but also reflect the unfortunate reality that these injuries and aches are considered normal in these households – and thus do not merit medical care. **The implication is that these child weavers who are being injured are likely not to be receiving all necessary medical care – potentially creating worse long term health problems.** Providing timely medical care would be an immediate step toward improving the wellbeing of the children involved in this industry.

## 4.2 THE IMPACT OF WEAVING ON MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a cruelly underserved sector in Afghanistan - which is of particular concern given the prevalence of such problems. A recent *Samuel Hall* survey of youth in Afghanistan found that 75% of youth in Kabul wanted mental health counselling, but only 12% received it.

Children who weave are at greater risk for mental health problems than children who do not. While the research on weaving children did not include a rigorous psychological evaluation, enumerators collected data on indicators of mental health problems. Across the board, weaving children showed more symptoms of mental health problems than non-weaving children. Girls and children who do not attend school are even more likely to report these problems. Parents are not unaware of these issues – mental health came up on several instances in the focus group discussions, and they expressed concern for their children.

Finally, beyond weaving's direct impact on mental health, its psychosocial impact is also negative. While with some types of labour, children may report pride in their work, and find it interesting, in the case of weaving only 35% are proud of it – and 83% find it uninteresting.

While it is possible to find positive psychosocial effects of child labour (as some children, for example, may enjoy some aspects of the work), negative effects dominate the experience of child weavers. This study, as detailed below, noted symptoms ranging from difficulty sleeping (twice as often amongst weaving children) to fear and anxiety (50% more frequent). Little research exists on mental health in Afghanistan, especially among children.<sup>24</sup> Globally, it is estimated that the prevalence of mental health disorders among adolescents in developing countries is at approximately 20%, and several facts suggest that it may be higher in Afghanistan:

- Youth in Afghanistan are at risk for trauma and stress coming from conflict, displacement, poverty and insecurity.
- A 2004 survey on mental health in Afghanistan found that nearly 68% of respondents had experienced some sort of depression and 72% anxiety.<sup>25</sup>

**The prevalence of mental health problems among young weavers is of particular concern as mental health is a chronically underserved domain in Afghanistan.** Currently, there are only 71 psychiatrists for the entire country, of whom 1 is female.<sup>26</sup> **The findings of this report are especially relevant as mental health (together with drug use) is one of the themes of the new Afghan National Youth Health Strategy and UNFPA youth report.** The strategy calls for improved provision of mental health promotion initiatives, improved provision of preventative care and services and increased access to mental health services among young people.

“When I feel upset I sit alone in a corner to be alone there and weep, then I feel better and empty my heart.” (14 year old female weaver, Herat)

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<sup>24</sup> See Samuel Hall (Forthcoming), *Urban Displaced Youth in Afghanistan* for more information on mental health among youth

<sup>25</sup> Cardozo et al. as cited in Inception Workshop National Health Strategy for Young People Report, p.4

<sup>26</sup> Key informant interview, Dr. Malalai, World Health Organisation (WHO), National Professional Officer, Kabul, Afghanistan October 20, 2014



To evaluate mental health of weaving children, our researcher used a series of indicators rather than a rigorous psychological evaluation – the following findings should be treated as indicative rather than definitive. Many of the children interviewed were smiling and chatting with each other, and some case studies revealed overall contentment with their life. However, when asked whether or not they had ever experienced a range of symptoms associated with mental health challenges – difficulty sleeping, difficulty concentrating, restlessness, sadness/feeling like crying, loneliness, short-tempered/anger, lack of appetite, forgetfulness, dizziness, fear/nervousness, and anxiousness – carpet weaving children evidenced poorer mental health than the control group. Gender and school attendance play a role, as girls and children who are not in school show greater symptoms.

### 4.2.1 Mental health: symptoms observed

Our research found that weaving children show more symptoms of mental health problems than children from non-weaving households. Gender and school attendance both play a role:

- Weavers who do not attend school are more likely to report symptoms, as are girls overall.
- The impact of weaving is actually greater on boys for certain metrics, especially loneliness and feeling sad.

Weavers generally report suffering on at least some days:

- Difficulty sleeping **twice** as often
- Difficulty concentrating, restlessness, and fear and anxiety 50% more often
- Sadness and forgetfulness 20% more often
- Dizziness and loneliness almost half again as often.

Table 4.4 – Mental health problems suffered by children over the past twelve months

	FEMALE		MALE	
	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING
Difficulty sleeping	7%	18%	9%	13%
Difficulty concentrating	19%	29%	12%	24%
Restlessness	26%	38%	22%	29%
Sad/feel like crying	40%	44%	25%	39%
Loneliness	19%	23%	5%	15%
Short tempered/angry	51%	58%	39%	50%
Lack of appetite	38%	34%	28%	24%
Forgetfulness	30%	37%	18%	26%
Dizziness	31%	53%	19%	39%
Fear/nervousness	28%	40%	19%	30%
Anxiousness	13%	21%	7%	12%

The children’s parents are not unaware of this. Several mentioned mental health concerns.

“According to me, the main health concern is in term of mental.” (Mother from a weaving

household, Herat)

“The only problem I know is in term of mental health.” (Mother from a weaving household, Herat)

#### 4.2.2 Psychosocial impact of children’s work in weaving

Researchers also evaluated child weavers’ feelings towards their work in weaving to confirm to what degree it had a positive or negative psychosocial impact. Results are clear: while the children frequently feel that they have the skills to do their work well (80%), they are mostly not proud of it (only 35%), find it exhausting (78%) and generally uninteresting (83%), are under pressure to do more work (67%) and do not wish to continue doing it when they are older (88%).

On the more encouraging side, weaving does not carry a general social stigma: “only” 37% think that other people find their work shameful. This means that weaving children will not be forced by social disapprobation to stay in that domain forever. Indeed, researchers spoke to several NGO workers who discussed having weaved as children for financial reasons, who exemplify the fact that working in weaving as a child carries no social stigma preventing one from working in another industry.<sup>27</sup> While they lack social stigma from weaving, it may nonetheless impact their chances of moving on by limiting the breadth and strength of their education, as will be explored in the next section.

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<sup>27</sup> One, for example, worked for six years in weaving as a child in Iran.

### 4.3 EDUCATION: A VALUED IDEAL, NOT FULLY PRACTICED

*Let us think not of education only in terms of its costs, but rather in terms of the infinite potential of the human mind that can be realized through education. Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation.*

John F. Kennedy, 1961, Proclamation 3422

The words above highlight the primary challenge with regards to child weavers' education. Children themselves, as well as their families, recognize the importance of education. However, the potential it provides is often overridden by the attendance costs given as a reason for why children must work.

#### 4.3.1 Enrolment in school

**Enrolment rates.** The children from weaving households interviewed were about as likely to attend school as children from non-weaving households 73% of children in weaving households attend school at least some of the time, as do 69% of those in non-weaving households. These figures correspond to national urban school attendance rates: nationally in 2013, in urban households, 78% of children of primary school age attend school, as do 54% of those of secondary school age.<sup>28</sup> The average school day in Afghanistan is not long – schools must often hold separate morning and afternoon sessions to accommodate all students in limited space, and parents reported their children attending school on average about four hours per day – so weaving is not incompatible with attending school.

In more rural weaving communities, these figures would presumably drop significantly for two primary reasons:

- Nationwide, children in rural communities are much less likely to school – only 54% of those who are primary school aged and 26% of those secondary school aged do so.<sup>29</sup>
- The high enrolment figures for weaving children vary by ethnicity: Hazara respondent children went to school more frequently, at 74%, than children from 63% from other ethnicities.

**Reasons for non-enrolment.** While enrolment figures for children in weaving households are no worse than for children in non-weaving households, weaving nonetheless is a major driver in preventing children from weaving households from going to school: “Our family needs them to weave carpets” is the most frequently given excuse by weaving households to explain why their children do not go to school, followed by “Our family has trouble finding the money for them to go to school” (although schooling itself is free, it comes with associated costs – uniforms, school supplies – which families may have trouble meeting).

“My children weave at home. Three of them, two boys and one girl, attend school. My two oldest daughters do not go to school because they are working and I cannot afford to give the school fees for them.” (56 year old father of weaving children, Kabul)

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<sup>28</sup> Central Statistics Organization (2014), *National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2011-12*, Afghanistan Living Condition Survey. Kabul, CSO. p. 64

<sup>29</sup> CSO (2014), *NRVA 2011-12*, p. 64

In establishing programming, however, it is important to note that weaving does not correlate to fundamental opposition to the idea of going to school. On the contrary, most parents interviewed appeared very conscious of its importance. Even when they could not afford to send all children to school, an effort was often made to educate some children. The implications from a programming perspective is that any awareness raising activities should move beyond promoting the importance of school and instead focus on encouraging the prioritization of school in financial spending.

### 4.3.2 Attendance and retention

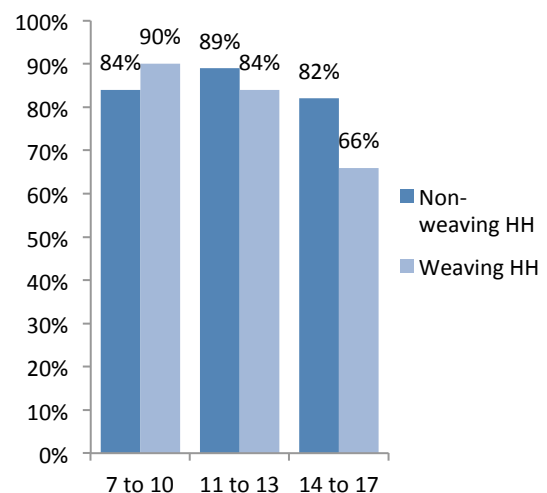
**Attendance.** Although weaving children have similar enrolment rates to non-weaving children, they have higher absenteeism rates. 39% of weaving households interviewed reporting that their children had been absent from school in the past month, as compared to only 24% of non-weaving households. **Weaving has a clear detrimental impact on attendance**, as can be seen below in the responses given by parents to explain their children’s absenteeism:

Table 4.5 - Reasons for child absenteeism

	NON-WEAVING HOUSEHOLDS	WEAVING HOUSEHOLDS
They were sick	50%	31%
Our family needed them to help at home	39%	30%
Our family needed them to weave at home	0%	55%
Our family did not want them to go to school	4%	0%
The weather prevented them from going	0%	2%
Security conditions prevented them from going	0%	0%
Other	14%	6%

**School retention rates.** While the younger of the interviewed children who weave attend school at similar rates to their non-weaving counterparts, **older weavers are less likely to attend school than the children of the same age in the control group, as can be seen in Figure 4.3.** This drop is primarily driven by girls: while 87% of 7-10 girls in the control group go to school, and 84% of those in the test group do, only 75% of 11-13 year olds in the test group attend school (vs. 89% in the control group) and 57% of 14-17 year olds (vs. 79%).<sup>30</sup> Programming should therefore also concentrate on improving retention rates among older female students.

Figure 4.3 - % of interviewed children saying they attend school, weaving households vs. non-



<sup>30</sup> This trend should be taken as indicative: due to subdivision of sample, margins of error on the control group are of +- .09 on the 14-17 female control group and +- .06 on the comparable test group

### 4.3.3 Education quality

The challenge detailed here is not on the supply side: notwithstanding the many problems facing most Afghan schools (lack of equipment ranging from books to chairs, lack of teachers, lack of buildings), these are common to both weaving and non-weaving children. Rather, here **research underlines the challenges that working as a child weaver imposes on schooling**. On several metrics, weaving limits the quality of weaving children’s education, as noted in the table below.

