



International
Labour
Organization

▶ **Third-party monitoring
of child labour
and forced labour during
the 2019 cotton harvest
in Uzbekistan**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra



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Foreword

This report has been prepared by the International Labour Office pursuant to an agreement between the ILO and the World Bank to carry out third-party monitoring on the incidence of child labour and forced labour in the World Bank-financed projects in agriculture, water and education sectors in Uzbekistan. Third-party monitoring by the ILO was also undertaken and reported on annually since 2015. The ILO is grateful for the cooperation of the tripartite constituents and human rights activists of Uzbekistan in the monitoring and assessment process.

There are three main reasons why the ILO Third-Party Monitoring is important:

- **First**, one in eight of the adult population or around 1.75 million citizens are engaged at some time during the harvest each year picking cotton by hand. Sixty per cent of pickers are women. Managing this workforce in full conformity with international labour standards ratified by Uzbekistan is an enormous task.
- **Second**, almost 70 per cent of arable land is still used for cotton or wheat production, despite government policy to diversify agricultural production. Cotton and related value chains will provide jobs and incomes and contribute to foreign exchange earnings for years to come.
- **Third**, serious allegations on the use of child labour and forced labour during the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan have continued to be made. The ILO Third-Party Monitoring provides statistically significant, nation-wide numbers that enable evidence-based conclusions and policy decisions.

The ILO has taken into account all the different comments and inputs it has received throughout the monitoring process from national governmental and non-governmental organizations, including Uzbek civil society representatives. In line with the request of its partners in Uzbekistan, in particular the Government, this report contains concrete suggestions for action. It also points out further opportunities for cooperation between the partners in Uzbekistan and the ILO and the World Bank. The ILO alone is responsible for the conclusions in this report.

The ILO would like to thank contributors to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund, which has been established by the World Bank with support from the European Union, the United States, Switzerland and GIZ. The Fund supports the elimination of child labour and forced labour in the cotton sector of Uzbekistan and capacity building of state and non-state institutions. Other World Bank and ILO projects contribute to this endeavor and help ensure the sustainability of cotton production and agricultural reform in general.

Beate Andrees
Chief, Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch

February, 2020

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Executive Summary

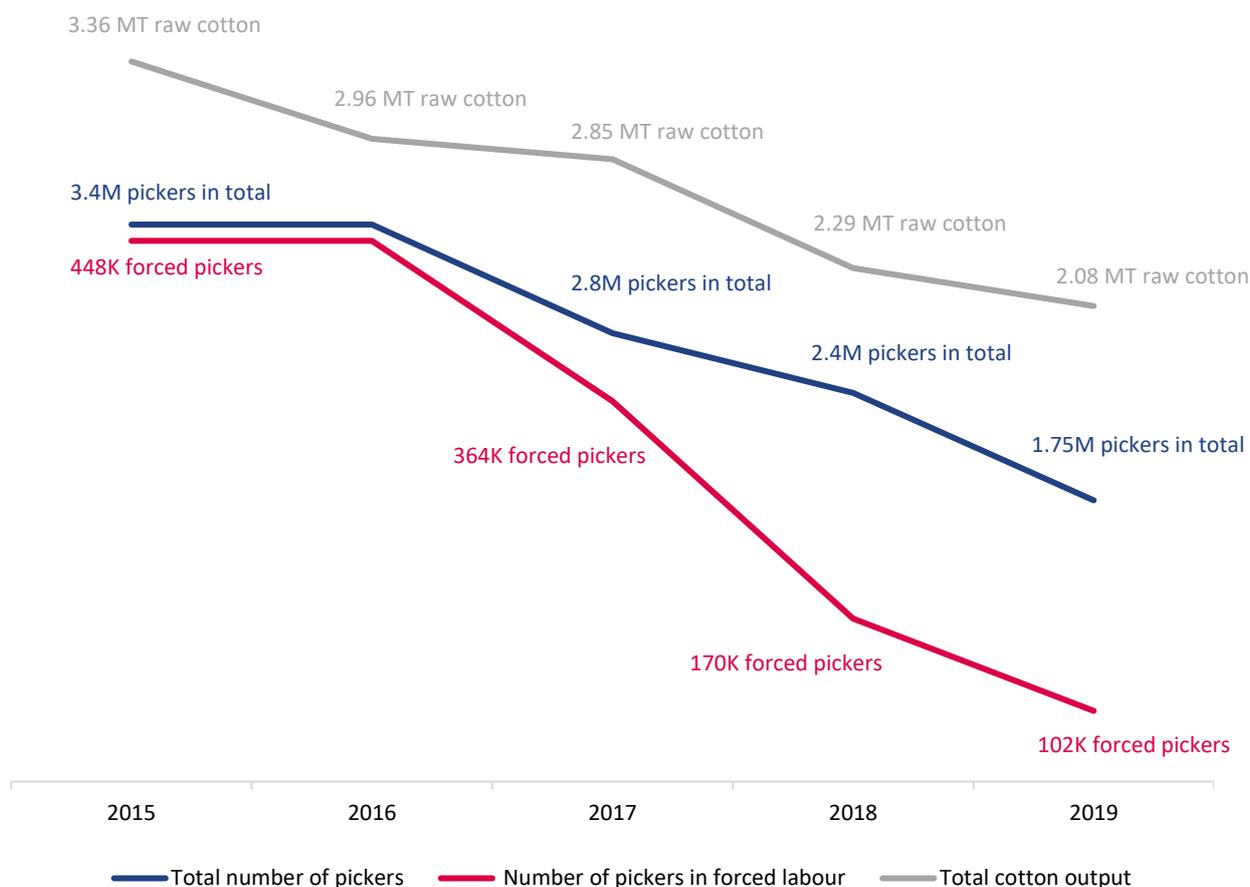
Uzbekistan continued to demonstrate major progress in the eradication of child labour and forced labour in the 2019 cotton harvest. As in previous years, there were only isolated cases of minors below the legal working age picking cotton. The number of people in forced labour during the harvest was reduced by 40 percent compared to 2018.

- The ILO continues to find that systematic or systemic **child labour is no longer used during the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan**. Schoolchildren and students were not mobilized for cotton picking; however, some isolated cases of child labour still occurred.
- **Systematic forced labour did not occur** during the 2019 cotton harvest. Reforms are implemented step-by-step and continue to have an impact; yet there are still challenges with implementation at the local level. The monitors could **work unhindered and in confidentiality**.
- **The number of people forced to pick cotton has further declined** in 2019. Despite this, a considerable number of **forced labour cases** were observed, which leads to conclude that **legacy systems conducive to the exaction of forced labour in agriculture** have not yet been fully dismantled.
- **Some 1.75 million people** (12.5 per cent of the working age population) were involved in cotton picking in 2019. The **vast majority of pickers participated in the harvest voluntarily** but about 102,000 people¹ (5.9 per cent²) were subject to some form of coercion. **This signifies that the number of forced pickers declined by 40% in 2019.**
- As the graph below demonstrates, the total number of people involved in the cotton harvest also **continues to decline**, mainly as a result of a reduction in cotton production and gradual introduction of mechanization.
- The data suggests that the pace of forced labour reduction has **somewhat decelerated**, compared to previous years. Such a “levelling out” is typical once new policies have been adopted and had significant impact shortly after their introduction. The continued use of forced labour may be in “hard-to-reach pockets” or be associated with certain practices that are more difficult to change.
- Therefore, **the Government should reinforce its efforts in 2020** to fully reach the target of eliminating forced labour and to promote fundamental principles and rights at work in cotton production and the emerging textiles and garment sector.
- The reforms undertaken by the government have the potential for addressing the risks of forced labour as well as simultaneously creating much needed **employment opportunities**. Economic growth would enable further reforms in education, health, infrastructure and other areas. **These reforms need to be supported by the international community.**
- **Trade and investment decisions by responsible international investors** are likely to benefit the further abolition of the legacies of the centrally planned economy. They can also have a positive impact on compliance with international labour standards. Furthermore, if the number of full-time decent jobs in **textile and garment manufacturing** and other parts of the economy grow, there could be a reduction of seasonal peaks in labour demand, which often fuel unfair recruitment practices.

Impact of agricultural reforms

- Agricultural reforms, which aim at diversifying output and reducing raw cotton production, continues to have a **positive effect in terms of reducing forced labour**.
- The lower production of raw cotton from 2018 to 2019 combined with a gradual introduction of mechanization contributed to a **significant reduction** in the overall number of both voluntary and involuntary pickers.
- The share of involuntary workers has **decreased more rapidly than the overall number of cotton pickers**.

Chart 1: Cotton production, workforce and forced pickers (2015-2019)

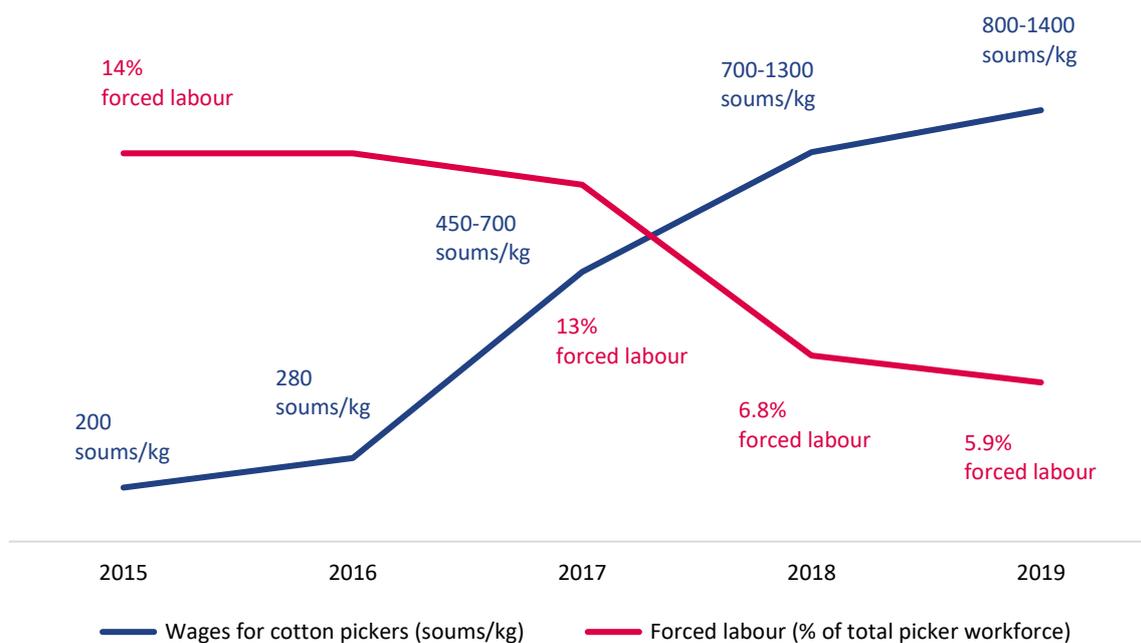


- Uzbekistan’s agricultural strategy includes abolishment of the “quota system” whereby farmers that opt for government financing for production inputs are assigned a production target and provided with cotton pickers recruited by the Government.
- The Government is seeking to replace the quota system with a market-based model, with the necessary safeguards in place, including fair recruitment practices and adequate wages. This would also end the practice of deploying pickers at the very end of the harvest simply to reach targets.

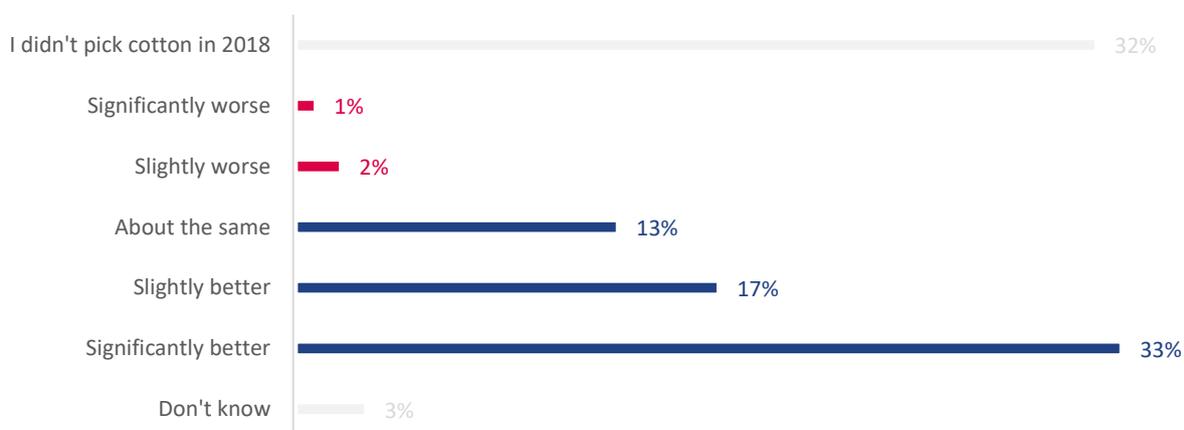
Wages and working conditions

- ILO monitors confirmed that **wages had increased** compared to the previous harvest. Generally, cotton pickers received their wages on time and in full.
- On average, each picker **participated for 23 days** and received on average 2.2 million UZS in wages. Thirty-eight per cent of pickers said the wages represented 100 per cent of their annual cash income.

Chart 2: Wages and forced labour percentages (2015-2019)



- A **majority of cotton pickers said that working conditions had improved since 2018**. Only 3 per cent said that the conditions were worse than the previous year. This relates to transportation, food, access to water, hygienic and other facilities.



Recruitment channels and profile of pickers

- **59.3 per cent of pickers were women and 40.7 per cent were men.** 75.5 per cent of pickers were from rural areas; 24.5 per cent were from urban areas. 44.7 per cent came to pick cotton with other adult family members.



- The **prohibition on recruiting students, teachers, nurses and doctors** was systematically implemented and observed at the local level.
- There were cases of military conscripts involved in the 2019 harvest. ILO monitors confirm that they were **paid for cotton picking**. The use of conscripts for picking cotton cannot be considered work of a purely military character but rather seems to be used as a method of mobilizing labour for purposes of economic development, and is therefore prohibited under the ILO Conventions concerning forced labour. The explanation given to the monitors was that the military conscripts have been used as a temporary measure in some provinces while privatization is being implemented.

