



FINAL EVALUATION OF “PREVENTING CHILD LABOR IN HOME-BASED CARPET PRODUCTION IN AFGHANISTAN” PROJECT



Glimpse of a family weaving carpet in Kabul, Afghanistan (August 2018)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ARCC	Afghanistan Rugs and Carpet Center
ARM Consulting	Afghan Australian Research and Management Consulting
CD	Certification Division
CMEP	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GWI	Good Weave International
HQ	Headquarters
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDI	In depth Interviews
ILO	International Labor Organization
KII	Key Informant Interviews
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoIC	Ministry of Industries and Commerce
MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIU	National Inspection Unit
PNTA	Preferred Not To Answer
SAB	Solidarity Afghan Belgium
SME	Small Medium Enterprises
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WB	The World Bank Group
WFCL	Worst Form of Child Labor

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In collaboration with GoodWeave International (GWI), Afghan Australian Research and Management Consulting (ARM Consulting) conducted the final evaluation of the **“Preventing Child Labor in Home-Based Carpet Production in Afghanistan”** project in Balkh, Kabul and Jawzjan provinces. The evaluation was conducted over a period of two and half months (July – September, 2018) in line with the approved inception report.

ARM Consulting is grateful to the GWI staff members in Kabul and Balkh offices for their assistance and guidance throughout the evaluation. Without their tireless efforts, the evaluation would have not been possible. More specifically, we are thankful to GoodWeave Afghanistan Country Director, Deputy Country Director and other project staff members for their assistance throughout the fieldwork.

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DISCLAIMER

This material does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government. Seventy Seven percent of the total costs of the project were financed with Federal funds, for a total of \$2,600,000 dollars.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2018, GoodWeave International (GWI) commissioned Afghan Australian Research and Management Consulting (ARM Consulting) to undertake a comprehensive final evaluation of its five-year project titled “Preventing Child Labor in Home-Based Carpet Production in Afghanistan”. The project aims to reduce child labor in the home-based production of carpets in Afghanistan. Albeit initially the project was planned for four years, covering the period of September 2013 to September 2017, a one-year no-cost extension was provided by the USDOL so that September 2018 marks the completion of the project.

The evaluation at hand has chiefly focused on identifying project achievements, challenges, opportunities, lessons learned, and putting forth recommendations to determine project performance against intended targets and to inform the design and implementation modalities of similar future projects. More specifically, the evaluation has investigated the impact of the project on children’s education as well as on the sustainability of the GWI certification model in the context of Afghanistan.

The methodology adopted for the evaluation comprises a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative data was collected through literature review, field visits, key informant interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with relevant project stakeholders. The evaluation involved 31 KIIs with multiple parties including; project implementation team (6), relevant government officials (4), private sector representatives (7), subject matters experts (lawyer and civil society activist; child protection specialist) (2), parents (6) and community members (6). In addition, six FGDs were held with the project beneficiaries and community members in the surveyed provinces of Balkh, Jawzjan and Kabul. The quantitative data was collected through questionnaire-based structured interviews with 519 respondents (346 beneficiaries; 173 non-beneficiaries), out of whom 65 percent were female, and the remaining 35 percent were male.

The final evaluation unveils the following key findings on project performance:

1. **Prevalence of children working is lower among project beneficiary children¹ compared to non-beneficiaries children².** 75 percent of beneficiary children have not participated in any work in the last 12 months, compared to non-beneficiary children among whom 58 percent have not participated in labor in the same time period. About 20 percent of beneficiary children are still engaged in carpet weaving, a relatively lower number than non-beneficiary children (33 percent) who remain engaged in carpet weaving. One percent of the beneficiary children are associated with other forms of work while the responses of four percent fall under the “prefer not to answer” option. The remaining nine percent of non-beneficiary children are engaged in daily wage labor, agriculture, and other types of jobs³. It is important to underscore that by child labor refers to children working in Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL) as outlined in the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention no. 182, and children engaged in work which interferes with their ability to attend school, which ILO considers compulsory up to the age of 14, in line with ILO Convention 138.
2. **Statistically insignificant variation of children working among boys and girls.** 74 percent of beneficiary girls have not worked in the last 12 months compared to 77 percent beneficiary boys.

1. Beneficiary children refer to children under the age of 18 years who are either working or at risk of working and who have received GWI service or support during the project life.

2. Non-beneficiary children refers to children under the age of 18 years who are either working or at risk of working and who have not received any service or support through GWI.

3. It is important to underscore that the 20 percent beneficiary children working as carpet weavers do not necessarily qualify as child-labor because the Afghan laws allow a child to work up to four hours per day based on the guidelines issued by the Afghan Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled.

Similarly, 59 percent of non-beneficiary boys have not worked in last 12 months, compared to 57 percent non-beneficiary girls. Generally, carpet weaving is perceived as a female handcraft, but the evaluation shows that a substantial number of boys are also engaged in carpet weaving.

3. **Prevalence of Worse Form of Child Labor (WFCL) is higher among non-project beneficiaries** compared to the beneficiaries. Out of the 20 percent beneficiary children engaged in carpet weaving, about 46 percent are working more than four hours per day, thus qualifying nine percent of beneficiary children as engaged in labor considered WFCL. It is vital to underscore that the stated nine percent of children largely live in targeted communities of Balkh province, which have not been inspected by the project, because they do not relate to the supply chains of the any of the certified carpet producers. However, overall, the prevalence of WFCL in beneficiary children is lower compared to non-beneficiary children. 58 percent of the 33 percent non-beneficiary children, who are weaving carpets, work more than four hours a day, hence, 19 percent of the overall non-beneficiary children are engaged in WFCL. The evaluation also shows that older children tend to work longer hours compared to younger children. 12.6 percent of beneficiary children and 22.3 percent of non-beneficiary children of the age of 15 or above were found to be laboring in carpet weaving for more than four hours a day, which is higher than the equivalent for children in the age bracket of 10-14 years. Work exceeding four hours a day for children aged 10-14 is 9.4 percent for beneficiary children compared to 20.3 percent for non-beneficiary children. For children aged nine or younger, 6.8 percent beneficiary children work more than four hours a day while the percentage for non-beneficiary children is 15.4.
4. **Limited percentage of children are working at night time:** Approximately two percent of the 20 percent beneficiary children involved in carpet weaving are working during night time (8 PM – 5 AM), which is lower compared to eight percent of the 33 percent non-beneficiary children working during the night.
5. **Carpet weaving interferes with children’s education.** 19 percent of beneficiary children remaining in carpet weaving reported that work interferes with their education. For non-beneficiary children, 32 percent find their labor interfering with their education. The most common types of interfering effects cited by the beneficiaries were “experiencing tiredness in class due to working” and “inadequate time available for school”.
6. **Poverty as the key driver of child labor.** There is wide consensus among respondents that poverty is the primary driver of child labor in Afghanistan, followed by the conservative socio-cultural fabric of Afghan society, limited awareness among parents on children’s rights, poor accessibility to schools, lower education standards, insecurity and lack of female teachers, particularly, for girls. The quantitative data shows that 96 percent of the beneficiary children employed, are working due to economic factors such as; financially supporting families; contributing towards payment of outstanding family debts, covering personal expenses, etc. On the other hand, four percent cited non-economic factors as the key cause of working.
7. **Consistency in the implementation of the certification model as per the approved manual.** GWI has a manual outlining in detail the steps and procedures for licensing, inspection, monitoring and certification. Interviews with private carpet firms who had applied for the GWI license as well as review of their applications and supporting documents indicate that the steps

and procedures outlined in the manual were applied consistently on all the firms. In addition, the review of the inspection reports and records of the Supply Chain Transparency platform⁴ indicates that the project implementation team has paid due attention to the audit and inspection procedures, as outlined in the manual.

8. **Moderate increase in the number of new export licensees.** Based on the project’s Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), GWI had a target of issuing licenses to three Afghan carpet producers and exporters in the course of the 5-year implementation period. The evaluation shows that the project has issued four licensees to Afghan carpet producers and exporters, two of which are currently functional. There are currently 99⁵ registered carpet producers and exporters in the country as per the records of the Afghanistan National Carpet Association, indicating a large scope for potential projects that could be leveraged to combat child labor in the carpet sector of Afghanistan.
9. **Inadequate business capacity is key barrier to the expansion of the certification program.** The evaluation has found inadequate business skills on the part of Afghan carpet producers and exporters to be the primary reason for their failure to obtain the GWI licence. The business development team at GWI has connected Afghan carpet firms with overseas importers, but due to Afghan producers’ lack of basic skills such as communication and marketing, they have been unable to maintain these relationships. Further, the instability in Afghanistan necessitates Afghan producers to perform even better than the competition in India, China and Pakistan to compensate for the lack of direct contact with importers who are either unwilling or unable to travel to Afghanistan. Another key impediment Afghan carpet producers face is difficulty with or veritable inability to manage their tax clearing processes, largely due to lack of expertise and the failure for a robust tax payment culture to take root. It is important to underscore that the absolute majority of carpet companies in the country are operated as family businesses, and in the majority of cases run by a single person.
10. **Limited demand for the GWI certification model.** During the project life cycle, 23 carpet producers and exporters approached GWI for certification but only nine submitted the prerequisite applications. Generally, firms are interested in obtaining certification but once they get to know about the certification standards they tend to withdraw, as these are found difficult to meet. Despite the fact that child labor is against the law, firms expect incentives to become child labor free producers as child labor is relatively cheaper compared to adult laborers.
11. **Increased inspection capacity.** In total, GWI has inspected 908 looms, all of which operate under the ambit of certified Afghan producers in the target provinces. The evaluation confirms that GWI has maintained at least one inspector in the provinces, tasking the person with inspecting GWI-certified manufacturers’ looms. Overall, the evaluation finds the inspection team to be qualified in performing these inspections. However, there will likely be a need for increasing the number of inspectors if any new carpet firms succeed in obtaining the certification license.
12. **Engagement with government stakeholders.** In-depth interviews with representatives of MoLSAMD and MoIC indicate a well-developed level of coordination between GWI and the Afghan government. Both government agencies expressed satisfaction with the project’s performance and are strongly in favour of continuing project activities in order to reach more carpet producers. GWI engagement with the Afghan government has resulted in increased

4. The Supply Chain Transparency Platform is an application GoodWeave hired Dutch firm, ChainPoint, to help build. It is a secure, cloud-based software platform for monitoring and securing sustainable supply chains. It can be used to manage and share product, process and supplier information, from raw material to finished product.

5. Please do note that the number of carpet producers and exporters changes from time to times due to business closures and new entrants.

awareness and resolve among government officials to take the issue of child labor seriously.

13. **High level of satisfaction with GWI’s education services.** The evaluation shows that 98 percent of project beneficiaries who have received education services are highly satisfied, or satisfied from the project. Two percent were not satisfied with the educational services provided to them, due to lack of qualified teachers and/or inadequate stationary, notebooks and other items.
14. **Increase of children’s enrolment in schools.** The data shows that the education support provided to the target communities has shown positive results, as there is a statistically significant increase in the school enrolment of boys and girls. Prior to the project’s activities, 16 percent of boys were enrolled in schools, while currently 47 percent of them are enrolled, marking a 31 percent increase. The accomplishments related to girls’ enrolment are even higher, with 23 percent of them attending schools before the project interventions in the target areas and 76 percent now, marking a 53 percent increase. The increase in children’s enrolment is attributed to a wide range of services delivered by the project to the target beneficiaries, including; assistance in granting children admission in schools, payment of education fees for children from vulnerable families, positive change in the attitude and behaviour of parents towards children’s education, particularly girls, and other related factors.
15. **Inadequate focus on livelihood interventions.** There was consensus among the key stakeholders consulted for this evaluation that poverty is the primary driver of child labor, and can be effectively dealt with if household incomes increase. However, no focus was given to the livelihoods of male adult members of the households. The only livelihood services provided to adult project beneficiaries was medical support in Herat province in the early years of project implementation. The project implementation team cites resource constraints as the key reason for not providing livelihood assistance.
16. **Increased support for children’s education.** The data shows a stark difference in how parents view their children’s education now compared to before the implementation of the project services in the target communities. Before the project interventions in the target communities, 77 percent of parents were of the opinion that their children’s education adversely affect household income with three percent stating that it is the right of children to receive education. However, by the end of the project, 11 percent of the parents view their children’s education as negatively affecting the income level of the family, and around half of them are of the opinion that education for their children is a means of employment and future income, while 39 percent now see education as a right of their children.
17. **Change in attitudes of parents towards children below the age of 14 working. The data analysis unveils that there is a positive change in parents’ attitudes towards the concept of children working.** Prior to the GWI interventions, 58 percent of respondents considered it permissible for children below the age of 14 to work while 41 percent considered it wrong. However, at present, half of them believe it is wrong for children under the age of 14 to work and 35 percent consider it permissible, while 15 percent are undecided.
18. **Increased support towards’ girls’ education.** The evaluation found a positive change in the attitude of parents towards girls’ education as six percent of project beneficiaries today believe that girls should not receive education and weave carpets – the number was around 18 percent

prior to the delivery of project interventions in the target communities. In-depth consultation with the parents and community members show that GWI’s in-home tutoring and community-based classes have been very effective in terms of providing education to girls who would otherwise be deprived of it, as they are not allowed by parents to attend schools outside home.

19. Sustainability of project activities is uncertain. There is consensus among the project stakeholders consulted that the sustainability of project activities is going to be a challenge, with a risk that project outcomes could be adversely impacted. Inducing a positive change in the attitudes and behaviour of the parents’ towards children’s education, particularly girls’ education, has been an important achievement of the project. However, according to a majority of the parents consulted in FGDs, their children would likely be unable to continue their education if the community-based classes and in-home tutoring end. Nevertheless, a limited number of the parents expressed their intent to continue their children’s education at government-operated schools if the project ends. The sustainability of project activities is rendered uncertain due to multiple factors, including on-going conflict in the country, lack of revenue generation from license fees, poverty, and inadequate government capacity and resources.

In terms of implementation challenges, the project was adversely impacted by insecurity, political instability, economic stagnation, limited capacity of firms to meet GWI certification standards, exports to Pakistan, and unduly high expectations among target communities as well as unprecedented migration to Europe. Throughout the course of the project, Afghanistan has experienced an uptick in violence, which has made project implementation difficult in various provinces, including Ghazni, Jawzjan and Faryab. Political instability and the withdrawal of international security forces in 2014, also affected the Afghan economy, slowing annual growth to 2.3 percent on average between the period of 2014-2018, compared to average annual growth rates of nine percent in the decade prior to 2014, according to the World Bank⁶. The expansion of the certification program was hindered by the limited capacity of the private firms, making them unable to conduct effective trade with overseas partners and pay their taxes to the Afghan government. Expansion of the certification program was further hindered by reluctance on the part of major international firms to invest substantially in Afghanistan, given the precarious security situation. Additionally, private firms involved in exports of carpets to Pakistan have limited interest in the certification program, because Pakistani traders and retailers do not consider child labor a serious issue. Finally, households receiving GWI inspection team visits expect cash and non-cash assistance due to prior experiences of receiving similar assistance from other development partners. Low-income households asked to cease engagement in child labor expect incentives to compensate for their anticipated financial losses. As such, the fact that the GWI certification model does not offer monetary incentives to families other than education services for their children, has affected its ability to ensure buy-in from target communities NGOs.

Overall, the final evaluation concludes that the project has succeeded in reducing child labor in target communities as more beneficiary children are attending schools and there is a decline in the number of children working compared to non-project beneficiaries. Likewise, the public awareness and engagement efforts with the government, parents and community members have shown results as there is increased support towards children’s education, particularly for girls, as well as a positive change in the attitude of target communities towards children’s education. Having said that, the replication and expansion of the GWI social compliance model has proved partially successful due to the stated implementation challenges.

6. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30293>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

With USDOL funding, GWI has implemented a 5-year project titled “Preventing Child Labor in Home-Based Carpet Production in Afghanistan” in Kabul, Balkh, Herat, Faryab, and Jawzjan provinces of Afghanistan. Originally scheduled over a four-year period from September 2013 to September 2017, USDOL granted a one-year no-cost extension, moving the completion date to September 2018. The GWI project has aimed at reducing child labor in the home-based production of carpets in Afghanistan. The project has been striving towards accomplishing the stated goal through the objectives, outputs, and interventions outlined below.

Objective 1: Building market preferences for child labor free Afghan carpets

- **Output 1:** Proven social compliance model replicated and its geographical reach expanded
 - **Activity 1.1:** Providing comprehensive technical support to new and existing Afghan partner companies in building their internal capacity to adopt and implement GWI certification standards;
 - **Activity 1.2:** Expanding GWI independent third party verification system to monitor existing and new partner companies’ compliance with GWI standards;
 - **Activity 1.3:** Engaging key Afghan government and industry stakeholders to build broad support for and sustainability of project impact.
- **Output 2:** Remediation services provided for children identified as engaged in child labor
 - **Activity 2.1:** Providing targeted social services for children identified as engaged in child labor as well as their families;
 - **Activity 2.2:** Providing education opportunities for children engaged in child labor;
 - **Activity 2.3:** Establishing a childcare center in one additional project site.
- **Output 3:** Global consumer demand for child-labor-free Afghan carpets increased
 - **Activity 3.1:** Engaging companies interested in the sales and distribution of child-labor free carpets from Afghanistan to grow market share;
 - **Activity 3.2:** Conducting marketing efforts to reach end consumers of Afghan rugs.

Objective 2: Contributing to evidence-based knowledge of child labor in the carpet sector.

- **Output 4:** Research and evaluation on child labor in the Afghan carpet sector supported.
 - **Activity 4.1:** Conducting research on child labor in the carpet supply chain;
 - **Activity 4.2:** Conducting research on child labor in home-based weaving;
 - **Activity 4.3:** Developing and implementing project M&E plan.

Objective 3: Increasing public awareness and engagement on child labor in the Afghan carpet sector.

- **Output 5:** Awareness of child labor raised among key local stakeholders
 - **Activity 5.1:** Convening community training workshops to build community support;
 - **Activity 5.2:** Developing and implementing print and radio outreach strategy.
- **Output 6:** Transparency and accountability promoted among key stakeholders
 - **Activity 6.1:** Establishing project advisory committee;
 - **Activity 6.2:** Hosting public meetings to promote transparency and accountability.

1.2 Evaluation Objective

Since the project is in its last year, GWI commissioned ARM Consulting to conduct a final evaluation to assess project performance against envisaged outputs, objectives and overall goal. The evaluation helps identify achievements, challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned of the project, and provides evidence-based knowledge to help improve and inform future project design and implementation modalities. More specifically, the evaluation investigated the impact of the project on children’s education, and sustainability of the GWI certification model in the context of Afghanistan.

1.3 Evaluation Methodology

This section details the framework, data collection tools, training of enumerators, and limitations of the final evaluation.

1.3.1 Evaluation Framework

During the inception phase, ARM Consulting developed a detailed evaluation framework that set out the approach and clarified the scope of research. The framework focused on the following aspects: *For detailed framework, please refer to annex I.*

1. Policy level issues relating to child labor in the carpet sector of Afghanistan;
2. Replication of GWI social compliance model and expansion of its geographical reach;
3. Remediation services rendered to children engaged in child labor;
4. Change in the demand for child-labor-free Afghan carpets in international markets;
5. Research and evaluation on child labor in the Afghan carpet sector;
6. Change in awareness levels of target communities and government officials on child labor;
7. Case studies, challenges, lessons learned and best practices;

1.3.2 Evaluation Tools

The evaluation methodology comprises a combination of qualitative and quantitative tools, including literature review, field visits, face-to-face structured interviews and FGDs with project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, and KIIs with relevant government officials, GWI staff, private sector, subject matter experts, parents and community members.

Literature Review: Prior to finalizing the evaluation tools, the evaluation team studied a wide range of project documents including the **project proposal, Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), technical progress reports, baseline survey report, beneficiary case studies, research report on the Child Labor in the Carpet Sector of Afghanistan – the Value Chain Analysis⁷, research report on Child Labor in Afghan Carpet Production⁸**, and other related documents. Reviewing project documents and secondary literature on the subject helped the evaluation team identify information gaps and other areas requiring particular attention during the evaluation. The literature review also helped the consultants map out relevant government entities, private sector actors and other stakeholders for consultation purposes.

Key Informant Interviews: The evaluation team administered 31 interviews with key informants, including project team members, relevant government officials, private sector representatives, subject matters experts, parents and community members. All interviews were conducted with the guidance of pre-constructed KII protocols informed by the review of the project documents and secondary literature. The interview guide for the project implementation team was structured around the

7. <http://samuelhall.org/?s=Ties+that+bind>

8. <http://samuelhall.org/?s=Cutting+the+threads>

following five sections; (i) project design and implementation, (ii) GWI’s social compliance model, (iii) prevalence of child labor and quality of the remediation services, (iv) demand for child-labor free Afghan carpets in international markets, and; (v) lessons learned, best practices, challenges and successes. On the other hand, the KII protocol for consultation with the remaining categories of the respondents focused on the following four areas; (i) policy level issues and government engagement with GWI, (ii) GWI’s social compliance model, (iii) demand for child-labor-free Afghan carpets in international markets, and; (iv) change in the awareness levels of target communities regarding child labor related issues. *Please refer to annex II for the list of key informants*

Focus Group Discussions: Supplementing individual interviews, a total of six FGDs were administered with project beneficiaries and community members by the evaluation team in order to develop an in-depth understanding into the various aspects of the project. FGDs were used for homogenous groups where interaction between participants had the potential to enhance the depth of data collected. The evaluation team explored common and divergent views on particular issues and discussed improvement opportunities. Four FGDs were held with female participants, while the remaining two were men-only. A minimum of ten participants partook in each discussion, facilitated by a team of two experts, with the help of a protocol of questions on a wide range of issues relating to the project and child labor in the carpet sector.

Questionnaire-Based Structured Interviews: Quantitative data was exclusively gathered through face-to-face structured interviews with 346 project beneficiaries and 173 non-beneficiaries, using questionnaires. It is important to state that due to shifts in project implementation localities (Herat to Balkh and Faryab to Jawzjan), the baseline survey was no longer a valid performance benchmark for the findings of the final evaluation. Therefore, non-project beneficiaries were consulted besides beneficiaries in order to provide reasonable comparison for measuring the project’s performance. In addition, the evaluation team asked the respondents questions pertaining to their attitudes, knowledge and behavior on child labor and education, before receiving the project services, compared to now. The responses have been used to identify change and impact in the target communities, if any, caused by the project activities. The evaluation team interviewed the following four categories of respondents through structured interviews.

1. 218 children under the age of 18 years (beneficiary children);
2. 104 children under the age of 18 years (non-beneficiary children);
3. 128 adult weavers and parents of children (beneficiary adults);
4. 69 adult weavers and parents of children (non-beneficiary adults);

Out of the 218 beneficiary children, 141 were between the ages of 10-14 years, 50 were aged nine years or younger, while the remaining 27 were 15 years or older. Out of the 104 non-beneficiary children, 47 were between the ages of 10-14 years, 36 were aged nine years or younger, and the remaining 21 were 15 years or older. For all the respondents below the age of 18 years, field researchers received written consent of a parent or an adult member of the household before conducting the interview. Moreover, the evaluation team adopted the same approach towards interviews with the children as used in the baseline survey. For a child aged 15 or older, the questions were asked directly from him/her in the presence of a parent or an adult family member. If the child was 10-14 years old, he/she was questioned together with his or her parent or guardian, while for children aged nine and younger, the questions were addressed to the parent or guardian.

The sample size for each category was calculated based on three parameters; (i) total number of project beneficiaries, (ii) margin of error of 5%, and (iii) confidence level of 90%. In terms of gender,

among the 519 respondents interviewed, 65 percent were female, and 35 percent were male. This gender balance aligns with the percentage of female and male beneficiaries in the target provinces. A majority of the respondents were interviewed in Balkh province (82 percent), followed by Kabul (11 percent) and Jawzjan (7 percent). The areas visited in Balkh include Shahraki Qalian Bafa (SQB), Camp Sakhi, Balkh Bastan and Camp Naw Shad. The geographical distribution of the sample size is also proportionate with the actual number of project beneficiaries in the stated provinces.

Respondents' Geographical and Sex Profile

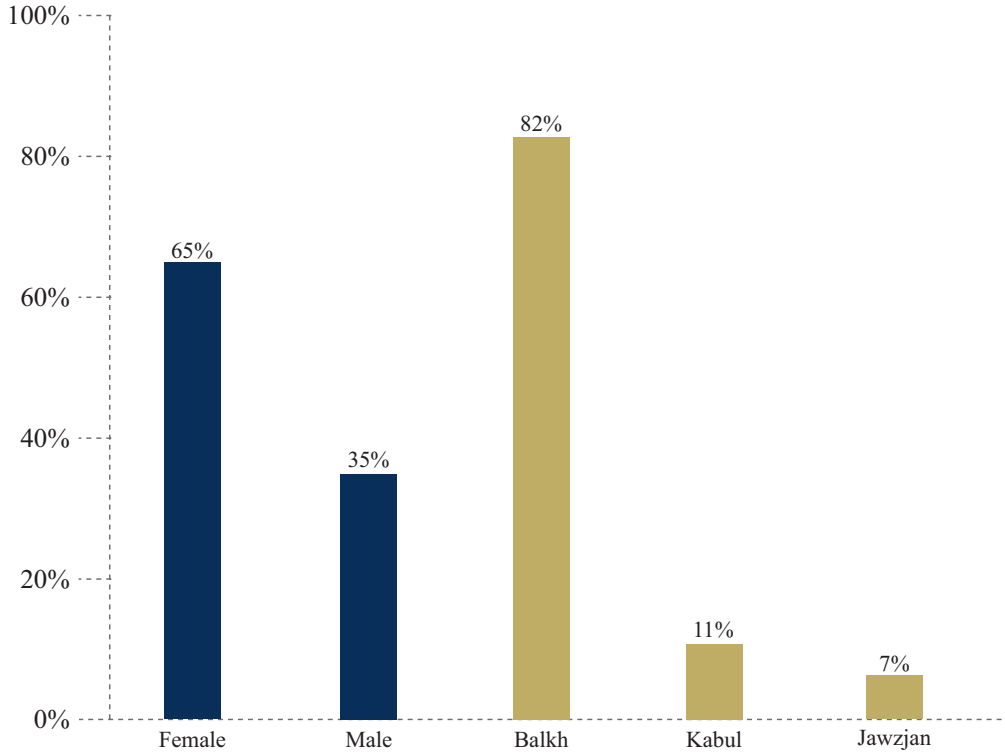


Figure 1: Respondents by province and gender

The table below further captures the gender breakdown of the respondents across the four categories of the survey respondents.

Table 1: Sex Profile by the Respondents' Type

No	Type of Respondent	Female	Male
1	Beneficiary Children	62%	38%
2	Non-beneficiary Children	67%	33%
3	Beneficiary Adults	62%	38%
4	Non-beneficiary Adults	78%	22%

The table below presents the geographical breakdown of the respondents across the four categories of survey respondents in the target provinces.

Table 2: Geographical Profile by the Respondents’ Type

No	Type of Respondent	Balkh	Kabul	Jawzjan
1	Beneficiary Children	82%	11%	7%
2	Non-beneficiary Children	84%	12%	5%
3	Beneficiary Adults	82%	9%	9%
4	Non-beneficiary Adults	77%	14%	9%

The evaluation team made extensive efforts to interview non-beneficiaries with similar demographic characteristics as those of the project beneficiaries, to ensure appropriateness of comparison between the two groups. The evaluation shows that GWI has implemented project activities in communities where education levels are on the lower side, further complicating the implementation of programmatic interventions in what is already a complex context characterized by conflict, political instability, economic stagnancy, and conservative socio-cultural factors. For instance, out of the 197 adult respondents, not a single person has university level education. In addition, more than one third of beneficiary children⁹ have not received schooling, and approximately half of them have completed primary, secondary or high school education, while one percent responded with “Preferred Not to Answer” (PNTA). While the percentage of children with no schooling and no formal education are even higher among the non-beneficiary children¹⁰ with 42 percent and 20 percent, respectively. The education level of adult weavers is even lower compared to children, as 81 percent of adult weavers, who are parents of beneficiary children, have no schooling or no formal education, which is lower compared to 89 percent adult weavers whose children are non-beneficiaries.

Education Level of the Respondents

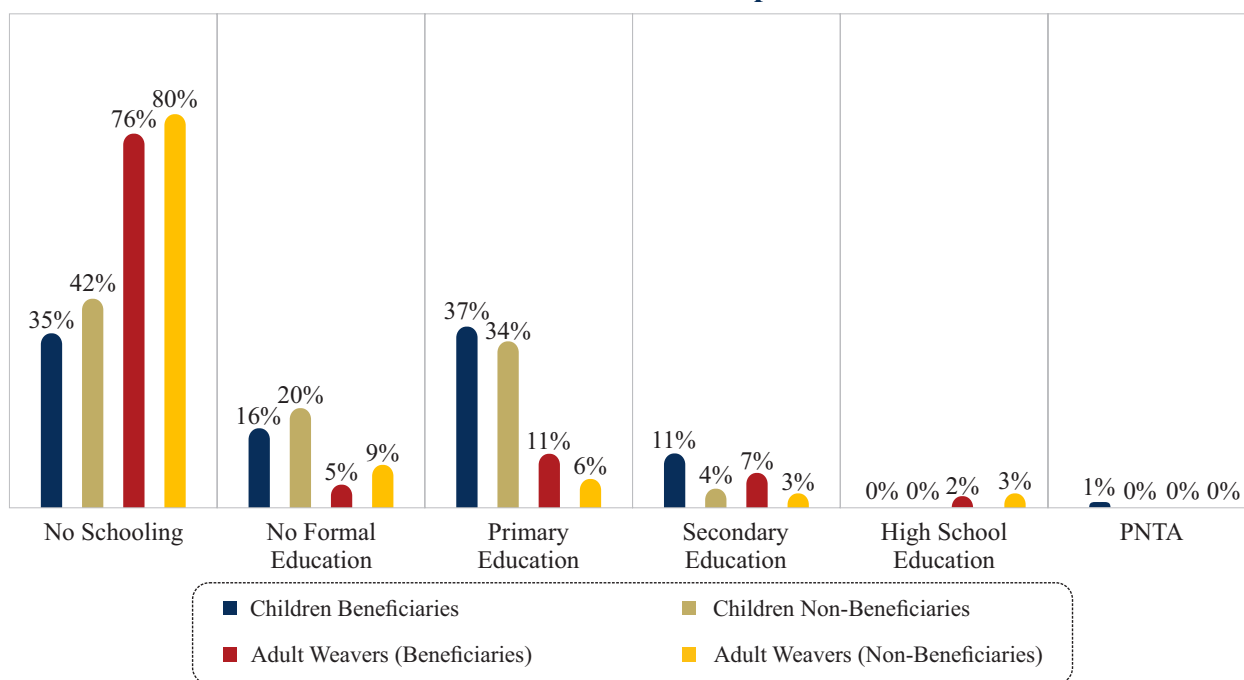


Figure 2: Education Level of the Respondents

9. Beneficiary children refer to children under the age of 18 years who are either working or at risk of working and who have received GWI service or support during the project life.