**Table 4.6 - Challenges faced in school, weaving vs. non-weaving children**

	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING
The school is far from my house	21%	27%
I don’t like to study	0%	0%
It will not help me in the future	1%	1%
I prefer work over school	0%	0%
I prefer staying at home over school	0%	1%
I don’t get food	5%	9%
I am too tired from working	1%	36%
I do not have time to do schoolwork at home	1%	29%
My parents do not think that my education is important	1%	9%
None	71%	38%
Other	3%	2%

Qualitative fieldwork confirmed this. One mother in Kabul stated that “[carpet-weaving] affects my children a lot, they can’t catch on in their lessons and fail in exams,” while others recognized that “Working prevents them from studying properly.”

**As with the tendency not to attend school, weaving-related problems with education become more important as respondents age.** While only 14% of respondents 7-10 say that they are too tired from working, 25% of those aged 11-13 do and 29% of those aged 14-17. Similarly, only 8% of those 7-10 say that they do not have time to do schoolwork at home, but 21% of those aged 11-13 and 27% of those aged 14-17 do.

**In conclusion:** the impact of weaving on education may at first seem limited – unlike other working children (say, workers in brick kilns, of whom only 15% reported attending school in 2011), weaving children in Herat and Kabul attend school at rates close to their non-weaving counterparts.<sup>31</sup> However, delving deeper, it is clear that weaving has a negative impact on student attendance, retention rates, ability to prepare for school and ability to focus in school. The long-term impact of this is concerning: without education, the chances of the children and households involved in weaving being able to break their cycle of dependency on child labour are lessened.

<sup>31</sup> SH/ILO (2011), *Buried in Bricks*, op. cit., p. 44

## 4.4 CHILD PROTECTION

UNICEF, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), uses the term “child protection” to refer to preventing and responding to violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse against children. Previous research on child labour in Afghanistan has found that children involved in child labour are more likely to be exposed to violence and abuse.<sup>32</sup> **While carpet weaving does not correlate to a material increase in violence faced by its weavers, by its very nature it creates conditions for children likely to lead to child protection issues:**

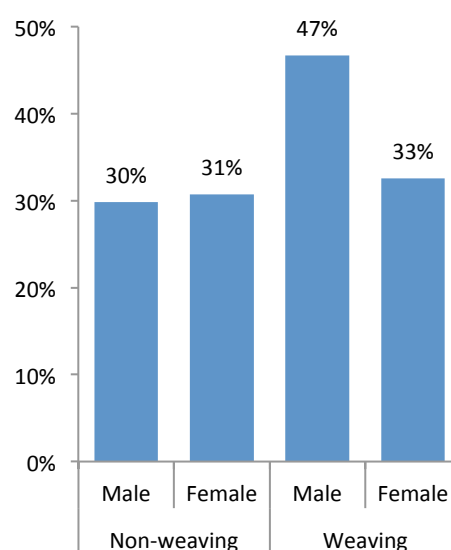
- As detailed in Section 3.2 (Health Hazards), children who weave do so in conditions hazardous to the health, posing potential for both injury and illness.
- It is difficult for young children to sit still and focus for extended periods of time: to keep them doing so, parents and supervisors may be forced to discipline them. In Afghanistan, this frequently takes the form of physical violence.
- Children who weave spend more time at home, and therefore less time interacting with other children, which can significantly impact social development.
- Weaving limits the time children spend playing – also important for their development.
- Children who weave are less likely to have birth certificates that prove their age, making it difficult to implement legal measures designed to limit or eliminate child labour.

### 4.4.1 The overlap of parental discipline and physical violence

The qualitative research makes it clear that physical discipline is accepted as normal by most respondents, and that children in both weaving and non-weaving households are subject to it. **However, by necessitating extra attention from parents/ supervisory adults and requiring long hours of focus from children, weaving as an activity places children in a situation where they are therefore more likely to be faced with physical discipline.**

**Methods of discipline.** Across the board, children generally stated that when they did something bad, their parents told them what they had done wrong. Hitting came in a distant second. **Weaving children were, however, slightly more likely to report that their parents used hitting to discipline them: 38% vs. 30%. Gender was a more significant differentiator, with weaving boys much more likely to say that they are hit for such infractions than girls (see Figure 4.4).**

Figure 4.4 - % of children reporting hitting as a method of discipline, weaving vs. non-weaving



<sup>32</sup> Samuel Hall (2012), *Breaking the Mould: Occupational Safety Hazards Faced by Children Working in Brick Kilns in Afghanistan*, commissioned by the ILO

“I used to beat my children when they were younger/small, but now, I advise them when necessary. I spend time with them when I am free in order to advise them on moral issues in life.” (70 year old father, non-weaving household, Herat)

“I usually try to discipline them by word, but if they bother me very much, I beat them so they obey me.” (30 year old mother, weaving household, Herat)

“Sometimes I beat the children when they are fighting and disobeying me.” (56 year old father, weaving household, Kabul)

**Given that (a) physical discipline by parents is accepted at home, and (b) weaving children are supervised by their parents, spending time working at home, and are contributors to the financial stability of their household, hence raising expectations and their role within the household not only as children but as actors, it follows that children who weave spend more time with their parents and are at higher risk of being disciplined as workers and not just as children.** This is borne out by the higher rates of physical discipline reported by boys who weave, who spend comparatively more time in the same room as their mother when they weave as they would otherwise. Studies have found that, although the normativeness (i.e., how common and normal it is perceived to be in the country under examination) of physical discipline may lessen the perceived effects, it is still associated with higher levels of aggressiveness and anxiety.<sup>33</sup> **Beyond the immediate physical harm, then, physical discipline has long-term negative effects, which may compound existing mental health impact of weaving (see section 4.2).**

**This situation can be improved by prompting a change in attitude towards physical violence as a method of discipline.** As social influences are strong in determining which behaviours are acceptable, this change should not be limited to weaving parents, but rather part of a broader awareness campaign of the negative consequences of physical discipline.

#### 4.4.2 Lonely children: weaving as limiter of child development

**Social inclusion.** Theories of psychological development concur: **social interactions between children are crucial to their social development.**<sup>34</sup>

For children who weave and do not attend school (especially girls who more likely to be constrained to the house), the implications are clear: weaving, by its nature as a familial, household-based activity, limits their potential for contact with other children. One 13-year-old boy, weaving in Kabul, described his social life as follows; “Generally I am not happy because I don’t play with children and

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<sup>33</sup> Lansford, Jennifer, et al, (2005), “Physical discipline and children's adjustment: Cultural normativeness as a moderator”, *Child Development*, 76(6), p.8

<sup>34</sup> In a review of the literature on the subject, it is explained that, “In some formulations, peer experiences are suggested to contribute to development in ways that are unique from children’s experiences with adults; in others, peer experiences offer an important countervailing influence to the influence of adults; in still others, peer experiences and adult influences are seen to share many similarities. Further, in some cases, the implications of unsuccessful adjustment with peers are drawn out explicitly, though in others they are only implied.” Jeffrey G. Parker, Kenneth H. Rubin, Stephen A. Erath, Julie C. Wojslawowicz, and Allison A. Buskirk, “Peer relationships, Child Development, and Adjustment: A Developmental Psychopathology Perspective”, in Dante Cicchetti, and Donald Cohen, eds. (2006), *Developmental Psychopathology, Theory and Method*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Hoboken, New Jersey, pp. 420-421

always work and most of the time I am drowsy. When I am upset I read my school books and sometime go out and play with children if my parents are not at home.”

Indeed, as can be seen in Figure 4.5, when presented with a list of common social interactions in Afghanistan (see footnote), weaving children more frequently stated that they had done none of the above.<sup>35</sup> The impact is very clear on boys, nearly three times as likely to report none of these common social interactions.

**Preventing play.** Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states that “every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.” Weaving contravenes this for the children involved: by taking up so much of the children’s time it limits their ability to play. While it does not always eliminate it completely, several children noted in the case studies that it reduced the time they had to do so.

“I spend less time in playing because my parents don’t let me play outside. I play football for a short time with other children [but] mostly spend my time in weaving.” (13 year old boy weaver, Kabul).

Other organizations in Afghanistan have been taking this into account in their programming. Save the Children, for example, has a pilot program bringing together children working in the street in centres. “Getting everyone in a group together that is experiencing the same thing helps a lot with their mental state and wellbeing. I think just relating with other children who are experiencing the same thing helps quite a lot. For children, these recreational activities actually are more effective than talking or anything else... they love just playing around and running around.”<sup>36</sup>

Figure 4.5 - % of children answering "none of the above" when asked about social interactions

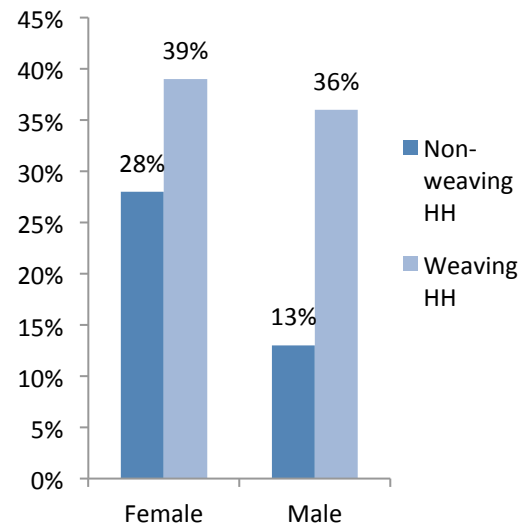
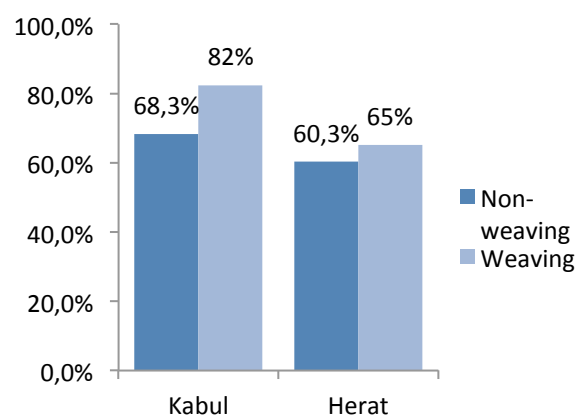


Figure 4.6 - % of households where all children lack birth certificates



<sup>35</sup> Children were asked if they did any of the following: go to religious ceremonies, spend time outside the house, go to non-religious celebrations, visit unrelated neighbors, spend time with unrelated children, speak to people of a different ethnicity

<sup>36</sup> Key Informant Interview, Crystal Stewart, Save the Children Senior Child Protection Advisor, Kabul, Afghanistan, October 24 2014



#### **4.4.3 Legal protection concerns: missing birth certificates**

Lack of birth certificates is not limited to weaving households – but weavers are less likely to have them, especially in Kabul. The International Convention on the Rights of the Child underlines the fundamental right of children to a name, nationality and their own identity, for which birth registration is crucial.<sup>37</sup> The lack of it also poses child protection challenges as without birth certificates, it becomes significantly more difficult to prove whether or not children and youth who are working are old enough to be doing so, and legal protection for working children is more difficult to implement. Additionally, this also makes it more difficult to access education and identify cards, which has clear long-term negative consequences for the children involved.