Law enforcement

- The Government intensified law enforcement efforts in 2019. The **number of staff of the labour inspectorate contributing to compliance during the harvest doubled** from 200 to 400. The labour inspectorate investigated 1,282 forced labour cases during the 2019 cotton harvest.
- Fines for forced labour were increased tenfold in 2019 compared to 2018. The Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations **punished 259 Government officials, heads of organizations and managers for forced labour violations** during the 2019 harvest, mostly through the imposition of fines.
- The Upper chamber of Uzbekistan introduced the **criminalization of forced labour** in December 2019 and the new legislation was signed by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in January 2020. No cases have yet been brought to court.

Civil society and journalists

- Independent **civil society activists said that they were free to monitor** the 2019 harvest and conduct their activities against forced labour without interference. Allegations of harassment or intimidation were not related to forced labour or the cotton harvest.
- The **dialogue between the Government and civil society continued in 2019**. Activists were invited to become members of the new National Commission on Forced Labour and Human Trafficking. However, activists continue to meet obstacles when they attempt to register their civil society organizations with the Ministry of Justice.

- The Uzbekistan **media reported actively on forced labour issues** in 2019. Journalists and bloggers were encouraged by the Government to cover forced labour cases critically.

Summary of 2019 observations

	Achievements ←	→ Opportunities
Political commitment and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistent political commitment from Government ▪ Transparency about Government meetings, decisions and implementation ▪ International engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of labour inspectors doubled from 200 to 400 ▪ Fines for forced labour increased tenfold and criminalization introduced ▪ Legislation enforced ▪ Still examples of uneven local implementation ▪ Production quotas still assigned to farmers and local administration ▪ Mismatched supply and demand for pickers in certain provinces
Recruitment mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No more systematic recruitment of students, teachers, nurses, doctors ▪ Focus on financial incentives as driver for voluntary recruitment ▪ High levels of awareness of feedback mechanisms including results of investigations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mahalla involved in the recruitment of unemployed people ▪ Heads of institutions still involved in recruitment of employed people ▪ Pickers recruited from employed people receive cotton picking wage on top of regular salary ▪ Involuntary recruitment through institutions, companies and mahallas still takes place ▪ Some recruiters still refer to cotton picking as "hashar", implying that participation is obligatory ▪ Local cases of collection of fees from companies and individuals to avoid picking cotton ▪ Military conscripts should be replaced
Decent wages and working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textile clusters increased wages beyond minimum rates ▪ Consistent and regular payments made to pickers ▪ Working and living conditions improved especially in the textile cluster areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations organized tent villages in Syrdarya to attract pickers from other regions ▪ Wage setting remains centralized ▪ Material rewards used to incentivize performance ▪ Individual cases of inadequate living conditions for cotton pickers ▪ Individual cases of insufficient medical attention and first-aid kits ▪ Individual cases of misunderstandings about payment for transport/food/aprons/deductions and bonuses ▪ Cases of gender-based violence exist
Engagement with local civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Constructive cooperation with local civil society activists ▪ Successful joint awareness raising campaign at local level ▪ Human rights activists freely perform monitoring of harvest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Activists invited as members of National Commission on Forced Labour and Human Trafficking ▪ Press conferences organized by the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations ▪ The number of civil society activists is relatively low ▪ Activists continue to meet problems when seeking to formally register their civil society organizations ▪ Civil society can be involved in governance of feedback mechanisms

Summary of 2019 recommendations

Keep doing

- Clearly communicate and reinforce messages about prohibition of forced labour and child labour
- Keep developing labour inspectorate to identify, address and prevent labour violations. Continue to operate effective transparent feedback mechanisms
- Keep increasing minimum wages in line with productivity to ensure cotton picking is an attractive source of income
- Continue to broaden dialogue with local civil society activists. Ensure that nobody is harassed for legal activities
- Keep encouraging journalists to raise awareness of labour rights and report on labour violations. Keep using social media
- Promote further private sector investment in cotton production and related value chains
- Keep strengthening public employment services and monitoring of private employment agencies, especially for temporary recruitment and mobility

Do more

- Broaden focus beyond cotton to fundamental principles and rights at work in agriculture and related value chains
- Focus on sustainable job creation through processing of raw materials and manufacturing of products for export
- Design and implement supervisory skills training to promote positive management techniques and HR practices
- Work with international partners to build CSR understanding and capacity in Uzbek exporting companies
- Require that textile clusters produce social plans to maximize benefits to local farmers and communities
- Facilitate women entrepreneurship opportunities as part of textile clusters
- Ensure decent working and living conditions for cotton pickers
- Incentivize pickers solely through higher wages and better conditions rather than using hashar as factor
- Increase mechanization
- Allow registration of more civil society organizations at province and national level. Utilize civil society in monitoring and awareness raising against forced labour

Start

- Develop skills strategy to enable increased garment and textile manufacturing at regional level
- Increase transparency of how textile clusters are established and operated
- Pay special attention to the needs of women pickers. Start programmes to prevent gender-based violence.
- Enforce criminalization of forced labour
- Build capacity of judges and prosecutors on forced labour violations

Do less

- Gradually reduce role of Government in cotton production and related value chains
- Phase out role of Hokimiats, state institutions and enterprises for recruitment of pickers
- Reduce low-yield cotton production in areas with low population density
- Phase out state order system incl. cotton production quotas

Stop

- Phase out state order system incl. cotton production quotas
- Prohibit local / individual initiatives to provide replacement pickers or collection of fees from private companies and/or individuals in relation to cotton harvest
- Ensure that military conscripts are not used in violation of ILO standards on forced labour
- Stop the mobilization of pickers from institutions, organizations and companies, both public and private

Cotton production in context

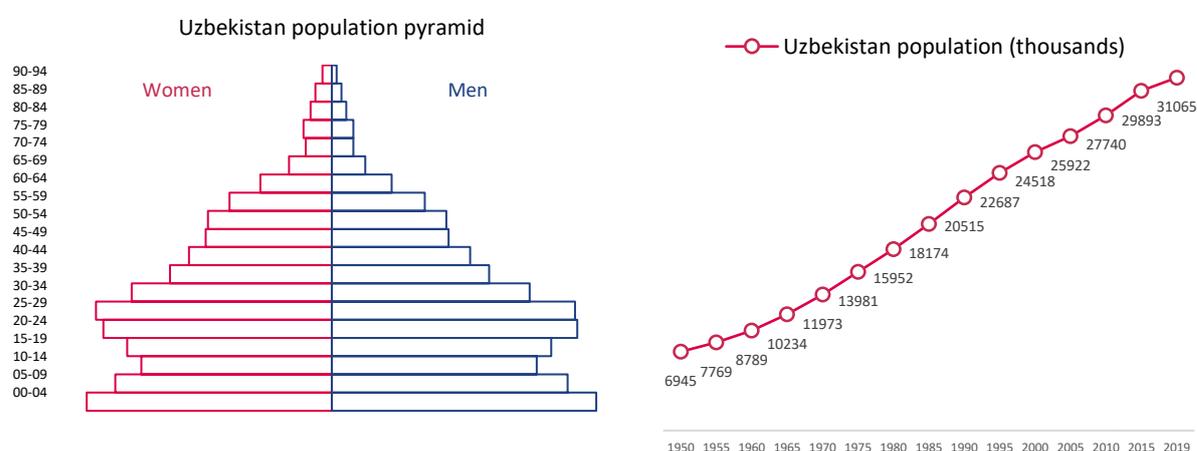
- Uzbekistan is the **sixth largest producer of cotton in the world**. The crop takes up a significant part of the country's resources³:
 - 1,75 million people pick cotton and over 1 million people weed cotton
 - 64 per cent of arable land is used by 130,000 farmers for cotton or wheat production
 - 65 per cent of all irrigation water and 13 per cent of all electricity are used for cotton
 - 45 per cent of all fertilizers and 30 per cent of all diesel fuel are used for cotton
- Despite these inputs, the **economic importance of cotton** has been dramatically reduced

1992		2016
90% of total export ⁴	→	Just 3.4% of total export ⁵
10% of GDP ⁶	→	Just 1.8% of GDP ⁷
25% of agricultural GDP ⁸	→	Just 7.6% of agricultural GDP ⁹

- Cotton production, processing, and marketing remain centrally controlled. This has led to **reduced productivity and resource efficiency**. A centralized state order system is also conducive to a situation where forced labour can be exacted.

Labour market in context

- Two thirds of the population of Uzbekistan are below 30 years of age. This demographic structure means that over 500,000 young people enter the labour market every year¹⁰ and the **unemployed population that need jobs exceeds 800,000 people¹¹**.



- The official **unemployment rate for 2018 was 9.3 per cent**, and it is over 17 per cent for young people. In addition, approximately 2.8 million Uzbeks are migrant workers abroad.

1. Assessment of legislation and policies

Definitions are important in developing reliable data and in guiding policy and practical interventions against forced labour. As has been done in earlier monitoring reports, terminology used to assess compliance with ILO standards has been clearly explained and is summarized in Annex 5.

1.1. Legislation

Uzbekistan has ratified all eight fundamental ILO Conventions¹² including the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105) and the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention (1930).

Article 37 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan¹³ prohibits forced labour. Forced labour is also clearly prohibited by Article 7 of the Labour Code¹⁴.

The national legislation of Uzbekistan has established penalties for the use of forced labour (articles 51 and 491 of the Administrative Code, articles 135, 138, 148 of the Criminal Code). These provisions are in compliance with the ILO Forced Labour Conventions.

Working conditions at enterprise level are regulated by more than 93,000 collective agreements, which cover 96 per cent of all legal entities employing workers. All collective agreements contain provisions on the observance of labour rights, including protection from forced labour in accordance with ILO Conventions.

Uzbekistan increased the fines for forced labour violations tenfold before the 2019 harvest. Furthermore, in December 2019 the country introduced further changes to the regulatory framework related to child labour and forced labour. Article 51 of the Administrative Code has been updated and two new paragraphs have been added to Article 148 of the Criminal Code as detailed below.¹⁵

- **Article 148-1. Violation of the requirements on the inadmissibility of the use of labour by underage persons**

The use of an underage person in works that may cause harm to his/her health, safety or morals, committed after the application of an administrative penalty for the same act, shall be punishable by a fine of up to twenty-five basic calculation units or by deprivation of a certain right up to three years or by correctional labour for up to three years.

- **Article 148-2. Administrative Forced Labour**

Administrative coercion to work in any form, with the exception of cases provided for by law, committed after applying administrative penalties for the same act, shall be punishable by a fine from one hundred to one hundred and fifty basic calculated values, or by deprivation of a certain right for up to two years, or correctional labour for up to two years.

The same action committed in respect of an underage person after applying an administrative penalty for the same act, shall be punished by a fine from one hundred and fifty to two hundred basic calculation units or by deprivation of a certain right up to three years or by correctional labour up to three years.

New legislation related to hazardous child labour

Old regulatory framework	New regulatory framework
Administrative liability with fines up to 20-30 minimum wages	Administrative liability with fines up to 20-30 minimum wages; AND Criminal liability for repeat offences with criminal record and punishments up to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 25 minimum wages; or ▪ Loss of certain rights < 3 years; or ▪ Correctional labour < 3 years

New legislation related to forced labour

Old regulatory framework	New regulatory framework
Administrative liability with fines up to 10-30 minimum wages; AND Administrative liability for repeat offences with fines up to 30-100 minimum wages	Administrative liability with fines up to 50-60 minimum wages; AND Criminal liability for repeat offences with criminal record and punishments up to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100-150 minimum wages; or ▪ Loss of certain rights < 2 years; or ▪ Correctional labour < 2 years

New legislation related to forced child labour

Old regulatory framework	New regulatory framework
Administrative liability with fines up to 30-50 minimum wages; AND Administrative liability for repeat offences with fines up to 50-100 minimum wages	Administrative liability with fines up to 70-100 minimum wages; AND Criminal liability for repeat offences with criminal record and punishments up to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 150-200 minimum wages; or ▪ Loss of certain rights < 3 years; or ▪ Correctional labour < 3 years

Conviction according to the Criminal Code will in all cases lead to a criminal record.

Loss of certain rights (Article 45 of Criminal Code) can include loss of position, demotion or limitations on decision-making.

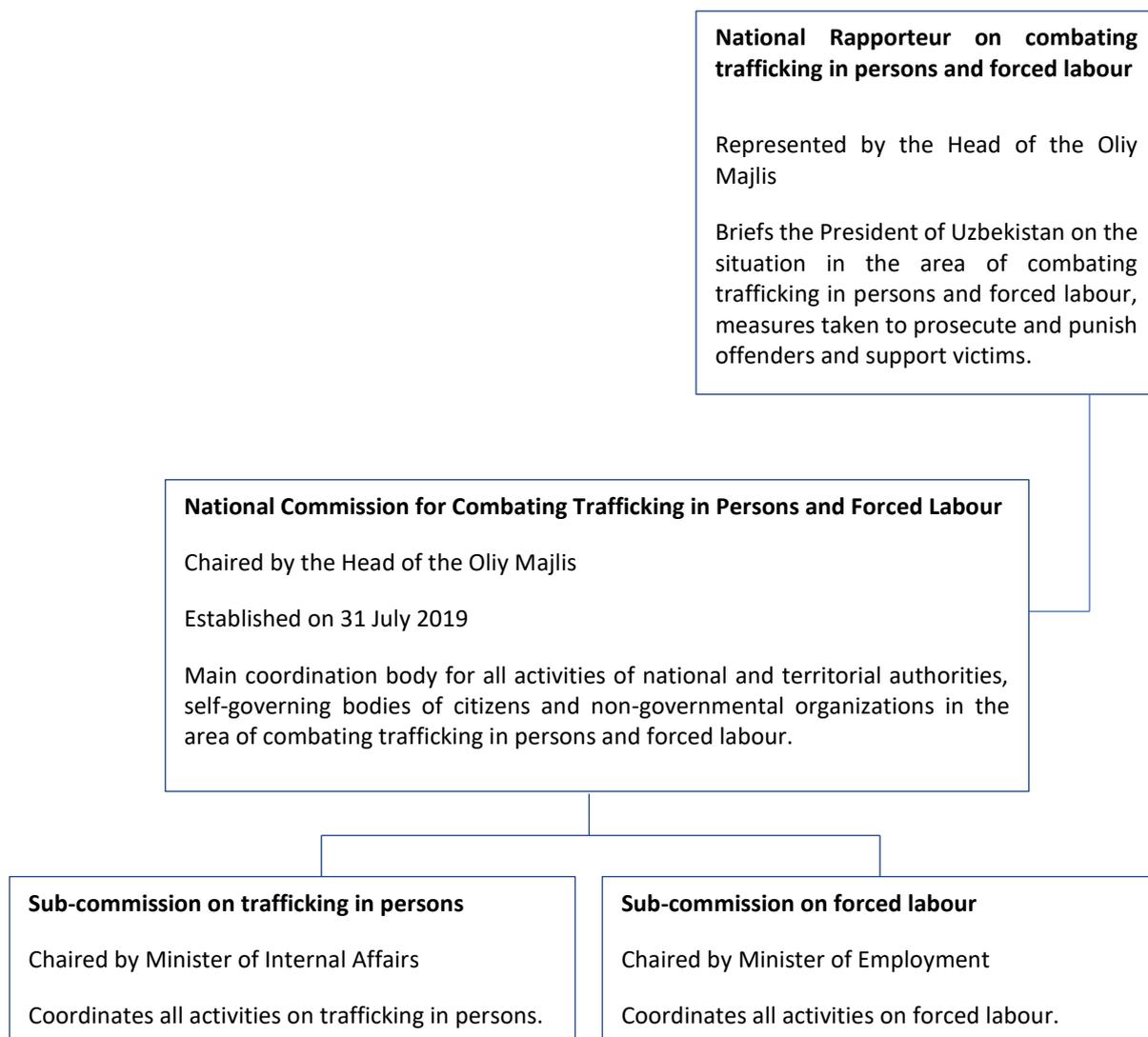
Correctional labour (Article 46 of Criminal Code) means that the convict has to work at a place designated by the court and 10-30 per cent of his/her salary will go to the state budget.

