

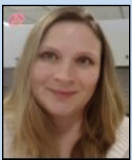
Sweat & Toil



2022 FINDINGS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR



The Year in Review: A Just Transition to End Child Labor



In Memoriam

Kristen Elise Pancio, a dear colleague and friend, passed away on January 9, 2023. Kristen was a dedicated public servant in the Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking at the Bureau of International Labor Affairs and a champion of children's rights.

Cover photo:

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Nabiullah, 11 years old sells peanuts at the local market of Trinkot, Urozgan a central province in Afghanistan; he invested \$40 in a cart that includes an oven and gas cylinder, and 7Kg of peanuts. Trinkot, Afghanistan. January 16, 2021.

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All three of the U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) flagship reports on international child labor and forced labor are available on our website in HTML and PDF formats at dol.gov/ChildLaborReports. These reports include *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*, as required by the Trade and Development Act of 2000; *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor*, as required by the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005; and *List of Products Produced by Forced or Indentured Child Labor*, as required by Executive Order 13126. On our website, you can navigate to individual country pages where you can find information on the prevalence and sectoral distribution of the worst forms of child labor; specific goods produced by child labor or forced labor; efforts each country has made to implement their commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in the areas of laws and regulations, institutional mechanisms for enforcement and coordination, and government policies and social programs; and specific suggestions for government actions to address the issue of child labor.

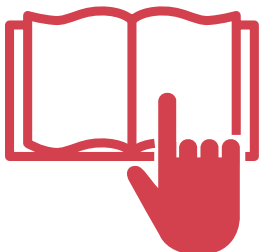
You can also access USDOL's *Comply Chain: Business Tools for Labor Compliance in Global Supply Chains* online at dol.gov/ComplyChain. *Comply Chain* is a practical guide for companies to develop strong social compliance systems to reduce child labor and forced labor in supply chains. Companies can explore modules including stakeholder engagement, code of conduct provisions, auditing, remediation, reporting, and engagement, among others.

Finally, you can access USDOL's *Better Trade Tool* on our website at dol.gov/BetterTradeTool. This tool's dynamic dashboards and custom queries allow users to view and analyze U.S. and global trade data for use in identifying potential child labor and forced labor risks in global supply chains.



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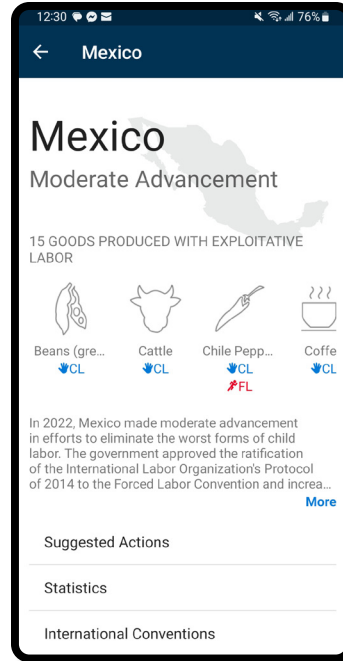
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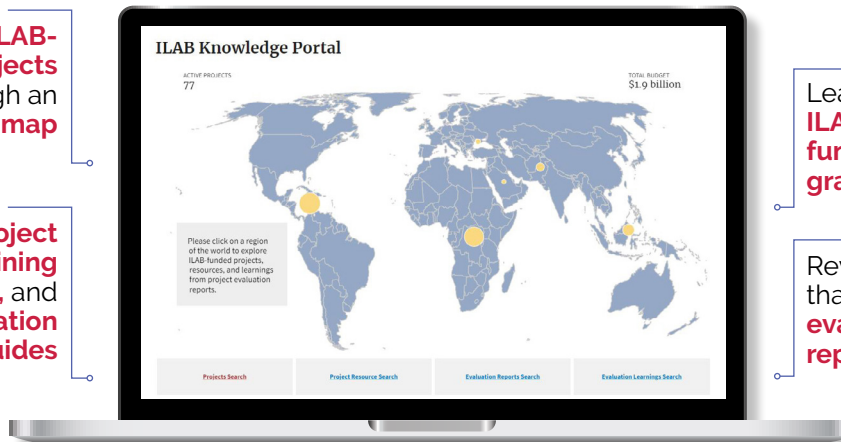
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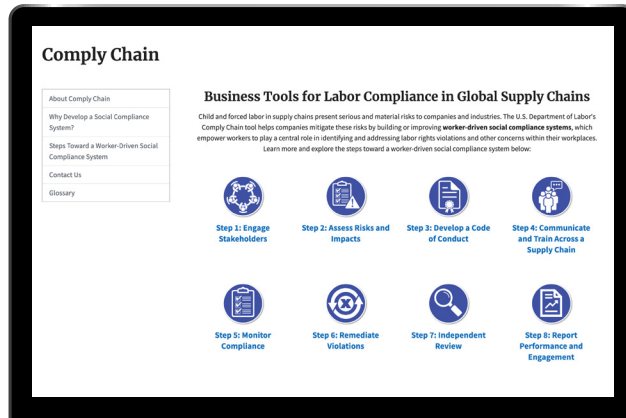
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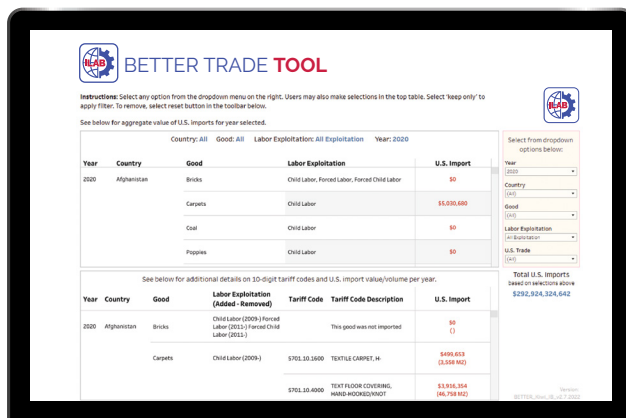
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Girls sit in a classroom preparing for class. Yaounde, Cameroon. September 17, 2022.