10. Non-beneficiary children refers to children under the age of 18 years who are either working or at risk of working and who have not received any service or support through GWI.

Similarity of income level and source of income were also selection criteria, which the evaluation team utilized in drawing its two sample groups of respondents. As such, carpet weaving is the primary source of income for 37 percent beneficiary households and 32 percent non-beneficiary households. However, for more than half of the households (54 percent), who reside in areas where the project has implemented its interventions, daily wage labor is the primary source of income. For such households, in many cases, adult male members are engaged in daily wage work, while women and girls weave carpets at home. In contrast, for the households where carpet weaving is the primary income source, adult male members are either jobless or earning comparatively less. Only a small percentage of households among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike rely on agriculture as a primary livelihood source, which can be explained by the fact that both reside in urban and semi-urban areas of the target provinces, where there is little to no land for cultivation. Furthermore, seven percent beneficiary households and ten percent non-beneficiary households earn their income primarily from “other” sources, which include; driving, real estate, tailoring, handcrafts, carpentry, auto-mobile repairing and shop-keeping.

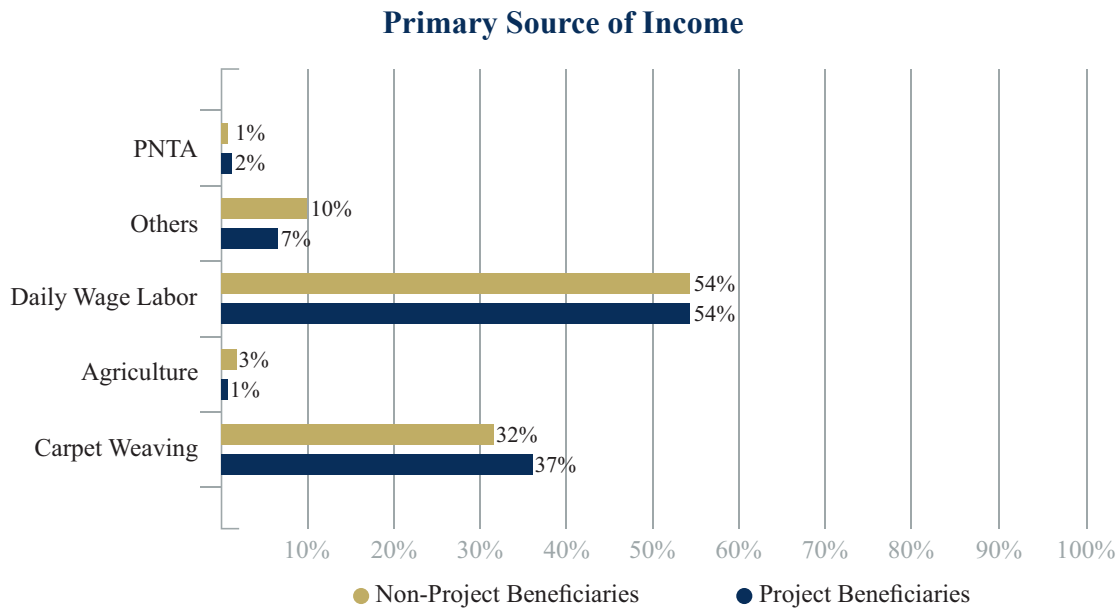


Figure 3: Primary Income Source of the Respondents

The evaluation further shows that the monthly income of beneficiary households is higher compared to non-beneficiary households. The project beneficiaries consulted for this evaluation had reported an average household monthly income of AFN 6,829 (USD 95)¹¹, while for non-beneficiaries; the amount is AFN 6,690 (USD 93). Considering the average national household size of 7.7¹² and the national poverty line, defined as USD 1.90 per day per person¹³ by the World Bank (WB), a majority of the surveyed households are living below the poverty line. It is important to state that the WB Afghanistan Development Update, released in August 2018, shows that 55 percent of the Afghan population lives under the poverty line¹⁴.

11. 1 USD = 72 AFN

12. http://cso.gov.af/Content/files/ALCS/ALCS%20-%202016-17%20Analysis%20report%20-%20pre-print%20for%20web_rev.pdf

13. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/brief/global-poverty-line-faq>

14. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30293/129163-REVISED-AFG-Development-Update-Aug-2018-FINAL.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

1.3.3 Training the Survey Team

The survey team, consisting of six members (four female; two male) received a 3-day training on the purpose of the evaluation, sample size, random sampling technique using the Kish Grid approach, data collection tools, ethical protocols, types of respondents, interviewing techniques, reporting arrangement, consent forms and confidentiality, quality control measures, gender sensitivity, and managing interview biases. The field researchers also conducted mock interviews and piloted the evaluation tools in the Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood of Kabul before embarking on the fieldwork.

1.3.4 Limitations of the Evaluation

The evaluation team could not compare the key findings of the final evaluation with the project baseline study, due to change in the project coverage area (Herat to Balkh and Faryab to Jawzjan). The baseline survey consulted individuals in Kabul and Herat provinces, while, the evaluation covered Kabul, Balkh and Jawzjan provinces. Therefore, the different geographical coverage of the baseline study and final evaluation made it difficult for the evaluation team to compare the key findings of the two with each other. Has the baseline study were a valid benchmark for the end-line evaluation, it would have allowed for a more robust measurement of the project performance.

2. KEY FINDINGS

2.1 Prevalence of Child Labor in the Carpet Sector

Since the primary goal of the project is to reduce child labor in the home-based production of carpets in Afghanistan, the evaluation focused on examining the prevalence of child labor in the target areas. It is important to underscore that by child labor, GWI refers to children working in Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL) as outlined in the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention no. 182, and children engaged in work which interferes with their ability to attend school, which ILO considers compulsory up to the age of 14, in line with ILO Convention 138¹⁵. Both overall prevalence and prevalence of WFCL will be addressed below.

2.1.1 Prevalence of Children Working

The evaluation shows that the number of beneficiary children (75 percent) who have not participated in labor over the past 12 months exceeds the number of non-beneficiary children (58 percent) who have similarly not worked over the past year. However, 20 percent of children from beneficiary households are still working in carpet weaving, compared to 33 percent of non-beneficiary children. Qualitative data points to increased awareness of parents and provision of education services to children, as the key causes of a decline in the number of beneficiary children working.

Prevalence of Children Working

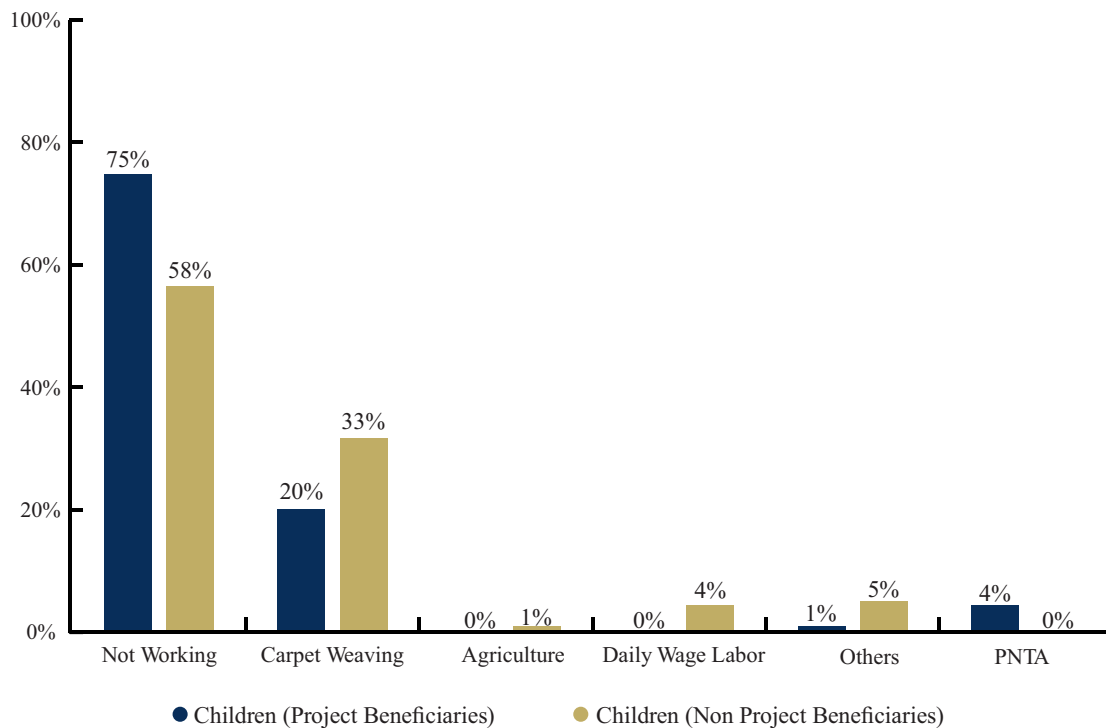


Figure 4: Percentage of Children Working at the End of the Project

In addition, no statistically significant variation was found among the prevalence of children working, based on their sex. For instance, 74 percent of girls who had benefitted from the project have not worked in last 12 months, which is marginally lower than the percentage for boys (77 percent). Similarly, for non-beneficiary children, the differences in gender are marginal with 59 percent of boys and 57 percent girls not working. The total percentage of girls working (21 percent

15. https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312283:NO

among beneficiaries; 34 percent among non-beneficiaries) is relatively higher compared to boys (18 percent among beneficiaries; 29 percent among non-beneficiaries). However, the difference is not as significant as widely believed. The general perception is that women and girls largely perform carpet weaving, as it is one of the safest and most accessible means of livelihood for them in the context of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, this evaluation shows that a considerable percentage of boys are also currently involved in carpet weaving in the surveyed areas.

Table 3: Prevalence of Children Working by Sex

No	Type of Respondent	Children (Project Beneficiaries)		Children (Non-Project Beneficiaries)	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
1	Not Working	74%	77%	57%	59%
2	Carpet Weaving	21%	18%	34%	29%
3	Agriculture	0%	0%	1%	0%
4	Daily Wage Labor	0%	0%	1%	9%
5	Others	1%	0%	6%	3%
6	PNTA	4%	5%	0%	0%

2.1.2 Prevalence of Worst Form of Child Labor (WFCL)

With a view to determine the project’s performance in terms of combating child labor in the carpet supply chain, the evaluation looked at whether children who work are involved in WFCL, in line with article three of the ILO Convention no. 182. As per the guideline of MoLSAMD, carpet weaving for more than four hours per day is considered as hazardous labor for children and qualifies as WFCL. The ILO convention further includes lifting heavy loads (14 kg or above), handling of chemicals, use of dangerous and sharp tools, tight workspace and working at night (8 pm – 5 am), as hazardous labor. Out of the 20 percent of the beneficiary children who remain engaged in carpet weaving, about 46 percent work more than four hours per day, equalling to nine percent of the total beneficiary children engaged in WFCL. This shows that despite GWI interventions, the labor of nearly half of child weaver beneficiaries qualifies as hazardous. However, It is vital to underscore that the stated nine percent children mostly live in communities of Balkh province, which do not fall under the supply chain of certified carpet producers, hence, the project inspection did not extend there. The prevalence of WFCL in beneficiary children is lower compared to non-beneficiary children, indicating an impact of project interventions in the target sites. 58 percent of the 33 percent non-beneficiary children, involved in carpet weaving labor, work more than four hours a day, meaning that 19 percent of the total non-beneficiary children are engaged in WFCL. Notably, no statistically significant variation was detected in terms of WFCL according to gender. The evaluation also looked at whether children work at night (9 PM – 5 AM). Of the 20 percent beneficiary children who are engaged in carpet weaving, 1.8 percent work during night hours. In comparison, 8 percent of the 33 percent non-beneficiary children involved in carpet weaving work during night hours.

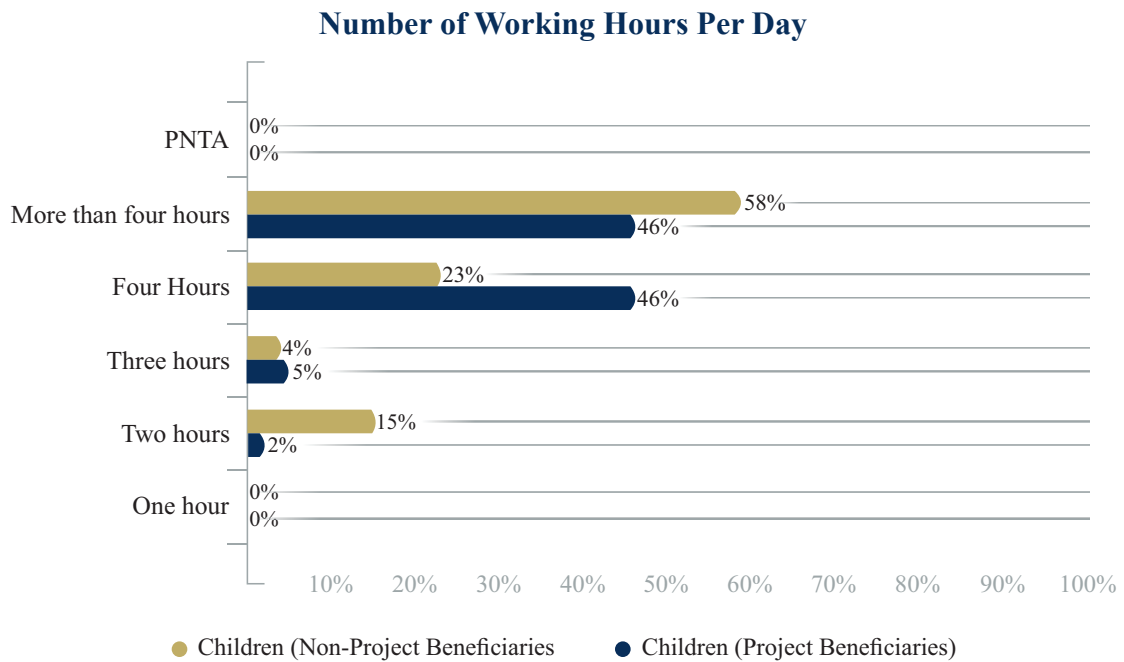


Figure 5: Percentage of Children Working as Hazardous Labor

The evaluation also studied the percentage of children working for more than four hours per day according to age brackets. Among beneficiary children aged nine or younger, 6.8 percent were found to be working for more than four hours, which is lower compared to other age brackets; 9.4% for 10-14 years and 12.6 percent for 15 or older. Data analysis for non-beneficiary children also shows that children of higher ages tend to be working longer hours compared to younger children.

Table 4: More than Four Hours of Carpet Weaving, by Age of the Respondents

No	Age Group	Children (Project Beneficiaries)	Children (Non-Beneficiaries)
1	Nine or younger	6.8%	15.4%
2	10-14 years	9.4%	20.3%
3	15 or older	12.6%	22.3%
	Total (Average)	9%	19%

In terms of workplace conditions, the data does not point to a major difference between beneficiary children and non-beneficiary children. The two major issues raised by children interviewed were dust and use of sharp/dangerous tools while weaving carpets. According to 86 percent of beneficiary children, dust is the biggest issue for them followed by the use of sharp/dangerous tools with 63 percent. For non-beneficiary children, too, the use of sharp/dangerous tools (91 percent) and dust (74 percent) were cited as the main issues. The fact that a relatively lower percentage of beneficiary children use sharp/dangerous tools compared to non-beneficiary children, could likely be a result of enhanced awareness among parents, an effect of the project.