The presence of legislation alone is, however, in itself not a guarantee for the prevention of forced labour, but also requires the presence of a robust enforcement and compliance system.

1.2 Government policies and their implementation

The Government of Uzbekistan has demonstrated strong political commitment to eradicate forced labour. Consistent statements from the President, Senate Chair, Prime Minister, Minister of Employment and Labour Relations and other Ministers underline that the policy of the Government is to eradicate all forms of forced labour in the country.

In 2019, a new structure was established to effectively govern the area of trafficking in persons and forced labour. The main coordination body is the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Forced Labour chaired by Tanzila Narbaeva, Chairperson of the Parliament Upper Chamber. The Commission already met several times during the 2019 harvest.



Uzbekistan has also established a separate republican tripartite commission on social and labour issues co-chaired by the Minister of Employment, Head of the Federation of Trade Unions and Head of the Confederation of Employers on a rotational basis.

Instructions and plans

As part of the 2019 Third-Party Monitoring, the ILO has examined a number of decrees, resolutions and meeting minutes, which set out how the 2019 cotton harvest was organized.

Examples of decrees and resolutions at national level

Document	Key regulations
Law on amending the Administrative Code and Penal Code 22/01/2019	Increasing administrative fines for the use of child labour and forced labour and introducing penal liability for repeat offences.
President Decree Nr. 5775 30/07/2019	Measures to strengthen the system against trafficking in persons and forced labour and creation of the National Commission on Trafficking and Forced Labour, headed by the Senate Chairperson
President video conference to hokims 13/08/2019	Reconfirmation of prohibition to involve staff of state budget institutions to pick cotton.
President Decree 14/08/2019	Measures to strengthen the protection of private property and rights of entrepreneurs. Local authorities prohibited to request involvement of entrepreneurs in seasonal agricultural works or to ask for other types of contributions.
Cabinet of Ministers Resolution #752 09/09/2018	An explicit ban on forced labour in the 2019 harvest. Organization of cotton harvest and wages for cotton pickers.
President Decree Nr. 5853 23/10/2019	Approval of the Strategy of Agricultural Sector Development for 2020 – 2030. This relates to the abolishment of the quota system for cotton production.

Note: These documents are all annexed to this report.

For the previous harvest, a formal clarification was given on the interpretation of article 95 of the Labour Code on the temporary transfer of workers to other responsibilities. Transferring people to do cotton picking with reference to this article was **explicitly prohibited**.

Examples of plans at local level

Most instructions and plans at the local level are aligned to the national level. However, there are still examples of uneven implementation at province and district level.

1. In September 2019, the hokim of Syrdarya district issued a written order for the involvement of staff of state budget institutions and private companies in cotton picking. Each of these institutions and companies were assigned a quota of pickers to offer for the cotton harvest. (Source: repost.uz)

№	Отряд таркиби	Жами теримчи сони	Отряд раҳбарлиши	
			Ф.И.Ш	Давлати
103	Сирдарё тумани ДСИ маъмурий биноси ёнида	100		
104	Сирдарё тумани ДСИ маъмурий биноси ёнида	100		
105	Сирдарё тумани ДСИ маъмурий биноси ёнида	100		
106	Синдаробол СИУ марказида	100		
9	Жами тадбиркорлар бўйича	1000		
4-категория- Газзаираваклар томонидан теримга чиқариладиган				
1	107 Мафгул гузали МЧЖ	50	Муҳаммадиев Анвар	Транс куч сервис МЧЖ раҳбари
2	Транс куч сервис МЧЖ	50		
2	Отряд жами	100		
1	108 Азия Авто Бут МЧЖ	50	Исламов Ридван	Гранд Метан Сервис МЧЖ раҳбари
2	Гранд Метан Сервис МЧЖ	50		
2	Отряд жами	100		
1	109 Тежакидор Метан Газ МЧЖ	50	Муминов Габрат	Тежакидор Метан Газ МЧЖ раҳбари
2	Фидокон ЛФ	50		
2	Отряд жами	100		
1	110 Шеретон Сервис МЧЖ	50	Рисбеков Қудратхужа	Шел Газ Сервис МЧЖ раҳбари
2	Шел Газ Сервис МЧЖ	50		
2	Отряд жами	100		
1	111 Шел Газ Сервис МЧЖ	50	Рашид Дилмурод	Шел Газ Сервис МЧЖ раҳбари
2	Зангилор Метан Газ МЧЖ	50		
2	Отряд жами	100		
1	112 Кардон Метан Сервис МЧЖ	50	Жаваҳир Мурод	Шел Газ Сервис МЧЖ раҳбари
2	Хамкор Газ Сервис МЧЖ	50		
2	Отряд жами	100		
12	6 Жами тадбиркорлар бўйича	600		
5-категория- Ўнрок қорхона ва ташкилотлар отряди				
1	113 "Баху Текс Фарм" МЧЖ	150	Атабеков Нозир	Директор ўнрок қорхона
2	114 "Пан Шенг Хитой КК	200	Ахмедов Гофуржон	Директор ўнрок қорхона
3	115 "Ўн Роф Транс"	700	Таймуродов Рудимурод	"Ўн Роф Транс" директори ўнрок қорхона
4	116 "Тенур Мед Фарм МЧЖ"	100	Назаров Фариш	Цех бошлиги
5	117 "Рисовалфарм" МЧЖ	150	Холдиров Уктаб	"Рисовалфарм" МЧЖ директори ўнрок қорхона
6	118 "SIRDARYO VINO" аксуздорлик	85	Гуронов Шамат	"SIRDARYO VINO" аксуздорлик бошқаруви раҳбари
7	119 "SIRDARYO MEGA LUKS" МЧЖ	400	Салимов Валли	"SIRDARYO MEGA LUKS" МЧЖ раҳбари
8	120 Баху Мой элвист	50	Бегалова Маълана	Баху Мой элвист раҳбари
9	121 Баху Соғин механика заводи	18	Бегалова Маълана	Баху Мой элвист раҳбари
9	9 Жами Ўнрок ташкилотлар	1853		
6-категория- Ўнрок ташкилотлар отрядлари				

- On September 15, almost all staff of state budget organizations in the Bagat district of Khorasm province were picking cotton. On September 19th, from 20:30 to 22:00, the district hokim organized a meeting with 300 farmers and heads of state institutions. They were all asked to go to the cotton fields and pick cotton. Cotton was picked by staff of the district divisions of the Finance and Beautification Departments. The case was reported to the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations. The Hokim, and the heads of the district divisions of Finance and Beautification Departments were punished by fines of 15,6 mln soums (over USD 1600). (Source: kun.uz)
- Early October 2019, the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations investigated alleged cases of forced labour during the cotton picking in Denau district in Surhandarya province. Following the investigations, fines were applied to the heads of the district telecommunication unit and of the Livestock and Veterinary Development Department for forcing their staff to pick cotton. (Source: kun.uz)

While these cases may be exceptions, they underline that there still is a need to increase the engagement with, and training for, local hokims so that the indicators of forced labour are well understood.

Systemic forced labour

Based on the assessment of legislation and policies and their implementation, the ILO concludes that the government systematically seeks to eradicate forced labour. The underlying root causes of forced labour associated with the quota system in cotton picking and insufficiently developed labour recruitment systems, among others, still continue having an impact on the cotton harvest.

A systemic problem affects the entire system and not only parts of it. It is due to issues inherent to the overall system rather than to a specific, individual, isolated factor. One of the biggest challenges is to distinguish between individual and systemic cases of coercion. In the former, it should be possible to identify and sanction one offender or group of offenders; and similarly, to identify and provide appropriate assistance to one victim or group of victims.

In all cases identified by ILO monitors and local human rights activists, it has been possible to identify an offender and a victim or group of victims. This also applies for cases submitted to the feedback mechanisms.

Feedback mechanisms

In 2015, the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations and the Federation of Trade Unions (FTUU) established feedback mechanisms to receive cases of complaints. In recent years, trust in those mechanisms has increased, demonstrated by their increased use.

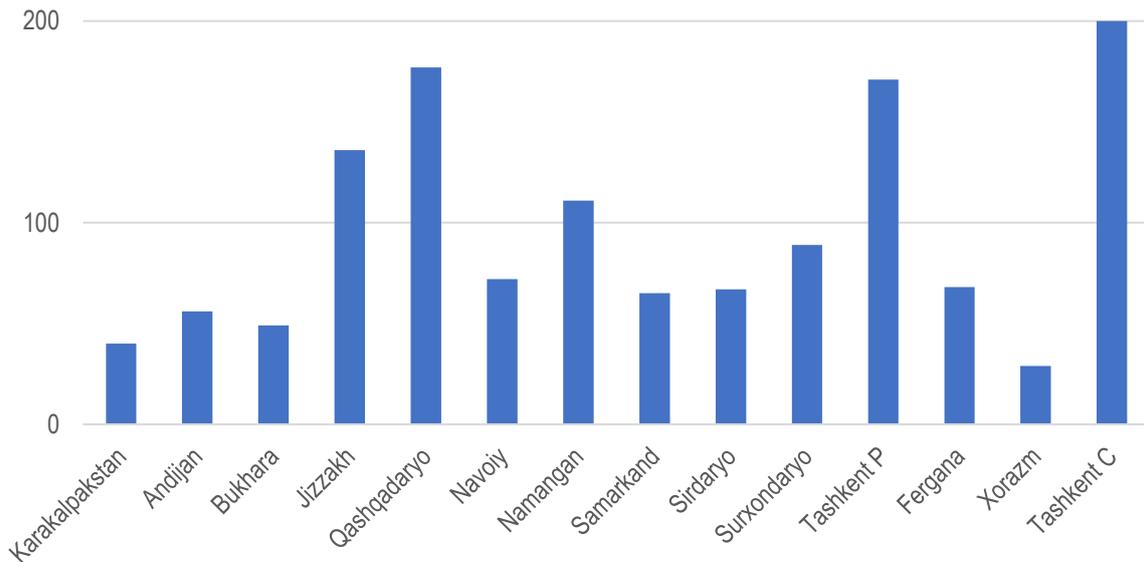
The feedback mechanism operated by the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations received 1,282 forced labour complaints during the cotton harvest that were investigated by 400 labour inspectors across the country. The FTUU Legal Clinic received a total of 6,208 cases in 2019. Two hundred and eighty one of these cases were related to forced labour in the cotton harvest and were handled by the 28 lawyers in the FTUU Legal Clinic.

In previous years, more cases were received by the FTUU Legal Clinic from staff of institutions in the fields of science, education, culture and health. In 2019, these groups of staff were no longer involved in the harvest and consequently the FTUU Legal Clinic received the majority (79 per cent) of forced labour appeals from unemployed people in 2019.

The ILO was also granted full access to the Ministry feedback mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of the system and track individual cases. Four hundred labour inspectors across the country were dedicated to investigating cases. All the cases examined were dealt with expediently. The Ministry published statistics on its website and organized press conferences to discuss its findings.

Both feedback mechanisms were accessible through a telephone hotline number as well as an online bot on the messaging service “Telegram” which is highly popular in Uzbekistan.

The 1,563 cases from both feedback mechanisms were received from all provinces of Uzbekistan. For both feedback mechanisms the number of cases across provinces varied significantly which is to be expected given the differences across provinces with regards to amount of cotton produced and availability of pickers. Most cases were received from Qashqadaryo, Jizzakh and Tashkent provinces.



Many of the cases reported to the feedback mechanisms led to disciplinary measures against hokims, officials and managers for forced labour violations. During the 2019 harvest, a total of 259 hokims, officials and managers were sanctioned for violations related to forced labour. The applied included dismissals, demotions and fines.

List of cases where local hokims, officials and managers were punished for forced labour during 2019 cotton harvest

Please refer to Annex X for the full list of cases. For privacy and ethical reasons, all names of individuals have been initialized and the names of companies, provinces, districts or cities have been replaced by "X". The full details of all cases are known to the ILO Third-Party Monitoring Project.

1.3 Systems conducive to the exaction forced labour

The reality of forced labour is not a binary one. It is a continuum of experiences and situations. The means of coercion can at times be subtle or not overtly present. Social pressure is a reality, but the situations created by it generally fall *outside* the definition of forced labour. Due to the dynamics of a community, despite their personal preference, people may agree to pick cotton although they are not subject to tangible reprisals or an actual penalty if they refuse to do so. Normative conformity often goes hand in hand with social pressure, which in some societies has a high degree of cultural acceptance.

