

2.10.1. Violence against children: overview



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COMMON ANALYSIS

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COI summary

Child abuse is endemic in Afghan society. Children in Afghan families are often subjected to corporal punishment, including slapping, verbal abuse, punching, kicking, and hitting with thin sticks, electrical cables, and shoes. Sexual abuse of children also remains a pervasive problem, with girls being most frequently abused in their families or communities [[Society-based targeting](#), 5; [Key socio-economic indicators 2017](#), 4.1].

Although the Child Rights Protection Law was enacted by President Ghani in March 2019, the ratification of the legislation remained blocked by the Wolesi Jirga due to a disagreement over the definition of a child [[Security situation 2020](#), 1.4.5].

The practice of bacha bazi has resurfaced since the end of the Taliban ruling. Sources report that young boys, with 14 as an average age, are abducted and disappeared into the practice or can be traded in by their families in exchange for money. Boys involved in the practice may be subjected to violence and threats, be raped, and kept in sexual slavery. Bacha bazi is not perceived as

homosexuality. Despite the criminalisation of the practice in the revised Penal Code, Afghan security forces, in particular the ALP, reportedly recruited boys specifically to use them for bacha bazi in every province of the country. Bacha bazi boys have little to no support from the State and the perpetrators are seldom prosecuted in the context of a weak rule of law, corruption, and official complicity with law enforcement perpetrators. Under the new provisions of the Penal Code, prosecution of victims of bacha bazi is outlawed; however, instances of jailing boys that were dancing were reported [[Key socio-economic indicators 2017](#), 4.3.3; [Society-based targeting](#), 5.1; [State Structure](#), 2.1, 2.1.4].

For violence against girls, see also [2.11.1 Violence against women and girls: overview](#).

Risk analysis

Sexual assault and rape amount to persecution. In case of other forms of violence, the assessment should take into account the severity and repetitiveness of the violence.

Not all children would face the level of risk required to establish well-founded fear of persecution. The individual assessment of whether or not there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the applicant to face persecution should take into account risk-impacting circumstances, such as: gender (boys and girls may face different risks), age and appearance (e.g. non-bearded boys could be targeted as bacha bazi), perception of traditional gender roles in the family, poor socio-economic situation of the child and the family, etc.

Nexus to a reason for persecution

Available information indicates that in the case of violence against children, the individual circumstances of the applicant need to be taken into account to determine whether or not a nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated.

In individual cases, a link could be established to membership of a particular social group. For example, (former) bacha bazi could have a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of membership of a particular social group, based on common background that cannot be changed and having a distinct identity linked to their stigmatisation by the surrounding society.



See other topics concerning children:

2.10.1. Violence against children:overview

[2.10.2. Child marriage](#)

[2.10.3. Child recruitment](#)

[2.10.4. Child labour and child trafficking](#)

[2.10.5. Education of children and girls in particular](#)

[2.10.6. Children without a support network in Afghanistan](#)

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