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<sup>37</sup> As cited in Central Statistics Organisation/UNICEF (2013) *Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010-2011*, p. 122

## 4.5 OPIUM AND DRUG ABUSE IN CARPET-WEAVING HOUSEHOLDS: MYTH OR REALITY?

Afghanistan is the world's greatest producer of opium, responsible in 2012 for 74% of the world's supply.<sup>38</sup> This opium is not reserved for export, as UNODC reports "Significant increase in the use of opium and heroin have been observed in the country in recent years and cannabis has emerged as the most widely used substance with over half a million users countrywide. Between 2005 and 2009, the numbers of regular opium and heroin users increased by 53% and 140% respectively."<sup>39</sup> This is of concern for two reasons:

1. Drug usage is not confined to adults: a 2009 study found that approximately 50% of drug users interviewed also gave drugs to these children. Opium in these cases is not used just to get high: rather it is, according to UNODC, used to deal with stress, as medicine, and to "numb hunger."<sup>40</sup>
2. Drug use is reported as forcing children to work (when the head of household is addicted).<sup>41</sup>

### 4.5.1 A correlative link between carpet weaving and drug use

Several articles have linked this drug usage specifically to the carpet weaving industry: "*Afghanistan's carpet loomers are feeding their kids hashish*" (July 9, 2013), trumpeted *Vice Magazine*, while *Payvand News (Iran)* constrained itself to the more reserved "*The art of carpet weaving is passed from generation to generation among the Turkmen women of Afghanistan's northern Balkh province. So is opium addiction,*" (May 28, 2008).

But, does this connection actually exist, or are these articles merely propagating rumour? A representative of WarChild UK in Herat province reported that he had actually heard about this issue from the news, as it has gotten traction and then been discussed in meetings.<sup>42</sup>

While the quantitative research in this project found no statistically significant incidence of drug use among weavers, qualitative research in Herat and Kabul suggested that it occurs in more rural areas. Indeed, key informant interviews conducted in both Faryab and Balkh provinces to follow up on this issue recognized that drug use is relatively common among carpet weavers, and used primarily to keep children quiet and for medicinal purposes. It is important to note, however, that this connection remains anecdotal.

"There are many addicted people among [carpet weavers] because when women are weaving they give opium to their young children to keep them calm, [...] also women and young girls drink opium with their tea to keep calm." (Key informant interview, Education department, Khulm district, Balkh)

"We have women who give opium for their babies to keep them calm during the work time, and women use opium themselves to relax their body while they are working. I had interviews with women in Shakh and Ghurak area in Qaisar district; they told me that they are using opium." (Key informant interview, department of Labour and Social Affairs, Faryab)

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<sup>38</sup> UNODC (2014) *Afghanistan Drug Report 2012*, executive summary, p. 7

<sup>39</sup> UNODC (2014) *Afghanistan Drug Report 2012*, executive summary, p. 9

<sup>40</sup> UNODC (2014) *Afghanistan Drug Report 2012*, executive summary, p. 10

<sup>41</sup> UNODC (2014), *Impacts of drug use on users and their families in Afghanistan*

<sup>42</sup> Key Informant Interview, Eshaq Karimi, WarChild UK, Project Manager, Herat, Afghanistan, October 14, 2014

To delve more deeply into this issue, follow up qualitative research was conducted in Balkh Province. **This research found clear instances of weaving families using opium for the purposes of pain relief and to keep children quiet (See Box 4.1).**

#### Box 4.1 - Opium use in carpet weaving villages in Balkh Province

As noted above, quantitative research around drug use in carpet-weaving families in Herat and Kabul showed very little incidence of drug use. Field researchers emphasized, however, that this was at least partially due to a) the population interviewed (the urban centres of Herat and Kabul contain many weaving families for whom weaving is an economic rather than traditional activity) and b) an unwillingness to admit to drug use in a questionnaire.

To delve more deeply into this issue, then, qualitative research was organized in Balkh province: by going outside of the centre of the city and speaking to people in a more conversational matter, it was theorized, one could solicit more personal information. Indeed, over the course of these interviews, opium usage was clearly linked to pains due to weaving, and doctors confirmed this anecdotal evidence. However, while the qualitative research in Balkh province showed a clear correlation between weaving and opium usage in some families, the direct relationship between weaving specifically and opium is not always clear.

Village leaders and doctors interviewed linked the use of opium as medicine to tradition amongst some Turkmen families:

“Mostly people who use opium they are Turkmen and they are using from the past.” (*Sharak-e-watani Clinic, Balkh Province*)

“People use opium in Shortepa and Kaldar districts, and other Turkmen places. It is a long tradition among Turkmen people and it is difficult to eliminate using opium among Turkmen people.” (*Shortepa Clinic, Balkh Province*)

The trend may spread to other groups, as the same doctor cited “others who weave also use [...] because their work load is high.”

**Indeed, the opium usage described was not for recreational purposes, but rather to allow people to work long days and for pain relief and medicinal purposes more generally.**

In some cases, only older people were reported as using opium – signs, perhaps, of a tradition losing ground.

“But some old people between the ages of 50-60 who are involved in carpet weaving, use opium as medicine in order to get relief from body pain because it relieves them for 10-12hrs. The people usually buy drugs from the city or the other people in the village. My wife daily uses a piece of opium equivalent to a seed of wheat with tea because she has spent a long span of her life in weaving carpet, so she usually get pain in her body, but the rest of my family members (children) don’t use opium at all.” (Father in a weaving household, *Farukh Abad, Balkh Province*)

In others villages, however, this tradition remained widespread:

“The whole people living in this village use opium as medicine, but they are not addicted to in a way to use it for always; they use it only to get relief of any pain in the body or cough-related diseases. The people don’t react against opium in any proper manner because they all assume the opium as medicine.” (Father in a weaving household, *Sharak-e-watani, Balkh Province*)

In these cases, while reported as medicinal, opium use went further:

“The children in my family are also sometimes given opium in order to make them quiet.” (Father in a weaving household, *Sharak-e-watani Clinic, Balkh Province*)

In these villages where the majority of the population weaves, the link between carpet weaving and the need for opium as a medicine was explicitly drawn, in both villages where opium use was very limited and in those where it was widespread.

“In term of carpet weaving, only those women are addicted to drug who strictly weave carpet from early morning up to late at night without taking any breaks.” (*Father in a weaving household, Qarchak Olama*)

“Opium using is common among the carpet weavers in this village. It is perceived an evil task by the people, as many people shy to disclose they’ve used opium, but most of them have been addicted to it due to ignorance. The more one (carpet weaver) get a higher age, the much amount of opium will be used by him/her in order to relief the body pain.” (*Father in a weaving household, Sharak-e-watani, Balkh Province*)

“Anyone who uses drugs is perceived a bad person in the community because it is a prohibited action, but they are used by some people out of necessity because they are dependent to carpet weaving on which they have to use the drugs. Opium is often used by the women who are involved in carpet weaving from early morning up to late at night.” (*Father in a weaving household, Farukh Abad, Balkh Province*)

Not only was a link drawn between carpet weaving and opium use, but this link specifically noted the dangers of this to children.

“This situation led the people into an addiction level where some children are given as much opium, as it puts the life of the child in danger and makes stomach washing compulsory for him/her.” (*Father in a weaving household, Sharak-e-watani, Balkh Province*)

“They even give opium to their babies in order to force them sleep and not disturb them during weaving. Some children are even died due to hyper-opium given to them by their mothers. Thus, when such babies get older, they keep on using opium for lifetime.” (*Father in a weaving household, Farukh Abad, Balkh Province*)

**The key trends from these qualitative interviews are as therefore as follows:**

1. Opium usage in Balkh tends to happen at the village level, i.e. either the vast majority of the village uses opium or tolerates its use, or it is something done only by old people and drug addicts.
2. Respondents were more likely to admit to opium usage in smaller villages further from Balkh
3. When respondents admitted to using drugs or having family members who did so, pain relief, medicinal use, and, occasionally, to keep children quiet, were the primary reasons given for doing so.
4. Opium for these purposes was generally consumed as a solid along with tea.
5. Respondents, even those who took drugs, appeared aware of some of the key dangers of opium use for children, specifically overdosing and long-term addiction.

## 4.5.2 Consequences of childhood drug use

Opiate usage is not without consequences. **The first, and clearest, tendency is that children who are given drugs are more likely to continue using them as they become addicted.**

“A few years ago families used to keep their children calm with using opium for them which after ten years the children became addicted.” (Key informant interview, department of Labour and Social Affairs, Faryab)

“We had a Turkmen trainer who worked with us in Sadat. Later, we realized she was addicted. When we went into the details with her, she said that her two sisters were also addicted because when they were younger their parents had given them drugs to be able to weave for long periods of time.” (Key informant interview, NGO in Herat)

Limited research exists on the long-term effects of opium usage on children specifically but some very concerning trends can be noted:

- **Maternal drug use can affect the fetus both directly and indirectly.** Active metabolites from drugs such as cocaine, opiates and marijuana can directly penetrate the fetal blood-brain barriers, and they can affect the maternal body in ways that harm the fetus (for example, restricting fetal oxygen supply).<sup>43</sup>
- **Apparent pattern linking prenatal opiate exposure to behavioural problems.** While there has been no statistically significant research, studies suggest prenatal opiate exposure can be linked to increases in ADHD and other such behaviours.<sup>44</sup>
- **Once children have become addicted to opium, they will be subject to a number of uncomfortable symptoms if they try to stop.** Research on children given opioids for medicinal purposes and on infants born to drug addicted mothers have noted a) neurological symptoms (“high-pitched crying, irritability, increased wakefulness, hyperactive deep tendon reflexes, increased muscle tone, tremors, seizures, intraventricular haemorrhage”), b) gastrointestinal tract symptoms (“poor feeding, uncoordinated and/or constant sucking, vomiting, diarrhoea, dehydration”), c) autonomic signs (“increased sweating, nasal stuffiness, fever, mottling”) and d) other symptoms (“poor weight gain, increased rapid-eye movement sleep, skin excoriation”).<sup>45</sup>

One key informant in Herat explained this drug usage by saying that “people are not aware of what will happen to them if they start using drugs; once they are addicted, they cannot do anything.”<sup>46</sup> If this indeed is the case, **awareness raising in rural areas where drug use is more prevalent is crucial to avoid contributing to intergenerational addiction.**

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<sup>43</sup> Sonia Minnes, Adelaide Lang, Lynn Singer, (2011) “Prenatal Tobacco, Marijuana, Stimulant and Opiate exposure: Outcomes and Practice Implications”, *Addiction Science & Clinical Practice*, p. 57

<sup>44</sup> Sonia Minnes, Adelaide Lang, Lynn Singer, (2011) “Prenatal Tobacco, Marijuana, Stimulant and Opiate exposure: Outcomes and Practice Implications”, *Addiction Science & Clinical Practice*, p. 65

<sup>45</sup> Erwin Ista, Monique van Dijk, Claudia Gamel, Dick Tibboel, Matthijs de Hoog (2007), “Withdrawal Symptoms in children after long-term administration of sedatives and/or analgesics: a literature review. ‘Assessment remains troublesome’”, *Intensive Care Med*, vol. 33, Springer-Verlag, p. 1397

<sup>46</sup> Key Informant Interview, Zabihullah Taheri, HELP, Program Director, Herat, Afghanistan, October 15, 2014

### 4.5.3 Social stigma of drug use

Responses when asked about drug use were quite strong: focus group discussion respondents in the periurban and urban areas of Herat and Kabul condemned drug users, stating that they were not accepted within their communities. This suggests two possibilities:

- A striking urban/rural difference in attitude towards drug use
- A lack of awareness in rural areas that opium and hashish usage is necessarily bad for you.