This term describes systems that create an environment where forced labour is either likely or possible. It differs significantly from *systematic forced labour* in that these types of systems were not designed to implement forced labour but they create situations or dynamics where forced labour becomes likely or possible.

Like all former Soviet republics, Uzbekistan was long subjected to a centrally planned economy, including in agriculture, which is particularly relevant to the country. The state set the targets for cotton, which required the direct control and regulation of not only cotton production (primary agriculture), but of all enterprises in the cotton production. This led to the monopolization of input supply, processing of cotton, and its marketing and exports.

In Uzbekistan, the cotton production plans (on which production quotas are determined) are still centrally set by the State. The State order is linked to the advance for working capital at the concessional rate producers receive from the State Agricultural Fund under the Ministry of Finance. The commercial banks currently do not have sufficient liquidity (estimated at less than 6 trillion UZS) to supply credit needed to pre-finance production of cotton and wheat (estimated at 20 trillion UZS). Therefore, funds are allocated from the national budget and all recipients consequently become subject to the state order system.

In some cases, the production targets are overestimated due to obsolete data on soil quality, unjustified expectations of khokimiyats, and a lack of capacity and skills of farmers to properly manage high yield agricultural production. Overestimated plans lead to “overprovision” of the advance loan to farmers, which, in turn, can lead to inefficiencies and bankruptcies.

The use of state production plans assigns priority to the quantity over the quality of cotton. It also leads to situations where khokimiyats put pressure on producers to meet the plans. Such an environment is conducive to forced labour since cotton picking has to continue until the plan has been met. This often becomes a significant problem at the later stages of the harvest when both the quantity and the quality of cotton diminishes.

This dynamic will continue to play an important role unless state production targets are either adjusted or completely removed.

1.4 Conclusions

Based on this analysis, the ILO concludes that:

1. According to the results of the monitoring, no systemic or systematic forced labour was exacted through instructions and policies of the Government of Uzbekistan during the 2019 cotton harvest.
2. There were, however, cases of forced labour, which are caused by uneven local implementation of the policy to prohibit child labour and forced labour; this again is due to the legacy of centrally planned and governed agricultural and economic systems.
3. In addition, the social context puts pressure on many people within families and communities to participate in the cotton harvest. This in itself does not constitute forced labour but it can be a contributing factor, especially as it blurs the distinction between voluntary and reluctant engagement.

Based on these observations, the following conclusions and recommendations can be made for how different stakeholders could contribute to solutions in this kind of situations:

- When there is evidence of widespread forced labour exacted by a government, the policy response from the international community is often to put pressure on the government to reform its policies and practices. This can be done through various supervisory mechanisms of the ILO or through trade and other measures implemented through national and international governmental and non-governmental bodies. The aim then is to abandon the objectionable practices and reform procedures. In the case of Uzbekistan, the ILO has been involved since 2013 through monitoring and giving advice on the incidence of child labour and forced labour in the cotton harvest of Uzbekistan.
- Over this period, it has become generally accepted that children should no longer be involved in the cotton harvest. Most of the focus over the last three years has been on the potential use of forced labour, following the request of the Government to the ILO in 2013 for assistance with the implementation of the Forced Labour Convention 1957 (No. 105), ratified by Uzbekistan.
- In 2019, the ILO Third-Party Monitoring arrives at the conclusion that no systematic or systemic forced labour was exacted by the Government of Uzbekistan during the cotton harvest but the uneven implementation of national policies remains a challenge.
- There are still numerically significant incidents of forced labour, with evidence that the legacy of centrally planned agriculture and economy continues to be conducive to the exaction of forced labour. Centrally set quotas for cotton production are a legacy of a centrally planned economy that increases the risk of forced labour during the cotton harvest.
- The Government of Uzbekistan has openly recognized the risks and limitations of these legacy systems. It has embarked on a reform process, which aims at wide-scale liberalization and privatization including of the cotton sector extending to garment and textile manufacturing as well as to enforcing the principle of voluntary recruitment. The objective is to gradually transition to a fully market-based model.
- The entire cotton value chain from input supply to processing, manufacturing, marketing and exports should be liberalized in a transparent and responsible manner. To successfully pursue this transformation, Uzbekistan should engage with international investors, traders and buyers from the garment and textile industry.
- The reforms undertaken by the Government have the potential for not only addressing the risks of forced labour but also creating much needed employment opportunities. Economic growth would enable further reforms in education, health, infrastructure and other areas. These reforms need to be supported by the international community.
- Trade and investment decisions by responsible international investors are likely to benefit the further abolition of the legacies of the centrally planned economy. They can also contribute to enhanced compliance with international labour standards. A growing number of full-time decent jobs in manufacturing and other parts of the economy would

reduce the seasonal peaks in labour demand, which often fuel unfair recruitment practices.

- Going forward, the framework and tools utilized for promoting the ILO's Fundamental Rights and Principles at Work (FPRW) should be made use of in the cotton and garment sector and beyond.
- Strong, representative and independent workers' and employers' associations and social dialogue are critically important to ensure that Uzbekistan can have all the benefits of a successful transition from a planned to a market economy.
- A new employers' association has been set up in Uzbekistan. The trade unions are provided with support from the ILO for further intensification of their action for the defense of the interests of the workers. The Bureaus of the ILO for employers' and workers' activities (ACT/EMP and ACTRAV) support the development of the capacity of the social partners.
- Improving overall labour market governance in Uzbekistan, including in areas such as Labour Code reform, compliance, social dialogue, the functioning of public employment services, and skills development, will not only contribute to the sustainability of the gains made in the eradication of child labour and forced labour, but also increase the likelihood that the wider economic reforms undertaken by the Government will contribute to the gradual realization of decent work for all in Uzbekistan.

2. Methodology and ethics

2.1 How the ILO conducts third-party monitoring

The ILO uses qualitative data to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. This involves focus groups and field interviews conducted jointly by international ILO experts and local Uzbek human rights activists. Quantitative data is used to present the problem through usable statistics. In 2019, the ILO TPM conducted over 7,000 interviews across all provinces and districts of Uzbekistan. The ILO TPM follows international standards on sampling sizes and methodology.

Independent, unannounced, unaccompanied and ethical

At no stage were government officials involved in the monitoring or had access to data. All field interviews were randomly selected and conducted unannounced and unaccompanied. The TPM methodology has been reviewed and approved by an **Independent Review Board (IRB)** to ensure the rights and welfare of people who participate in our monitoring.

Utilizing both international and local expertise

ILO uses a combination of international and local experts to conduct interviews. The four international ILO experts are increasingly taking on a coaching and advisory role for the local independent Uzbek human rights activists. The same number of interviews were conducted as in previous years. The pattern of interviews and replies was unchanged compared to previous years. Local Uzbek experts, activists and service providers were all trained directly by ILO to ensure legal and methodical consistency in data collection.

Duration of the monitoring

In 2019, the ILO Third-Party Monitoring took place throughout the entire cotton cycle, including the last stage of the harvest. Interviews were conducted and data were collected from **September to December 2019**. The findings were presented at a Roundtable in Tashkent on 5 February 2020, and the data collection continued until the end of December 2019. This report contains the full set of data and analysis.

Working with independent local civil society activists

Civil society activists were consistently involved in the Third-Party Monitoring as well as activities beyond the cotton harvest.

1. **Dialogue with the Government.** The ILO continued to facilitate a dialogue process between human rights activists and the Government. The process mainly concentrated on labour rights with a particular focus on forced labour. Regular meetings were arranged with the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations and there were frequent and regular exchanges on measures to prevent forced labour.

The activists and the Government officials also discussed effective implementation at the local level. The activists also met with the focal point for the “Obod Quishloq” programme from the Ministry of Economy where they addressed the risks of forced labour in the programme and how the Government can manage these risks to prevent and/or address possible violations.

2. **Pre-harvest capacity building for labour inspectors.** The independent activists actively contributed to the 2019 pre-harvest trainings on Fair Recruitment for 400 labour inspectors from all the districts of the country.
3. **Cotton harvest monitoring.** The activists participated in the cotton harvest monitoring in the following way:
 - Conducting awareness raising activities for the pickers and potential pickers;
 - Monitoring the functioning of the feedback mechanisms under the MELR and FTUU, including intake mechanisms, governance, decision-making processes and communication of results; and
 - Monitoring cotton fields, by conducting interviews with pickers, brigade leaders and farmers.

A specific feature of the work with civil society in 2019 was the broadening of the group in terms of number, age, geographical distribution, occupation, etc. In 2018, the ILO engaged with 8 activists, while in 2019 their number increased to 15. All activists were trained by the ILO on child labour and forced labour and third-party monitoring methodology. In addition, the monitors of the cotton fields benefitted from coaching by international experts on how to conduct interviews and how to ensure confidentiality of data. They also improved their understanding of the recruitment process, working conditions, and occupational safety and health in the cotton picking.

All 15 activists received badges from the MELR, which legitimized their work during the cotton harvest as national experts.

The list of activists (alphabetical order):

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|-----|---------------------|
| 1. | Adizov Botirjon | 9. | Oripova Hayothon |
| 2. | Arslanbay Otepov | 10. | Parmonov Abbos |
| 3. | Elena Urlaeva | 11. | Shodmonova Dilshoda |
| 4. | Farmonov Azam | 12. | Uktam Pardaev |
| 5. | Ganiev Shukhrat | 13. | Yakubov Mansurbek |
| 6. | Hudiev Hurshidbek | 14. | Zokhirov Zokhidjon |
| 7. | Khaitboy Yakubov | 15. | Zulfia Fataeva |
| 8. | Kulidjanov Jakhongir | | |

2.2 Ethics considerations

The ILO Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) methodology respects the principles of independence, confidentiality and informed consent. The TPM methodology has been carefully designed to protect vulnerable persons and groups. In order to avoid or minimize any risk to respondents, a substantial number of mitigation measures were implemented both at the qualitative and quantitative stages.

The 2019 ILO TPM methodology achieved approval from an international Independent Review Board (IRB) also known as an Independent Ethics Committee.

- Annex 3 - IRB Approval for ILO Third-party Monitoring (field visits)
- Annex 4 – IRB Approval for ILO Third-party Monitoring (nationwide phone survey)

As described below, informed consent is a key requirement for all parts of the ILO TPM. Informed consent provides people with adequate information to allow for an informed decision about their voluntary participation in the monitoring. This was achieved through a consent form that was provided and explained in detail.

2.1.1 Item count technique

The ILO study design (sampling and questionnaires) used the so-called Item Count Technique when asking sensitive questions from potential victims of forced labour. ICT protects the anonymity of respondents.

Respondents are randomly split into two groups. The Control Group will be presented with four statements. The Treatment Group will be presented with the same four statements + one sensitive statement (in this case about forced labour). Respondents are then asked to indicate **how many** statements (not which statements) apply to them. By comparing the results from the two groups, an accurate estimate of how many people are in forced labour during the cotton harvest can be calculated.



The advantage of ICT is that respondents are not revealing directly to the interviewer whether or not they were threatened or perceived threats in relation to participating in the harvest. ICT improves, through anonymity, the number of true answers to possibly awkward, embarrassing or self-incriminating questions, and it is used in many kinds of research.

2.1.2 Ethics considerations for qualitative data collection

The ethics measures implemented during the field visits are described below:

- After arrival at the field, lists were distributed among all the pickers with key information about the monitoring. Pickers were invited to approach the ILO monitors on the field (monitors were instructed to spend up to three/four hours at each field site) or to contact the ILO TPM office in Tashkent to submit information regarding the monitoring objective or to arrange an interview at a convenient time and place. This allowed people who are afraid to share sensitive information in public to do so in a convenient and safe way. This measure also protected pickers present in the field (up to 50–100 pickers) as the farmer could not know who provided information to ILO via personal interview or through other channels.
- Once a picker contacted the ILO monitor, all details related to consent were discussed and clarified. The consent form with the contact information of the ILO was provided to respondents. Informed consent was received from all respondents who took part in the monitoring, including pickers, farmers, brigade leaders, and state officials.
- Informed consent and the interview were conducted in the presence of only the monitor and the translator.
- All respondents had the right to choose the time and place of interview for safer conditions.
- The field monitoring team included no representatives of the state or state-affiliated institutions. The teams consisted of the ILO monitor, an independently recruited interpreter and an independent Uzbek human rights activist.
- Respondents were told that they could use a pseudonym and they were not asked to share any names or personal information of other individuals during the interview.
- Monitors used secure electronic devices (such as tablets) to record interviews, fill in check lists, and develop write-ups. All data collected were submitted to the ILO TPM project through a protected cloud server and were physically deleted from all field devices within 24 hours. The devices were protected by a fingerprint or cyber code access so that physical theft of the device could not allow access to the data.
- A confidentiality agreement, specifying that no information received during the course of the study can be shared with any third-party, was signed by all monitors and supporting staff (e.g. drivers, interpreters and civil society representatives).
- Monitors were strictly prohibited from taking any pictures or videos of human subjects. They could only take pictures of objects (uploaded on the secure cloud server) related to the working conditions.

- Monitors and translators were provided with a two-day training sequence with detailed instruction and clarification of ethics issues. Specific attention was paid to the notion of informed consent, privacy, confidentiality of the respondents, the right to withdraw from the study at any moment, practices of conducting interviews with members of vulnerable groups, etc.
- The monitors did not collect any contact information during the study. No follow-up data collection procedures were conducted with the pickers.
- The only identification information about the data collection sites were the GPS coordinates. The GPS coordinates were collected to check the quality of work conducted by the monitors. The data was deleted after the quality control procedures were completed, and it was not used in any output materials for the study.
- Additional measures were applied to protect risk groups that might have been present in the field during the monitoring (individuals under the age of 18 and persons involved in forced labour). To minimize the risks, no one under 18 was recruited for an interview. In the case someone below 18 was identified working in the field, he/she would have been removed from the workplace. According to Uzbek legislation, manual cotton picking is classified as hazardous work, which children under 18 years old are not allowed to undertake. The monitor was instructed to inform an adult accompanying the child, such as the farmer/brigade leader, about the prohibition of employing children in cotton picking and the hazards associated with cotton picking. If the child's parents or legal guardians were not present in the field, the monitor was instructed to inform representatives of the local mahalla fund (i.e. the local community association) to contact the parents or legal guardians of the child. The monitor was asked to be present in the field until the child was withdrawn and united with his/her parents or legal guardians.
- People who had been involved in forced labour were recruited to participate in an interview. International monitors all have significant experience in collecting data from vulnerable groups, including people in forced labour situations. In addition, the monitors and interpreters were trained on methodology, including refresher sessions on data collection with this specific group of respondents in mind.
- Respondents might have become visibly and emotionally distressed by certain questions or modules (e.g. on the experience of being involved in forced labour). This issue was addressed during the training with the monitors and interpreters. Respondents were reminded that they are free to leave the interview at any time and have the right not to respond to any questions that made them uncomfortable. The respondents were told that they are free to withdraw from participation in the study at any time, even after oral consent had been given.
- In addition to the measures stated above, all ILO monitors were practicing independent international experts on forced and child labour with over 10 years of work experience each. After the interview was completed, they were in a position to provide advice on labour rights and explain protection mechanisms in the country. The contact information

of hotlines and telegram bots of the MELR and FTUU was provided to respondents if they wished to have more information or if they wanted to make a complaint or needed support to protect their rights.

