

Coordination of Rehabilitation and Development Services for Afghanistan (CRDSA)

Educational condition of labored children in Herat city

Investigator organization: Coordination of Rehabilitation and Development Services for Afghanistan

Covered Area: Herat City

Year: 2014 (1393)

About Tawanmandi:

The civil society strengthening program was established in 2011 with financial support from a consortium of donors (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom).

Tawanmandi works to contribute to the development of a vibrant and inclusive civil society, with focus on issues of policy and practice in the areas of access to justice, anti-corruption, human rights, media, and peace-building and conflict resolution, with due attention to disability, gender and youth as cross-cutting themes.

www.tawanmandi.org.af

About CRDSA:

Coordination of Rehabilitation and development services for Afghanistan (CRDSA) is a non-government Afghan civil society organization that aims to eliminate poverty, strengthen civil society, promote human rights and reintegrate effectively Afghan returnees/IDPs through providing sustainable livelihoods to poor and marginalized groups, civil society organizations' capacity building and networking, implementing human rights awareness and responsiveness enhancement initiatives and undertaking assistance and protection activities for Afghan returnees and IDPs.

www.crdsa.org

Research Team:

The research was done under direct supervision of Dr. Aziz Ahmad Jami, Managing Director of CRDSA.

The team involved in this research was:

- Mohammad Rahim Khajezadeh, Research Team Leader and consultant
- Abdul Razaq Mohiq, author and data collector
- Asadullah Temori, field researcher
- Abdullah Nekzad, field researcher

Introduction:

Children are the most vulnerable major groups of every society, especially when the supportive structure of the society is collapsed. Afghanistan has lost its supportive structure during the war and the ravages of the past years. Insecurity, poverty and unemployment are the very important factors of children deprivation from their childhood rights that forced them to work in harsh conditions higher than their ability, in order to provide their family's daily living cost.

Due to this reason, the Afghan children are in bad situation and they are more vulnerable than any other segments of the society. Different issues, mostly, economic poverty have caused children deprived of their right to education, being victims of the wars and suicide attacks, being sexually used and even trafficked.

This research which is done by CRDSA survey and research team, evaluate how labor children access to education in Herat city. In addition, for more richness, data from other entities is used as well. The hope is that this report could clear picture of the extent of the working children's access to education and the existing problems they face in Herat City, and help the authorities in charge to make effective plans and measures for the protection of the children and their educational status improvement on hands.

Doing the harsh works done by Children and deprivation from their Education rights, is an alarming issue. Currently, house works, looking out for domestic animals, Agricultural works, and the other works which are higher than their ability which are done by children are caused disturbance to their education process and upbringing.

This Report will assist the governmental and non-governmental institutions to take knowingly and efficient decisions for the children access to their education rights which is indeed one of the fundamental rights of children.

Methodology:

This is an inductive method research which has been done face to face with 130 labored children. The questionnaire was filled directly on interviewees different by place of duty, type of job, age and time of interview.

Interview of 130 labored children, were followed by information from their families. Then the collection of data was finalized with codes, regulations and policies being implemented on labored children, besides observing other organizations' researches, investigations, ideas and services. Then the collected data was analyzed, evaluated and decomposed by expert's panel of CRDSA.

Coverage Areas:

The working domain of labored children is summarized around places suitable for ordinary jobs which can be parks, commercial and crowded places, and differs based on diversity of job. By observing this factor the investigators confined themselves in mentioned zones. Indirectly and through humanitarian committees of CRDSA the educational status of children out of city were also evaluated and included in this research.

Generally the focusing fields were places appropriate to elementary jobs like Parks (Tarqi Park "football playgrounds" Gulha Park), Darb Malek, Khwaja Kallah, Mostowfiate square (small vegetable market), Gazargah (Religious place), Naw Abad, Jakkan, Ferqah, Shaidae (returnees and displaced camp), Pol Ranginah, Darb Qandahar, Darb Iraq, Sultan Aqa Square, Payan Ab, 64 Metra street, Shahr-e- Naw, Qol Urdu, Pol Pashto, Pol Malaan, Takht Safar Park, and Bagh Mellat Park.