Foreword

Ninety years ago, Frances Perkins served as Secretary of Labor and became the first woman appointed to the U.S. Cabinet. She fiercely advocated to end child labor and to institute other labor protections we now take for granted. Throughout her life and in her tenure as Secretary of Labor, she championed the role of unions and the need for social and legal protections—including a national minimum wage, unemployment insurance safety net, and social security. She also brought a global focus to the job, participating in International Labor Organization conferences as early as 1935.

The Biden-Harris Administration and the Department of Labor continue to build on Frances Perkins' enduring legacy to empower and support all workers, to end child labor and forced labor in the United States and across the world, and to uplift workers' rights internationally.

Unfortunately, around the globe workers are often denied the rights they deserve. The Department of Labor has identified a significant increase in child labor in the United States. We also have a responsibility to address labor abuses and take the lead on a global stage. To do so, we need a clear understanding of the conditions leading to harsh labor practices. Our annual *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* report includes an assessment of efforts to end child labor in more than 130 countries and territories and serves as a blueprint for action.

We must also center workers and workers' voices in efforts to overhaul the systems that profit off their exploitation. Through the Multilateral Partnership for Organizing, Worker Empowerment, and Rights initiative, or M-POWER, we can help empower workers to drive change and bring the

rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining to the forefront. The U.S. government has already invested an unprecedented \$130 million to secure these rights globally, and our partners—including five national governments, philanthropic institutions, civil society organizations, and academic entities—are helping bring these efforts to scale.



Julie A. Su
Acting Secretary of Labor

Workers need a voice in their workplace, their communities, and political systems so all workers, businesses and societies can thrive. Our Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor report provides critical data to help workers and worker advocates raise their voices effectively—thereby enriching their contributions and heightening their visibility.

Let's continue to be bold like Frances Perkins—by imagining a world without exploitative child labor and developing policies to empower labor activists and worker organizations to make that world real. Our collaborative efforts and collective action can uplift children's rights and ensure their time is spent learning in school and playing games at home, rather than toiling in fields and factories.

Julie A. Su

Julie A. Su
Acting Secretary of Labor
September 2023



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First graders at Tunua Elementary School studying in their classroom. Tunua Village, North Mollo Sub-District, Timor Tengah Selatan District, Nusa Tenggara Timur Province, Indonesia. October 5, 2022.