Table 5: Workplace Conditions

No	Issue	Children (Project Beneficiaries)	Children (Non-Beneficiaries)
1	Dust	86%	74%
2	Loud noises	14%	15%
3	Extreme cold/hot temperature	9%	15%
4	Insufficient ventilation	16%	18%
5	Improper setting/inadequate space	2%	3%
6	Inadequate lighting	14%	15%
7	Lifting heavy loads (14 KGs or more)	0%	6%
8	Handling chemicals	2%	6%
9	Sharp/dangerous tools	63%	91%

2.1.3 Impact of Carpet Weaving on Children’s Education

Child labor is by definition premised on the notion of children engaged in work that interferes with their ability to receive schooling. With this in mind, the evaluation studied whether carpet weaving has adversely impacted children’s education. The data indicates that a higher percentage of beneficiary children (62 percent) are enrolled in schools compared to 43 percent of non-beneficiary children. In-depth discussions with the respondents reveal that the higher enrolment in schools among beneficiary children is attributable to two factors; (i) the education services consisting of home-based classes, literacy classes, community-based classes, and other related support provided to them by GWI, and (ii) attitudinal changes of parents towards children’s education as a result of the project awareness efforts.

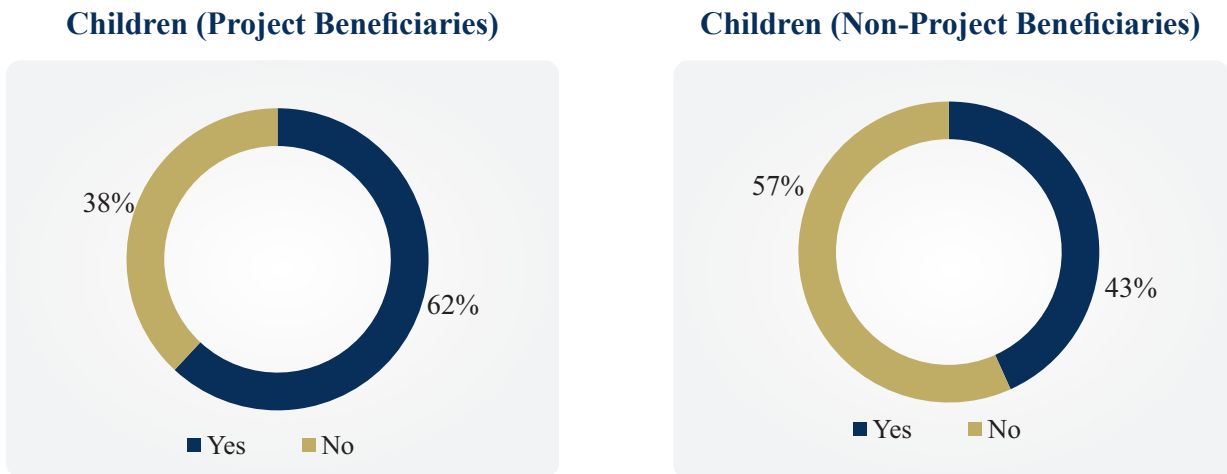


Figure 6: Beneficiary Children Access to Education Figure 7: Non-Beneficiary Children Access to Education

When asked whether carpet weaving interferes with schooling, 19 percent of beneficiary children who have been engaged in carpet weaving responded in the affirmative – notably less than the 32 percent of non-beneficiary children who answered in the affirmative when asked the same question.

This indicates that the prevalence of child labor among beneficiary children is lower compared to non-beneficiary children.

The respondents further expressed their views on how carpet weaving affects their education. Among the 19 percent of project beneficiaries who remain in carpet weaving labor, 77 percent experience tiredness in classes, 12 percent have missed classes, and eight percent stated that they do not have adequate time to attend school due to carpet weaving. For non-beneficiary children laboring in carpet weaving, 52 percent mentioned experiencing tiredness in classes, followed by 39% saying they have insufficient time for school. The data shows that the children targeted by GWI efforts tend to have more time available for school (eight percent) compared to the children who were not (39 percent), which is consistent with the earlier findings, according to which more non-beneficiary children are working longer hours compared to beneficiary children.

Table 6: Interference of Children’s Work with their Education

No	Type of Interference	Children (Project Beneficiaries)	Children (Non-Beneficiaries)
1	Feel tired in the classes due to working	77%	52%
2	Insufficient time available for school	8%	39%
3	Low grades	4%	6%
4	Miss classes	12%	3%
5	Cannot arrive on time to school	0%	0%
6	Others	0%	0%

The evaluation also explored the interference of children’s work with their education, based on their age brackets. Among beneficiary children, there were no statistically significant variations found in the responses of children from various age groups. For instance, 80 percent of children aged nine or younger have reported feeling tired in the classes due to working, followed by 77 percent for children between the ages of 10-14 years, and 75 percent for children aged 15 years or above. Similarly, for non-beneficiary children, a higher percentage of children aged nine or younger reported feeling tired in classes due to working (56 percent), compared to children between the ages of 10-14 years (50 percent) and children aged 15 or above (48 percent). Similarly, more children from the age bracket of 15 years or above reportedly have insufficient time for school (45 percent), compared to children nine years or younger (33 percent). This also shows that younger children (nine years or below) might be working shorter hours, compared to the other two categories of the children.

Table 7: Interference of Children’s Work with their Education –Age Breakdown

No	Type of Interference	Beneficiary Children			Non-Beneficiary Children		
		9 Years or Younger	10-14 Years	15 years or above	9 Years or Younger	10-14 Years	15 years or above
1	Feel tired in classes due to working	80%	77%	75%	56%	50%	48%
2	Insufficient time available for school	6%	8%	9%	33%	41%	45%

3	Low grades	1%	4%	4%	9%	5%	4%
4	Miss classes	13%	11%	12%	2%	4%	3%
5	Cannot arrive on time to school	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6	Others	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

2.1.4 Causes of Child Labor

There is broad consensus among respondents that poverty is the primary driver of child labor in Afghanistan, followed by the conservative socio-cultural fabric of the Afghan society, limited awareness among parents on children’s rights, poor access to schools, lower education standards, insecurity and lack of female teachers. Based on the World Bank’s semi-annual update on the Afghan economy, released in August 2018, about 54 percent¹⁶ of the Afghan population is living under the poverty line. The quantitative data collected and analysed for the evaluation at hand also clearly shows that among children engaged in labor, 96 percent of beneficiaries and 98 percent of the non-beneficiaries work due to economic factors such as earning income to financially support families, towards payment of debts, education fees or to cover personal expenses.

Key Drivers of Child Labor

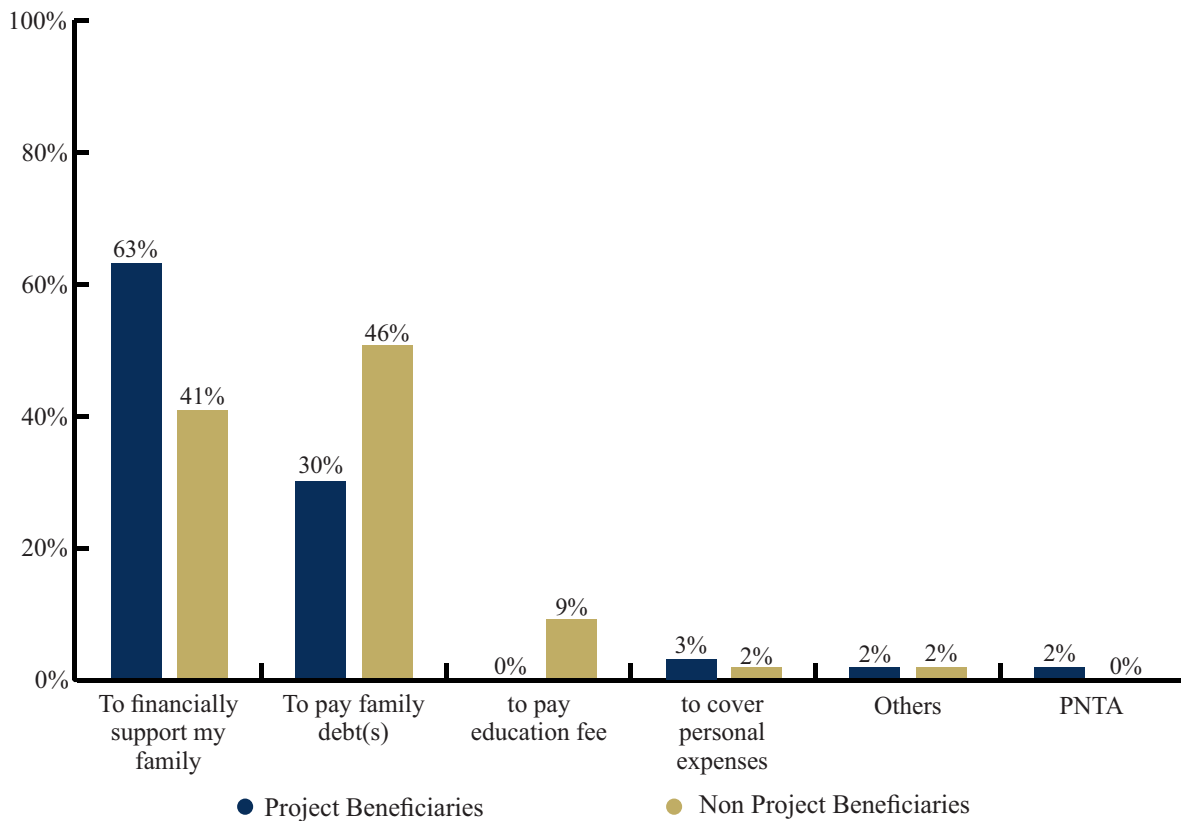


Figure 8: Key causes of child labor

16. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/985851533222840038/Afghanistan-development-update>

2.2 Building Market Preference for Child Labor Free Afghan Carpets

The evaluation analyzed project performance as per its objective I, focusing especially on the replication and expansion of the GWI social compliance model; the adequacy and quality of remediation services; and, change in the demand for child labor free Afghan carpets in the international markets, particularly the United States and Europe.

2.2.1 Replication and Expansion of the GWI Social Compliance Model

Concerning the replication and expansion of the social compliance model, the evaluation unveils the following key findings.

- **Consistency in the implementation of the model as per the approved manual.** GWI has a manual outlining in detail the steps and procedures for licensing, inspection, monitoring and certification. The GWI Secretarial Policy Officer and Certification Division (CD) have jointly developed the manual to ensure consistency in carrying out the certification program in all countries where GWI operates. Interviews with private carpet firms who have applied for the GWI license and review of their applications and supporting documents indicate that the steps and procedures outlined in the manual were applied consistently towards all firms. Applicants are all required to submit five documents, namely registration certificate, legal license, tax clearance certificate, export license and list of total production capacity, along with a list of individuals involved in the supply chain. The evaluation team found that the nine applicants whose applications were rejected lacked one or more of the stated documents in their applications. In contrast, the folders of the two licensees, Ariana Rugs and Afghanistan Rugs and Carpet Center (ARCC), contained all required documents.
- **Issuance of new GWI exporter license.** As per the project performance plan, GWI was required to issue three new licenses to Afghan carpet firms throughout the project life cycle. Ariana Rugs received the license in 2012 and three new licences were issued to ARCC, Tavakuli Carpet Limited and Arzu Carpet Limited. However, Arzu Limited withdrew from the certification program and Tavakuli Limited has since closed its business operations in Afghanistan. At present, GWI has two certified Afghan carpet producers and exporters in the country. In the larger context, there are currently 99 registered carpet producers and exporters in Afghanistan as per the records of the country’s national carpet association¹⁷. Thus, two percent of all the carpet production is certified as child labor free, indicating a large scope for further work to tackle child labor in the carpet sector.
- **Inadequate business capacity of Afghan carpet producers is a key barrier to certification.** The evaluation found inadequate business skills of Afghan carpet producers and exporters to be the primary reason for their failure to obtain the GWI licence. There is strong interest among carpet firms to obtain the child labor free license in order to secure a competitive edge in the international markets. However, due to lack of basic communication and marketing skills, they are unable to conduct trade with importers in US and Europe. The business development team at GWI has connected Afghan carpet firms with overseas importers, but due to Afghan carpet producers’ lack of capacity, lasting working relationships were not forged. It is important to underscore that the absolute majority of the carpet companies in the country are operated as family businesses, and in the majority of cases run by a single person. Despite GWI recognizing the need for increasing the business skills of carpet firms, no such support was provided, as it

17. Please do note that the number of carpet producers and exporters changes from time to times due to business closures and new entrants.

was not part of the project design. GWI did, however, develop a follow on project proposal to USAID to specifically address these issues, but unfortunately was not awarded funding. In addition, carpet firms are unable to clear their taxes, largely due to two reasons. Firstly, firms do not have accounting units or experts to calculate and pay taxes on time to the government. It is vital to note that the Afghan taxation procedures are complex and bureaucratic; and most firms need accounting or tax experts to carry them out. Secondly, Afghanistan does not yet have a robust tax culture, mainly due to inefficiencies and corruption in the tax collection system. As a result of both reasons, firms often struggle to pay the due taxes on time.

- Moderate demand for the GWI certification model.** During the project life cycle, 23 out of 99 carpet producers and exporters approached GWI for certification, but only nine submitted applications and requisite documents. Generally, firms are interested in the certification program, but they withdraw once they get to know about the GWI certification standards because they find them difficult to meet. It is important to outline that GWI has consistent standards across all the countries of operation, so that the label has the same meaning to consumers regardless of where the carpet is produced. The firms also expect incentives for becoming child labor free producers as child labor is relatively cheaper compared to adult labours. More importantly, a substantial number of Afghan carpet firms export to Pakistan. Traders in Pakistan are not interested in child labor free labelling. It must be noted that GWI established a small office in Andkhoi district of Faryab province, which is a key hub for carpet production in a bid to certify carpet companies, but none of the companies in the area showed interest in the certification program as an absolute majority of them are exporting carpets to Pakistan. Due to the lack of demand along with a deteriorating security situation in the district, the GWI eventually decided to close the office.
- Increased inspection capacity.** Expansion of the inspection capacity at GWI was a key component of the project, with an aim to inspect about 800 looms in the supply chain of Ariana Rugs and for new licensees as well. In total, GWI has inspected 908 looms, 253 of which were associated with Ariana Rugs while the remaining 655 were for other licensed carpet firms, as indicated in the figure below. The inability to inspect the 800 Ariana Rug looms was due to insecurity in Ghazni and Faryab provinces where Ariana Rug had large number of household level looms. Based on GoodWeave’s Supply Chain Transparency Platform¹⁸ records, the looms were inspected once in every quarter, while looms that were rated as high risk of utilizing child labor were visited more than four times in a year by the GWI National Inspection Unit (NIU). The evaluation also confirms that GWI has maintained at least one inspector in each of the provinces where they were required to conduct loom inspections. Currently, there are three inspectors working for GWI – one for each of the target provinces, Balkh, Nangarhar and Kabul. The consultation with the NIU

“I attended a carpet exhibition in China in 2018 and presented a carpet with similar features, colour, design, raw materials and dimensions, as that of ARCC (GWI licensee). However, the buyer purchased ARCC’s carpet due to the GWI child labor free label, even though I offered a lower price. After realizing the importance of the license, I approached the GWI team for the certification program. However, I do not know whether my sub-contractors will agree to child labor free carpet weaving, as it will have cost implications for them”

Male, 54-years old, Owner of a Carpet Production and Export Firm in Kabul, Afghanistan

18. The Supply Chain Transparency Platform is an application GoodWeave hired Dutch firm, ChainPoint, to help build. It is a secure, cloud-based software platform for monitoring and securing sustainable supply chains. It can be used to manage and share product, process and supplier information, from raw material to finished product.

also shows that Kabul-based staff members have received overseas trainings while provincially based inspectors have received both off the job and on the job trainings inside Afghanistan. Overall, the evaluation found the inspection team to be qualified to perform inspections of the two certified carpet firms. However, there might be need for increasing the number of inspectors if any new carpet firms succeed in obtaining the certification licence.