Goals:

CRDSA implements humanitarian project in Herat and Badghis provinces; which covers educational status of labored children. This research was done to identify the educational frustration of labored children in mentioned provinces. The main goal is to study educational position of labored children and factors influenced them, finally to take accurate and efficient steps toward recovering education of labored children. So this research will clarify the vision for CRDSA and other organizations which serve labored children.

Brief Results:

The outcome of this research shows that the most significant cause of engagement to exhausting jobs and deprivation of labored children from education in Herat is poor economy, which makes them help their parents and turn to an income source for the family. Also children who lost their parents have same conditions with those who are suffering from weak economy.

Other factors which affected children's education in Herat (rural areas, districts and villages) is inexistence or farness of school, lack of security, educational facilities, teacher and existence of evil customs.

The situations governing on female juveniles could be concluded as governance of evil customs in society, underage marriages, farness of school, lack of interest of families regarding female education.

Underage marriages of female children may have two major reasons. To dissolve poor economy (receiving large amount of money as dowry) and to revive family ties by exchanged marriages (Badal).

According to universal conventions the governments are bound to protect children from any kind of abuse. **Article 32** Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:
 - (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum age for admission to employment;
 - (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
 - (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

Moreover the labor code of Afghanistan defines completion of 15 years as the minimum age for slight works, and 14 years for trainee under particular conditions.

Likewise, in **paragraph 4, article 13** of mentioned law recruitment of teenagers to jobs which cause harm to physical growth or disability is prohibited.

The researches by different organizations in Herat give statistic of labored children around 8000 to 12000. These children are categorized to below categories based on type of work and daily income.

1. Children who work to help their parents.
2. Children working independently due to poverty.
3. Displaced and immigrated children who must work.
4. Children who don't have supporter and must work to safe the family.
5. Children having no interest to education and voluntarily working.

Major works that Labored children are devoted:

✓ *garbage collection:*

Children employed to this job are 8 to 16 years old; they prefer it, because it doesn't need investment and has a good income. The daily income through this job is 100 to 300 AFS. Guardians of such children are preliminary workers, immigrated to Iran, disabled, addicted or jobless. Mainly male children attempt garbage collection, and the huge number of such children is displaced who left school.

✓ *Shoe polishing:*

Children employed to this job are between 9-12 years old and their guardians are preliminary workers, bargainers of vegetable, mobile recharge or jobless and some of them don't have guardian. The averages of their families are from 6 to 10 heads mostly displaced and immigrants. The income of these children is 30 to 90 Afs per day. Surely these children have better economic situation than above category. Only poor economy isn't the cause of deprivation from school, but lack of interests of families for education and inexistence of official documents needed for registration to school are also the reason.

✓ *Begging:*

Children who beg are between 5 and 10 years old and usually accompanying their parents (mother or father). Most of these children are related to families of displaced who have been compelled to begging due to poor economy or their parents are addicted, disabled, and aged.

✓ *ice cream selling:*

Children employed to this job are between 10 and 17, and majority of them follow their education besides working. The reason they work can be said as poor economy, lack of school, displacement or lack of guardian.

Their daily income is 70 to 200 AFS per day. The guardians of such children are preliminary workers, drivers or they don't have guardian. Addiction and lack of guardian also caused these children to be deprived from education. The average of their family member is 10 to 5 heads. Majority of them are male children and are displaced.

✓ *Car washing:*

Children of this job are 10 to 15 years old and their daily income is from 100 to 250 AFS per day. As previous categories the guardians of these children are preliminary workers, jobless or addicted or they don't have guardian. Their family members are 5 to 9 heads. Majority of them have been to school but they left school due to poor economy and lack of school.

✓ *Colportage:*

Children of such types are between 9 and 17 years old and most of them are in school and some of them hold the necessities of their families.