Statement

It is true both in the United States and around the world: ending child labor and forced labor is hard work. It requires more than just removing children and adults from exploitative work. This hard work also demands empowering workers to build and strengthen an environment of unionized workplaces, good benefits, and fair compensation to challenge labor exploitation and those who seek to profit and gain from it.

We must take a worker-centered approach to ending child labor and forced labor. First, and fundamentally, this requires standing up for workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively for family-sustaining wages and benefits. When workers raise their voices together to denounce exploitative and dangerous working conditions, they build collective power that can achieve lasting change that stands strong. We know, however, that many workers cannot do this safely, particularly those who toil in informal roles, at the start of global supply chains and far from view, or in countries that systematically repress these foundational rights, sometimes in concert with malevolent corporate actors.

In the U.S., a worker covered by a union contract earns 10% more on average than a peer with similar education, occupation, and experience in a nonunionized workplace in the same industry. Black workers represented by a union are paid 13% more than their nonunionized Black peers, and Hispanic workers represented by a union are paid nearly 19% more than their nonunionized Hispanic peers. (1) Outside the U.S., we also see positive effects for empowered workers. For example, collective bargaining agreements in the Honduran apparel sector have improved access to decent work, fair wages, and safe working conditions, reducing incentives to migrate. (2) And in Lesotho, unions and women's groups persuaded major brands to sign a binding agreement to combat gender-based violence

and harassment in garment factories.

A unionized workplace, in short, is a more equitable workplace, and it's less likely to experience exploitative labor conditions, including child labor.



Thea Mei Lee
Deputy Undersecretary for
International Affairs

Second, we need worker-informed policies, aided by strong labor law enforcement, clear expectations for responsible business conduct and compliance, and economic consequences for governments that fail to enforce the law and comply with international standards. It is vital for governments to enforce transparency as a key business responsibility through legally binding instruments, including government agencies that promote market access for companies who play by global rules or have mandatory due diligence in place and in practice. Such action is essential for accountability and to clear the marketplace of actors who tolerate, or even endorse, abusive labor practices and denial of fundamental labor rights.

Third, we need adequate social protection systems to ensure that poverty and vulnerability do not lead inexorably to child or forced labor.

The U.S. government is a leader in these efforts. We have committed to taking action to end forced labor by 2030 and child labor by 2025 under Target 8.7 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The Department of Labor has invested in the Alliance 8.7 Global Accelerator project, which supports countries in eradicating child labor and forced labor by replicating promising practices, strengthening partnerships, and spurring innovation. The project accelerates action to improve due diligence and

transparency in supply chains, strengthen worker voice, and increase access to social protections.

We are steadfast in our support of the Durban Call to Action, which emerged from the Fifth Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labor last year. We are working globally to eliminate child labor by promoting decent work, universal access to education and social protection, increased collaboration, and stronger laws and enforcement.

We are proud of our new M-POWER initiative—the Multilateral Partnership for Organizing, Worker Empowerment, and Rights. M-POWER is building a committed partnership of governments, worker organizations, and non-governmental organizations to take collective action to defend and uphold workers' rights globally, recognizing that freedom of association and collective bargaining are core elements of vibrant, resilient democracies. The M-POWER Action Plan includes four pillars: global issue campaigns supporting local action on worker priorities; country-level coordination to advance worker rights; urgent action to protect labor activists and organizations facing threats; and strategic communications to elevate worker voice and priorities. By advancing these goals, we create the conditions in which good jobs—not child or forced labor—can flourish.

The department's reports and tools provide the U.S. government and foreign governments a shared understanding of the problem: where it is and how to address it. We and other global actors are putting this research to work.

ILAB's *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor* highlights 159 goods from 78 countries and areas vulnerable to child and forced labor. The latest version also details how some of these tainted goods enter into complex global supply chains and end up in commonly used products. This List is used by advocates, the private sector, NGOs, and governments to identify risks and where to focus remediation efforts.

Companies seeking to implement or improve due diligence also use *Comply Chain*, an online tool with a comprehensive set of best practices to address child and forced labor across global supply chains. This year we have enhanced *Comply Chain* to be more user-friendly and operational, including case studies and resources.

ILAB's Better Trade Tool matches information in our flagship reports to U.S. import trade data. Companies can see which imports have a higher risk of having been produced with child or forced labor, improving transparency and sourcing.