Secondary literature suggests that the latter is more likely the case. In a 2009 *LA Times* article on drug use more generally, one woman recovering from addiction was cited as saying “I didn’t know smoking opium was bad for me – People said it was medicine. If I had known it would ruin my life I would never have tried it.”<sup>47</sup> The qualitative research in Balkh confirmed that while case study respondents from drug using weaving villages in Balkh noted the long-term addiction risks that using opium poses to children, they still conceived of opium as medicine, and people using opium were generally classified differently from the drug addicts who are stigmatized.

“Here the numbers of the addicted people are very few while the youths are often unemployed and idle in the area. The people assume [they are] bad people. [...]. But some old people between the ages of 50-60 who are involved in carpet weaving, use opium as medicine in order to get relief from body pain “ (*Father, weaving household, Farukh Abad, Balkh Province*)

The only health issues noted caused by opium were cases of overdosing. Awareness therefore needs to be raised – as has been done in the villages closer to the cities, that opium is a dangerous drug like heroin.

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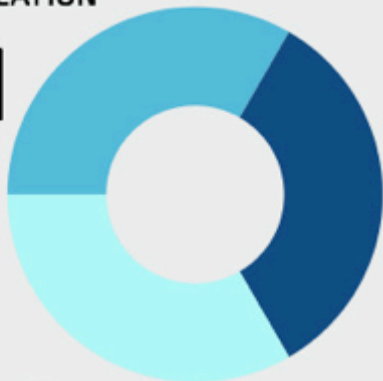
<sup>47</sup> David Zucchino (July 31 2009), “Afghanistan faces growing addiction problem”, *LA Times*, accessed at <http://www.latimes.com/la-fg-afghan-addicts31-2009jul31-story.html#page=1>, 12 Nov. 2014

# WEAVING CHILDREN

THE IMPACT OF CHILD LABOR IN CARPET WEAVING ON THE WELL-BEING OF THE CHILDREN INVOLVED

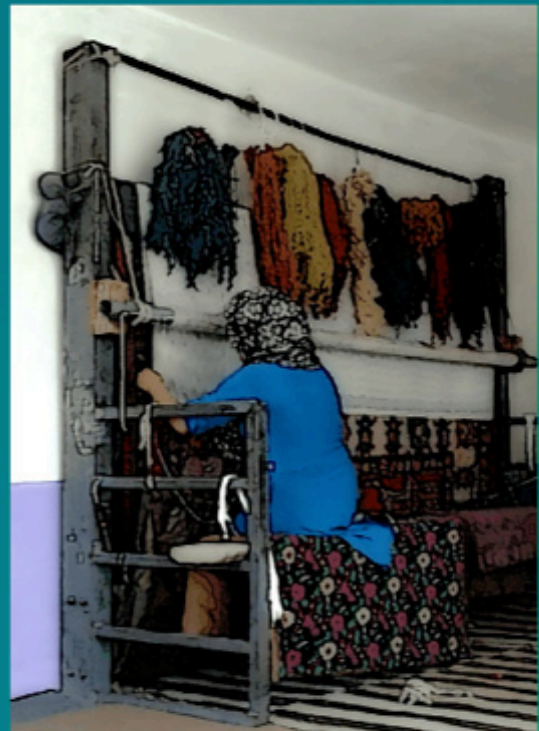
## THREE MAJOR AREAS OF IMPACT

EDUCATION



HEALTH

CHILD PROTECTION



25%

of weaving children suffered a cut, bruise or open wound in the last year

4%

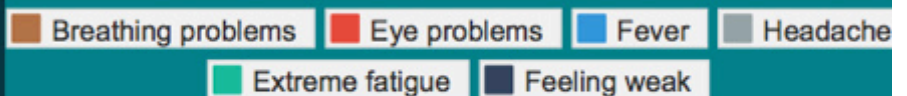
of children in the control group did

HARMFUL TO PHYSICAL HEALTH

## WEAVING CHILDREN'S PRINCIPAL AILMENTS

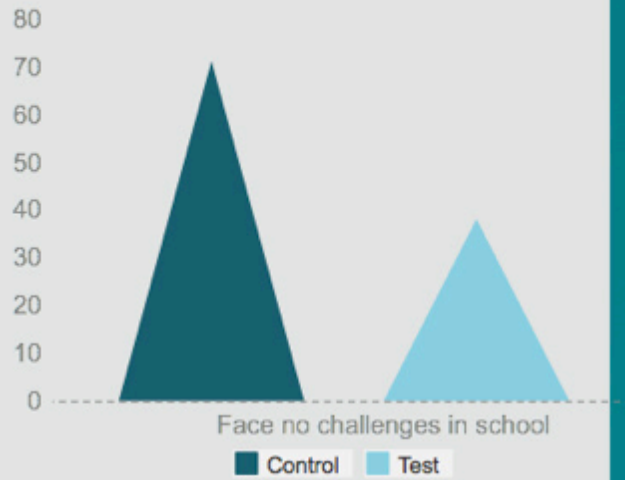
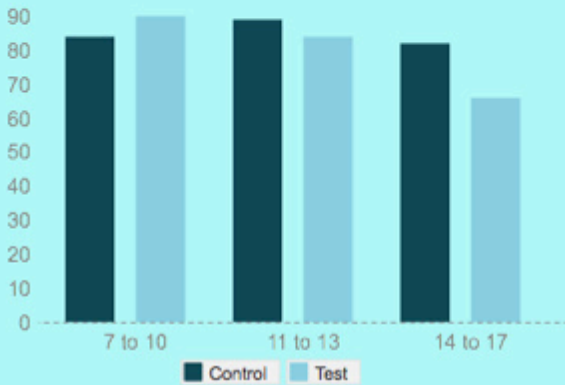


## NON-WEAVING CHILDREN ON THE SAME



## LIMITING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Weaving youth are less likely to attend school than their non-weaving counterparts



Only **35%** of children have never been hit

**74%**

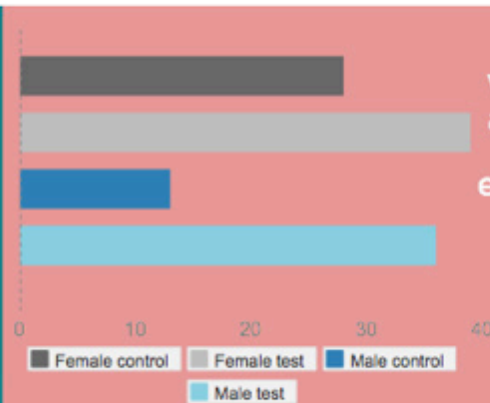
of weaving households do not have birth certificates for their children

“Once I didn’t obey my mother so she started hitting me, then father got angry and hit her. Such violence happens once a month.” (11 year old female weaver, Kabul)

## CHILD PROTECTION RISKS

**Difficulty sleeping**

**Sadness**



Weaving children are more likely to report having experienced none of the social interaction options given

## INCREASED INCIDENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS

**Restlessness**

**Fear and anxiety**

**Forgetfulness**

**Loneliness**



SAMUEL HALL

Samuel Hall/ GoodWeave, "Weaving or Warping? The impact of child labor in carpet weaving in Afghanistan"



## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE INTERVENTIONS

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This research highlights key take-aways to improve the lives of child weavers and their households. The two are co-dependent as child weaving in Afghanistan is home and family-based. Children are perceived as workers rather than mere children with rights, needs and futures. Parents rely on discipline and pressure around the collective good for the family, using different means to ensure that their children continue to work – occasionally going to the extremes of physical violence and drug use. Children become de-humanized. Parents become discipline-oriented, protecting the household's collective good but not their children's individual interests.

**Hidden tensions: education, work, no leisure. Sacrificing long-term social development.** Parents are conscious of the importance of education but feel forced to make their children lead two lives – although children weaving and education are compatible, as children are prepared to lead two lives in one – workers and students – carpet weaving, education and leisure are incompatible. Children weaving sacrifice their leisure time, their childhood, and more long-term, their social development. Weaving is not their choice, they do not bear the benefits but rather the costs of financial choices made, consciously or not, by their parents. School absenteeism is high, retention rates are low. Scratching the surface on education we see the inability of children to focus, to spend time preparing for school. Fatigue and time take the best of their ability: as a result commitment to education wanes, absenteeism increases and retention rates drop.

**Hidden tensions: health, physical violence, drug use and addiction: an imposed discipline.** Their relationship to their parents is tense. Weaving is not enjoyable for children, nor is it their choice. Boys who weave suffer from greater rates of physical violence; children are disciplined as workers – not just as children – to be more productive. Child weavers suffer from higher rates of chronic pain and ailments, as well as mental health problems. They express more difficulties sleeping, concentrating, feeling more frequently sad, dizzy and unhappy. In some cases, parents provide drugs to their children as medicine, allowing them to work longer hours, and to keep younger children quiet. This leads to long-term drug addiction problems.

**Hidden tensions: legal rights, child protection and enforcement: lacking birth certificates.** Legal challenges are another component of the protection challenges facing children. In Kabul, for example, only 18% of households had birth certificates for all children – this which impairs the ability of the government in enforcing the legal framework against the worst forms of child labour in Afghanistan. Legal measures are hampered by the lack of documentation.

**GoodWeave needs to raise awareness, among legislators, administrators, international and national organizations, at the community and household level, that child labour in carpet weaving is in fact a problem. Partnerships, therefore, are a crucial component moving forward:** before “reinventing the wheel,” GoodWeave should make linkages between carpet weaving families and organizations working in their communities, as well as between the organizations. Lack of coordination is responsible for the waste of probably millions of dollars in Afghanistan, as some communities receive excess help and others ill-adapted help. This coordination should also be used to make households aware of the opportunities available to them.

## 5.1 KEY CHALLENGES IN ELIMINATING CHILD LABOUR IN CARPET WEAVING

Although recent ILO/IPEC estimates have reported a material decline in child labour worldwide in the past ten years (a reduction of almost one third of child labourers between 2000 and 2012), the situation in Afghanistan is less encouraging.<sup>48</sup> Facing consistent economic, development, migration and security concerns, child labour has not been a major focus of government policy. Immediate elimination of child labour in the carpet-weaving domain is practically speaking impossible:

- **Carpet-weaving families using child labour are economically dependent on such labour**, as discussed in Phase 1 of the research. The cost-benefit analysis between having children work or not comes out on the side of the immediate needs which weaving fulfils, rather than the long-term opportunity cost.
- **Child labour in carpet-weaving has, in more rural areas, a strong cultural component.** For Turkmen families in particular, children, especially girls, have been weaving carpets for generations. This sort of tradition is harder to overcome conceptually for the families involved than more rational arguments. Blanket interventions across all areas of interest will have very differing levels of success.
- **Many of the areas where the most harmful forms of child labour in carpet weaving (i.e. linked to drug use, preventing weaving children from attending school) are occurring are inaccessible even to non-local Afghans.** Carpet sellers in Herat recounted that it is becoming increasingly dangerous for them to go back to their home village on the Turkmen border to purchase carpets.
- **The government is limited in its ability and capacity to enforce laws against child labour.** The fact that weaving is objectively speaking not as damaging to the children involved as other prominent hazardous forms of child labour (such as labouring in brick kilns and child prostitution) further complicates things – how to justify specific focus on child labour in carpet weaving other problems which may appear more harmful – for example, child labour in brick kilns – are still getting short shrift in a country where the lack of government capacity and government resources are structural impediments to law enforcement.