✓ *Buying and selling old iron:*

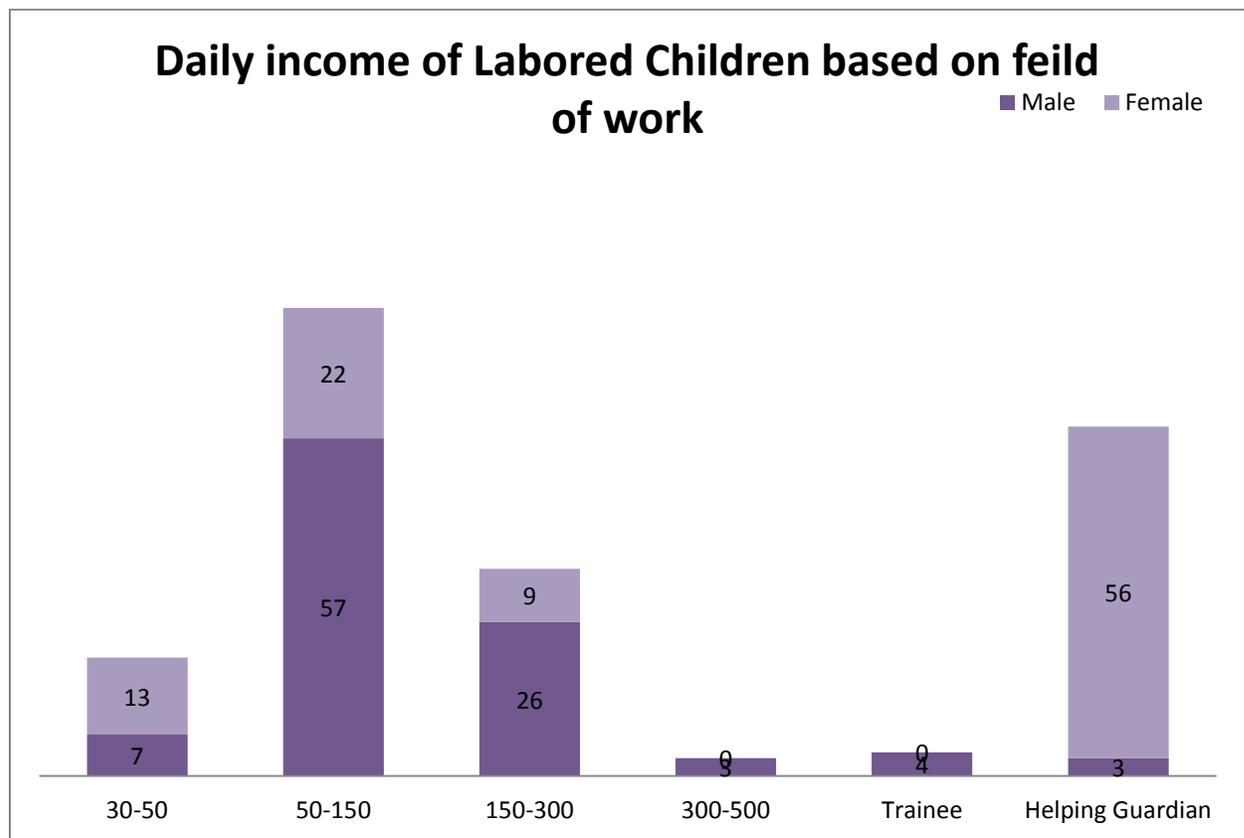
Children of this type of job are 9 to 17 years old. Few of these children go to school but most of them need to support their families, but they can't attend school. Besides diseconomy, the main cause for employees of this job is lack of guardian. Surely the children devoted to buying and selling old iron have above 10 years age, and about half of them are displaced. Their families are from 5 to 9 heads. Also the children of this category work to prepare the needs of their younger brothers and sisters so that they can follow their educations. The income through this job is 200 to 400 AFS per day.

✓ *Grocery:*

Children of this type of job are around 11 to 15 years old. Such children are mostly displaced, but few of them are native of Herat province. Daily income through this job

is 270 to 500, and their families are 5 to 8 person. The school attendance rate of this category is better than above mentioned category. Normally these children work to support their guardians, but poor economy, lack of documents required by educational system, holding responsibilities of family and incompatibility of age also affect them.