Our research and technical assistance impact enforcement as well. With our support, the ILO and Cornell University developed a forced labor detection handbook and hosted a workshop with South African labor, immigration, and fisheries officials. Later, authorities in South Africa detained a Taiwanese-flagged fishing vessel over suspected labor violations, the first detention action of this kind in five years.

We've also funded new projects to promote transparency and accountability in supply chains.

We awarded a new grant to the Fair Foods Standards Council to expand, for the first time internationally, the Fair Food Program model for promoting human rights and worker rights. The council will pilot the project in the cut flower sector of three countries—Chile, Mexico, and South Africa—as part of a feasibility study for further expansion of the model in other international agricultural supply chains. The model promotes transparency and accountability by empowering farmworkers to report on labor rights issues, holding participating growers responsible for addressing and taking steps to prevent labor rights infractions, and leveraging the influence of participating buyers to secure greater adherence to labor rights in global supply chains.

We also funded a new project with the International Labor Organization to increase worker voice and address forced labor, child labor, and other labor

violations in cattle-raising areas of Brazil and Paraguay.

We recognize that no government, including our own, can do this alone. Whether you represent a company, a government, a union or civil society organization, or are a worker, we hope you look to us as a partner in the fight to end child labor and forced labor. We are strategically investing resources toward these efforts and call upon others to do the same. Together, we can support workers' rights to organize and bargain

collectively, strengthen labor law enforcement, monitor and enforce labor provisions in trade policy, and secure adequate social protection systems in order to end child labor and forced labor.

Thea Mei Lee

Thea Mei Lee
Deputy Undersecretary for International Affairs
September 2023





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Daniel, age 11, carries a bag of cobalt from the Kingiamiyambo mine, where he works ferrying sacks of cobalt. Kolwezi, Democratic Republic of the Congo. 2017.

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Copies of this and other reports in ILAB's child labor and forced labor series may be obtained by contacting the Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room S-5315, Washington, D.C. 20210. Telephone: (202) 693-4843; e-mail: GlobalKids@dol.gov. The reports are also available on the web at <https://www.dol.gov/ilab>. Comments on these reports are welcome and may be submitted to GlobalKids@dol.gov.



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Mohammed, age 14, a Syrian refugee from Kobani, works underneath a car at a repair shop. Mohammed and his family fled violence in Kobani 3 years ago. He and his brother now work full time in an industrial area in Erbil to support their family. Mohammed and his five siblings have not been to school since they left Syria. Erbil, Kurdistan, Iraq. March 10, 2016.

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Underage teens working in a coffee drying factory, drying coffee beans under the sun, in the rural areas of Jinotega, Jinotega, Nicaragua. January 28, 2014.

Purpose of This Report

Research Focus of the Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

USDOL prepared the 2022 *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* report in accordance with the Trade and Development Act of 2000 (TDA). (3) The TDA set forth the requirement that a country must implement its commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor for the President of the United States to designate the country a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program (subject to an exception if designation is in the national economic interest of the United States). (4) The TDA also mandated that the President submit to the United States Congress the Secretary of Labor’s findings with respect to each, “beneficiary country’s implementation of its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.” (3) ILAB carries out this responsibility on behalf of the Secretary.

Country Coverage

This report covers 119 independent countries and 15 non-independent countries and territories designated as GSP beneficiaries. This includes former GSP recipients who have negotiated free trade agreements with the United States. (5) Because the population of children is extremely small (fewer than 50) or non-existent in the British Indian Ocean Territory, Heard Island and McDonald Islands, and the Pitcairn Islands, the report does not contain a discussion of these three non-independent countries and territories. The 2022 report presents information on child labor and the worst forms of child labor, and efforts to eliminate this exploitation in the remaining 119 countries and 12 non-independent countries and territories. The use of “countries” in this report includes territories, and because the report focuses on government efforts, non-independent countries and territories are classified by their associated regions.

Population Covered

In undertaking research on the “worst forms of child labor,” ILAB relies on the definition contained in International Labor Organization Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor (ILO C. 182), which defines “child” as a person under age 18.

Reporting Period

The reporting period for this year’s report is January 2022 through December 2022. In certain cases, significant events or government efforts that occurred in early 2023 were included, as appropriate.

