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3.16.4. Children without a support network in Afghanistan

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: May 2024

This subsection concerns children who do not have a parent or other adult family member who can take care of them in Afghanistan.

COI summary

According to reports from January and February 2022, the number of orphans and unsupervised children in Afghanistan was increasing. Many children had lost their parents in the conflict, making orphanages in Afghanistan important institutions. At the same time, orphanages have faced serious difficulties to provide care and food for the children due to the country's economic crisis and lack of external and internal funding [KSEI 2022, 9.3., p. 66].

Only a few weeks after the Taliban takeover in August 2021, the situation for children was described as particularly dire. In October 2021, the starvation deaths of eight unattended orphan boys in Kabul's District 13 were reported. In February 2022, of the 68 public orphanages in Afghanistan, only 9 were reportedly still open, while 36 private orphanages were also still operating [KSEI 2022, 9.3., p. 66].

Living conditions in the orphanages were reported to be poor, with no regular access to running water, heating in winter, indoor plumbing, healthcare service, recreational facilities or education. Children were reportedly subjected to psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, forced labour, and sometimes became the victims of trafficking in human beings [KSEI 2022, 9.3., p. 66].

Conclusions and guidance

Do the acts qualify as persecution under Article 9 QD?

The lack of a support network does not amount to persecution in itself. However, it considerably increases the risk for such children to be exposed to acts which due to their severity, repetitiveness or accumulation could amount to persecution.

See, for example, 3.16.3. Child labour and child trafficking.

What is the level of risk of persecution (well-founded fear)?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the child to face persecution should take into account risk-impacting circumstances, such as: age, gender, being subjected to psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, forced labour, trafficking in human beings, etc.

Are the reasons for persecution falling within Article 10 QD (nexus)?

Available information indicates that in the case of children without a support network in Afghanistan, the individual circumstances of the applicant need to be taken into account to determine whether a nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated.

See other topics concerning children:

- 3.16.1. Violence against children
- 3.16.2. Child recruitment
- 3.16.3. Child labour and child trafficking
- *3.16.4. Children without a support network in Afghanistan*

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