Below chart shows the average of daily income of labored children



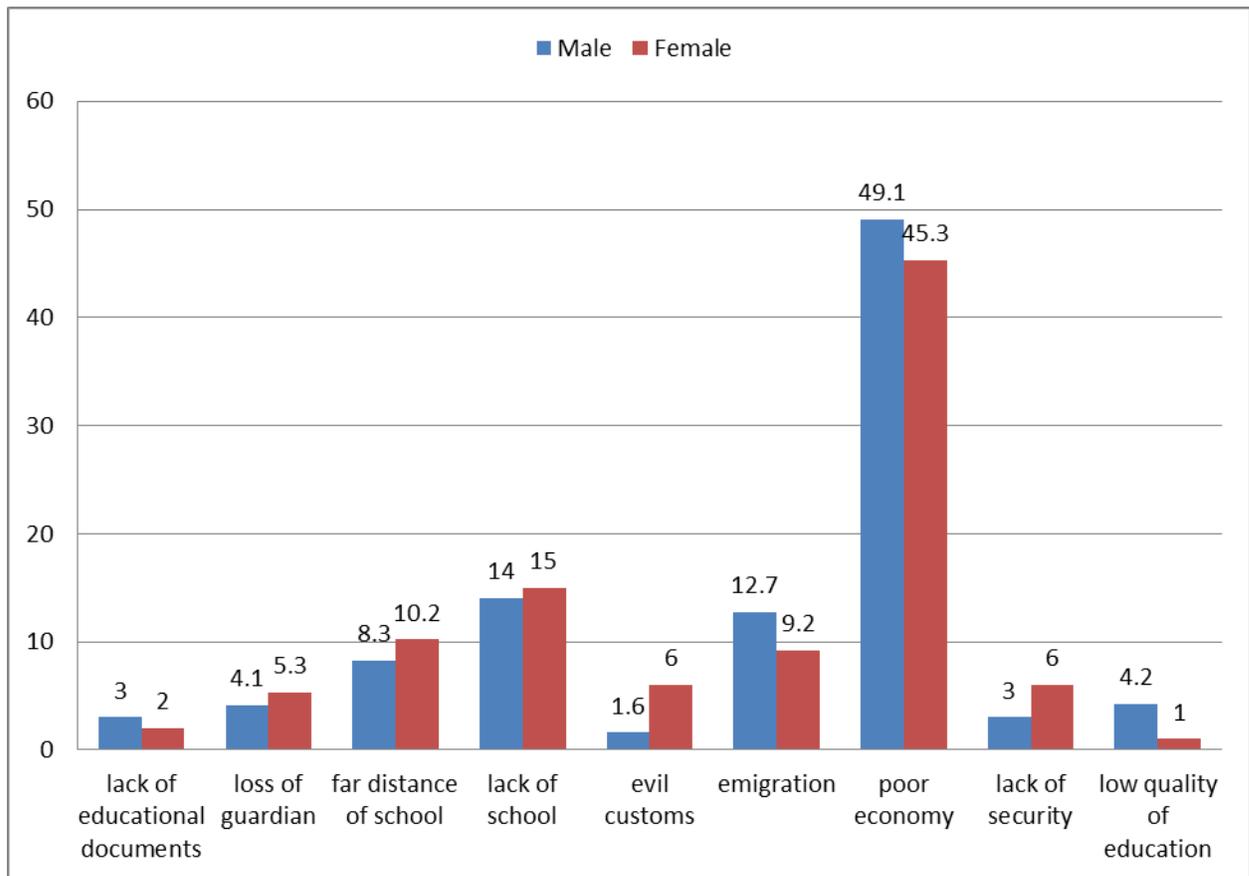
Reasons for which labored children have been deprived from education:

- **Vulnerability of children from family:**
 1. Loss of guardian
 2. Loss of shelter
 3. The guardians are jobless.
 4. Lack of interest of families to education.
 5. Sickness (addiction, paralysis and oldness) of guardian.
 6. Poverty

➤ **Vulnerability of children from society:**

1. Insufficient capacity of schools.
2. Low level of working opportunities in society.
3. Lack of security (especially for female children).
4. Education department do not assist immigrants.
5. Farness of school from residence area.