- The ILO team nominated a complaints focal point to address any issues and respond to requests from respondents. Information was provided to participants regarding the contact details of the focal points for them to register their concerns or complaints.

2.1.3 Ethics considerations for quantitative data collection

A number of measures were applied at the quantitative stage to avoid or minimize the risks to respondents, including the following.

- Particular attention was paid to the privacy of respondents. The questionnaire did not include personal information about the respondents. The phone number for the effective interview was deleted immediately after the interview was conducted.
- No individuals younger than 18 years old were interviewed for the survey.
- No direct questions on the experience of being involved in forced labour were asked. The ICT technique related to the respondent's experience with picking cotton was applied, to identify the proportion of population that was involved in the practice in 2019.
- Informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior the interview. The consent script included the contact information of the ILO team so respondents could contact the ILO with any questions or complaints.
- Interviewers informed respondents that they could use a pseudonym and not share their or any other individuals' names or personal information during the interview.
- The ILO team conducted training for all interviewers and field managers and provided detailed instructions and clarification of ethics issues. Specific attention was paid to informed consent, privacy, confidentiality of the respondents, the right to withdraw from the study at any moment, and practices of conducting interviews with members of vulnerable groups.
- Respondents might become emotionally distressed by certain questions or modules. This issue was addressed during the training with the interviewers. Respondents were reminded that they were free to leave the interview at any time and had the right to not respond to any questions that make them uncomfortable. The respondents were told that they were free to withdraw from participation in the study at any time, even after verbal consent had been given.
- No follow-up contacts were made with the respondents.
- If a respondent required more information about his/her labour rights, the contact information of hotlines and telegram bots of the MELR and FTUU was provided to the respondent. They could contact them for more information about labour issues in general, the issue of child labour and forced labour, or if they wanted to make a complaint or needed support to protect their rights.

3. Cotton harvest monitoring

3.1 Methodology

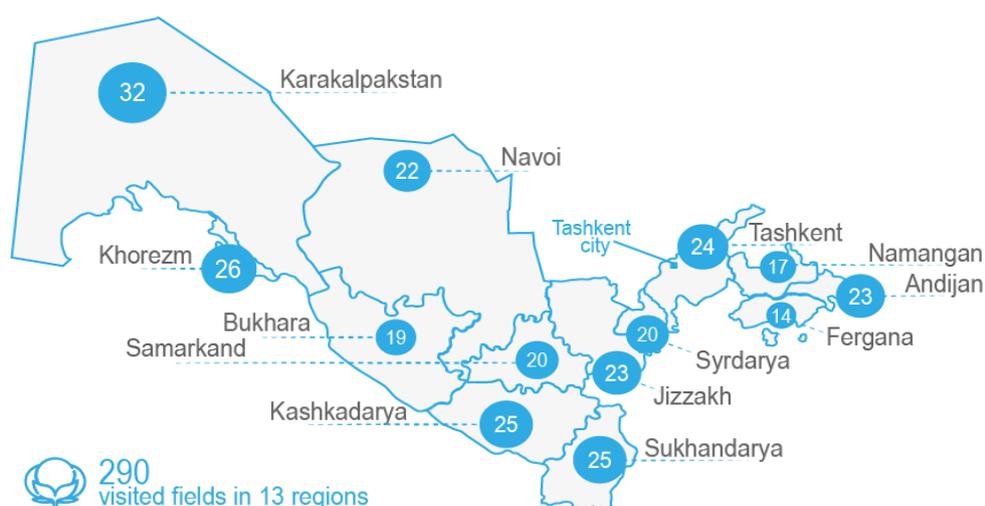
The key objective of the 2019 cotton harvest monitoring was to collect real-time observations of the effects of recent policy initiatives on recruitment practices, working conditions, and the risk of using child or forced labour for the cotton harvest. The harvest monitoring uses both qualitative and quantitative data sources as outlined below.

Sampling and data collection in the qualitative phase

Four international monitors and seventeen Uzbek human rights activist monitors were involved in data collection for the harvest monitoring. Monitoring was conducted in all 13 regions of the country. Three to five districts were sampled within each selected region (3 districts were selected in Karakalpakstan and 5 districts in every other region).

The selection was informed by the index of availability of voluntary pickers, developed by the Centre of employment research under the MELR. The index is based on two indicators: 1) availability of the working-age population in the district, and 2) production of raw cotton, in tons, in the district. According to the Centre's methodology, if the index is lower than 3 people per ton, the district has a shortage of agricultural workers/cotton pickers. In 2019, the index was calculated by the ILO team using the methodology of the Centre of Employment Research. For the cotton production, the team used forecast data for 2019 at the district level, while for the availability of the working-age data, the MELR data for 2017 had been applied. An index of higher than 3 or 4 indicates a sufficient or excess number of agricultural workers respectively. Both districts with low and medium/high availability of pickers were sampled for the monitoring. If there is at least one district with high scarcity of labour, the district was sampled for the analysis. In each region, the team monitors visited up to 32 fields.

Map 1. Conducted field visits and qualitative data by region



Randomly generated GPS coordinates were selected in a rural area of the selected districts. Monitors received the coordinates early morning of each working day via secure messenger (e.g. telegram). The team, consisting of local and, sometimes, international monitors and translators, and the driver, followed the coordinates and selected the closest cotton field to the coordinates where people were picking cotton. That field was then selected for the monitoring.

Farmers were not notified in advance. Monitors asked for consent from the farmer to fill out the checklist and to distribute the information lists among all pickers with key information about the study and the invitation to approach the monitors directly in the field or via the provided phone number. To those interested in taking part, a consent form was provided and explained in detail. Interviews were conducted only with those respondents who provided the informed consent. Up to three respondents were recruited on the field for an interview (the farmer or brigade leader and two pickers).

The methodology of the cotton field monitoring was assessed and approved by the International Review Board to ensure that there was no potential for harm to human subjects taking part. See annex 1 for the summary of the protection of human subject protocol.

Sampling and data collection in the quantitative phase

The target population for the survey was working age citizens of Uzbekistan (18–50 years old). The data collection method was a CATI survey. The sampling method was a random systematic stratified sample of mobile phone numbers (RDD). Sampling size: 6,000 individuals aged between 18–50 years old.

The study focused on the recruitment and working conditions of cotton pickers. It was important to ensure a sufficient response rate from people involved in the cotton harvest in 2019. According to previous studies, about 18 per cent of the working age population of Uzbekistan were involved in the cotton harvest in 2018. Therefore, based on the requirements for accuracy and reliability of the results, it was proposed to interview 6000 respondents during the survey. It allowed receiving 722 responses in the target group of cotton pickers (without weights).

The sampling frame is mobile phone numbers in Uzbekistan (N = 60 580 000 cell phone numbers¹⁶). The sampling design is based on a random systematic sampling of mobile telephone numbers, which enables an equal probability of selecting each mobile phone number. This method of selection can be called Random Digit Dial (RDD).

The 95 per cent confidence interval for the sample of 6,000 respondents is expected to be 1,5 p.p. (concerning weights). For the cotton pickers (722 respondents) it is expected to be 4,4 p.p. Due to formula for simple random sample:

$$\Delta = t_d \sqrt{1-f} \sqrt{\frac{p(1-p)}{n-1}},$$

where p – percentage of attribute in sample (we used 50% for maximum variance), n – sample size, Δ - confidence interval, t_d – constant depending on the level of confidence (1,96 for 95%), f – percentage of sample in population (n/N).

and concerning weights:

$$\text{var}(\bar{y}_w) = \text{var}(\bar{y}) \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^n w_i^2}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^n w_i \right)^2},$$

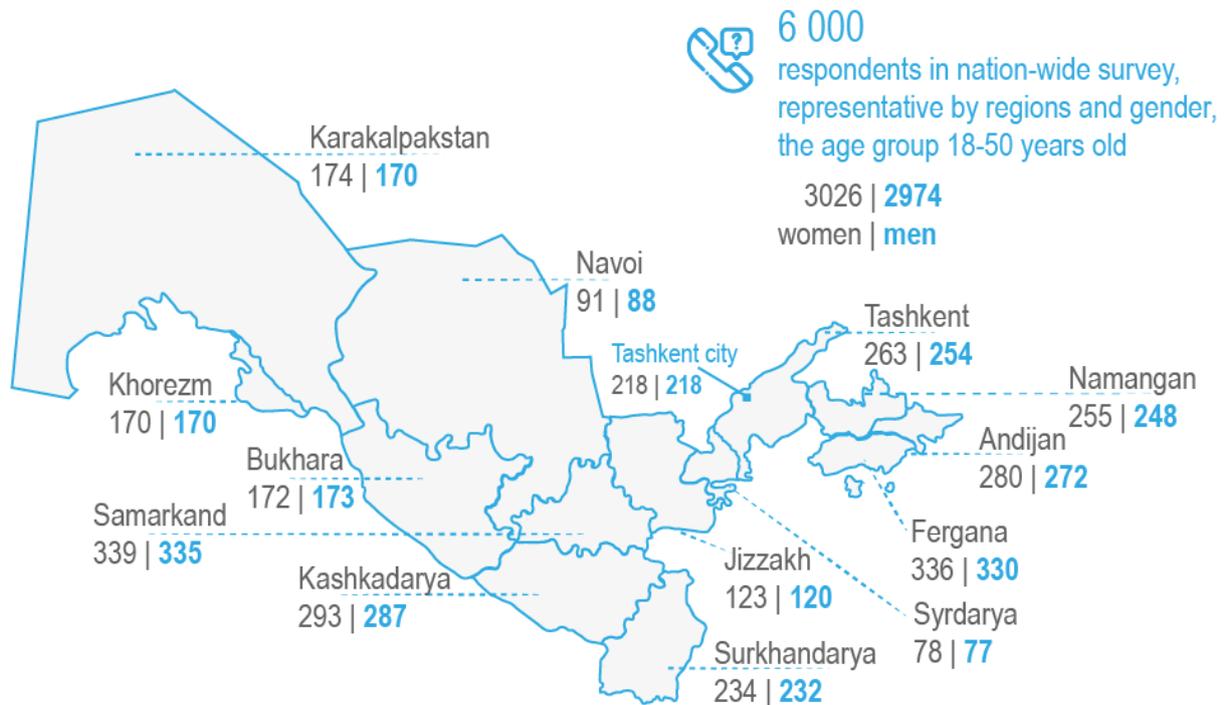
where $\text{var}(\bar{y}_w)$ – dispersion of mean of y in the sample, $\text{var}(\bar{y})$ – dispersion of unweighted mean of y in the sample, n – sample size, w_i – weight of i -th respondent.

The regions of Uzbekistan vary quite significantly in terms of several socio-economic indicators, which suggests there may be a different level of mobile phone usage among the populations in different regions. Therefore, regions should be treated as strata in the construction of the sample, otherwise there may be a risk the sample could shift (be biased) toward regions with a higher coverage/usage of mobile phones. The number of respondents in each region should be proportional to the percentage of the working age population of the region among all working age citizens of Uzbekistan.

A strong gender imbalance was observed in the sampling conducted for the CATI survey in 2017. Therefore, to fix this bias, it was suggested to add gender distribution as a target stratum in the sampling.

The CATI survey fulfilled the following strata by region and gender:

Map 1. CATI survey for ILO TPM by region, 2019



To estimate the proportion of the population involved in forced labour, the Item Count Technique (ICT) was used in the sampling and questionnaire design. To ask potentially sensitive questions to the victims of forced labour, the Item Count Technique (ICT) was used in the sampling and questionnaires.

The ICT is an indirect questioning technique used to estimate the proportion of people who have engaged in stigmatizing behaviour. This technique is expected to yield a more appropriate estimate than the ordinary direct questioning technique because it requests respondents to indicate, based on a list of several items, simply the number of items that are applicable to them, including the target key item.

Estimate the proportion θ of people belonging to the stigmatizing category

Sample is randomly divided in two parts. Two lists are used, one for each sample:

- the long item list which includes $G + 1$ items (G are non-sensitive, and one is sensitive) and
- the short item list which includes the G non-sensitive items

In both samples, the respondents should report the total number of items that apply to them without disclosing which ones

Let X_i be the number reported by person i from the first sample ($i = 1, \dots, n_1$) and let Y_j be the number reported by person j from the second sample ($j = 1, \dots, n_2$). Then $\hat{\theta} = \bar{X} - \bar{Y}$ is an estimator of θ

It is possible to add two ICT questions to decrease the sample error (variance). The following questions have been added in our questionnaire:

Question 1. Here is a list of four [five] things that some people have done, and some people have not. Please listen to them and then tell me how many of them you have done in 2019. Do not tell me which you have or have not done. Just tell me how many. Here are the four [five] things:

Both samples

1. Bought large household appliances
2. Grew vegetables on tamorka
3. Went to mahalla office with some request
4. Attended a wedding

Sub-sample 2 only (long version)

5. Picked cotton because you were afraid or threatened that you would lose your job, salary, benefits, etc., if you declined

[INSERT THE NUMBER OF ITEMS THE RESPONDENT AGREES ON _____.]