Number of Looms Inspected

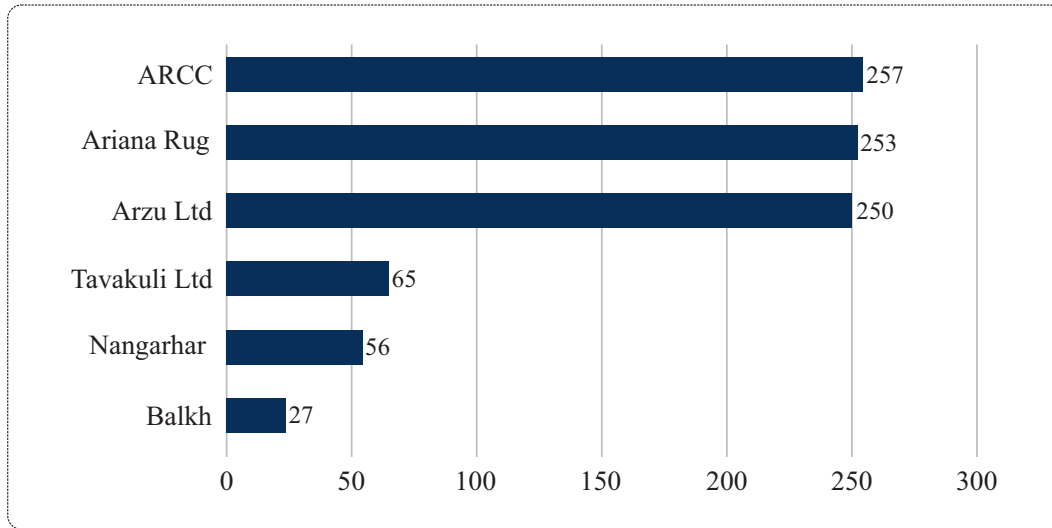


Figure 9: Inspection of Looms by Licensees, Over the Project Life Cycle

- Carpet Labelling.** As per the project performance indicator, GWI has set a target that 410 carpets be labelled as child labor free by the end of the project. At the time of writing, 362 (88 percent) carpets produced by certified producers have been labelled as child labor free, but the evaluation team believe that the GWI is on track to fully accomplish or get closer to the target by the end of the project (September 2018).
- Engagement with government stakeholders.** In-depth interviews with representatives of MoLSAMD and MoIC indicate that there has been a well-developed level of coordination between GWI and the Afghan government during the course of the project implementation. In addition, the stated government agencies expressed satisfaction with the project’s performance and are strongly in favour of continuing project activities in order to reach more carpet producers. According to the MoIC, GWI was an active member of the Carpet Sector Working Group, which convened once every two months. GWI has also provided financial and technical assistance towards organizing national carpet conferences in an attempt to raise awareness about the issue and to secure the support of stakeholders to combat child labor. As per the project proposal, GWI was required to advocate for the Afghan government to adopt GWI labor standards as the national industry benchmark, but

CASE STUDY:

The Afghan president intends to establish a mini carpet museum inside the presidential palace, to be toured by visiting diplomats and dignitaries. For this purpose, the MoIC was tasked to purchase 1,500 square meters of carpets of different varieties from the private sector. The MoIC has issued a tender for the procurement of the carpets with a provision of the procurement terms and conditions stipulating that only firms with child labor free carpet production will be eligible

this has not materialized as of yet. However, there is a noticeable change in the behaviour of relevant government agencies on the issue of child labor. For instance, the MoIC has recently developed a National Strategy for Small Medium Enterprises (SME) Development, which is currently awaiting approval of the Office of the President. The document contains provisions on combating child labor in the country; in large part a result of increased engagement of GWI with the ministry on child labor related issues. Furthermore, GWI has also contributed to the “Child Labor in Carpet Weaving Policy Paper and Action Plan”, which was issued

to apply. According to officials at MoIC, the inclusion of child labor free carpet production in the procurement terms and conditions is the result of GWI advocacy efforts which led to increased awareness on the part of the Ministry, encouraging them to pay more attention to the issue of child labor. Steps such as these can ensure carpet producers with child labor in their supply chains face appropriate consequences – in this case, exclusion from a procurement process. MoIC authorities are of the belief that policy measures such as these are likely to bring positive changes in the attitude, behaviour and practices of the private sector when it comes to the issue of child labor.

by the MoLSAMD in 2016.¹⁹ Likewise, the government has allocated 90,000 jerib land for the establishment of carpet production complexes in several provinces, and the MoIC will be providing land to carpet producers that are certified as child labor free. As of yet, the complexes have not been established, and it is too early to determine whether only child labor free producers will be allowed to benefit from this opportunity. This is an area where GWI can continue to advocate with MoIC, the High Economic Council (HEC) and the Office of the President, to make a tangible impact in terms of reducing child labor in the carpet sector.

- **Need for increased advocacy with government-level policy makers.** In the current certification model, GWI is focused on private companies, and has been able to cover two percent of carpet producers. There is need for stronger engagement with the Afghan government at the top level (Office of the President and HEC) to introduce incentives and measures similar to those discussed above, for carpet producers refraining from using child labor in their supply chains. The process of engaging with the government might be time-consuming and complicated as no single ministry is interested in taking a leading role on fighting child labor. Moreover, there is inadequate coordination between the relevant ministries, MoIC, MoLSAMD and Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), when it comes to dealing with child labor.

2.2.2 Provision of Remediation Services

A key element of the GWI approach towards reducing child labor is the provision of certain services including counselling, medical treatment, education, and day care for weavers’ children and other social services. In light of this, the evaluation focused on determining the impact of these services on reducing child labor. The data reveals the following key findings in this regard.

- **Educational support as the cornerstone of remediation services.** Education remained the core of the GWI remediation services, because it is a key component in the concept of child labor. According to 72 percent of beneficiary children, they have received some educational support from the project. Out of the 72 percent respondents, 47 percent have benefited from day care services, 34 percent received education fees, 32 percent were granted admission in a private or public school, five percent were provided the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities, and two percent (all girls) received in-home tutoring.

19. <http://policymof.gov.af/smaf-annex-ii-child-labour-in-carpet-weaving-policy-paper-and-action-plan-molsamd/>

Types of Remediation Services

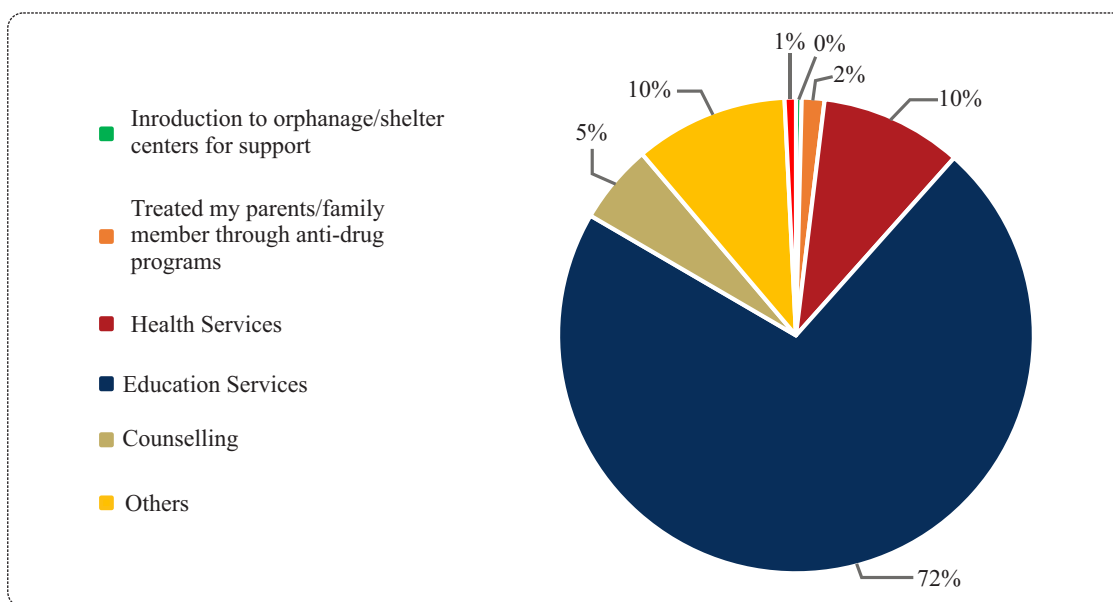


Figure 10: Types of Remediation Services Rendered to Project Beneficiaries

The higher focus on education services was aimed at addressing some of the key causes of child labor in the carpet sector such as lack of schools in the target area, the brevity of the school day, and conservative socio-cultural barriers, particularly concerning girls’ education. The data shows that more than half (56 percent) of project beneficiaries who had benefited from the educational services are highly satisfied, followed by 42 percent who reported being satisfied. Two percent of the respondents found the GWI education services not satisfying, mainly due to lack of qualified teachers and/or inadequate assistance provided to children in terms of stationery, notebooks and similar items. In-depth interviews with the parents and community members indicate that day care services to children have been the most appreciated feature of the education services, as it allowed adult weavers, particularly mothers, to better focus on carpet weaving.

Table 8: Project Beneficiaries’ Satisfaction Level from the Education Services

No	Level of Satisfaction	Percentage
1	Highly satisfied	56%
2	Satisfied	42%
3	Not satisfied	2%
4	Highly unsatisfied	0%

- Increase in children’s school enrolment. Evaluation shows that the educational support rendered to target communities has paid off, as there is a statistically significant increase in the percentage of boys and girls attending school. Prior to the delivery of project services in the target communities, 16 percent of boys were enrolled in schools, while currently 47 percent of them are going to school, marking a 31 percent increase. Improvement in the enrolment of girls is even higher, with 23 percent of them attending schools before the implementation of project activities, while at the time of writing, this percentage has increased to 76 percent, marking a 53 percent increase. On the basis of age, there is a significant increase in school enrolment of children aged nine or

younger, from 12 percent before the beginning of the project interventions to 71 percent by the end of the project. The increase in children’s enrolment is likely attributable to the following factors: GWI assistance in getting admission for children in schools, payment of educational fees for children from vulnerable families, establishment of better quality schools as well as attitudinal and behavioural shifts among parents and community members towards children’s education, particularly for girls. The evaluation team also noticed that the lack of understanding of admission processes for enrolling children into school, on the part of some parents, has played a role in keeping their children out of school. Likewise, the lack of required documentation for school enrolment for some children from internally displaced families was a key challenge. The Social Protection Unit at GWI has provided assistance to the target households on addressing the stated issues, and getting admissions for children in schools.