Recommendations are geared towards **the progressive elimination of child labour in carpet weaving**. In the short term, the government and other international and national actors should focus on mitigating the effects of weaving on the children already involved in the business, limiting their involvement as much as possible, and addressing the factors which prompt child labour.

**The recommendations below will focus on the urban and peri-urban carpet-weaving population as an entry point in Afghanistan; these populations are accessible and pose fewer security concerns. Success in this area will allow GoodWeave to have the credibility and connections to partner effectively with other organizations for initiatives in more rural areas.**

Programming needs to make sure it has no negative effects. For example, pushing children to go to school could lead to longer days for the children and more dangerous work if they are then forced to work at night to make out the time.

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<sup>48</sup> International Labour Office, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) (2013), *Marking progress against child labour - Global estimates and trends 2000-2012*, Geneva, Switzerland.

Finally, in planning programming, economics should always be kept in mind: in the households examined, they are the primary driver of child labour. Programming addressing other problems (health) can be made more successful if it also frames the positive economic outcomes it can lead to.

**Box 5.1 – Addressing households where weaving is a secondary versus primary income generating activity**

**While the difference is one of nuance rather than order of magnitude, the decision to use child labour in households where weaving is a secondary income generating activity seem more driven by financial need than in households where weaving is the primary income generating activity – despite equivalent if not higher income:**

- Children are more likely to weave because of household debt (35% of households vs. 26% of households)
- Children are less likely to say they can stop work if they want to (18% vs. 32%)
- Weaving is less likely to be a traditional activity for the household (25% of households interviewed vs. 30%).

**Accordingly, the most popular proposed solutions amongst these households were those helping to generate income for the adults in the household.** They were more frequent in saying that vocational training for adults and weaving cooperates would very likely change whether or not their children work (61% and 49%, respectively, versus 47% and 32% in households where weaving is the primary household activity). **Should GoodWeave wish to target these households specifically, it should orient its activities towards income generation.**

## 5.2 PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS

GoodWeave has already evoked a number of interventions, based on a) Phase 1 of the research and b) experience from addressing this topics in other countries. These are primarily based on the market-based approach used by GoodWeave in other countries: “if enough people demand certified child-labour-free rugs, manufacturers will employ only skilled, adult artisans, and children will no longer be exploited in the carpet industry.”<sup>49</sup> The crux of this approach is therefore building both the supply of and demand for child-labour free rugs.

The proposed interventions were evaluated in the current phase of research. Their viability has been evaluated based on their presumed success along OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) as well as their potential for partnerships to maximize effect (see ANNEX 2 for a full evaluation matrix and details underlying summary evaluations below). Each evaluation includes suggestions for adapting the initiative to the local context. These recommendations additionally include proposed interventions based on phases 1 and 2 of the research.

To ensure coordination the recommendations have been designed to work together to fulfill the time-bound program goals of the ILO (see Box 5.2).

### Box 5.2 – Addressing the worst forms of child labour: ILO International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) Programming Guidelines

ILO and IPEC have adopted the “time-bound programme” approach to assist in the goals of ILO Convention No. 182, that is to say,

- Prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour,
- Provide direct assistance for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labour and for their rehabilitation and social integration,
- Ensure access to free basic education and appropriate vocational training for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour,
- Identify and reach out to children at special risk, and
- Take account of the special situation of girls.

**Time-bound programmes** consist of “a set of integrated and coordinated policies and interventions with clear goals, specific targets and a defined time frame, aimed at preventing and eliminating a country’s worst forms of child labour. They emphasize the need to address the root causes of child labour, linking action for its elimination to national development policies, macro-economic trends and strategies, and demographic and labour market processes and outcomes, with particular emphasis on economic and social mobilization.”<sup>50</sup> This has not yet been implemented in Afghanistan.

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<sup>49</sup> GoodWeave website, “About the Organization”, [www.goodweave.org/about/organization](http://www.goodweave.org/about/organization), accessed February 1, 2015

<sup>50</sup> International Labour Organization, “Time Bound Programmes”, <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Action/Time-BoundProgrammes/lang--en/index.htm>, accessed November 20, 2014

## 5.2.1 Raising the Visibility of the GoodWeave Label and Child-free standards in the Afghan rug industry

**Launching (and leading) a consortium to end child labour in the carpet weaving sector in Afghanistan** composed of GoodWeave, UNIDO, ILO, UNICEF and WHO – A partnership strategy would help Goodweave reach its objectives in a sustainable and efficient way, by better engaging with key governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in Afghanistan. The long-term objectives of GoodWeave in Afghanistan will require a broad-based effort to lead a consortium composed of – identifying where support is needed to raise visibility and attention with the Government. Given the well established working relations of UNIDO, ILO and UNICEF with the relevant line ministries at both national and sub-national levels, GoodWeave will need to ensure a partnership with these UN agencies to frame its work in Afghanistan. The role of the Consortium, under the leadership of GoodWeave, will be to engage with the government to introduce standards of child-free certification in the carpet industry in Afghanistan. The Government has shown its commitment to eliminating the worst forms of child labour in 2013 by releasing a list of jobs where working conditions prohibited child work – carpet weaving featured on this list. The Government has also applauded the child-free rug certification given to Ariana Rugs, Inc. The respective roles of Consortium members can be to:

- **GoodWeave:** introduce the GoodWeave label and a community-based monitoring system to ensure that the education, health and rights of children are safeguarded
- **ILO:** ensure the requirements for decent work are recognized and implemented
- **UNICEF:** document progress towards child protection in the carpet weaving industry
- **UNIDO:** include child-free standards in the standardization process at the national level, through awareness raising and sensitization with government counterparts
- **WHO:** introduce a drug-free campaign among carpet weaving communities

Beyond Government and UN actors, Goodweave should progressively seek to include in this Consortium other relevant actors, such as the World Bank, the AKDN, or NGOs (Save the Children, CARE, Oxfam, etc.)

**Initiating a sub-national level advocacy strategy:** The National Director of Security, the Government’s Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defence, the Afghan National Security Forces have been sensitized to detect and respond to cases of trafficking, recruitment and abuse of children. Further sensitization is now needed with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – through its Directorates (DoLSAMD) in the provinces. A pilot programme linking DoLSAMD field staff to carpet weaving communities should consist of meetings within communities to:

- Fund a government focal point within DoLSAMD to monitor child work in carpet weaving
- Sensitize the government focal point on children’s protection and rights
- Familiarize focal point with standards of child-free certification
- Train the focal point in assessing adults/parents’ skills and matching them with local vocational training programmes

**Linking systematically with other actors in the carpet-weaving and anti-child labour at the Central Asian and international scales:** Goodweave’s mandate is to raise awareness of the incidence of child labour in carpet-weaving in Afghanistan in the international carpet industry. Incidence and impacts of child labour should be highlighted to international carpet industry players – for example, the ORRA (Oriental Rug Retailers of America), increasing the demand for child-free-free carpets. This should come simultaneously with the extension of GoodWeave’s child-free labour certification (with modifications to take into account the challenging security situation if necessary) to Afghanistan to avoid simply eliminating the demand for Afghan carpets.

#### Box 5.3 – GoodWeave’s Child-free Labour Certification

GoodWeave’s has a child-free labour certification program which certifies carpets as having been made without the use of child labours. Rug exporters and importers who wish to earn this certificate must:

- “be licensed under the GoodWeave certification program, and
- sign a legally binding contract to adhere to GoodWeave’s no-child-labour standard,
- allow unannounced random inspections by local inspectors;
- and pay a licensing fee that helps support GoodWeave’s monitoring, inspections and education programs”<sup>51</sup>

In the Afghan context, the program may have to be adapted to take into account the lack of access to many places where carpets are woven and the home-based nature of the activity.

**Visually mapping the Afghan carpet value chain to link the purchase of rugs to the risks posed to children: Ushahidi and Development Seeds:** A partnership with Ushahidi or Development Seeds, open source organizations that use technology and creative data visualization to empower citizens and organizations to change the way information flows and the way information impacts change. This is needed to launch disruptive solutions in the carpet weaving market and raise the visibility – and dangers – of the carpet weaving value chain – from producers to retailers:

- Ushahidi or Development Seeds can be strong strategic partners to boost transparency and accountability by visually mapping the carpet weaving value chain as part of a campaign to push the international carpet industry into adhering to child-free standards.
- This will have to be implemented through dynamic data collection in Afghanistan and in Pakistan where many of the rugs are sent and traded in.

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<sup>51</sup> GoodWeave website, [www.goodweave.org/about/child\\_labour\\_free\\_rugs](http://www.goodweave.org/about/child_labour_free_rugs)

## 5.2.2 Targeting community members: Locally managed inspection, monitoring and community-based programmes

**Establishing cooperatives and weaving centres:** GoodWeave has already begun to do this in Kabul. However, more generally Afghanistan, cooperatives and centres do not currently exist in the carpet weaving sector. The potential they offer is high: they can both address the drivers of child labour in weaving (economics and childcare) discussed in Section 3.3 by for example allowing women to earn extra income (through group negotiations or special certification) and setting up a childcare centre with the weaving centre, and mitigate the prevalence and impact of child labour in weaving (improved security conditions and age checks).

They do, however, face several implementation challenges:

- Securing an appropriate space and materials and getting approval from the community
- Ensuring women not only want to come but can given cultural norms and security concerns
- Long-term financial sustainability.

The centres should allow for life skills and other classes – for example, training to make silk carpets rather than wool. They could also allow youth to weave in a legally approved setting, with limited hazards and limited working hours.

### **Establishing recreational activities (educational, artistic, and/or athletic) as an alternative occupation for weaving children – introducing the Ideas Box in carpet weaving communities in Afghanistan**

Without initial awareness-raising and publicity, such activities are ill-adapted to the Afghan context. They do not target the primary driver of child labour, nor do they focus on the skills beneficiaries want for their children: vocational trainings. The limited value placed on sports and the arts suggests that it would be unlikely children would be allowed to attend. While educational activities are slightly more appealing to parents, only 19% said that these would be very likely to change whether or not their children work. The challenge here would therefore be to make activities seem “worth it” to families. Tying these to a vocational training, or even providing food, could suffice.

**Mobilizing the community as a watchdog:** As has been discussed, the community is a powerful force in Afghanistan that can be used to enhance child protection.

- **Providing awareness training to mullahs and shura members** around the worst types of child labour (for example, children not going to school to weave carpets) provides a non-governmental method to enforce limitations on child weaving.
- **Teachers** should also be taught to identify health problems stemming from weaving among their students to encourage medical treatment when necessary.
- **Monitoring officers should be appointed in each community** – to feed a community-based monitoring and evaluation process that can provide information from the field to

organizations like GoodWeave in order to track the progress of pilot initiatives like the cooperatives and weaving centres.

### 5.2.3 Targeting parents: Building the self-reliance and skills of adults in weaving households to better protect their children

**Changing head of household attitudes about child labour:** Again, this is an intervention whose approach should be dictated by location:

- In the rural areas visited in Phase 1 of research and where key informant interviews were conducted more recently, cultural norms and traditions played a stronger role; there, any such programming should focus on the negative impacts of child labour itself.
- In urban areas, families were generally aware of the negative impacts of child labour in carpet weaving, explaining it as an economic necessity. The focus here should be on helping families weight the costs of child labour more strongly to modify their decision-making processes.

