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#Uzbekistan
#Corruption
#EnvironmentalSecurity
#ChildLabour

“It is clearly one of the worst environmental disasters of the world.”

- United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the shrinking of the Aral Sea

FAST FACTS // Uzbekistan:

- one of the worlds largest exporters of cotton
- uses forced labour (especially child labour) during harvesting season
- government shuts down schools + public offices while people are forced into the fields to pick cotton, often for long hours, with no protective gear and inadequate food and water
- those who do not make quotas are denied access to utilities and government services such as electricity, gas and water

TAKE ACTION // Campaigns:

| [Human Rights Watch//Uzbekistan: End Forced, Child Labor in Cotton Fields](#)

| [Anti-Slavery International: Cotton Crimes](#)

| [International Labor Rights Forum: Stop Child & Forced Labor - COTTON CAMPAIGN](#)

| [Environmental Justice Foundation: Pick Your Cotton Carefully Campaign](#)

| [Responsible Sourcing Network: The Cotton Pledge](#)

*This is an edited ‘sampling’ of informational resources.
[Click here](#) for #GET learning activities, lesson plans and study guides.*

FEATURED READING // #Uzbekistan, #Corruption & #ChildLabour

[Corruption...what corruption? Transparency International breaks it down](#)

February 12, 2012

Uzbekistan was ranked among the top 3 most corrupt countries in the 2011 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), from the 183 countries surveyed by Transparency International.

[Update: Forced Labour in Uzbekistan](#)

August 27, 2009

Uzbekistan is the second largest exporter of cotton in the world. Unfortunately, this cotton comes at a high price. Thanks to a number of campaigns, it is no secret that Uzbekistan uses forced labour especially child labour during the harvesting seasons. When it's time to harvest the cotton, the government shuts down schools and public offices while people are forced into the fields to pick cotton, often for long hours with no protective gear, inadequate food and water. According to some accounts, children as young as seven are forced into the fields. Those who do not meet quotas are denied access to utilities and government services such as electricity, gas or water.

[Update II: Forced Labour in Uzbekistan](#)

October 6, 2009

Children working the cotton fields this year in Uzbekistan. In August, SA posted an update on Uzbekistan's forced and child labour in the Cotton sector. SA continues to follow the story and unfortunately, matters have continued to decline. As expected, the Uzbek government is once again relying on forced and child labour during this year's harvest season. The Cotton Campaign (through Ferghana.ru) reports that 8 out of 12 provinces have kicked off a mass mobilization into the cotton fields.

[Update III: Uzbekistan's Cotton Trail](#)

November 27, 2009

Yet another update on forced and child labour in Uzbekistan's cotton sector. The Cotton Campaign continues to report on the flagrant abuse of human rights by the Uzbek government. There have been some unfortunate incidents linked to this year's harvest...

FURTHER READING // #ChildLabour & #EnvironmentalSecurity

Country Profile //

- BBC News: [Uzbekistan Country Profile](#)
- Human Rights Watch // [Reports](#)
- Transparency International // [Uzbekistan: Country Profile & Corruption Ranking \(5th lowest ranked country\)](#)

[International Labour Organization \(ILO\): What is child labour?](#)

“Considerable differences exist between the many kinds of work children do. Some are difficult and demanding, others are more hazardous and even morally reprehensible. Children carry out a very wide range of tasks and activities when they work.” (ILO)

[The Aral Sea Crisis - Columbia University](#)

“The reason why we decided to explore the implications up to today of this human alteration of the environment is precisely that certain characteristics of the region, from its geography to its population growth, account for dramatic consequences since the canals have been dug. Those consequences range from unexpected climate feedbacks to public health issues, affecting the lives of millions of people in and out of the region.” (Columbia University - The Aral Sea)

[Environmental Justice Foundation: Forced Child Labor on the Cotton Fields in Uzbekistan: EJL \(2009\) \[VIDEO\]](#)

This short film highlights how exploitative practices continue in Uzbekistan (2009) despite the government adopting a national plan to eradicate child labor, and ratifying International Labor conventions on a minimum employment age, and the worst forms of child labor. The film contains video evidence shot by activists in 2009 and a selection of interesting interviews that summarize the situation well.

[Uzbekistan – the sick man of Central Asia?](#)

Juliette Williams PESISIDE NEWS 75 MARCH 2007

“When I was little, people used to tell me about a strange disease called ‘chicken eye’ which attacks people while they work in the cotton fields. They said when you catch it, everything in front of your eyes becomes white until eventually you temporarily lose all vision...Two years later someone explained that these symptoms were the effects of pesticides applied to cotton” EJF interview with a rural Uzbek (2006)

Environmental Justice Foundation: [Deadly Chemicals in Cotton](#)

Pesticide Action Network: [Problems with conventional cotton production](#)

[What has changed? Progress in eliminating the use of forced child labor in the cotton harvests of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan](#)

A discussion, with new research, on the situation in Uzbekistan today, examining if the governments pledges to end forced labor have been carried through and what progress has been made. This report argues that the continuation of forced child labor is not surprising considering that the root causes have not changed significantly over the past years. The results of a qualitative study, based on interviews with children, parents, teachers and farmers, in 4 different regions of Uzbekistan, demonstrate that the systematic mobilization of children by the state continues throughout the country.