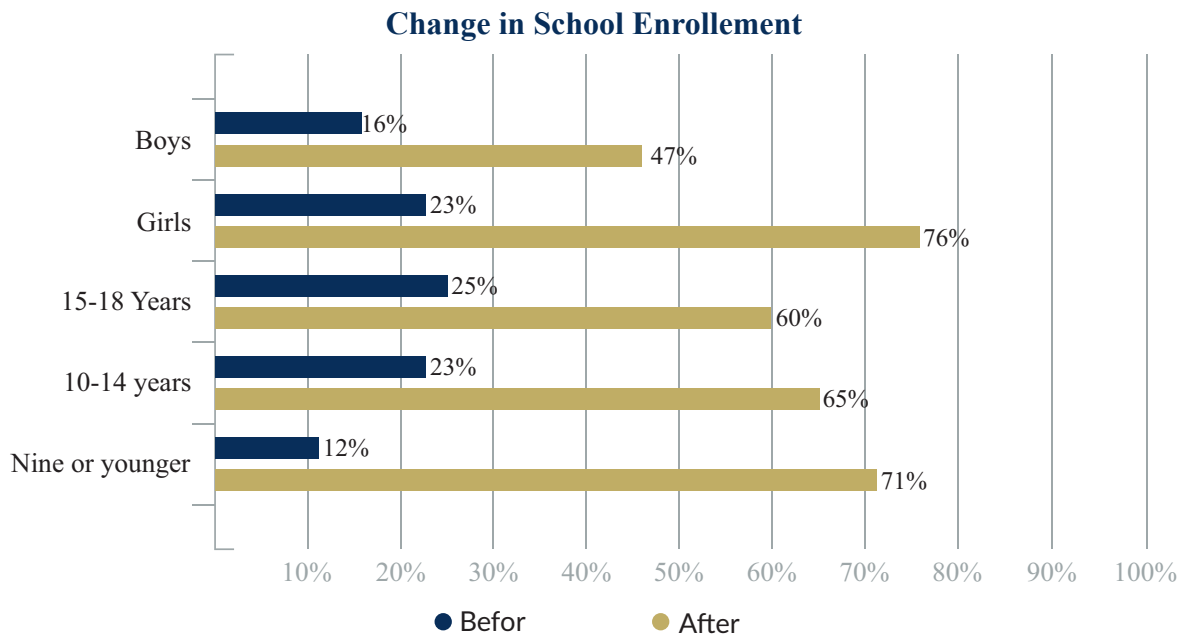


Figure 11: Types of Remediation Services Rendered to Project Beneficiaries

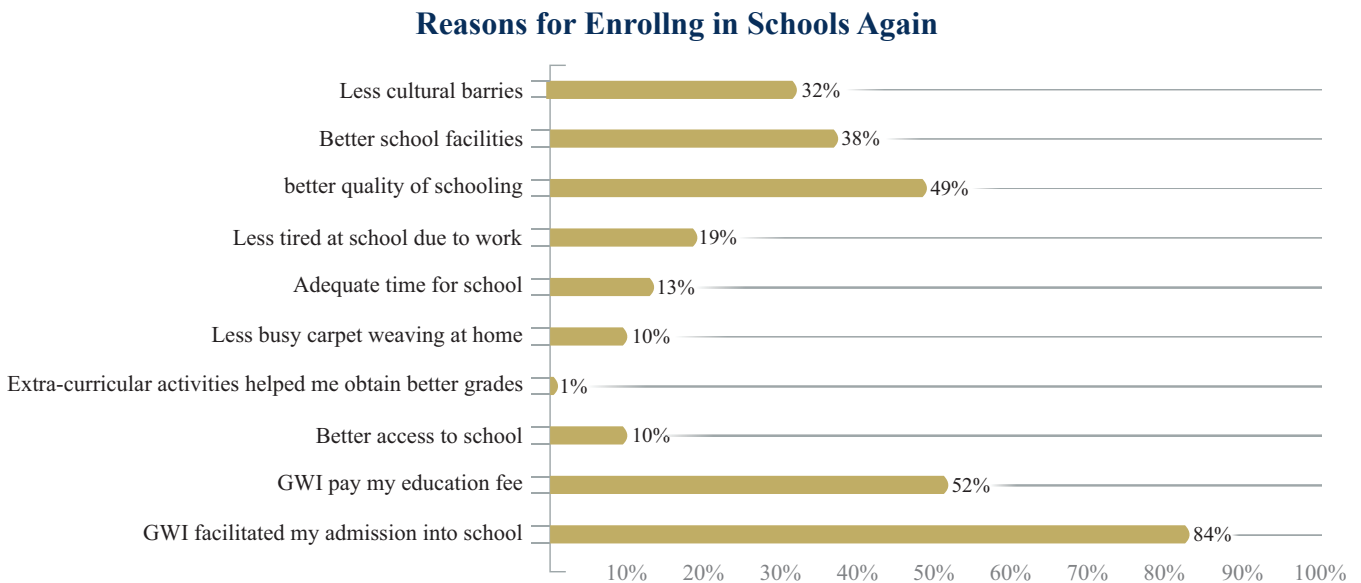


Figure 12: Causes of Increase in Children’s School Enrolment

- Impact of health services.** Data demonstrates that ten percent of the project’s beneficiaries in surveyed provinces have received health services in the form of eyeglasses. While the project provided health services in its first year of implementation in Herat province, no health services were provided in other provinces, largely due to the fact that target beneficiaries already had access to health services, provided by the Afghan Ministry of Public Health (MoPH). It is important to highlight that eyeglasses were provided to GWI through Vision Spring, which does not fall under the USDOL grant. Field visits to day care centres in Balkh province furthermore showed that GWI had provided first-aid package to the centres, which could be used for treatment of minor injuries. The Social Programs Unit at GWI has also provided counselling to households whose children were found to be involved in child labor.
- Inadequate focus on livelihood interventions.** The baseline survey administered by GWI and a research study conducted by Samuel Hall under the title of “Cutting the Threads- Assessing Child Labor Afghan Carpet Production”²⁰ show that poverty is the principle cause of child labor in the carpet sector. There was also consensus among key stakeholders consulted for this evaluation that poverty is the primary driver of child labor, and can be effectively dealt with if household income increases. As indicated in section 1.3.2, the average monthly household income for the surveyed households was found to be around AFN 6,829 (USD 95)²¹, implying that a majority of them are living under the poverty line indicated as USD 1.90 per day per person²². It is important to highlight here that the average national household size in the country is 7.7 members²³. The project proposal states that households with child labor will be linked to MoLSAMD, Solidarity Afghan Belgium (SAB) and BRAC efforts to provide them with technical and vocational trainings in areas such as carpentry, embroidery and tailoring. However, the evaluation shows that no short-term or long-term livelihood programmatic interventions were part of the project design to be delivered to the adult male household members in the surveyed provinces, which could have increased the household income level, and by extension resulted in declining child labor. Having said that, it is important to acknowledge that the project did provide some health services to target beneficiaries in Herat province in its early years of implementation. The project implementation team cites resource constraints as the key reason, followed by the concerns that livelihood assistance to households with child labor might encourage other households in the same community to engage their children in labor in order to obtain the assistance.
- Impact of child labor remediation services on adult productivity.** The evaluation demonstrates that 16 percent of adult beneficiaries reported that GWI services had increased their weaving capacity, 67 percent stated that the services did not increase their productivity, while the remaining 17 percent did not know whether the services had any impact on their productivity. Out of the 16 percent who reported a positive impact, receipt of eyeglasses and child-care services were cited as the key remediation measures that have increased productivity.

20. <http://samuelhall.org/?s=Cutting+the+threads>

21. 1 USD = 72 AFN

22. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/brief/global-poverty-line-faq>

23. http://cso.gov.af/Content/files/ALCS/ALCS%20-%202016-17%20Analysis%20report%20-%20pre-print%20for%20web_rev.pdf

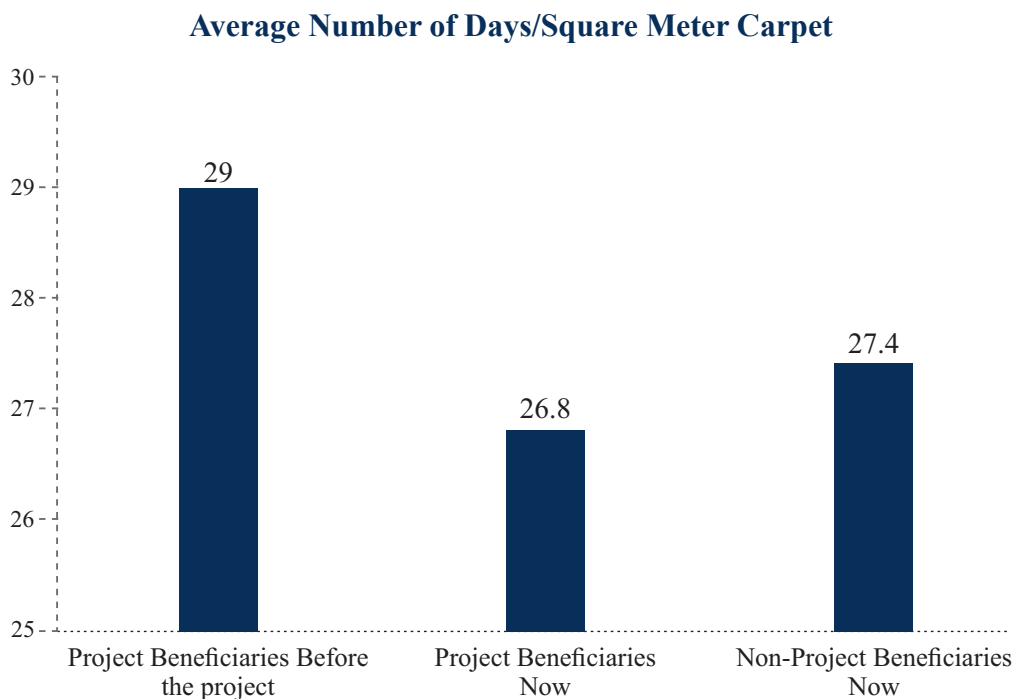


Figure 13: Impact of Remediation Services on Carpet Weaving Productivity

The adult respondents were further asked about carpet production capacity understood as the average number of days required for an adult to weave one square meter of carpet. According to beneficiaries, an average of 29 days were required for an adult weaver to weave one square meter before the project interventions in the target areas, when no remediation services had been given to them. However, today the average number of days required have declined to 26.8 due to the provision of GWI services. In contrast, it takes 27.4 days on average for an adult non-beneficiary weaver to weave one square meter of carpet.

2.2.3 Global Demand for Child-Labor Free Afghan Carpets

An integral component of the GWI model is to work with importers and consumers in the US and Europe to procure child labor free Afghan carpets to give incentives to Afghan firms to strive towards removing child labor from their supply chains. GWI has accomplished this by placing Afghan-focused marketing campaigns and by functioning as a broker between Afghan exporters and overseas importers. The technical progress reports show that GWI has actively participated in trade shows such as Decorex, Domotex, etc. to promote certified Afghan rugs as well as to create market linkages between Afghan producers and overseas importers. In addition, Afghan carpet producers have participated in various international trade shows, and have found them to be helpful in terms of creating market linkages. However, due to weak business skills, the Afghan firms have not been able to capitalize on the market linkages, nor establish working relationship with importers in the US and European markets.

In terms of the Afghan carpet-focused ads, the project has outperformed the target for the relevant performance indicator. GWI was required to place 16 ads during the project, however, it has placed a total of 62 ads in a wide range of magazines including Rug Insider, Interior Design, Furniture World,

Interior Design, Cultured Life-Style, House Beautiful, Rue, Veranda, Organic Spa and others. Since this evaluation was focused on the project activities in Afghanistan, it cannot comment on eventual shifts in the purchasing behaviour of American and European importers and consumers towards buying child labor free Afghan carpets.

However, the Afghanistan National Carpet Association, which has 75 registered members, believe that the GWI’s advertisement campaigns has negatively affected the sales of Afghan carpets in the US and Europe. According to the association, the ads has introduced and consolidated the notion of Afghan carpets as necessarily utilizing children with a resulting decrease of interest from American and European importers and consumers in carpets produced in Afghanistan. However, the exports data derived from the Afghanistan Central Statistics Office show that the decline in Afghanistan’s exports had dropped 80 percent between 2008 and 2011, but reached its lowest point between the periods of March 2016 to March 2017. Later, an upward trend was witnessed in the fiscal year covering the period of March 2017 to March 2018. On the other hand, the GWI advertisement campaign under the USDOL grant started in January 2017. Therefore, the evaluation team believes that there is no convincing evidence to back up the point of view of the carpet association.

Carpet Exports in Millions (Square Meters)

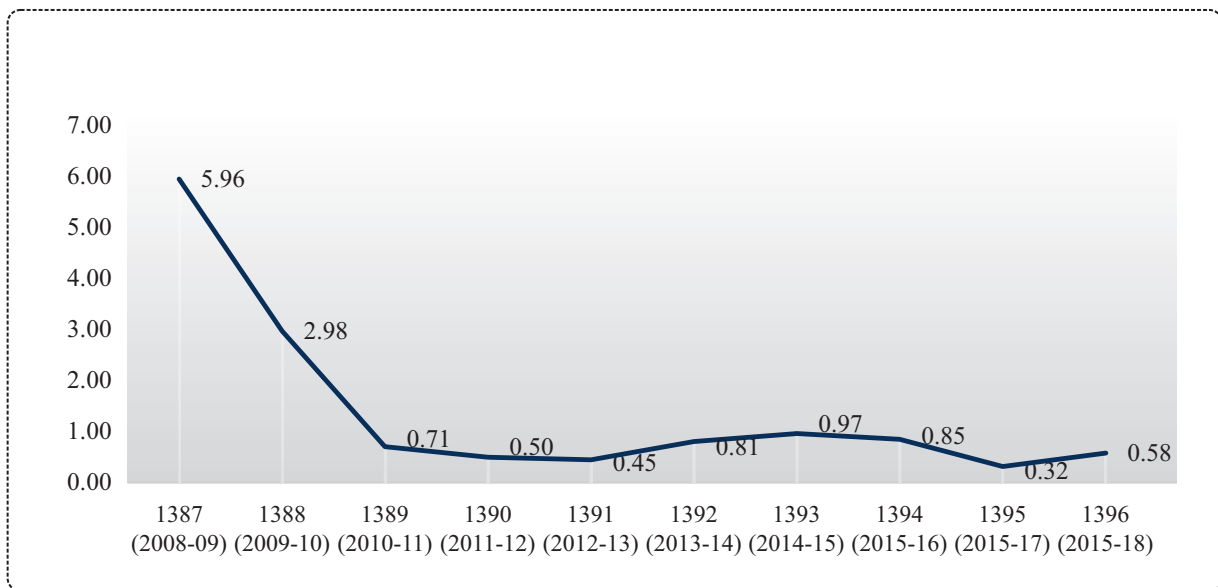


Figure 14: Afghanistan’s Carpet Exports

2.3 Child Labor Research Contribution

- Project M&E Set-up.** The National Inspection Unit at the GWI main office in Kabul has been responsible for the monitoring and evaluation functions of the project. The unit consists of two individuals; a Head Inspector and an M&E Officer, both of whom are responsible for inspection of the carpet supply chain of certified firms (household-based looms in the targeted provinces) as well as the central carpet weaving facilities in Kabul. The NIU makes use of latest relevant technology in the form of the custom built Supply Chain Transparency Platform unique to GWI, which makes data collection during field visits easier, quicker, and more transparent. The application has automated time and GPS tracking functionality, which can be used to track whether inspections take place at intended looms. The application functions as a database containing information

on the looms inspected over the course of project implementation and also contain details on specific child labor cases. The project furthermore has a CMEP containing the theory of change, activities, and performance indicators along with the targets and actual performance, and other related information. Overall, the evaluation team has found the project M&E set-up adequate to conduct strong M&E work. This notwithstanding, there is need for separating the M&E Officer from the actual inspection and other program related work, in order to allow for monitoring and evaluation of inspection and social program performance, without conflict of interest. At present, the M&E Officer is also engaged in the inspection of looms, a programmatic activity.

- **Baseline Study.** The evaluation confirms that GWI conducted a baseline survey in the first half of 2014. 454 children (360 in Herat; 94 in Kabul) from 114 households (84 in Herat; 30 in Kabul) who were associated with the supply chain of Ariana Rugs were targeted in the baseline study. However, due to a shift in the geographical location of the project (Herat to Balkh and Faryab to Jawzjan) due to insecurity, the baseline study has not been used as a performance benchmark for this evaluation as respondents and surveyed provinces are different in the baseline and final evaluation.
- **Research Contribution.** In accordance with the project proposal, Samuel Hall Consulting, a research implementing partner of GWI on this grant, has conducted two research projects; (i) an assessment of child labor in Afghan carpet production (2014)²⁴, and (ii) a carpet value chain study²⁵. The project’s technical reports indicate that the research papers were used by MoLSAMD and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and formed the basis of the Ministry’s understanding of prevalence of child labor in Afghanistan’s carpet sector. In addition, UNICEF contracted Samuel Hall to complete an additional policy paper that drew upon the two research studies and formed the basis for a subsequent action plan. Human Rights Watch (HRW) also cited the research papers for its report titled “They Bear All the Pain”²⁶. Likewise, the research reports were shared with War Child UK, ACTED and other stakeholders in a bid to better understand the prevalence of child labor in the carpet sector and to design evidence-based programmatic interventions.

2.4 Community Awareness and Engagement on Child-labor Issue

The evaluation assessed the impact of the project’s public awareness efforts to change attitudes and perceptions towards child labor related issues, particularly that of the parents and key influential community members. In addition, the evaluation looked at the level of understanding of community members when it comes to the concept of child labor.

- **Increased support towards children’s education.** The data shows a stark difference in how parents view their children’s education now in comparison to before they received project services. As reflected in the figure below, 77 percent of parents were of the opinion that their children’s education adversely affects household income, with three percent stating that children should be educated. However, now 11 percent of the project beneficiaries view their children’s education as negatively affecting the income level of the family, and around half of them are of the opinion that education for their children is a mean of employment and future income. The evaluation also compared the views of project beneficiaries versus non-beneficiaries on the point of children’s education. Again, more project beneficiaries (39 percent) considers education as a right of their children compared to non-beneficiaries (28 percent). Furthermore, more non-

24. <http://samuelhall.org/?s=Ties+that+bind>

25. <http://samuelhall.org/?s=Cutting+the+threads>

26. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/07/14/they-bear-all-pain/hazardous-child-labor-afghanistan>

project beneficiaries (38 percent) believe that their children’s education negatively affects family income, compared to 11 percent of the project beneficiaries holding a similar view. This shows a statistically significant change in parents’ view on children’s education in areas targeted by the project, in all likelihood a result of GWI awareness efforts. The qualitative data also shows that target communities contributed the venues for the community-based classes, reflecting their support towards children’s education.

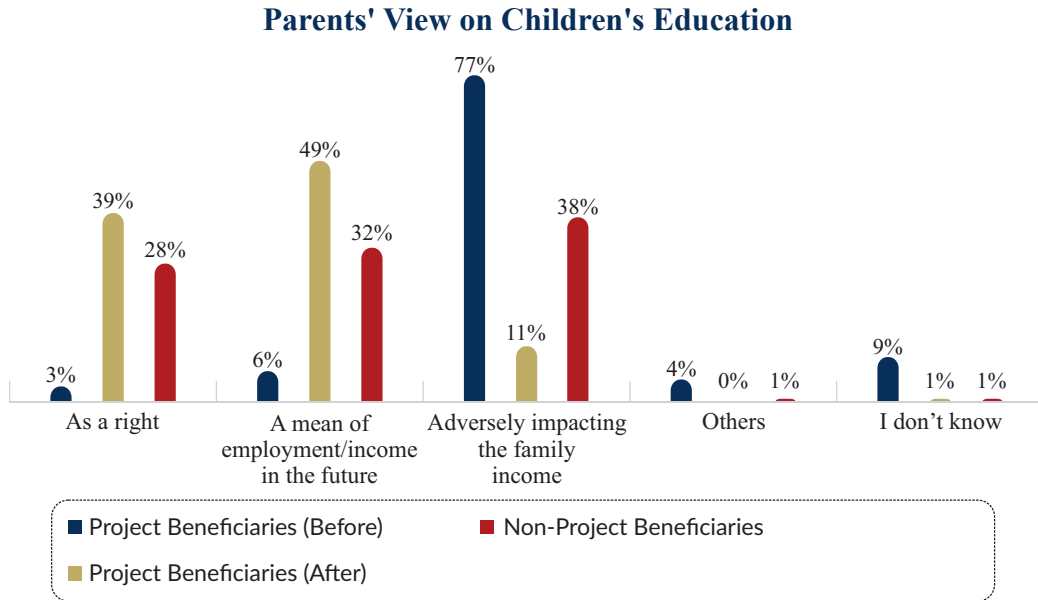


Figure 15: Change in Views of Parents on Children's Education

- Positive change in attitudes towards children below the age of 14 working. Data analysis reveals that there is some change in parents’ attitudes towards the concept of children working. Prior to the GWI interventions in the target communities, 58 percent of respondents believed that it was permissible for children below the age of 14 to work while 41 percent considered it wrong. However, at present, half of them are of the opinion that it is wrong for children under the age of 14 years of age to work, 35 percent considers it permissible, while 15 percent are undecided. Comparing the responses of project beneficiaries with those of non-beneficiaries, a similar picture arises, as almost half of both groups considered it wrong for children to work. These findings show that GWI efforts did have some positive impact, although half of the project beneficiaries (35 percent and 15 percent) are yet to change their minds on the concept of children below the age of 14 working. As a result, there is a need for sustained awareness efforts using inclusive approaches as securing the buy-in of religious figures, community leaders, and influential individuals could go some way towards shifting perceptions further.