**Providing vocational training programs and other income-generating activities to adults and youth in weaving households to eliminate financial incentive towards child labour in weaving.** This vocational training should:

- **Include a focus on families where weaving is the secondary source of income** as they are more driven by financial concerns.
- **When targeting parents, include the family as a whole:** for the training to be successful, attendees need to be assured that their children will be looked after and that their families will still have basic necessities (food, housing, etc.). HELP in Herat provides full-family help such as this which helps limit child labour.
- **Target weaving youth (14-17)** with new skills aligned with labour guidelines.
- **Make sure parents will not teach their young children the skills:** several households interviewed where children weave had learnt to weave carpets from NGO programs. All NGO vocational training programs teaching carpet weaving should raise awareness around the physical and mental risks posed to carpet weaving children by weaving, and broader campaigns should be conducted to discourage parents from teaching children youth. The promotion of child-friendly looms could also help with this. It is important to note that such programs should be careful not to stigmatize child labour in carpet weaving so much that it becomes hidden and families do not admit to it as this could place some children in worse off situations than before.



**Teaching numerical literacy, system of savings and self-help groups for women:** Evaluations of existing self-help groups (see for example Samuel Hall/Mission East *External Evaluation of the Self-Help Program 2014*) have a positive impact on the households involved – notably on female members of the household who are empowered in their capacity to balance finances as well as children’s needs. GoodWeave could partner on this front with organizations that have already promoted such groups in Afghanistan (Mission East, AKF, Concern, GIZ), modifying the approach as necessary to the specificities of the weaving sector:

- The goal here is **to improve the financial situation of child weaving households** to reduce their economic dependency on child labour.
- Self-help and savings groups should **include financial knowledge component**, to ensure the money saved is used with the long-term in mind.

**Promoting the use of child-friendly looms:** The ILO has developed and in Pakistan promoted the use of an ergonomic loom improving the health and, consequently, productivity of adult weavers.<sup>52</sup> By improving adult weaver productivity and hence income, these looms actually decreased child labour. Supporting the spread of these looms in Afghanistan would allow GoodWeave to support the creation of a child-labour-free supply of carpets.

## 5.2.4 Targeting children: help them break the cycle of dependency

The findings of this research focus on three key thematic areas where children’s rights and needs are compromised: their education, their health and their legal rights. Targeting these directly would continue GoodWeave’s work of matching children who have stopped weaving with appropriate educational opportunities. Rather than work alone, we recommend here a number of partnerships with organizations familiar with the Afghan context and experienced with the specific challenges it poses.

### A. Educating

**Partnering with Library without Borders – and their Ideas Box:**<sup>53</sup> a multi-media kit originally used for children in refugee camps but that is now being expanded to other sectors and needs. The mission of Ideas box is to provide isolated communities with the tools to read, write, create and communicate. In the case of carpet weaving households: they are often isolated within their communities, keeping to their homes and maintaining ties mainly with traders. Their ties need to be extended to the community – should GoodWeave’s community-based approach become sustainable. The Ideas Box will allow to

- Build the capacity of children and adults through literacy and numeracy workshops, professional training;

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<sup>52</sup> ILO Press release, “ILO-IPEC nominated inventor of new ergonomic loom honored with 2005 tech Museum Award. New loom is helping reduce child labour in carpet weaving sector”, [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/press-releases/WCMS\\_005177/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/press-releases/WCMS_005177/lang--en/index.htm), accessed January 8, 2015.

<sup>53</sup> See <http://www.librarieswithoutborders.org/index.php/news-and-events/lwb-news/item/291-the-ideas-box-a-portable-multi-media-kit-for-refugees>

- Connect weaving households with other community members
- Build resilience
- Build the social and cognitive development of children by ensuring that they do not alienate themselves from the rest of the community

Given that the school system does not ensure proper retention rates and attendance rates, initiatives are needed to address urgent needs. This initiative has proven its success in refugee camps and can be adapted to other isolated communities – like carpet weaving communities.

**Modifying the child-friendly village approach successfully used in India to the Afghan context:**

Community participation and mobilization have become an essential part of sustainable education projects in Afghanistan.<sup>54</sup> Empowering households and communities to have the possibility to control resources being used to help them increases sustainability of initiatives by creating a sense of responsibility and program ownership. From this perspective, a modified child-friendly village approach with modifications to account for the local context (amongst others, emphasizing the importance of the shura and mullah) makes complete sense.

While **the child-friendly village approach makes sense, its objectives and modalities must be modified to reflect the Afghan context and the nature of child labour in Afghanistan.** Child labour does not preclude education – and the reverse is also true, so promoting education will not necessarily contribute to eliminating child labour. Legal concerns also apply – where other organizations have created bridge school equivalents in the past, for example, they have not been allowed to do so within a certain distance of governmental schools.<sup>55</sup>

Results of research underline one key point: the value of education is not debated by most weaving households, even those who do not send their children to school. To specifically target weaving households, the argument popularized through the child-friendly village approach would have to include a rationale for the long-term benefits of education over the short-term productivity from weaving.

**Help provide families where children do not attend school with school supplies:** These should be contingent on student attendance records. Lack of money for school supplies was given as a reason why weaving children did not attend school.

**Consider vocational training programs or income generating activities for the worst off of the older children (10-13):** This research underlined the reality that in many cases, families cannot afford to have their children stop weaving. If the choice is between their weaving and their doing a less physically strenuous work, weaving children would be better off learning another skill in courses tied

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<sup>54</sup> Samuel Hall (2014), *School Management Shuras*, p. 5

<sup>55</sup> Key Informant Interview, Katy Cantrell, Catholic Relief Services, Head of Office (Herat), Herat, Afghanistan, May 1 2014

to life skills and literacy trainings. The NRC YEP program provides a good model of how to successfully tie literacy and life skills to vocational training programs.<sup>56</sup>

## B. Improving Health

**Addressing the effects of drug use in carpet weaving households:** Addiction to drugs, and drug usage, are passed on from parents to children to ensure that children can work for longer hours and also to address the physical impacts of weaving on children. This has been documented through qualitative fieldwork throughout this research. This research also underlined that part of the problem was that opium use was considered medicinal in these more rural communities – rather than drug use. The realities of opium usage and its impacts therefore require a four-pronged response by GoodWeave and the Consortium:

- **Launch a drug-free campaign** in carpet weaving communities
- **Offering health screenings:** GoodWeave should partner with the Ministry of Public Health to ensure screenings and mobile health centres are aware of effects of child weaving to a) speak with parents of affected children about its dangers and b) have appropriate medicine and exercises to combat its effects.
- **Partner with WHO and Médecins du Monde** to test rehabilitation treatments to cure parents from drug addiction, and their children
  - Target female headed-households
  - Target households where women are pregnant or have infants
  - Target households whose children do not attend school
- **Facilitating access to health facilities by providing a medical focal point in the nearest health facility:** parents and other responsible adults, as well as weaving children, should know where the nearest health facility is in case of injury or illness. A focal point in the health facility will be able to decrease opium usage by providing alternatives to respond to chronic pains and ailments and also by further sensitizing families on the risks of drug use.

**Linking up with current policy initiatives on Mental Health and National Youth Health Strategies in Afghanistan (UNFPA, MoPH, DMOYA):** This research documented the impact of weaving on mental health of children and Afghanistan’s next generation – fitting with the definition of hazardous work as work that is mentally dangerous for children. Current initiatives launched in 2013/2014 by UNFPA and the Government of Afghanistan on ensuring that “Mental Health Matters” are critical and should allow for the mainstreaming of the particularly vulnerable situation of socially isolated child workers in the carpet weaving industry. Given the current focus on a National Youth Health Strategy and on mental health by the Government of Afghanistan, GoodWeave has a window of opportunity to set on the agenda the needs of child weavers.

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<sup>56</sup> See [http://www.nrc.no/arch/\\_img/9182680.pdf](http://www.nrc.no/arch/_img/9182680.pdf) for an overview of YEP programming in Afghanistan, as a point of comparison

**Improving conditions under which child labour is performed to reduce health risks:** Section 4.1 noted the clear physical impacts stemming from weaving and the conditions under which it is done. Modification of weaving conditions and behaviors could eliminate some of the factors responsible for many of the health problems stemming from weaving. In particular, efforts should focus on:

- **Promoting the use of more ergonomic vertical looms:** providing trainings on their use to horizontal loom users and subsidies to purchase them.
- **Sourcing higher-quality supplies:** dust from wool reportedly causes many of the breathing problems evidenced among weavers. This should include promotion of the use of non-toxic dyes
- **Using community structures to raise awareness of the risks posed by modifiable behaviors:** in particular, this training should focus on the risks of night work, and, in rural areas, on the addictive and dangerous impacts of drug use.
- **Improve lighting of rooms where weavers weave:** offer lighting made with renewable technology to weavers – for example, solar-powered lamps.

### C. Promoting a rights-based approach

**Supporting the government to develop a unit within the MoLSAMD, the MoPH and the MoJ devoted to hazardous work and child labour:** This department would have as task to ensure understanding and implementation of the law. While Afghanistan has ratified the primary conventions on the subject and made strides in its legal framework, there is a need to continue strengthening these and work on improving their implementation. Currently, law enforcement for issues such as labour rights in Afghanistan is extremely weak with very little capacity for it.<sup>57</sup> Due to its home-based nature, the carpet industry is particularly difficult to monitor, and is not as directly addressed by the labour code so enforcement officials will need specific training to allow them to better identify cases and understand the mechanisms in place to deal with these. The challenges the carpet-weaving industry poses should be mitigated by the creation of specific legislation dealing with it, allowing for regulation through the carpet buyer and seller side in addition to at the production level. At the district and provincial levels, regions of the country which are prone to using children to weave carpets should be targeted with livelihood creation activities, awareness campaigns, and proper contextual socio-economic assessments. Last, local authorities, including police, should receive information on the legal structures surrounding child and youth labour.

**Providing birth certificates to child weavers:** a key protection risk is the lack of birth certificates by weaving households. This can be addressed through a programme linking birth certificates with educational school supplies being given to child weavers, in partnership with UNICEF. This will allow the community-based programmes and government officials to better monitor the ages, trends and priority interventions in carpet weaving communities.