[Life in a Muslim Uzbek village: cotton farming after communism](#) [Russell Zanca \(BOOK\)](#)

This book offers a rare insight into the life and culture of a farming community in Boburkent Uzbekistan, as experienced by the author during time spent in the area. This is an easy reading, anthropological case study, presenting the daily life, culture, and identity issues in one rural Uzbek cotton community.

[For Exploited Uzbek Farmers, High Cotton Prices Only Enrich Overlords](#)

by Ron Synovitz Thursday, February 09, 2012 Radio Liberty

It is not just children and workers who suffer because for cotton in Uzbekistan, life for farmers is also undesirable. Farmers are trapped by a highly regulated state run system, likened to bonded labor. Despite the rise in global cotton prices Uzbek farmers will not see any benefit.

A farmer in Jizzakh, Uzbekistan describes how he was cleared off the land he had rented from state after failing to keep up with debts but having no way to increase his profits. Now unemployed, the farmer blames government greed and power, for the poverty facing the Uzbek s farmers.

#DesignIntervention // Toward #EnvironmentalSecurity: Exploring different models of fashion

Hacking Design RSA

Otto Von Busch

Despite the ready to wear 'fast fashion' model being labeled as democratic, the reality is, in fact one in which workers have no voice. Consumers are encouraged to be passive and excessive waste is produced. The existing relationships between design, manufacture and consumption perpetuate a lack of horizontal agency; which is challenged by Otto, through the concept of 'Hackism'. A must see for designers who do not support the dominant industry model of fashion and are left feeling excluded from fashion altogether.

Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys

Fletcher, Kate. London: Earthscan, 2008.

"Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys brings together for the first time information about lifecycle sustainability impacts of fashion and textiles, practical alternatives, design concepts and social innovation. It challenges existing ideas about the scope and potential of sustainability issues in fashion and textiles, and sets out a more pluralistic, engaging and forward-looking picture, drawing on ideas of systems thinking, human needs, local products, slow fashion and participatory design, as well as knowledge of materials." (KateFletcher.com)

What Happens? An appendix on Fashion stewardship and Social entrepreneurship

Otto von Busch & Karl Palmås (2010)

A theoretical discussion on fashion stewardship in relation to the politics of invention. This paper unpicks the concepts of 'social' and 'entrepreneurship' in order to gain an understanding of what is meant by social entrepreneurship and how this can be related to social change.

What happens next? A journey towards fashion stewardship

Annika Axelsson, Otto von Busch, Karl Palmås & Karin Stenmar (2010)

An alternative approach to the business of fashion, told through this simple picture book. *'This is a story of a sustainable process in fashion called fashion stewardship. It is an adventure about a caring company that creates a symbiosis with a caring consumer.'*

Slow Fashion Fact Sheet

Kate Fletcher, for Fashioning an Ethical Industry

'Slow fashion is about designing, producing, consuming and living better.' (Kate Fletcher)

An alternative to the fast fashion model, slow fashion builds respect into the production of fashion and quality into the produce.

"the rituals of fashion", "the mechanisms of fashion", "the virus of fashion"

Otto von Busch

"Fashion is the celebration of the immediate future. By being constantly new, fashion indicates that the future can be something else, and it pulls us there, by force almost, promising the endless possibilities of the new, the unwritten, our possible better self." (The Virus of Fashion, Axel Trumpfheller and Otto von Busch: Pg. 27)

An end to fast fashion? Consumer-focused, sustainable alternatives

Directorate General for the Environment European commission 19th Jan 2012

Rapidly changing fashions are responsible for the increasing volume of production and consumption of clothing; this excess is associated with greater social and environmental impacts. If consumer values could be used to rethink design and business strategies, more sustainable production and consumption could be achieved.

A solution to fashion textile unsustainability

By Joan Farrer and Angie Finn

The mechanical operations of fast fashion production demonstrate a super efficient, mass manufacturing process. This process has social and environmental costs attached and the flow of information to the consumer is poor; as a result of this the buyer (brand or consumer) cannot exert choice over products based on knowledge of their production. This paper explores how persuasive adaptive computing could be used to increase awareness across the supply chain and combat the 'built in obsolescence' in today's fashion industry.

MORE #Uzbekistan, #Corruption, #EnvironmentalSecurity & #ChildLabour — more videos and photos

[VIDEO] [Aral Sea: UNEP & Google Earth highlights environmental change](#)

[VIDEO] [Camels and rusting ships on the bed of the Aral Sea](#)

Simon Reeves- from the BBC series Meet the Stans (2003)

[VIDEO] A clip from: [The Hospital at the End of the Earth](#)

2001, ELAN FILMS, 16mm Colour.

For the CBC series The Nature of things by David Suzuki

Featuring the town of Muynak Uzbekistan and with past and present footage of the sea and what is left today in the area. It focuses on how this huge environmental disaster is affecting the lives and lively hoods of people living in the area.

[VIDEO] [Uzbekistan recogida del algodón Rafael Gomez](#)

14 second video cotton picking in Uzbekistan taken shot from a car, 2009

[PHOTO] [PICKING COTTON](#)

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