Below chart shows the rate of efficiency of each factor:



Recommendations regarding sponsorship of labored children:

In order to protect the labored children and prevent them being abused by different groups, the government must bound it to act according universal declaration on juvenile rights and protect them.

Further, the government must consider those children who have no way other than working and prevent them venturing any kind of jobs. Behold that by evaluating the necessities of youths and in order to develop the social, educational and ecumenical situation of children, the below recommendations are offered.

➤ **Recommendations to safeguard families:**

1. Increasing knowledge of families from their rights.
2. Facilitating working environment for guardians of families.
3. Building shelters for families.
4. Elimination of primary necessities.
5. Treatment of guardians of families.
6. Facilitating recovery for displacements and immigrants to their native place.

➤ **Recommendations regarding education of labored children**

1. Establishing school in particular areas.
2. Advocacy for specified problems of labored children.
3. Registration of children to school who have bare problems.
4. Development of schools in specific areas.
5. Providing school kits for children.
6. Sponsorship of families by governmental and non-governmental organizations.

➤ **Recommendations regarding the Law:**

Besides many problems that afghan children face, registration to school is a big problem either. Meanwhile education code of Afghanistan obligates the registration of children between 6 up to completion of 9 years old. Although ministry of education, do not have a proper plan for compulsory inclusion of these children, but there isn't a practical start.

So, there should be regular and practical plan for inclusion of such children to secondary education. When educational system of Afghanistan became capable and there was not any deficiency regarding schools and manuals based on education law which incumbents inclusion of children to education and there would be reaction against violator whoever the violator may be, child, his/her guardian or third party.

Also paragraph (1) article (4) of education law indicates that “*secondary education in Afghanistan is compulsory*” moreover in paragraph (1) article (5) of mentioned law it

says “children, from 6 years to completion of 9 years age would compulsorily attend secondary education”.

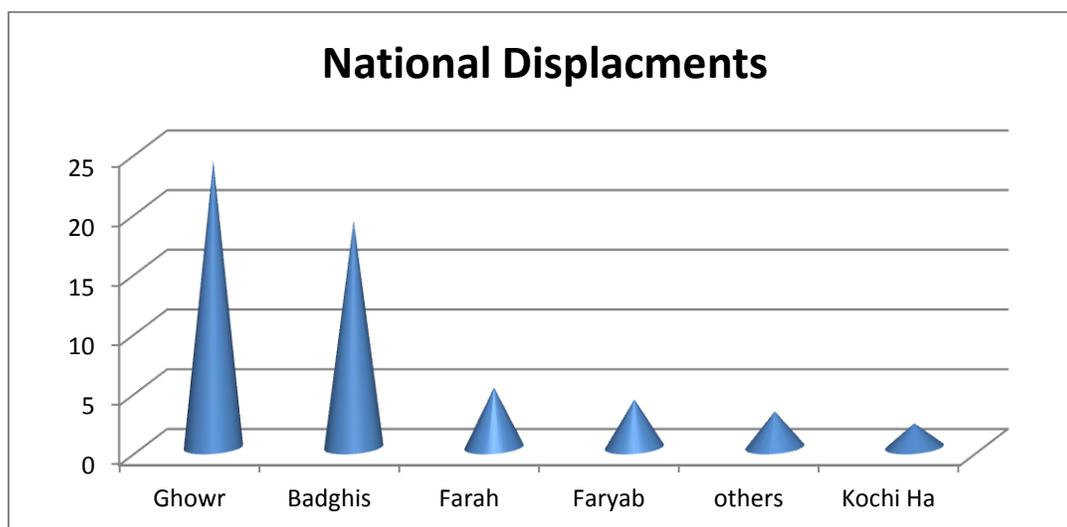
But the law didn’t mention the penalty for violator, as compulsoriness is along with creating responsibility and in case the law was violated there must be penalty.

Conclusion:

One of the serious problems that afghan children are facing is, exhausting with occupations inapplicable with their emotional and physical conditions. Drastic poverty of families, lack of working opportunities, loss of guardian in some families and mainly insecure situation have caused too many children to be deprived of education and leave their native places. Many teenagers are occupied by ordinary daily works and can’t see themselves with the education convoy of Afghanistan.