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<sup>57</sup> Key informant interview, Hervé Berger, International Labour Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, November 13 2014

### 5.3 FUTURE AREAS OF RESEARCH

The present report has underlined several challenges in addressing child labour in carpet weaving which should be studied in more detail to support GoodWeave's work:

- **An evaluation of carpet-weaving incentives in rural areas of Afghanistan.** The present report has underlined why immediate action in more rural areas of Afghanistan is not recommended. However, the incentives for carpet weaving – particularly cultural – and barriers to elimination in rural areas should be more closely: how feasible is it to develop sustainable programming in these areas? Who would be the best implementing partners for GoodWeave?
- **Market evaluation for livelihoods alternatives.** Providing weaving households with alternative skills with higher earning potentials is of no use if there is no local market for skills. This report would identify skills for which there is a demand in weaving areas of Herat and Kabul that are adapted to the cultural needs and professional capabilities of weaving households. Drawing on previous labour market evaluations by Samuel Hall and others, it would also identify potential new market opportunities, introducing new skills to relevant communities.
- **Drug use and carpet weaving: clarifying the relationship.** UNODC has just reported a 17% increase in opium production in 2014 since 2013.<sup>58</sup> The number of addicts in Afghanistan will therefore presumably not be decreasing. The current report has touched on the link between carpet weaving and drug, particularly opium, use. This report would seek to better understand the nature of this relationship by conducting research in affected areas. Additionally, it would examine the feasibility of reducing this addiction among carpet weavers specifically and treatment possibilities.
- **An economic 'Cost of Child Labour Analysis' in association with the ILO-IPEC.** The general assumptions about child labour in Afghanistan should not only be discussed from a legal or technical point of view, but also from a more pragmatic and economic one, so that GoodWeave can develop alternative advocacy tools: What is the long-term impact of child labour on the Afghan GDP? What is the impact of child labour in the carpet weaving industry? What is the opportunity cost of child labour for carpet weaving families? This set of economic answers, and others, would provide national and international policy-makers, as well as local traders and socio-economic leaders, with economic figures, showing that beyond its detrimental impact on health, employing children in the carpet weaving industry is also economically counterproductive on the long run. It does have a cost for Afghanistan – at the national, provincial, community and household levels.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> "Afghanistan sees rise in Poppy Cultivation", Al Jazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/11/afghanistan-sees-rise-poppy-cultivation-20141112115426363345.html>, accessed on 20. Nov. 2014

<sup>59</sup> In this regard, we recommend a collaboration with UNICEF and ILO-IPEC, which have a strong expertise in this field. See for instance the ILO-IPEC report *Investing in Every Child – an Economic Study on the Costs and Benefits of Eliminating Child Labour*, 2004. At [http://www.ilo.org/global/WCMS\\_071311/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/WCMS_071311/lang--en/index.htm)

## ANNEX 1 – ADDENDA TO METHODOLOGY

### A. QUANTITATIVE SURVEY TOTAL

Figure 6.0.1 - Total interviews - Quantitative

Province	T/C	Type	Questionnaire target	Questionnaires completed
Kabul	Test	Parent	150	159
		Child	300	318
	Control	Parent	150	161
		Child	150	161
Herat	Test	Parent	150	158
		Child	300	316
	Control	Parent	150	156
		Child	150	156
Total	<b>Test surveys</b>		<b>900</b>	<b>951</b>
	<b>Control surveys</b>		<b>600</b>	<b>634</b>

### B. FURTHER DETAILS ON QUANTITATIVE SAMPLING

In each community identified as having a relatively high density of weavers, researchers spoke with two types of households:

- **Weaving households with children who weave, the “test” group.** In each of these were interviewed 1 parent and 2 children who weave (insofar as possible; in a few cases an older sibling responsible for the children was interviewed). As much as possible, the following were taken into account in selecting the children to interview: a) researchers spoke with one weaving child between the ages of 14 and 17 and one child under 14, and generally prioritized speaking to the oldest children in the household b) when both boys and girls were present, researchers spoke with one boy and one girl
- **Non-weaving households with children of age to weave who do not do so, the “control” group.** Researchers spoke with children of similar ages and gender to the test group.

A dual methodology was used to identify weaving households with children:

1. Within communities identified as having high concentrations, interviewers began in the centre of the community and spread out, randomly knocking on doors to find weaving households.
2. When enough weaving households could not be identified using this method, researchers used snowball methodology to identify further weaving households, asking interviewees to identify other potential interviewees.

### C. SPECIFICS OF QUALITATIVE TOOLS

**Child weaving observation checklist (3 total):** researchers completed an observation checklist based on their time spent in the field. This checklist provided a structured manner for researchers to note observations on a) work-specific risk factors, b) physical conditions in which these actions take place, and c) motional climate in which these actions take place.

**Focus Group Discussions (6 total, 5 female and 1 male):** Focus group discussions allowed researchers to gather more information about the risks involved for children working in weaving as well as deepen understanding of what motivates families to send their children to weave and which alternatives might be acceptable. In each province, one FGD was conducted with mothers of weaving children, and one amongst their neighbours to control for the possibility of weaving mothers giving interviewers the information they think they want to hear. As it was not possible to find enough weaving fathers for focus group discussions, these were replaced by additional female FGDs and case studies.

**Case studies (21 total, 6 with adult weavers whose children do not weave, 10 with weaving children and 5 with weaving and non-weaving fathers):**

**Children** were interviewed to a) better understand their physical and mental well-being and b) explore their hopes for the future. **Parents from weaving families whose children do not weave** were interviewed to understand why they, unlike other weaving families, choose not to have their children weave, and how this could be generalized. **Weaving and non-weaving fathers** were interviewed to replace the planned focus group discussions

**Key informant interviews (18):** These interviews consisted of a series of open-ended questions. Samuel Hall researchers interviewed relevant actors (NGOs, IOs, government officials) at the local and national level when necessary to understand context and identify potential areas for action.

#### **D. ADDITIONAL QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CONDUCTED**

**The research conducted in Herat and Kabul suggested a linkage between opium usage and and carpet weaving, but provided only very limited evidence.** So as to better understand this phenomenon, which had been gaining traction in national and international media, the decision was made to conduct further qualitative research in Balkh province:

- **Why Balkh?** Key informant interviews suggested that opium usage was more common in rural villages and among certain ethnicities. The security and accessibility (in mid-January) of such villages around Mazar-e-Sharif meant that research could be successfully conducted there.
- **Why qualitative research?** In past research, respondents have proven more likely to respond to “difficult” questions accurately in qualitative research rather than quantitative research. The case study and key informant interview allowed researchers to better understand trends and rationales behind opium usage.
- **How were villages selected?** Based on key informant interviews with doctors and carpet traders, the research team identified villages likely to contain carpet weavers who used opium. There, researchers spoke with community leaders and heads of household to complete the information given by doctors.

**Research conducted:** Researchers conducted 9 case studies, 3 interviews with doctors and 4 interviews with community leaders, in addition to preparatory interviews with carpet sellers in Mazar-e-Sharif.

## ANNEX 2

### OECD DAC CRITERIA AND INTERVENTION EVALUATION MATRIX

#### A. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposed interventions were evaluated using their expected performance on the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria as well as their potential for partnerships.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	DEFINITION (as given in OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms, 2010)
Relevance	“The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donor’s policies
Effectiveness	The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. Also used as an aggregate measure of (or judgment about) the merit or worth of an activity, i.e. the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results
Impact	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
Sustainability	The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flow over time

#### B. EVALUATION MATRIX & IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

NB: Primary goals in all cases have been taken as 1) elimination of child labour in carpet weaving, 2) mitigation of dangerous conditions for children involved in carpet weaving and 3) improving well-being of children involved in carpet weaving on the three axes of health, education and well-being.

PROPOSED INTERVENTION	Establishment of cooperatives / weaving centres	
Criteria	Rating (out of 3)	Rationale & notes
<b>Relevance</b>	★ ★ ★	Relevant on several fronts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Economic</b> – potential for group negotiations for increased income</li> <li>• <b>Social</b> – promotes social interactions among weaving women</li> <li>• <b>Child protection</b> – group environment can make extreme violence more rare</li> <li>• <b>Health</b> – centre can be designed to minimize health risks (ergonomic looms, good lighting, etc.)</li> <li>• <b>Education</b> – centre can be tied to classes for mothers on life skills,</li> </ul>



		<p>literacy, or even vocational trainings to increase income</p> <p>Especially attractive in Kabul, where 42% of respondents state that this would be very likely to change whether or not the children in their household work (versus 30% in Herat). Also especially attractive among women – 54% said it would be likely or very likely to change whether or not the children in their household work, versus 32% of men.</p>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	★★	<p>Will have to take into account several challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping weaving &amp; non-weaving children from these households occupied while mothers are at centre</li> <li>• Cultural norms in more rural areas which call for women to stay in the home</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	★★	<p>Requires start-up funds to set-up centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be mitigated by working with community – to increase involvement and sustainability get community to donate space. Other projects such as NRC’s YEP programming have successfully negotiated for space for educational purposes.</li> <li>• Requires constant staff – guard, cleaner, potentially teachers/caretakers for children</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	★★★	<p>Potential for high impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be used to address several of the drivers of child labour in carpet weaving (economic difficulties, cultural norms, lack of awareness of impact) and mitigate the impact of weaving on the people involved (particularly from a health perspective)</li> <li>• Broader impact on women by increasing sociability and potentially self-confidence through additional courses.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavily dependent on funding for initial set-up, but if community becomes sufficiently invested potential for self-sustainability. For example, if weavers go through the cooperative or centre to sell carpets, could bargain for higher prices (especially if in coordination with “fair trade” or “child labour free” stamp) and use a portion of the extra benefits to fund the centre.</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to partner with other NGOs giving trainings; share the space and the funding for it.</li> <li>• Partner with MoPH for health screenings</li> </ul>
<i>Implementation Recommendations</i>	<p>The success of a weaving centre or cooperatives depends firstly on one point: its acceptability to the community. Community leaders (religious and other) must be persuaded to support the centre (negating any norms requiring women to stay at home). Security, as with any female-centric programming in Afghanistan, must be ensured. To have the desired effects of mitigating and eventually eliminating child labour, centre should</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide alternative care for the youngest children, allowing mothers to weave</li> <li>Refuse to allow children to weave, sending them to school instead</li> <li>Gradually allow older youth to come for limited numbers of hours under proper conditions, allowing them to still learn the skill.</li> </ol>	
<b>PROPOSED INTERVENTION</b>	<b>Establishment of recreational activities (educational, artistic and/or athletic) as an alternative occupation for weaving children</b>	
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Rationale &amp; notes</i>

	<i>(out of 3)</i>	
<b>Relevance</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few parents stated that their children wove to keep them occupied. This may be more relevant in rural areas, but in urban areas providing alternative occupations without financial compensation for children has limited appeal.</li> <li>Educational activities are not much more appealing to parents – 19% said these would be very likely to change whether or not their children work, versus 17% for non-educational activities.</li> <li>Arts, music and sports are generally viewed as having little appeal because of their lack of practical impact; Qualitative work highlighted the desire to have an alternate activity that teaches skills that can lead to earning money – for example, vocational trainings. This would be more applicable for youth than children as they should not be taken out of weaving only to do a different job.</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlikely to contribute to the elimination of child labour, but could help mitigate some of the negative impacts on the children involved’s well-being by a) potentially decreasing # of hours spent weaving and b) providing opportunities for socialization.</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the potential impact is limited, could be achieved for very little costs, especially athletic activities if existing facilities can be used.</li> <li>Could draw from example of NRC’s YEP activities when considering educational activities as they were successful in getting community involvement in offering space.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convincing parents to let children attend, especially for girls will prove challenge, limiting impact: difficult to show that the cost-benefit analysis will provide more advantages than the income children could earn through weaving.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require long-term funding to ensure sustainability; limited value placed on such activities suggests it is unlikely funds can easily be raised from local entities.</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could target different athletic or arts- focused organizations for funds</li> <li>Partnership opportunities in Kabul at least with organization already providing arts or music training</li> </ul>
<i>Implementation Recommendations</i>	The challenge here would be to make activities seem “worth it” to families. This was given in qualitative research statements as leading to money either immediately or in the relatively near future (such as vocational training programs). A very clear argument would then have to be made and circulated for such activities to be successful, necessitating awareness campaign before any programming could be implemented.	
<b>PROPOSED INTERVENTION</b>	<b>Increasing the number of school hours per day to decrease the number of work hours per day</b>	
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Rating (out of 3)</i>	<i>Rationale &amp; notes</i>
<b>Relevance</b>	★	Logistics of this in the Afghan context simply not feasible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most schools already run on “shift” system, with two if not three shifts of children attending the same school due to lack of space.</li> <li>Lack of teachers, especially female, is a constant problem across the country and particularly in more rural areas</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only 10% of parents said it would make it “very likely” to change their</li> </ul>

