THE CENTRE
FOR CHILD RIGHTS AND BUSINESS

Child Labour Risk Index

Last Update
July 2026

India

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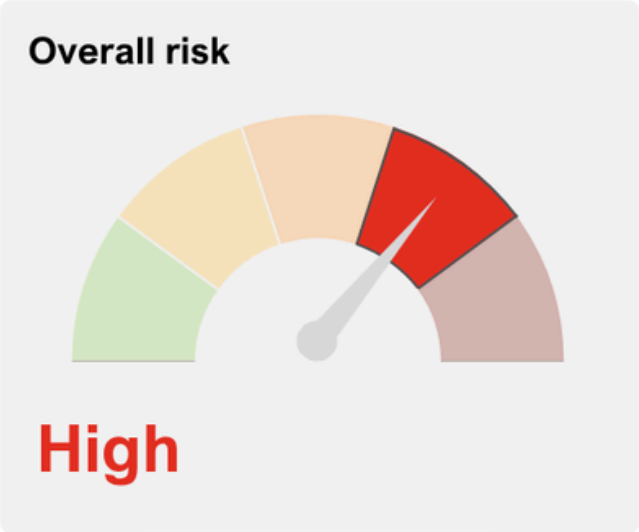
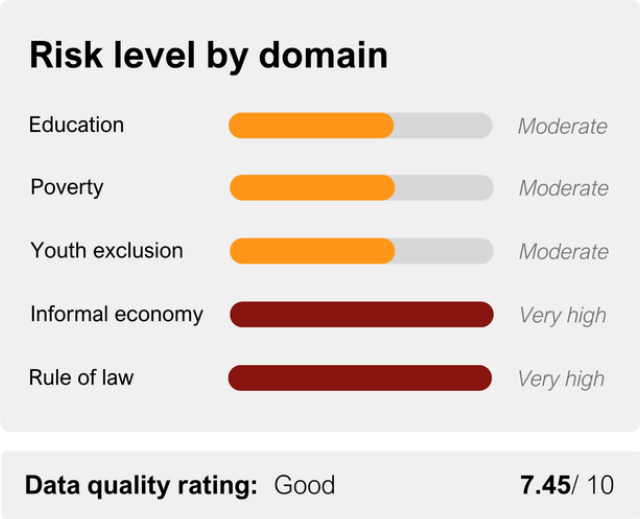
Overview





For detailed information including methodology, visit the Child Labour Risk Index website.

Child Labour in India

The high child labour risk score in India reflects persistent poverty and inequality alongside education drop-off risks that increase children's vulnerability to child labour. While school attendance is widespread, poverty-related pressures, hazardous work, and worst forms of child labour remain concerns where labour demand is informal or subcontracted, reinforcing the need for enhanced due diligence.

Risk Factors

Risks are associated with labour-intensive and informal sectors, including agriculture such as cotton, sugar, herbs, rice and spices, as well as brickmaking, stone quarrying, and garment and textile production. Complex subcontracting, home-based work, and informal recruitment can reduce oversight, increasing the likelihood of underage and hazardous work remaining undetected.

Enhanced due diligence is recommended in India. See page 3 for further guidance.

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Evidence Indications

Between January 2020 and July 2026, The Centre received reports of 21 cases of child labour in India, representing an average age of 14.5 years.

The majority of cases were reported from the agriculture sector. These cases highlight the ongoing risks faced by young adolescents engaged in informal or low-skilled work across.

Please note that this case data is not representative of prevalence, but rather indicative of where The Centre and our clients work.

Please explore Child Labour Alerts and Trends in the CRIB Members' Area for more details.

Credible Reports of Child Labour

Child Labour in India was also documented in **19 credible reports** (via academia, government, media or NGOs) from January 2020 to July 2026. Sectors mentioned in the reports include:

- Cotton (4)
- Agriculture (4)
- Garments & textiles (7)
- Mica (1)
- Sugarcane, spices & tea (3)

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Next Steps

Recommended Due Diligence: **Enhanced**

Implement comprehensive measures: deep multi-tier tracing, in-depth assessments, structured remediation protocols and integration of findings into sourcing decisions.

Step 1: Commit

- Establish a clear CL policy outlining prevention and remediation commitments.
- Create a country-specific CL response plan referencing relevant national legal requirements and industry risks.
- Establish an ongoing partnership with a credible third-party child rights organisation to support case handling and expert guidance.
- Create a dedicated remediation budget or fund to cover remediation costs where needed.

Step 2: Build Capacity

- Train in-country staff and relevant third-party service providers on CL risk identification, escalation and response.
- Train business partners regularly on CL prevention and remediation expectations.
- Require completion of CL training prior to onboarding business partners in high-risk countries.

Step 3: Identify & Map Risks

- Conduct deeper research on CL risks in sourcing regions using credible country and industry reports.
- Assess relevant multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) operating in or covering the country, including their effectiveness and suitability.
- Map supply chain links to informal settings and increase monitoring; consider formalisation where feasible.

Step 4: Conduct In-Depth Assessments

- Organise on-site risk assessments in high-risk countries, prioritised based on risk severity and company leverage over suppliers and intermediaries.

Step 5: Act on Drivers of Risk

- Assess how purchasing practices may contribute to CL risk and implement mitigating actions to avoid contributing to increased risk.

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