The statistics of labored children in Herat are disparate, based on investigations done by different organizations which can be considered from 8 to 12 thousand. Only 14 percent of these children can achieve education, 2 percent follows religious schools, but 84 percent are deprived of education.

Generally 57 percent of these children are from provinces and 43 percent are from districts of Herat who have displaced to city. The reason of displacements is differ related to political and economic and security situation of native places.

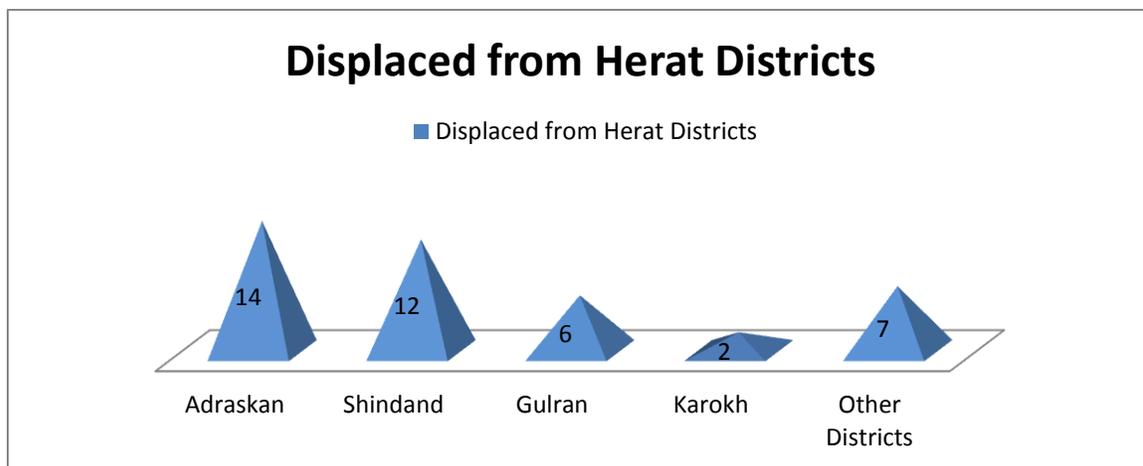


The insecure situation is the main cause of immigrations and displacements in Afghanistan, although lack of water and cultivation can be included in this factor

especially for village dwellers. Herat city is among the most hosting cities of Afghanistan for displacements and immigrations.

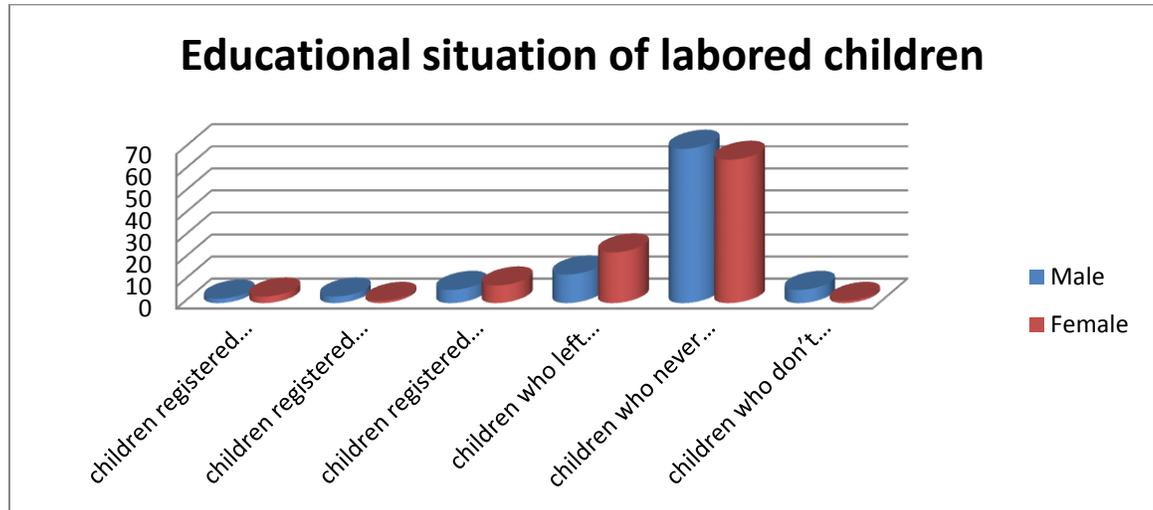
To be mentioned that displacements have different causes than immigrations. Most displacements are from insecure districts of Herat, therefore lack of security is the main factor. To earn the expenses of family, one should leave his/her native place and substitute to cities while being occupied by ordinary works. Children of such families are inevitably being engaged with works inappropriate to their emotional and physical structures. To be mentioned that based on this research the statistics of children who left school is 37 percent.