Type of Work

This report focuses on child labor and the worst forms of child labor. Definitions related to these types of work are primarily guided by International Labor Organization Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age (ILO C. 138) and ILO C. 182. Child labor includes work below the age of 15 (14 in developing economies where specified at the time of ratification of C. 138) or the higher minimum age as established in national legislation (excluding permissible light work) and the worst forms of child labor. The definition of “worst forms of child labor” is found in the TDA and is

the same as that included in ILO C. 182. It includes (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale or trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, or forced or compulsory labor, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring, or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography, or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procuring, or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs; and (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances under which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children. (3; 6) Similar to ILO C. 182, the TDA states that the work described in subparagraph (d) shall be determined by the laws, regulations, or competent authority of the beneficiary developing country involved.”

Figure 1

Global Estimates on the Number of Working Children
Global Data on Child Labor, 5-17 Years Old

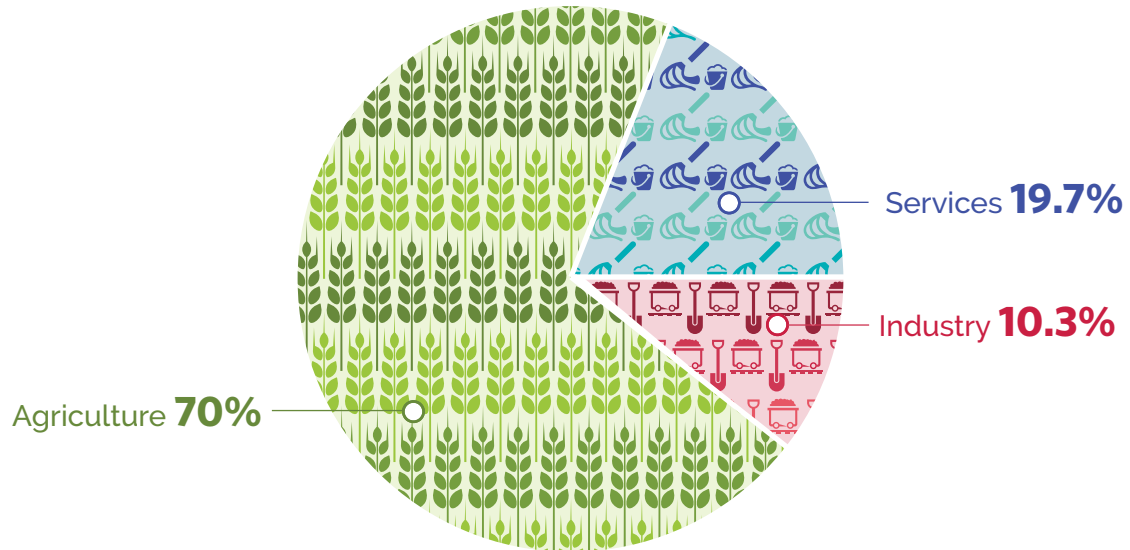


*Global estimates on the number of children engaged in categorical worst forms of child labor do not exist. Source: ILO and UNICEF. *Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward*. New York, 2021

Figure 2

Where 160 Million Children Work

Global Data on Child Labor by Sector, 5-17 Years Old



Source: ILO and UNICEF. *Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward*. New York, 2021





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Sambilahatsa, 12 years old, dropped out of school and works in the Vohibola mica mine. Anosy, Madagascar. June 23, 2022.

2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Year in Review: A Just Transition to End Child Labor

The evidence that the Earth is warming at an unprecedented rate due to human activity is unquestionable. Although the Earth’s climate has fluctuated over time, this current and ongoing period of warming is at the highest rate recorded in more than 10,000 years. (7) A drastically changing climate impacts all of us, especially vulnerable families, workers, and communities, as extreme weather events increase in frequency, sea levels rise, and oceans warm. Climate change leads to irreparable harm, from local fishing stocks disappearing as seas warm, to a need for families and even whole communities to abandon homes due to natural disasters driven by climate change. In fact, over half a billion children are living in areas with extremely high levels of floods and nearly 160 million children live in high drought severity areas. (8) Other global research demonstrates that climate change and environmental degradation are increasingly driving children to more and riskier work. (9)

In the face of these challenges, the world must rise to the occasion. We need a “just transition” to an economy that is more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable—one that is based on clean energy free from fossil fuels, which are directly linked to rising temperatures and climate change. A just transition means that no people, workers, sectors, or countries should be forgotten in the move from high carbon use to low carbon use economies. Our clean-energy future cannot be built on the backs of children and adults in exploitative labor conditions.