Parents' Attitude on Girls' Education

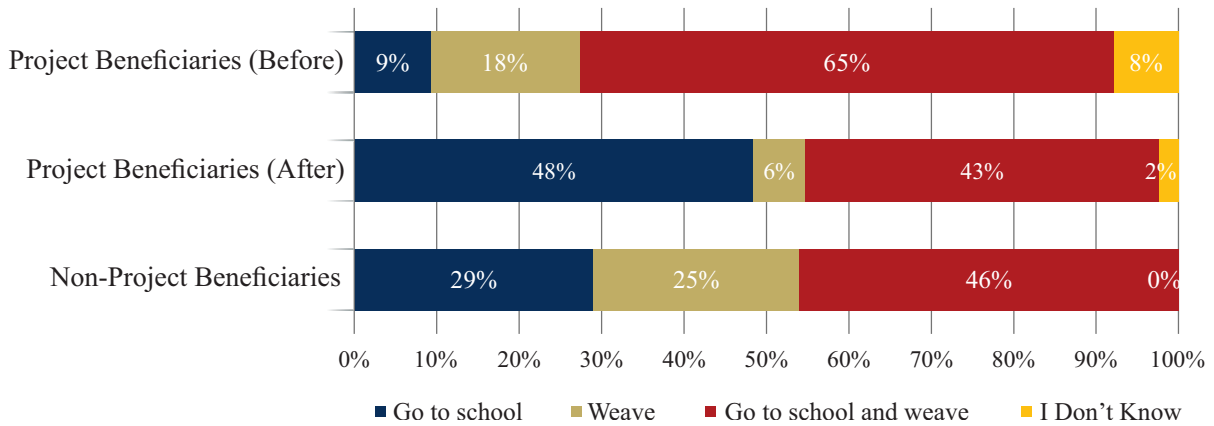


Figure 16: Change in parents' attitudes towards children education

Parent's Attitude towards Children under 14 Working

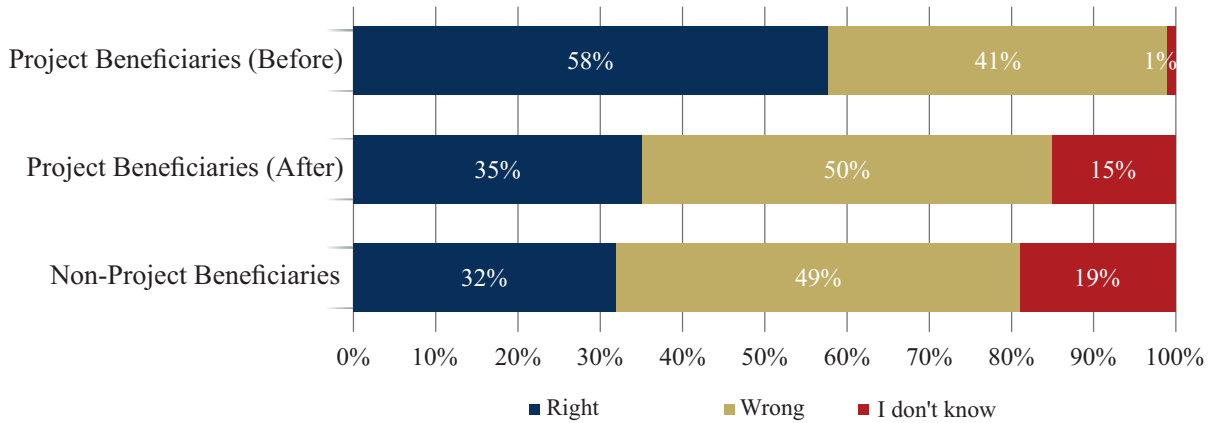


Figure 17: Change in parents' attitudes towards children under 14 working

- Increased support towards' girls' education.** The evaluation has found a positive change in the attitude of parents towards girls' education as six percent of project beneficiaries today are of the opinion that girls should not receive education. This marks a significant decrease from the 18 percent who gave this response prior to receiving the project services. Additionally, 25 percent of non-beneficiaries believe that girls should weave only, and not obtain education. The in-depth consultation with parents and community members show that GWI's in-home tutoring and classes have been very effective in terms of providing education to girls, who would otherwise be deprived of education, as they are not allowed by parents to attend schools outside the home. Despite the positive change in the attitude of respondents towards girls'

“I have three daughters who were weaving carpets for around 10-12 hours daily. I did not allow them to go to school outside our home because the environment is not permissible for girls to go to school. This NGO (GWI) came to us and offered to send a teacher to our home to teach my daughters. I was reluctant but accepted the offer. After two years of education at home, my daughters asked me to permit them to go to a school. Since I had seen a positive change in them, I allowed them to go to a government school nearby”

Father, 48, Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul

education, Afghanistan remains a conservative society when it comes to educating girls. Hence, there is need for sustained efforts to consolidate the gains in this regard.

- Inadequate understanding of children’s rights.** It is important for adult household members to have a strong understanding of children’s rights in order to effectively participate in reducing child labor in the carpet sector. For this reason, the evaluation assessed the understanding of children’s rights among adult respondents. As per the country’s labor law, 18 is the minimum age for working full time, but children between the ages of 15-17 are legally allowed to work if; (i) the work is not harmful to them, (ii) less than 35 hours per week²⁷, and (iii) is some form of vocational training. The labor law prohibits children below the age of 14 from working. Awareness of the minimum age of working was limited among both adult project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, with 41 percent and 38 percent, respectively, able to tell the correct minimum working age. In addition, when adult respondents were asked to tell the maximum number of hours a child can be involved in carpet weaving, based on the laws of the country, 53 percent adult project beneficiaries could tell the correct number (four hours), which is marginally higher than the non-project beneficiaries of whom 49 percent knew the correct number. As such, the data does not suggest significant changes in the level of understanding among adult beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries on children’s rights, highlighting here a relatively limited project impact. In order to increase the level of understanding of parents and communities, it is essential to hold short-term training courses, exclusively focused on children’s rights in light of the national and international laws.

Adult Respondents' Understanding of Children's Rights

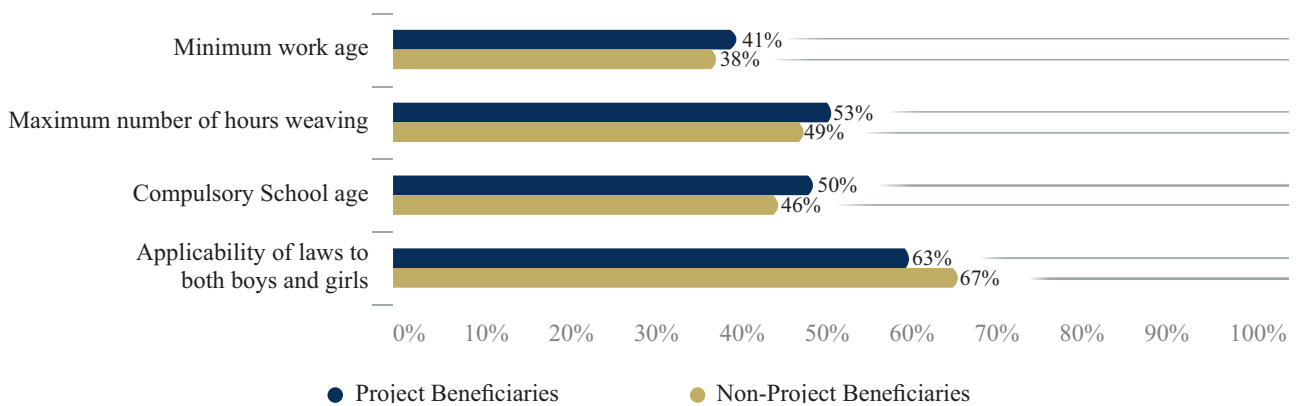


Figure 18: Adults’ Understanding of Children’s Rights

The survey also asked adult respondents whether they knew the compulsory school age for children. Although Afghan legislation fails to explicitly specify this, 14 years of age is widely assumed by development agencies and the Afghan government alike to be the compulsory school age. As can be reflected in the figure above, there are marginal differences in the level of understanding of project beneficiaries (50 percent) and non-beneficiaries (46 percent), with a significant percentage of project beneficiaries still not knowing the compulsory school age. Furthermore, when respondents were asked whether the compulsory school age and other laws apply equally on both genders, a majority of beneficiaries (63 percent) and non-beneficiaries (67) responded in the affirmative.

27. It is important to outline that according to MoLSAMD, a child cannot weave carpets for more than four hours a day, hence, the total number of hours a child above the age of 14 can work in carpet weaving adds up to 24 hours.

2.5 Sustainability

The evaluation examined whether GWI, relevant government agencies, certified carpet firms and community members can ensure sustainability of project activities, and if so, to what extent and requiring which resources. There is consensus among the stakeholders consulted that ensuring sustainability of project activities is going to be a daunting challenge, posing a risk that project gains could be reversed. For instance, a key achievement has been a positive attitudinal change in the attitudes and behaviors of parents and community members towards children’s education, particularly that of girls. However, according to the parents consulted through FGDs, a majority of children would be unable to continue their education if community-based classes and in-home tutoring end. Only a limited number of parents expressly intend to see their children continue pursuing education through the public schooling system in the eventuality of project activities ceasing.

However, it is important to highlight that the sustainability of most development programming in Afghanistan is at risk. The security situation continues to be precarious and public finances remain highly dependent on international aid.

Overall, the following factors render the sustainability of project activities uncertain.

- **Lack of revenue generation.** GWI has sustained its work in India and Nepal for more than twenty years through revenue generation from licensing fees on labeled carpets combined with grant funds raised to cover the cost of specific programming. It was never anticipated that the program in Afghanistan could be entirely sustainable on fees alone. Costs in the Afghan economy are significantly inflated and the market is unstable as well as relatively smaller in size compared to India and Nepal. For that reason and to incentivize participation, GWI has not charged carpet producers and exporters fees, since it established its presence in Afghanistan in 2011. There were hopes that it might eventually be possible to charge some fees to recoup costs, but there are currently no signs that GWI will be able to generate any revenues from fees in the near to mid-term. The private sector already complains about a lack of adequate incentives in the GWI certification model. In addition to discouraging new applicants, charging of fees on carpet labeling could cause ARCC and Ariana Rug to withdraw from the certification program. The \$ 676,396 in private funding that GWI raised to supplement the USDOL budget and offer educational programming and to advertise for the Afghan carpet sector has been expended during the life of the project and is not available to continue operation of these programs in the future.
- **Inadequate government capacity.** The government of Afghanistan faces serious challenges on several fronts including terrorism, a stagnant economy, corruption, and lack of rule of law, amongst others. Therefore, the Afghan government would not be able to continue project activities despite an increased interest at government level to combat child labor. MoIC, responsible for private sector engagement, does not have a fully functioning M&E Directorate, which could monitor and follow up child labor related cases. The M&E functions are performed by a small team of inadequately trained individuals within the General Directorate of the Ministry. As for MoLSAMD, which is responsible for preventing child labor, the Ministry has a plan to create one million jobs for adult members of the households, who will commit to no child labor. Additionally, it has the required legal framework to combat child labor, but its implementation has been a challenge due to inadequate resources and other pressing priorities, according to the representative of the MoLSAMD consulted for the final evaluation. It is important for GWI to finalize the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Afghan Ministry of Education

(MoE) in order to hand over the education activity stream to the government, upon the close of the project.

- **High poverty at community level.** The most widely used sustainability model for development projects in Afghanistan is to hand over projects to community and government entities to sustain them. However, the communities in which GWI has implemented the project are facing high rates of poverty, with a majority of local populations living under the poverty line. The possibilities of community members contributing resources to continue project’s gains are consequently slim. Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with parents and community members further indicate that communities will be unable to sustain project gains, with a strong possibility according to some of respondents that children might be sent back to carpet weaving to financially support their family.

3. CHALLENGES

GWI has encountered the following key challenges during the implementation of the project.

1. **Insecurity.** Afghanistan has experienced an uptick in violence in recent years, which has adversely affected the implementation of the project activities. For instance, Ariana Rug had a substantial number of household looms in Ghazni, but due to rising insecurity in the province, the GWI inspection team was unable to carry out the inspection there. Likewise, none of the inspectors have been able to visit the Aqcha district of Jawzjan province since December 2017 due to the presence of insurgents. Despite the project team taking necessary precautions, insecurity is a national level issue and well beyond the control of GWI.
2. **Political instability and economic stagnation.** When the project began its activities, Afghanistan was in the midst of a presidential election and saw the withdrawal of international security forces. The election would go on to be marred by allegations of rigging, and led ultimately to the formation of the National Unity Government consisting of both leading presidential candidates. The two sides have since been involved in power struggles, resulting in political instability in the country, which by extension has led to economic instability. This combined with the withdrawal of international forces caused the Afghan economy to grow at a sluggish rate. According to the World Bank²⁸, the annual average growth of Afghanistan was nine percent between the periods of 2003-2013, while since then, the economy has grown at 2.3 percent per year on average.
3. **Limited business capacity of Afghan carpet firms.** An absolute majority of the carpet businesses in the country are operated as family businesses, and characterized by a lack adequate capacity in marketing, communication, monitoring, financial management, administration, human resources, business development, and trade, amongst others. The businesses are consequently unable to meet the certification standards put forth by GWI. For instance, most Afghan carpet producers are unable to conduct business with importers in the US and Europe due to a lack of adequate expertise. For instance, the project experience with Afghan carpet producers indicates that they are unable to prepare marketing material (e.g. brochures, catalogues etc.), which is fundamental for conducting business with overseas importers. In addition, in many cases, they do not have robust enough financial management systems, which could allow them to submit taxes to the Afghan government on time.
4. **Exports to Pakistan.** The GWI certification system requires inspection of supply chains from end to end. The evaluation shows that a substantial percentage of Afghan carpets are still exported to Pakistan where they are processed, packed and exported to international markets under Pakistani labels. But, since GWI has no infrastructure in Pakistan to conduct inspections, licensing of these supply chains have not been possible. Furthermore, these producers and exporters have a relatively limited or no interest in the GWI certification program because child labor free labels are not in demand by Pakistani markets. This is evidenced by GWI repeatedly reaching out to all these firms throughout the duration of the project, but the efforts did not secure their interest in the certification program.
5. **Higher expectations of beneficiaries.** A key challenge for GWI has been to meet the high expectations of beneficiaries, a result of the massive flow of development aid since 2002. Households receiving GWI inspection team visits expect cash and non-cash assistance in exchange for their participation in activities due to prior experience of receiving similar assistance from

28. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/985851533222840038/Afghanistan-development-update>

other development partners. Low-income households asked to cease engagement in child labor expect incentives to be able to compensate the anticipated financial loss. As such, the fact that the GWI certification model does not offer beneficiary families any monetary incentives other than education services for children, has affected its ability to ensure buy-in from target communities.