Question 2. And here is another list of four [five] things. Please listen to them and then tell me how many of them you have done in 2019. Do not tell me which you have or have not done. Just tell me how many. Here are the four [five] things:

Both samples

1. Watched soap operas on television
2. Asked neighbours for help
3. Visited a doctor in a hospital / clinic
4. Traveled outside your city / village

Subsample 1 only (long version)

5. Picked cotton because you were afraid or threatened that you would lose your job, salary, benefits, etc., if you declined

[INSERT THE NUMBER OF ITEMS THE RESPONDENT AGREES ON _____.]

The CATI software was programmed so that 3,000 randomly selected respondents were provided with the shorter list in question 1 (4 items, no question about forced labour) and long list in question 2. And another randomly selected 3,000 were provided with a list of 5

items in question 1 (4 neutral items and 1 item on the involvement in forced labour) and short list in question 2. No direct questions on a forced labour experience were asked.

Statistical weightings by age, gender, and probability to be selected for the survey (practice of mobile phone usage) were developed and applied at the data analysis stage to ensure the sample better represents the working age population.

3.2 Key results of the qualitative phase (harvest field visits)

Most pickers on visited fields received 800 UZS for 1 kg of cotton during the first pass and 1200 UZS for the second and third passes. Some pickers received fees up to 200 UZS higher. The higher fees were observed in cotton fields operated under clusters and, according to the respondents, the additional payment was provided from the cluster's budget. In addition, well-off farmers could provide higher fees to recruit the best pickers and motivate them to meet the quota and start preparing the fields for wheat seeding.

Pickers noticed that the fees were higher this year. However, many cotton pickers shared their disappointment regarding the increase. Pickers noticed that in the first pass this year they received 50 UZS higher fees than last year. Pickers expected a higher increase because the prices of major goods were much higher from last year.

Fees were usually paid every 2–3 days. The minimum payment period was one day/daily payments, and the maximum recorded payment period was 5 days. The payment was made by the bank representative directly, either through the farmer, or through the brigade leader.

On average, one person picking cotton full time could earn up to 3 million UZS for a season. However, pickers noticed that they have to spend some of their money on the aprons and gloves necessary for the job and which are not usually provided by farmers. In one season, a picker could spend 40,000–100,000 UZS on aprons and gloves.

In addition to the fee payment, some farmers provide those pickers who met certain quota or picked more cotton than others with incentive bonuses and rewards. It is important to highlight that pickers positively responded to the bonus and reward system and negatively responded when farmers did not offer any incentives. The Mahala/Khokimiyat also participates in a system of informal rewards for cotton pickers, giving gifts of salt, sugar, cereals, clothes, shoes, scarves, and dishes.

Working conditions

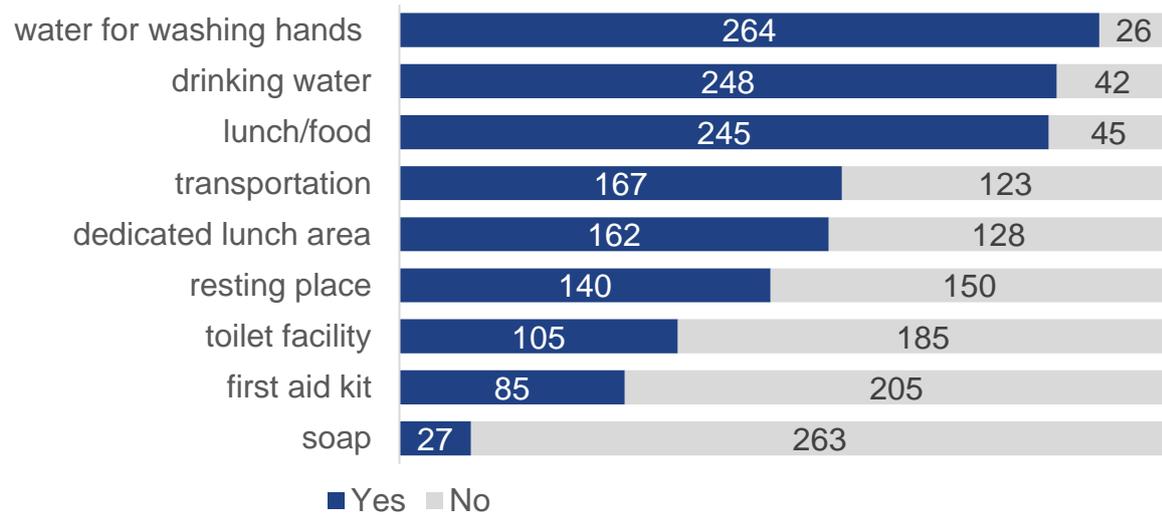
Monitors had to identify on a checklist the presence or absence of key working conditions, including drinking water, lunch, toilet facility, transportation, water for handwashing, soap, first-aid kit and an organized area for resting and having lunch.

Field monitoring indicated that the working conditions provided most commonly to pickers were the following (see chart 1): water for washing hands (264 out of 290 visited fields), drinking water (248 out of 290 fields), and lunch (245 out of 290 fields). Most of the fields

where water and lunch were not provided were closely located to the settlements, so pickers could quickly go home to get water or have lunch and come back to the field.

Transportation was provided to pickers on 167 fields out of 290. A dedicated lunch area was available on 162 fields, while a resting place was organized on 140 fields. A toilet facility was available on only 105 (one third) of the cotton fields. A first-aid kit and soap for hand washing was available on only 85 and 27 fields respectively.

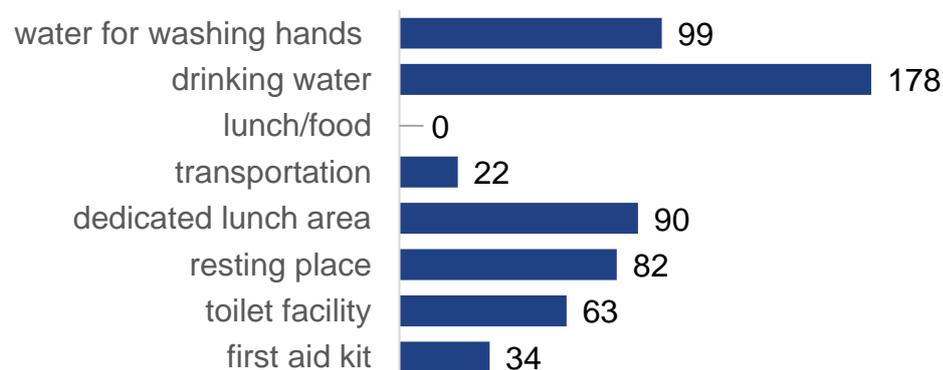
Chart 1. Working conditions



Source: TMP 2019, N = 290

This year, working conditions were documented using photography. A total of 568 photographs were collected and analysed. The Chart 2 below shows the number of photographs by category.

Chart 2. Working conditions with photo



Source: TMP 2019, N = 568

Water

Drinking water is of critical importance during the cotton harvest. Lack of drinking water was noted in only 42 cases out of 290.

Analysis of monitors' comments concerning the drinking water included the following:

- The arrangement of drinking water is the farmers' responsibility.
- It is crucial to have a sufficient amount of drinking water on remote fields and during hot weather.
- There were cases when the water brought in was finished by the middle of the day and pickers had to wait for the farmer to refill the containers.
- There were cases when water was present at the field but accessing it from a big barrel was difficult.

The volume of drinking water and the storage conditions vary greatly: it can be (i) tanks up to 100 litres (barrel, can, canister, bucket, bottle), which are filled 3–4 times a day from the nearest drinking water source, or (ii) a large tank volume (tanks, water carriers) up to several thousand litres, which are refilled once every few days (within a week), (iii) pots with boiling water, or (iv) a well in close proximity to the field. In 41 cases out of 290, the ability to boil water was photographed in the field. In 120 cases, a small volume of water storage was photographed; in 22, there was a large volume of water storage; in 14, the source of water was in the field.

It is not possible to trace the source of drinking water in the fields, or can its quality or objective compliance with sanitary conditions be assessed. The following is the result of a visual analysis of the storage conditions of drinking water:

Boiling water (hot tea): in the fields, there may be pots or stoves that are heated by firewood. The presence of a pot or stove in the field means that workers have the opportunity to drink boiled water, which reduces the likelihood of water-borne diseases.



Pic 1. Pots with boiling water.

Tanks up to 100 litres: mostly small-volume barrels, cans or a canister with a scoop, a mug or a bucket, less often a plastic bottle. In the photo, there is just a container with water that is

used for drinking. A scoop or mug can be used to pour water into personal dishes, but all field workers can use it to drink from. In rare cases, the water is boiled before use. Water in such a container stands in the open sun during the working day.



Pic 2. Tanks up to 100 litres.

Water storage containers with capacity of more than 100 litres and up to 4,000 litres are used. This is a tank, a plastic cube or a water carrier (barrel on wheels). They, as well as small-capacity containers, can be samovars or cans, or barrels; then, water from a larger capacity is spread across the field in smaller containers. Based on the research data, it cannot be said that the capacity of a larger displacement is better than many capacities of a small displacement. It may be problematic to get water out of such containers. For example, if the tap is broken, you have to get the water with scoops from the top cover, which is difficult when there is little water left (the level drops lower than the hand can reach).



Pic 3. Water storage containers with capacity of more than 100 litres.

There were situations when a source of unlimited volume was located on the field, i.e. a well or a pump with running water used for drinking, without cleaning or boiling.



Pic 4. Well or pump.

Lunch

The availability of lunch was noted in 245 of 290 fields. A lunch area was available in 162 of 290 fields. Comments on monitors checklists and write-ups showed:

- Food is usually provided by the farmer. Food is prepared directly in the field from products provided by the farmer or is brought to the field at a certain time.
- There is not always enough food for all the pickers, or it is of unsatisfactory quality. In these cases, some pickers prefer to bring food with them.
- Having food on the field does not always mean that cotton pickers receive free hot meals. Sometimes a fee for the food is deducted from the pickers' payment.
- When pickers work close to their home, they prefer to have dinner at home.





Pic 5. Lunch provided to pickers.

The food provided on the fields might be shurpa (a thick meat broth), shawl (porridge with meat), pilaf (rice with meat), or pasta with meat. Some farmers also provide tea, bread, watermelons and other fruits.

According to visual analysis, food intake occurs mainly on bedspreads, carpets or mattresses spread on the grass, on the ground, or on the floor indoors (59 cases out of 290 in the photo). Less commonly, there are tables with chairs or benches (20 cases). Bedspreads, mattresses, pillows or carpets are spread on them, and sometimes a low table is placed in the centre.



Pic 6. Dedicated lunch area.

Transportation

The presence of transport was noted in 167 cases out of 290. Of these, 22 were photographed. Vehicles are minibuses, buses or personal cars.

As monitors noted in their comments on checklists and in write-ups:

- The time to start work in the fields is about 7.00 am. Usually by this time transport, (if any), brings pickers to the field. The end of the working day is 5.00 pm, the time when transport collects pickers to take them home.
- In cases where a lot of collectors live far away, a bus is ordered. If there are not many such pickers, farmers use their own cars for transport to and from the field.



Pic 7. Transportation.

Hand washing

Water for washing hands is the most common working condition according to the qualitative monitoring stage. Its presence was recorded in 264 out of 290 fields. However, in only 27 cases out of 264 cases of water being present for washing hands was soap also available. In the vast majority of cases, pickers are not able to wash their hands before eating or after work.

Key observations:

- It happens that pickers use the same water for hand-washing that was brought by the farmer as drinking water.
- Most often, there is no special place for washing hands on the field, or hands are washed in irrigation canals, irrigation or drainage channels.
- In rare cases, there may be sanitary zones, showers or baths in the field.

Visual analysis shows that the source of water for washing hands can be irrigation canals, drainage canals or natural reservoirs. It is important to understand that irrigation or drainage channels might contain some fertilizers and defoliants used on the fields. All of these substances can accumulate on the hands of the pickers during the day and, if swallowed, cause poisoning or illness.



Pic 8. Hand washing facility – aryks or open sources.

In some cases, handwashing water is delivered and distributed across the field in buckets or cans. Less commonly, there are zones with washstands that are filled manually.



Pic 9. Hand washing facility - buckets or cans.

In several cases, in the photo, showers are visible next to the washstands: the barrels are filled with a pump (white in the photo), and the water heats up under the influence of sunlight.



Pic 10. Hand washing facility – washstands.

In several cases, the photo shows sinks that are not always connected to water (the first in the row below); some of them are filled manually. Such facilities are usually located in the farmhouse, which is located near the field.



Pic 11. Hand washing facility – sinks.

Toilets

With access to toilets, the situation is worse than with access to water for washing hands.

Only in 105 fields out of 290 was a toilet present, 63 of them photographed. In only 23 cases, observers noted that the bathroom on the field had separate cubicles for men and women.

All toilets that were observed on the fields are pit latrines. Two types of toilets were identified: adequate and inadequate based on physical safety, privacy and accessibility.

Chart 3. Toilet facility



Source: TMP 2019, N = 63

Toilets in the fields are inadequate pit latrines (33 cases), when the booth is not installed or the doors do not close, or there is no roof over the toilet. Walls (and doors) may be material stretched around the perimeter.





Pic 12. Toilet facilities - inadequate pit latrines.

In 30 cases the toilet facility was an adequate pit latrine with proper walls, roof and working doors.



Pic 13. Toilet facilities - adequate pit latrines.

In the best-case scenario, there is a comprehensive sanitary zone on the field, divided into male and female and including toilets (lockable cabins with holes in the floor, mounted above cesspools), washstands and showers. In the photo below, the sanitary zone was built in 2019:



Pic 14. Toilet facility - Sanitary zone (Syrdarya).

First aid kits

In 85 out of 277 cases, there was a first-aid kit on the field; in 31 cases, monitors were able to photograph the kit. The following types of first-aid kits were found: a driver first-aid kit (21), a personal first-aid kit brought by collectors or brigade leader (10 cases), and a fully equipped medical care centre.

In most cases when being asked by the monitor to show the first aid kit, farmers or brigade leaders showed a driver's first aid kit in a car parked closely to the field.



Pic 15. A driver first-aid kit

Personal first-aid kits (10 cases), when collectors or team leaders carry individual medicines with them.



Pic 16. Personal first-aid kits.

Qualified medical assistance (only 4 cases), in this case, the doctor on duty holds the medicine, there are beds for rest and examination, the medicine is kept in the refrigerator. A physician can be present both continuously and intermittently (once a week).