Below chart shows the statistics of Immigrants from districts of Herat

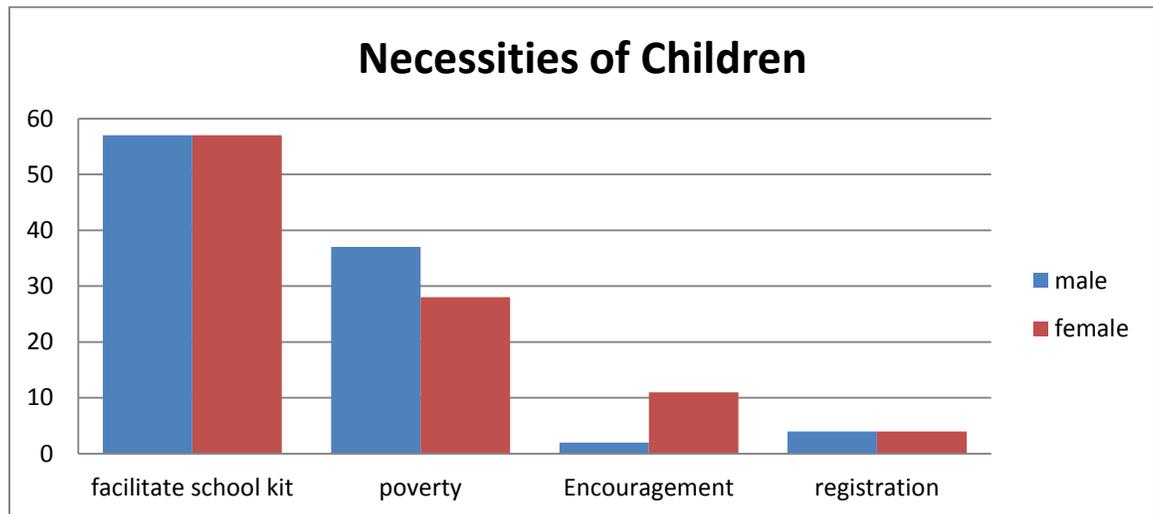


One of the most important factors of child growth is to facilitate educational environment for them. Despite achievements of government by covering huge number of children to education system, still it's hard to say that juveniles are not facing problems so far. The statistics by other assessments shows that Herat has between 8 to 12 thousand juveniles who are busy with working on streets and less of them have access to education. Moreover in some rural and far way districts schools are closed.

Barred schools and Insufficiency of services means loss of standard educational opportunities can cause vague future for children. Moreover students (especially female students) are being poisoned on the way to school. Recently the poisoning of female students is a serious fear for them.



Below chart shows the operant factors of deprivation of labored children from accessibility to education in Herat province.



According to the education law, the afghan government bounds itself to create sound educational system in which there wouldn't be any discrimination and would be equal privileges for each and every afghan student. Further based on international convention on juvenile rights, governments should make effort to facilitate the situation for teenagers to reach their basic rights such as education, health and entertainment.

It's obvious that instead of attending school, too many children are employed in unbearable duties. Based on current assessment, the statistics shows that 70 % children are engaged with tasks that are not compatible with their intellectual and

physical growth, because their families have poor economy or they must prepare their family expenses. So such children are needier to reach education.