6. Unprecedented migration. The unprecedented levels of migration of Afghans to Europe during recent years have also influenced project implementation. The project initially began activities in Herat province where Arian Rug and Tavakulli Carpet Limited had household level looms. However, as a considerable number of these households migrated to Europe, it became unfeasible for the project to continue its operation in the province, opting instead to move implementation to Balkh province.

4. LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

1. Child labor is primarily driven by poverty, and remediation efforts alone are unlikely to reduce child labor in the carpet sector of Afghanistan. The project’s substantive focus on education services has increased the awareness level of parents and community members, and the evaluation has detected a positive attitudinal change. However, such efforts do not address the underlying cause of child labor – poverty.
2. Carpet weaving is often the most feasible mean of earning a livelihood for adult female household members in the target areas. However, there is a need to form partnerships with organizations that can provide robust livelihood services to adult male members to increase household income levels. Such interventions could include vocational training and post-training assistance in the form of market linkages.
3. Inspections alone are unlikely to substantially reduce child labor in household-based carpet production as children can opt to work at night to avoid inspection. There is a need for the establishment of carpet weaving centres in areas where weavers in the supply chain of a certified firm are in close geographic proximity. This will allow for greater efficiencies, easier inspection and make it less likely for children to get pulled into child labor.
4. GWI’s education focused efforts have resulted in a substantial increase in the number of children enrolled in schools. The in-home tutoring was found to be the most effective approach for the education of girls whose families do not permit them to study outside.
5. Day care services were found to be highly popular among the project beneficiaries, particularly among female weavers, as it allows them to work more productively.
6. The approach focusing on companies might not result in coverage of large portions of the Afghan carpet market. At present, GWI covers two percent of the carpet production. To expand coverage of the market, it is important to expand advocacy efforts with the Afghan government at the top level to introduce policy and regulatory measures and incentives, discouraging child labor in carpet production. It is also important to network advocacy efforts with carpet producers and exporters association, in order to increase the likelihood of success.
7. The inability of carpet producers to pay taxes on time is a primary obstacle preventing them from getting child labor free certification. To mitigate this, GWI can either provide targeted technical assistance directly to such firms in order to help them better sort out their tax related issues with the Afghan Ministry of Finance or find partners capable of providing the same.
8. The practice of not charging fees on carpet labelling is encouraging as it incentivizes carpet producers to join the certification program. Although the charging of fees is a source of revenue, key for project sustainability, at present time it might serve as a disincentive for already beleaguered private carpet firms.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The final evaluation concludes that the project has succeeded to some extent in reducing child labor as more beneficiary children are attending schools, and there is a decline in the number of beneficiary children working compared to the non-beneficiary children. In addition, project beneficiaries have reported a high degree of satisfaction with the remediation services component of the project and the companies are satisfied with the inspections system. Likewise, the public awareness and engagement efforts with the government, parents and community members have shown results, as there is increased support for and positive attitudinal changes regarding children’s education, particularly girls. Having said that, the replication and expansion of the GWI social compliance model has encountered many challenges, and as a result, only two carpet producers/exporters (two percent of the total number) in the country are certified. Inadequate incentives in the model and the limited business management capacity of private firms are key barriers to the expansion of the certification program in Afghanistan. Moreover, the approach of focusing on firms has resulted in the model obtaining coverage of only a small portion of the Afghan carpet sector. Finally, despite extensive advocacy efforts of the project with the Afghan government, there is need for further engagement to introduce regulations, incentives and policies for tackling child labor effectively in home-based carpet production.

Based on consultation with a wide range of project stakeholders, the evaluation presents the following recommendations, aimed at improving future interventions to reduce child labor in the carpet sector:

1. There is need for delivering technical assistance to carpet firm producers and exporters with a view to improve their business management functions in areas including: accounting and financial management, tax management, marketing and effective management of trade with overseas partners. The most obstructive issue facing carpet firms is their inability to file taxes with Ministry of Finance in accordance with rules and regulations in place. To mitigate this, GWI could recruit taxation services firms to train carpet producers and exporters on Afghan taxation laws, processes and procedures as well as to help them file taxation documents with the government. GWI could also explore the possibility of embedding technical advisors on a temporary basis with carpet firms in order to provide them on the job training, and help them with system development to improve their ability to conduct trade with international markets.
2. Child labor is prevalent in the production of carpets exported to Pakistan. It is recommended GWI advocate with the Afghan government to provide subsidies to the private sector so as to establish carpet processing centers in Afghanistan. Such subsidies could take form of provision of land and electricity for processing centres at discounted rates, as well as waiving of taxes for carpet producers who are willing to process their carpets inside the country and commit to child labor free production.
3. Since child labor is primarily caused by poverty, there is need for targeted livelihood interventions for adult male household members to increase the household income level, which would then discourage parents from allowing children to work. In order to identify livelihood interventions with potential to increase household income levels, GWI needs to conduct additional labor market assessments and livelihood studies in the target areas. These studies would increase GWI’s understanding of local market dynamics, helping the organization to design targeted livelihood interventions into future projects.
4. An area in need of continued improvement is the awareness of parents and community members on children’s rights in regard to minimum working age, compulsory school age, and maximum working hours in the carpet sector as allowed by the law. Civic education awareness sessions

with a strong focus on children’s rights offered at community level with parents, community elders, religious figures can go some way towards addressing this.

5. Carpet weaving centres should be established in areas where weavers in the supply chain of certified firms are in close geographic proximity. This will help in moving home-based carpet production towards more factory-based production. The evaluation found willingness among the respondents to allow women to work in a centralized location such as factories, in so far staff members be women. In addition, GWI needs to provide assistance to certified licensees who are able to establish carpet weaving centres, for instance through establishing day care facilities in centres, further incentivizing women. The establishment of centres can be made possible through combined support and contribution from both GWI and community members, with communities contributing the land and building facilities.
6. ARM strongly recommends that GWI continue working with the MoLSAMD, MoIC, HEC, Office of the President and MRRD to introduce incentives for carpet producers to refrain from child labor. As part of this, GWI should continue its advocacy efforts with the government to ensure allotment of land to carpet producers who reject using child labor in their production. However, for advocacy efforts to be effective, the evaluation recommends that GWI work closely with members of the Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) to exert collective pressure on the Afghan government to introduce incentives for carpet producers to avoid child labor in their production and lower opportunity costs of refraining.
7. GWI should finalize the MoU with the MoE urgently so as to ensure continuity of community-based classes once project funding ends. Based on the Community-Based Education policy of the MoE, the government is required to establish community-based classes in areas where the closest public school is located more than three kilometres from the community. Hence, the MoU will ensure that MoE either continues the existing community-based classes, or facilitate the enrolment of children into the closest public schools.
8. To allow independent and conflict of interest free monitoring and evaluation of programme interventions, it is important for GWI to separate the M&E unit from the inspection unit. At present, the M&E Officer is involved in the implementation of programmatic interventions such as inspection of the looms as opposed to exclusively conducting actual monitoring and evaluation of project implementation.
9. Besides conducting baseline assessments at the start of the project, the data collected at initial inspections of new applicants could be used as a benchmark against which the performance and impact of the certification program can be measured.
10. For the sake of sustainability, it is important for GWI to work with the relevant government ministries, particularly MoLSAMD and MoIC, to develop the required capacity to effectively monitor, inspect and follow up on child labor cases. GWI needs to train the government officials on the processes and procedures of child labor inspections.

6. ANNEXES

6.1 Evaluation Framework

Area of Focus	Data needed (to be collected)	Data Source/Method
Policy Level issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy provisions that necessitate the fight against child labor in the carpet sector of Afghanistan. • The implementation of the policy provisions relating to child labor in the carpet sector, and the key barriers in this regard. • The extent to which the project has leveraged government policies and priorities to increase the number of participating companies to get engaged in child-labor-free carpet production. • Prevalence of Initiatives similar to this project (Combating child labor in the carpet sector) in the target provinces. • Influence/impact of the project on formulation of government policies/strategies on reducing child labor in the carpet sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence/impact of the project on formulation of government policies/strategies on reducing child labor in the carpet sector.
The replication of GWI social compliance model and expansion of its geographical reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and quantity of the technical assistance provided to Afghan companies to build their internal capacities to adapt to GWI’s certification standards. • The level of interest among companies to apply the certification standards on their operation. • The perception of companies on the positive and/or negative impact of the certification standards on their business. • Change in the number of companies meeting certification standards, due to the project interventions. • The degree of satisfaction among the companies from the GWI’s technical assistance. • Change in the number of looms monitored and inspected in the target areas. • Change in the number of carpets labeled as child-labor-free • Number of households inspected and found to have child labor non-compliances • The extent to which the capacity of project staff was enhanced to carry out quality inspections. • Outcome of the project advocacy efforts with the government on child labor in the carpet sector of the country. • Adoption of GWI certification standards as a national industry benchmark for the carpet sector. • Key barriers to the success of certification standards in Afghanistan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs with relevant government entities, Arian Rugs, ARCC, Nisar Shuaib Hussani Limited, Jamshid Zada Carpet Manufacturing Company, etc • KIIs with GW Afghanistan

<p>Remediation Services rendered to children engaged in child labor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in The number of children involved in child labor and hazardous labor in the carpet production in the targeted communities. • The impact of social services rendered to the target beneficiaries in reducing child labor in the target communities. • The types and scale of the technical and vocational skills obtained by the parents under the project for livelihood purposes. • The impact of extra-curricular activities on the attitude of children, parents and community towards children education versus labor • The extent to which the target community members have participated in facilitating community-based schools aimed at eradicating child labor, • Sustainability of education for children in your community in the mid to long run, once the project winds down. • Likelihood of the parents continuing to educate their children once the project activities end in the target areas. • Change in the productivity level of the beneficiaries due to receiving social services under the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs with GWI staff members, including Country Director, Social Program Manager, Child Protection Specialist, etc. • KII with ROAWC • Structured interviews with children, parents and community members. • FGD with children, parents and community members.
<p>Change in demand for child-labor free Afghan carpets in oversea markets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of overseas companies interested to import child-labor-free Afghan carpets. • Market linkages established between certified Afghan suppliers and overseas companies, due to advertisement efforts and attendance of GWI in global carpet trade shows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review • KII with GWI staff members
<p>Research and Evaluation on Child Labor in the Afghan carpet sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and documenting key drivers of child labor in the carpet sector. • The degree to which the key findings of the research on child labor in carpet supply chain and home-based weaving were taken into account during the project implementation • The extent to which the key causes of child labor identified in the research, were targeted and addressed by the project. • Change in the project activities/implementation due to the key findings of the baseline survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Review • KII with project team. • KII with Samuel Hall Consulting

<p>Change in the awareness level of target communities and government officials on child-labor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the “child labor” concept among the targeted communities and government entities. • Engagement of the community members in providing education to children engaged in child labor in the carpet sector. • The scale of ownership among the target community members to educate children. • The scale and causes of change in the attitude of parents and community members towards the education of children in the target communities. • Differences in the attitude of parents towards education of girls and boys. • The extent to which wide range of key local Stakeholders’ had been engaged and their support secured towards tackling child labor. • Increase in the number of children (girls and boys) enrolled in schools due to change in the attitude of parents and community members. • Number of households with all children of compulsory school age attending school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured interviews with children, parents and community members. • FGD with children, parents and community members • KIIs with project team and government officials
<p>Project Implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of project advisory committee in enabling the project to accomplish its intended objectives and goal (Value addition). • The extent to which the inputs, concerns and recommendations of the target community members were taken into account by the project. • Project governance and management Structure • Adequacy, qualification and turn-over of project staff members • Implementation supervision and management • Response to emerging issues during implementation • Reporting and documentation for the project • Effectiveness of the various components of the M&E system (staffing, Indicator definition, M&E Plan, tools, implementation and reporting) • Indicators’ validity, relevance, timeliness and general flow of data quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Review • KIIs with project advisory committee members. • KIIs with Project staff members and community members
<p>Case Studies, Lessons Learned and best practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme cases of success in different components • Extreme cases of failure in different components • Positive and/or negative lessons learned • Challenges, both in project design and implementation, and how they were managed. • Key recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review • FGD with project beneficiaries. • KII with GWI staff members, Arianna and ARCC.

6.2 List of Key Informants

No	Designation of the Key Informant	Gender	Organization	Mode of Interview
1	Country Director	Male	GWI	GWI
2	Head Inspector	Female	GWI	GWI
3	Social Program Manager	Female	GWI	GWI
4	Social Program Officer	Female	GWI	GWI
5	Business Development Director	Male	GWI	GWI
6	Regional Manager/Inspector	Female	GWI	GWI
7	Factory Manager	Male	Ariana Rug	Ariana Rug
8	Operations Manager	Male	Ariana Rug	Ariana Rug
9	Director	Male	ARCC	ARCC
10	Sales Manager	Male	ARCC	ARCC
11	Deputy Head	Male	Afghanistan National Association of Carpets	Afghanistan National Association of Carpets
12	Head of the Company	Male	Nissar Shuaib Hussain Limited	Nissar Shuaib Hussain Limited
13	Company Manager	Male	Jamshid Zada Carpet Company	Jamshid Zada Carpet Company
14	Child Protection Focal Point	Male	MoLSAMD	MoLSAMD
15	Private Sector Coordinator	Male	MoIC	MoIC
16	SME Expert	Male	MoIC	MoIC
17	Council Member	Male	HEC	HEC
18	Civil Society Activist/Lawyer	Female	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
19	Child Protection Specialist	Female	Human Welfare Organization	Human Welfare Organization
20	Father	Male	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
21	Father	Male	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
22	Mother	Female	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
23	Mother	Female	Not Applicable	In person
24	Mother	Female	Not Applicable	In person
25	Mother	Female	Not Applicable	In person
26	CDC Head	Male	Not Applicable	In person
27	Village Elder	Male	Not Applicable	In person
28	Community member	Male	Not Applicable	In person
29	Community member	Female	Not Applicable	In person
30	Religious figure	Male	Not Applicable	In person
31	Community Elder	Male	Not Applicable	In person

6.3 Disclaimer

- ARM Consulting has carried out the final evaluation and developed this report as per the terms of reference mentioned in the agreement signed with GWI on July 4th, 2018. This report is to be used by GWI and USDOL to determine the project performance against its intended targets.
- The findings and comments are based on the study of the project documents, face-to-face survey and FGD with the project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, and KIIs with GWI, private sector, relevant government authorities, parents, community members, and subject matter experts. In performing the evaluation, ARM Consulting has assumed the genuineness of all signatures and the authenticity of all documents submitted to us, whether original or copies.
- In accordance with our policy, neither ARM Consulting nor any of its employees undertake responsibility arising in any way whatsoever, to any person other than GWI in respect of the matters dealt with in this report, including any errors or omissions therein, arising through negligence.
- All analyses in this report, conclusions or assessments have inherent limitations.
- Any work progress or project accomplishments subsequent to our discussion with the respondents, of which we have not been informed, have not been evaluated by us and accordingly have not been reported.
- Neither ARM Consulting nor any of its employees will be liable to GWI for any consequential, incidental, indirect, punitive or special damages (including loss of profits, data, business or goodwill, collectively, “Excluded Damages”) in connection with the performance of the services or otherwise under this agreement, regardless of whether such liability is based on breach of contract, tort, strict liability, breach of warranty, failure of essential purpose or otherwise, and even if the company is advised of, or the parties had contemplated, the likelihood of such Excluded Damages.

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