Pic 15. Medical stations

Resting areas

Resting areas were present in 140 of 290 fields, 82 of which were photographed. Sleeping areas for pickers were observed in 19 fields, 8 of which were photographed.



Pic16. Resting area

Resting areas most often look like a trestle bed – a wooden floor that rises above the ground or floor. The trestle bed can be indoors or outdoors, under a canopy or in the open. It can accommodate mattresses with pillows. A resting area can also be a simple blanket under the trees or on the grass.

The sleeping places are either a room inside the building or a tent. In the first case, workers sleep on mattresses spread on the floor; in the second case, on bunk beds inside the tent. These are not always comfortable rooms. There may not be any doors, and doorways and windows are sealed with black plastic film.





Pic 17. Sleeping area.

Child Labour

No cases of systematic child labour were identified during the field monitoring. The institutions did not recruit school and university students to participate in cotton picking. Monitors observed cases of children present on 43 fields out of 290. In 18 cases, children were in the field but were not involved in any work-related activities; in 25 cases, monitors observed or suspected that individuals below 18 years old could be helping with cotton picking.

The following situations were recorded:

- Young children, up to 12 years old, could be on the field if the field was near the village. This was usually because nobody was at home to look after the child(ren), or the child was still being breastfed. Some pickers noted the absence of childcare facilities for their children in their rural area or lack of financial abilities to pay the kindergarten fees as a reason why they bring children with them. If observers recorded this situation, they conducted an explanatory conversation with adults and asked the parent to remove the child from the field.
- Older children, from 12 to 17 years old, could be assistants in the collection if the family or the adolescents themselves had decided this was acceptable. This was common among low-income rural families, where the participation of adolescents in cotton picking is still perceived only positively, as a way of being included in improving the material well-being of the family. In this case, an explanatory conversation was also held, and the adults were asked to remove the child(ren) from the field.

According to monitors in 2019, adults have a high level of awareness that minors should not be involved in picking cotton. Adult collectors could give the observer an appropriate explanation of why this is so. The farmers also instructed the pickers about this before the start of the collection and, during the collection, asked the parents to send the children home if they had turned up. In several regions, an awareness campaign had been conducted by educational institutions, farmers and mahalla chairmen to inform parents about the prohibition against using child labour in cotton picking. Through educational institutions, written confirmations were collected from parents that their family did not plan to attract children to the harvest.

There were more cases of children present in the field during the weekends and public holidays. On those days, schools and kindergartens do not operate, so parents bring their children with them to avoid leaving them home alone.

Some of the households who bring their children to the field are in the most vulnerable position. These households depend largely on the income from cotton, and they do not have the resources to leave children in childcare facilities, even when such facilities are available.

Forced Labour

In total, monitors noted 19 fields in which pickers had been mobilized by their place of employment. Out of these 19 cases, residents on five fields said that they had experienced some threat or felt that they could lose their job (four cases) or payment bonus (one case). In addition, in three cases monitors recorded that pickers said that they had to pay someone else to pick cotton for them or send someone else (e.g. relatives) to pick cotton.

Among organizations in the risk group were the police, different factories, state banks, and organizations that operate in the agricultural sector. Workers of different organizations and fabrics were involved in picking cotton in shifts for 10-30 days or during the weekends. They kept receiving salary at their usual place of employment, and transportation and food were provided by the employer.

In addition to the 19 cases, soldiers were observed on 9 fields and prisoners were observed on two fields. On 4 fields, respondents said that they came to pick cotton because they were threatened by local community leaders that they would lose social benefits, or they were afraid that they might lose their benefits.

In addition, monitors highlighted the following two cases:

- On one field in Karakalpakstan, the monitor observed a contradictory situation. Pickers said they had come voluntarily to pick cotton and could leave the field at any time. However, when one woman decided to leave the field to get some water, the brigade leader stopped her and rudely insisted she return to the field.
- On another field in Navoi, pickers asked the monitor if they could refuse to go to another region to pick cotton where local authorities were planning to send them.

We can conclude that there were still some incidents of forced labour during the 2019 season. Instances of mass recruitment or the presence of people on duty were recorded in some regions more than in others. In particular, the greatest number of cases were observed in Syrdarya, Surkhandarya, Khorezm and Tashkent regions.

Risks are highest in the third and fourth passes, when the financial motivation of local pickers declines. The increased fees for the second and third pass this year did not provide sufficient financial motivation to pick cotton.

The risk of forced labour is significantly lower in clusters, due to the higher wages and better working conditions provided by the clusters.

To accurately understand the findings, it must be highlighted that the monitoring was conducted in districts with the high deficit of pickers/the highest risks of forced labour. The observations are not representative for the whole country.

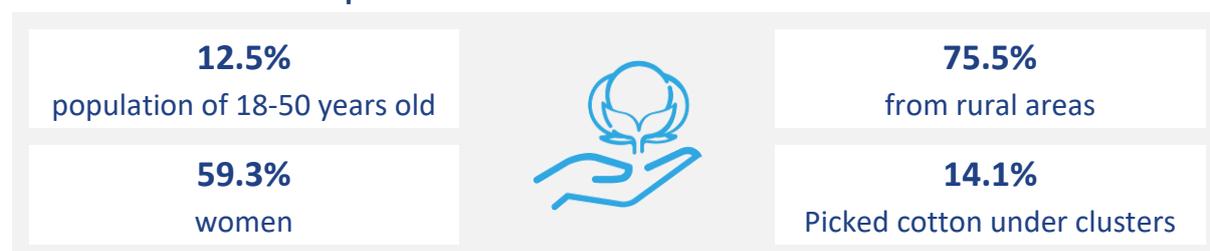
Hypotheses generated based on the qualitative phase

The hypotheses from the qualitative phase will be tested against findings from the quantitative phase.

No	Description
Hypothesis 1.	The proportion of the population involved in forced labour stayed at the same level or declined between 2018 and 2019.
Hypothesis 2.	Most pickers experience difficulties with working conditions such as access to toilets, hand-washing facilities, and first aid kits.
Hypothesis 3.	The proportion of pickers with formal contracts is low.
Hypothesis 4.	Pickers' wages in 2019 represented the same or a smaller proportion of their annual income than in 2018.
Hypothesis 5.	Working conditions for pickers in 2019 were not significantly improved from 2018.
Hypothesis 6.	Pickers that were working in the fields in clusters received higher payment.
Hypothesis 7.	Pickers that were working in the fields in clusters experienced better working conditions.

Key results of the quantitative phase (CATI survey, N=6000)

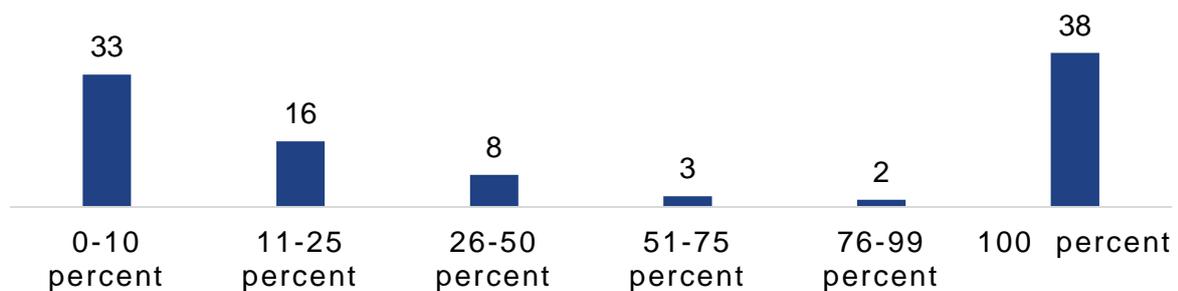
Characteristics of cotton pickers 2019



- 12.5 per cent of the population aged 18–50 years old was involved in cotton picking (approximately 1.75 million people).
- 59.3 per cent of pickers were women; 40.7 per cent were men.
- 75.5 per cent of pickers were from rural areas; 24.5 per cent were from urban areas.
- 10.4 per cent of those who were offered an opportunity to participate in cotton picking declined the opportunity.

- 75.4 per cent of the population was not offered participation in cotton picking. Only 18.4 per cent of the population was offered participation in cotton picking. Of these, 8.0 per cent agreed with the offer, 10.4 per cent declined the offer, and 4.6 per cent approached the farmer or other authority directly to ask for the job.
- Many pickers came to pick cotton with other family members. Among respondents, 44.7 per cent had family members who also participated in the cotton harvest. In 26.7 per cent of cases when several members of one household came to pick cotton, the number of family members was 3 or more.
- 14.1 per cent of people involved in the 2019 cotton harvest were picking cotton under clusters.
- On average, each picker participated in the harvest for 23 days. The average total wages received by a picker in 2019 was 2.2 ml UZS¹⁷.
- For 50 per cent of the cotton pickers, the wages represented up to 25 per cent of their annual income. For 38 per cent of the cotton pickers, the wages represented 100 per cent of their annual personal income.

Chart 1. Answers to the question “What percentage of your personal annual earning did the income in cotton picking represent in 2019?”



Source: TPM (2019), N=624 Testing of the hypothesis

Hypothesis 1.	The proportion of the population involved in forced labour stayed at the same level or declined between 2018 and 2019.	Hypothesis is confirmed
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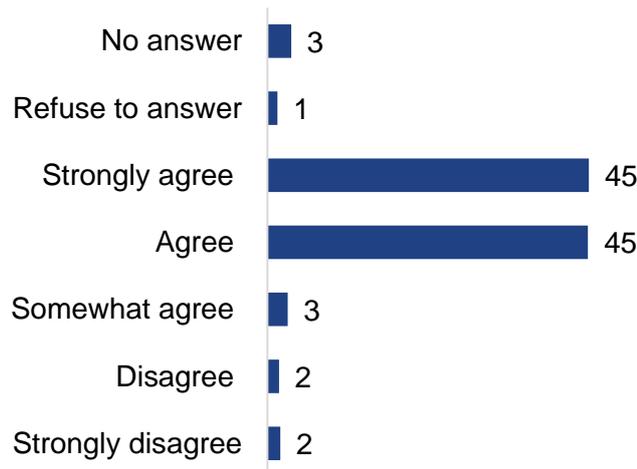
In 2019, the proportion of the working age population involved in cotton harvest declined from 18 per cent to 12.5 per cent. The number of involuntary cotton pickers declined from 6.8 per cent to 5.9 per cent. The absolute number of forced labour was about 102,000 people in the age group 18–50 years old. The decline was less drastic than in 2018. The qualitative monitoring demonstrated the presence of forced pickers among groups such as workers of larger and medium enterprises, soldiers, and prisoners.

Additionally, we note that 7.3 per cent of all cotton pickers said they did not receive payment for picking cotton because they came to pick cotton as a part of hashar. In general, mobilization of pickers under the idea of hashar was continued in 2019.

Hypothesis 2. People feel more open to discussing working conditions in cotton harvest with others. Hypothesis is confirmed

Among the respondents, about 90 per cent said that they felt more comfortable discussing working conditions in cotton harvest with others; 6 per cent entirely or partly disagreed with the statement; another 3 per cent agreed in part with the statement.

Chart 2. Answers to the question “Did you feel more comfortable to discuss working conditions in cotton harvest with others?”

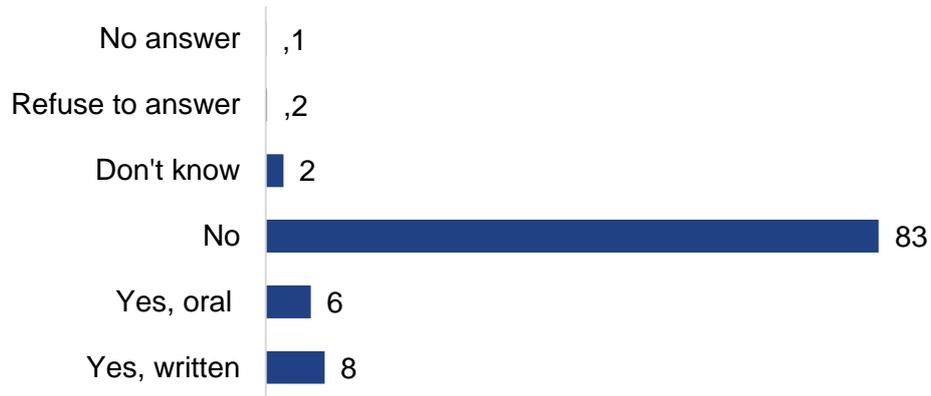


Source: TPM (2019), N=753

Hypothesis 3. The proportion of pickers with formal contracts is low. Hypothesis is confirmed

Most pickers (83 per cent) did not have any contract. Only 8 per cent had a written contract and 6 per cent had some form of oral contract. The proportion of pickers with contracts declined in comparison with 2018, when 21 per cent of pickers had some form of written or oral contract.

Chart 3. Did you have a contract for the work as cotton picker? One response, %



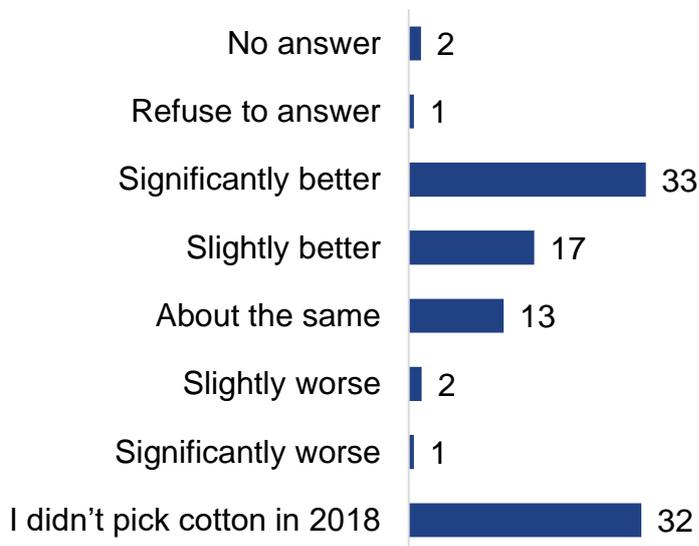
Source: TPM (2019), N=753

<p>Hypothesis 4.</p>	<p>Working conditions for pickers in 2019 were not significantly improved from 2018.</p>	<p>Hypothesis is rejected</p>
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Among all respondents who participated in cotton harvest in 2019:

- 32 per cent said that they did not participate in cotton harvest in 2018 and could not compare working conditions between this and that year.
- 50 per cent of cotton pickers said that working conditions improved slightly or significantly; that is, there were fewer delays with the payment, payment was made on time or more often, the food was better, and a hot lunch was provided more often.
- About 3 per cent noticed that working conditions deteriorated; for example, the increase in cotton picking fees was smaller than last year and less than the pickers had expected.