		<p>attitude towards child labour, vs. 19% saying “very unlikely” and 30% saying “unlikely”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could potentially lead to more fatigue for children if as a result they work more in the evening</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	★	<p>Money and time costs would make this very inefficient:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would require budget increase on the part of the government to increase teacher hours or train new ones</li> <li>• Would have to be implemented through the government</li> <li>• Overly ambitious scope – would be difficult to implement in selected locations as dependent on government</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents in focus group discussions were fairly evenly split between those who said that this would make their children stop working and those who said this would make their children stop attending school. The potential for unintended consequences is therefore high</li> <li>• Could make children who both attend school and work later in the evenings to compensate</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once past government hurdles, would be government responsibility to continue – less likely to run on of funds than if on a project with a clear end date</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	★	<p>Would necessitate partnership with the government which requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several (central, provincial, district) levels of cooperation</li> <li>• Awareness of unrelated interests driving policies</li> </ul>
<i>Implementation Recommendations</i>	<p>Would recommend against trying to implement this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious logistical difficulties</li> <li>• High potential for unintended negative impact</li> </ul>	
<b>PROPOSED INTERVENTION</b>	<b>Modifying the child-friendly village approach successfully used in India to the Afghan context</b>	
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Rating (out of 3)</i>	<i>Rationale &amp; notes</i>
<b>Relevance</b>	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As noted in the report, education does not imply that children will not also work. That being said, working through communities and shuras has proven to be quite successful on the education front in Afghanistan (see for example GIZ’s BEPA program establishing school shuras in Northern Afghanistan)</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Bridge schools” are a proven method in areas <b>lacking</b> government schools. The two do not generally coexist. See for example CRS work in Herat. This programming as is would therefore be limited in potential area of impact</li> <li>• The need for extensive mapping and repeated visits by implementing team also limits potential areas of implementation for security reasons</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	★★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively low cost for potentially high upside</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success in India and other countries suggests potential for high impact, as does the success of other shura-based projects. The community is a strong unit in Afghanistan, particularly in communities with homogeneous populations.</li> <li>• Go beyond child labour in weaving to help children involved in child labour more generally</li> </ul>

<b>Sustainability</b>	★ ★ ★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If community attitudes are successfully modified, should be fully self-sustaining</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work should be done directly with the communities, although NGOs/international organizations who have worked in targeted areas could be brought in for credibility.</li> </ul>
<i>Implementation Recommendations</i>	Results of research underline one key point: the value of education is not debated by most weaving households, even those who do not send their children to school. To specifically target weaving households, then, the argument popularized through the child-friendly village approach would have to include a rationale for the long-term benefits of education over the short-term productivity from weaving.	
<b>PROPOSED INTERVENTION</b>	<b>Changing head of household attitudes about child labour</b>	
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Rating (out of 3)</i>	<i>Rationale &amp; notes</i>
<b>Relevance</b>	★ ★	<p>Approach should be dictated by location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In urban areas, most families seemed aware of the negative impacts of child labour in carpet weaving, and explained it as an economic necessity</li> <li>In rural areas visited in Phase 1 of research cultural norms &amp; traditions played a stronger role</li> </ul> <p>In the first case, focus should be on the short-sightedness of using child labour for economic purposes – in the second, on the negative impacts of child labour itself</p>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For reasons above, seems unlikely to be very effective unless partnered with another initiative</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	★ ★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could go through local institutions for little cost</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fails to address the primary driver of child labour in carpet weaving in Herat and Kabul</li> <li>Even when heads of household are aware that child labour in carpet weaving is not good for them they still make them work if economics dictate.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	★ ★	
<b>Partnerships</b>	★ ★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could work through shuras</li> </ul>
<i>Implementation Recommendations</i>	Would have the greatest impact if tied to another project: for example, change head of household attitudes towards child labour AND provide them with an alternative way to earn money. If the choice is between children working and eating or not working and starving, high-flown ideals will not effect much change.	

## ANNEX 3: FURTHER TABLES

### A. NUTRITION

Figure 0.1- Overall mean food scores

	OVERALL	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING
HDDS	1.97	2.01	1.93
FCS	22.02	22.53	21.51

Figure 0.2 - Control average child HDDS and food consumption scores by province

	Herat	Kabul
HDDS	1.97	1.76
FCS	25.78	22.93

Figure 0.3 - Test average child HDDS and food consumption scores by province

	Herat	Kabul
HDDS	1.91	1.68
FCS	25.34	21.51

Figure 0.4 - Over the past 4 weeks, did you worry your household would not have enough food?

	OVERALL	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING
never	5%	5%	5%
rarely	20%	22%	18%
sometimes	17%	18%	16%
often	57%	55%	61%

Figure 0.5 - Respondents rarely go to bed hungry

	NON-WEAVING	WEAVING
never	83.0%	85.5%
rarely	12.9%	9.8%
sometimes	1.6%	4.7%
often	2.5%	0%

## B. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Margin of error to 90% confidence:

Table 0.1 - MoE, Injuries sustained by children in past 12 months, weaving vs. non-weaving

	<b>NON-WEAVING</b>	<b>WEAVING</b>
Cuts, bruises or open wounds	0.017	0.028
Broken bones	0.014	0.010
Sprains, strains or dislocations	0.014	0.009
Burns, scalds, frostbite	0.014	0.010
None of the above	0.027	0.030

Table 0.2 - MoE, Parts of body injured, children in weaving vs. non-weaving

	<b>NON-WEAVING</b>	<b>WEAVING</b>
Leg or foot	0.146	0.041
Arm or hand	0.134	0.046
Head	0.087	0.034
Neck	0.000	0.033
Back	0.073	0.033
Eyes or ears	0.109	0.032
Stomach	0.000	0.017
Lungs (respiratory problems)	0.087	0.017

Table 0.3 - MoE, Illnesses and health problems suffered by children over the past twelve months, weaving vs. non-weaving

	<b>NON-WEAVING</b>	<b>WEAVING</b>
Breathing problems	0.015	0.022
Persistent cough	0.022	0.016
Eye problems	0.018	0.024

Skin problems	0.005	0.014
Stomach problems / diarrhoea	0.019	0.018
Fever	0.028	0.019
Headache	0.041	0.033
Extreme fatigue	0.025	0.029
Feeling weak	0.028	0.025
Aching all over	0.013	0.013

**Table 0.4 - MoE, Mental health problems suffered by children over the past 12 months, weaving vs. non-weaving**

	NON-WEAVING		WEAVING	
	Female	Male	Male	Female
Difficulty sleeping	0.032	0.039	0.036	0.032
Difficulty concentrating	0.050	0.043	0.045	0.038
Restlessness	0.056	0.055	0.048	0.040
Sad/feel like crying	0.062	0.058	0.051	0.041
Loneliness	0.050	0.030	0.038	0.035
Short tempered/angry	0.064	0.065	0.053	0.041
Lack of appetite	0.062	0.060	0.045	0.039
Forgetfulness	0.059	0.051	0.046	0.040
Dizziness	0.059	0.052	0.051	0.042
Fear/nervousness	0.058	0.052	0.048	0.041
Anxiousness	0.043	0.035	0.034	0.034

## ANNEX 4: ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS

Term and Concept	Definition and Standard	Source
<b>Child</b>	<p><i>“Anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a child.”</i></p> <p>The ILO recognizes that standards may differ in different countries. For the purpose of GoodWeave, Afghanistan’s programming anyone below the age of 14 years old is considered a child.</p>	<p>UN (1989): <i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i></p> <p>ILO (1999): <i>Worst forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182)</i></p>
<b>Child Labour</b>	<p>The term ‘<b>child labour</b>’ is often defined as <i>“work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.”</i></p>	<p>ILO: <a href="http://www.ilo.org/ipe/c/facts/lang--en/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/ipe/c/facts/lang--en/index.htm</a></p>
<b>Child Work</b>	<p>Part time services offered by children between 15 and 18 years of age may be constituted as child work provided that the child has enough opportunity to grow physically and mentally. Whether the employment on the loom constitutes as ‘work’ (associated with positive development) or ‘labour’ depends on type, hours of work and conditions under which work is performed. Unequivocally, children’s work in the carpet-weaving sector in Afghanistan is done under strenuous work conditions and with long-term negative effects that diminish a child’s “opportunity to grow physically and mentally”.</p>	<p>MoLSAMD</p>
<b>Decent Work</b>	<p><i>“Opportunities for work that are productive and deliver a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.”</i></p>	<p>ILO: <a href="http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm</a></p>
<b>Hazardous work</b>	<p><i>“Any work, which is likely to jeopardize children’s physical, mental or moral health, safety or morals should not be done by anyone under the age of 18.”</i></p> <p>It refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.</p>	<p>ILO: <a href="http://www.ilo.org/ipe/c/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/ipe/c/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm</a></p>



<b>Bonded Labour</b>	<p><i>“A worker is in bonded labour when he or she is working in order to repay a loan or another form of debt – often from the employer or from a labour broker. The UN definition of bonded labour is: “the status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of his personal services or those of a person under his control as security for a debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied towards the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined.”</i></p>	<p>ILO, (2008), <i>“Forced Labour: Mini Action Guide”</i></p> <p>UN, (1956): <i>Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery</i>, Article 1 (a)</p>
<b>Human Trafficking</b>	<p>The United Nations define human trafficking as: <i>“Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”</i></p>	<p>ILO, (2008), <i>“Forced Labour: Mini Action Guide”</i></p> <p>UN: <i>United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children</i>, Article 3</p>
<b>Youth</b>	<p>The United Nations defines “youth” as people between the ages of 15 and 24.</p>	<p>UN definition</p>

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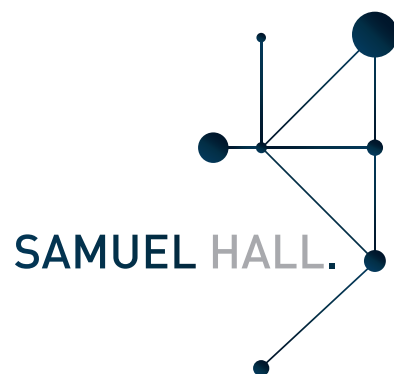
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## CONTACTS

**Samuel Hall** is a research and consulting company based in Asia (Kabul, Afghanistan) and East Africa (Nairobi, Kenya). We specialise in socio-economic surveys, private and public sector studies, and impact assessments for non-governmental and international organisations. Our teams of field practitioners, academic experts and local interviewers have years of experience leading research in Central Asia and East Africa. This has enabled us to acquire a firm grasp of the political and socio-cultural context in the country; design data collection methods and statistical analyses for monitoring, evaluating, and planning sustainable programmes; and to apply cross-disciplinary knowledge in providing integrated solutions for efficient and effective interventions. To find out more, visit [samuelhall.org](http://samuelhall.org).



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