Chart 4. Answers to the question “Can you assess the working conditions (payment, working hours, rest time, food/water, transportation, etc.) in 2019 in comparison with 2018?”



Source: TMP (2019), N=753

Working conditions (means)

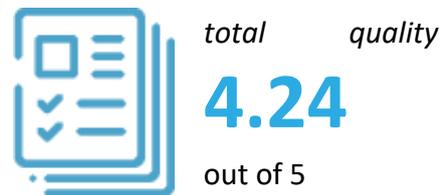
drinking water



transportation



lunch



This year, the respondents were asked whether some money was deducted from their wages to cover the costs for lunch or transportation.

- 6 per cent of pickers said that at least sometimes some money was deducted from their wages to cover the cost of lunch.
- 4 per cent of pickers on fields where the transportation was provided said that some portion of their wages was deducted to cover the costs of transportation.

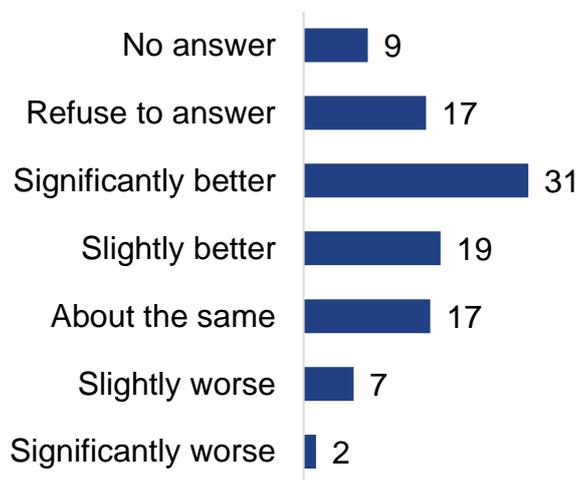
93 per cent of pickers said that they would agree to participate in cotton picking next season under the same fees and working conditions. Among those respondents who would refuse to

participate next year in a cotton harvest, 70 per cent said that they would change their mind if the wages were higher. The mean fair expected wages for 1kg of cotton suggested by respondents who picked cotton in 2019 for the next year is UZS 1580.

Hypothesis 5.	Pickers that were working in the fields in clusters received higher payment and experienced better working conditions.	Hypothesis is strongly confirmed
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For the season, workers working in clusters earned 2.29 mln UZS vs 2.26 mln UZS earned by other pickers. The differences are statistically insignificant (independent sample t-test sig. 2-tailed= 0,956)

Chart 5. Answers to the question “Can you assess the working conditions (payment, working hours, rest time, food/water, transportation, etc.) fields under clusters and fields of farmers that do not belong to clusters?”



Source: TPM (2019), N=106

Pickers who worked on the fields under clusters for at least one day in 2019 were asked to compare working conditions on fields under cluster with other fields.

- 49 per cent noticed that working conditions in fields under clusters were better.
- 17 per cent said that the working conditions were about the same.
- 8.5per cent said that working conditions on those fields were slightly or significantly worse.

This seems to indicate on one hand that working conditions on clusters’ fields tend to be better; on the other hand, on some clusters’ fields the working conditions were worse in comparison with those offered by traditional farmers. So, there is no unified standard regarding the working conditions on fields operated by clusters.

Annexes

Annex 1 – Acronyms and abbreviations

CATI	Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing
GoU	Government of Uzbekistan
MELR	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
ICT	Item Count Technique (ICT)
ILO	International Labour Organization / Office
IRB	Institutional Review Board
RDD	Random Digit Dial
TPM	Third-party Monitoring
WB	World Bank

Annex 2 – Glossary

Khokimiyat	Territorial public and administrative authority (Uzbek)
Hokim	Head of khokimiyat (Uzbek)
Mahalla	Informal self-governance body, neighborhood community (Uzbek)
Pahta shtab	District cotton-picking committee; working groups of local officials who ensure coordination and the proper organization of the cotton harvest.
UZS	Currency of Uzbekistan

Annex 3 – IRB Approval for ILO Third-party Monitoring (field visits)



27 September 2019

Jonas Astrup, LL.B.
Chief Technical Advisor
107A, Amir Timur str., 14 floor
Tashkent, Uzbekistan

RE: Expedited research ethics review findings for: *Third party monitoring of child and forced labour during the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan (field visits monitoring)*

Dear Mr. Astrup,

Protocols for the protection of human subjects in the above study were assessed through an expedited research ethics review by HML Institutional Review Board on 23 September – 27 September 2019.

This study's human subjects' protection protocols, as stated in the materials submitted, received **research ethics review approval** for one year in accordance with the requirements of the US Code of Federal Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46 & [45 CFR 46.110](#)). You may rely on this IRB for review and continuing ethical oversight of this study.

You and your project staff remain responsible for ensuring compliance with HML IRB's determinations. Those responsibilities include, but are not limited to: 1) ensuring prompt reporting to HML IRB of proposed changes in this study's design, risks, consent, or other human protection protocols; 2) investigators will conduct the research activity in accordance with the terms of the IRB approval until any proposed changes have been reviewed and approved by the IRB, except when necessary to mitigate hazards to subjects; 3) and to promptly report any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others in the course of this study.

HML IRB is authorized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections (IRB #1211, IORG #850), and has DHHS Federal-Wide Assurance approval (FWA #1102).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Anderson", is positioned above the typed name.

D. Michael Anderson, Ph.D., MPH
HML IRB Chair & Human Subjects Protections Director
dma@hmlirb.com

cc: Oxana Lipcanu, Rustam Abdumanov, Penelope A. Lantz, JD

HML IRB
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Annex 4 – IRB Approval for ILO Third-party Monitoring (nationwide phone survey)



26 November 2019

Jonas Astrup, LL.B
Chief Technical Advisor
107A, Amir Timur str., 14 floor
Tashkent, Uzbekistan

RE: Expedited research ethics review findings for: *Third party monitoring of child and forced labour during the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan (Nationwide representative phone survey)*

Dear Mr. Astrup

Protocols for the protection of human subjects in the above study were assessed through an expedited research ethics review by HML Institutional Review Board on 25 – 26 November 2019.

This study's human subjects' protection protocols, as stated in the materials submitted, received **research ethics review approval** for one year in accordance with the requirements of the US Code of Federal Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46 & [45 CFR 46.110](#)). You may rely on this IRB for review and continuing ethical oversight of this study.

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HML IRB is authorized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections (IRB #1211, IORG #850), and has DHHS Federal-Wide Assurance approval (FWA #1102).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Anderson", is written over a faint, large watermark of the HML IRB logo.

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Annex 5 – ILO definitions of forced labour, and systematic and systemic forced labour

Forced labour

The term “forced labour” is defined by the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) as all work or service:

- which is not voluntary; and
- which is exacted under the menace of a penalty.

For research purposes, a person is classified as being in forced labour if engaged during a specified reference period in any work that is both *under the threat of menace of a penalty and involuntary*. **Both conditions have to exist for this to be statistically regarded as forced labour.**

- A. The *reference period* may be short such as last week, last month or last season, or long such as the past year, the past two years, the past five years or lifetime. A short reference period may be appropriate where the concern is the measurement of forced labour among a particular category of workers. A long reference period may be appropriate where the objective is to measure the occurrence of forced labour among a general population group.
- B. *Work* is defined in line with the international standards concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization adopted by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, 2013. It comprises any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use. In certain circumstances, the scope of work for the measurement of forced labour may be broadened to include activities such as child begging for third parties that go beyond the scope of production of goods and services covered by the general production boundary of the System of National Accounts (SNA).
- C. *Threat and menace of any penalty* are the **means of coercion used to impose work on a worker against his or her will**. Workers can be actually subjected to coercion, or verbally threatened by these elements of coercion, or be witness to coercion imposed on other co-workers in relation to involuntary work. Elements of coercion may include, inter alia, threats or violence against workers or workers’ families and relatives, or close associates; restrictions on workers’ movement; debt bondage or manipulation of debt; withholding of wages or other promised benefits; withholding of valuable documents (such as identity documents or residence permits); and abuse of workers’ vulnerability through the denial of rights or privileges, threats of dismissal or deportation.
- D. *Involuntary work* refers to any work taking place **without the free and informed consent of the worker**. Circumstances that may give rise to involuntary work, when undertaken under deception or uninformed, include, inter alia, unfree recruitment at birth or through transaction such as slavery or bonded labour; situations in which the worker must perform a job of a different nature from that specified during recruitment without his

or her consent; abusive requirements for overtime or on-call work that were not previously agreed with the employer; work in hazardous conditions to which the worker has not consented, with or without compensation; the lack of protective equipment; work with very low or no wages; in degrading living conditions imposed by the employer; work for another employer than agreed; work for longer period of time than agreed; work with no or limited freedom to terminate work contract.

Schematic representation of the statistical definition of forced labour of adults

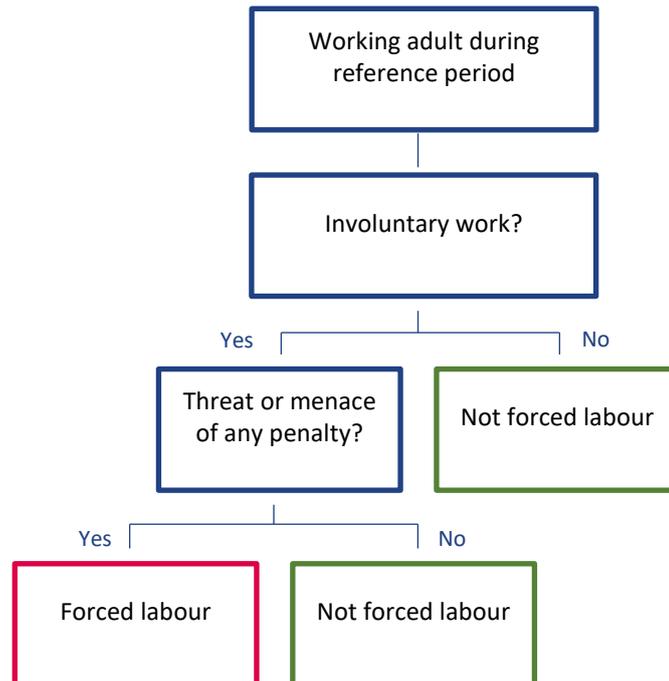
DEFINITIONS:

Work: Any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by other or for own use

Involuntary work: Any work taking place without the free and informed consent of the worker

Threat or menace of any penalty: Any means of coercion used to impose work on a worker against his or her will

Reference period: Short such as last week, last month or last season, or long such as past year, past five years or lifetime



Systemic forced labour

A systemic problem affects the entire system and not only parts of it. It is due to issues inherent to the overall system rather than to a specific, individual, isolated factor.

One of the biggest challenges is to distinguish between individual and systemic cases of coercion. In the former, it should be possible to identify and sanction one offender or group of offenders; and similarly, to identify and provide appropriate assistance to one victim or group of victims.

In all cases identified by ILO monitors and local human rights activists, it has been possible to identify an offender and a victim or group of victims. This also applies for cases submitted to the feedback mechanisms.

EXAMPLE OF SYSTEMIC VS INDIVIDUAL CASES

If all pupils in all schools in a country are normally made to harvest potatoes by law or national policy, it would not be meaningful to identify and punish the head of one individual school or the heads of all schools. Likewise, it is also not possible to identify one victim or a group of victims since in this case all children are victims.

This is an example of *systemic child labour*.

On the other hand, if schoolchildren are normally *not* participating in the potato harvest but the head of one school decides to send 50 pupils to the fields, then it would be meaningful to sanction the head of the school and it is possible to identify the group of victims.

This is an example of an *individual case of child labour*.

Notes and references

¹ Figures may have been rounded up/down. Refer to the methodology section of the report for how calculations are made

² Figures may have been rounded up/down. Refer to the methodology section of the report for how calculations are made

³ World Bank. 2018. *Cotton Taxation in Uzbekistan: Recent Development and Reform Agenda*. Washington, DC.

⁴ Cotton Taxation in Uzbekistan: Recent Developments and Reform Agenda Ahead, World Bank 2018

⁵ https://stat.uz/ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2780&catid=183&lang=ru-RU

⁶ Cotton Taxation in Uzbekistan: Recent Developments and Reform Agenda Ahead, World Bank 2018

⁷ https://stat.uz/ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2780&catid=183&lang=ru-RU

⁸ Cotton Taxation in Uzbekistan: Recent Developments and Reform Agenda Ahead, World Bank 2018

⁹ https://stat.uz/ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2780&catid=183&lang=ru-RU

¹⁰ Strategy of the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations 2021. In 2010, the number of jobs needed was 658,000 and in 2017, the need was 513,000 jobs and the projection is that 540,000 new jobs will be needed in 2020.

¹¹ Official government data: <https://stat.uz/uploads/docs/bandlik17-ru1.pdf>

¹² Complete list of ratifications for Uzbekistan can be accessed from the ILO website:

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11200:0::NO::P11200_COUNTRY_ID:103538

¹³ Official English version of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan is available online at this address:

<http://constitution.uz/en/clause/index#item37>

¹⁴ Unofficial English text of the Labour Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan can be found at this address: <http://cis-legislation.com/document.fwx?rgn=974>

¹⁵ The ILO will work further with the authorities to review the relevant provisions and ensure that their content and application are in line with ILS, given that they have only recently been adopted.

¹⁶ The sampling frame was generated based on DEF diapasons of all cell phones of Uzbekistan, a list of DEF diapasons of all cell phone numbers in the country (a list of all first 2 digits in 9 digit cell phone numbers) is publicly available on the website: www.rtmc.uz. Based on the diapasons, the computer will generate 60 580 000 cell phone numbers that correspond to the diapasons. The list of 60 580 000 is the sampling frame for the study.

¹⁷ Including both in cash and in kind payments