A just transition entails decent wages for workers, health and economic benefits for communities, respect for labor rights, and an end to child labor and forced labor. Involving workers and their organizations in key decisions is vital to ensuring that workers and communities benefit from the transition. Read more about the vital role of unions in global efforts to end child labor in Box 1.

Box 1

Trade Unions' and Organized Labor's Vital Role in Fighting Child Labor

For over a century, workers have acted through unions to lead the fight to end child labor. At its first convention in 1881, the American Federation of Labor passed a resolution calling on states to set a minimum age for work. Sustained efforts on the part of organized labor helped President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as part of the New Deal, advocate for policies that supported the rights and livelihoods of adult workers while promoting an end to the child labor that undercut those rights and livelihoods. It was during this time that Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which set the minimum working age at 14 for employment outside of school hours and 16 during school hours. (10)

Today, the fight continues on a global scale, with 160 million children engaged in child labor worldwide. Winning this fight requires workers to have the right to organize and bargain collectively for family-sustaining wages, benefits, and social protection. It requires that workers have the voice and support to denounce exploitative and dangerous working conditions, and collectively advocate for better ones—so that families can find economic security and let their children be children, and so that no one's labor is forced from them.

Empirical research demonstrates the vital role unions play in combating child labor. The International Labor Organization (ILO), for example, has found that policy responses to child labor are most effective when coupled with policies to protect and enforce workers' freedom of association and collective bargaining rights. Exercising these rights allows workers to claim their share of the wealth they have helped create. Absent these rights, the reality becomes more children at work and more adults denied decent work.

Moreover, international research supported by ILAB demonstrates that collective bargaining is key to addressing root causes of labor abuse: "Through collective bargaining, workers—through their elected representatives—are better able to negotiate wages and working conditions, thereby reducing dependence on income earned by children. Strong, democratic trade unions and worker organizations lobby for the 'social wage,' including employment promotion, vocational training, and access to public education, all of which contribute to eradicating child labor." (11)

Every action that governments take to empower workers and trade unions has an exponential effect on combating child labor. With the sustained efforts of workers and organized labor, we can succeed in building stable families, vibrant communities, inclusive economies, and democratic societies free from labor abuse.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) produces essential resources—like this *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* report—to highlight the risks of child labor and forced labor in global supply chains that threaten to derail the world's transition to clean energy. ILAB also conducts broad, international research on child labor and forced labor and has undertaken targeted research in the clean energy sector, most recently in the solar and rechargeable lithium-ion battery supply chains. (12; 13; 14) In

addition, ILAB funds technical assistance projects that work to prevent and eliminate child labor, while also addressing some of the effects of climate change, including our SafeYouth@Work project, which focused on occupational safety and health awareness, including the prevention of heat stress ailments faced by agricultural workers in Colombia; and the PREP4Change project, which is ongoing and looks to address chronic kidney disease, a malady closely associated with heat stress afflicting agricultural workers. (15; 16)

ILAB also works with the G7, which Ministers of Labor, Employment and Social Affairs recently adopted a communiqué on agreements, action, and joint steps toward a just transition and the creation of decent, high-quality work for a sustainable green economy. (17) In addition, ILAB promotes workers' rights in the Indo-Pacific region through the negotiation of commitments under the Trade, Supply Chain, Clean Economy, and Fair Economy Pillars of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity. (18) And in early 2023, the U.S. and Japan

signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch a Task Force on the Promotion of Human Rights and International Labor Standards in Supply Chains, bringing ILAB together with U.S. government and Japanese government agencies in the global effort to tackle labor exploitation and help create and strengthen clean energy supply chains in the U.S. and Japan. (19) Read more about ILAB's work to address labor risks in clean energy supply chains in Box 2 and review general project information in Figures 3 and 4.

Box 2

Addressing Child Labor and Forced Labor Risks in Global Energy Supply Chains

Paul never attended school. He was just 12 years old when he started working in an artisanal cobalt mine in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). For years, Paul worked excessive hours underground and often without breaks or protective equipment. As the world transitions to renewable energy sources, demand for critical minerals like cobalt has soared. Unfortunately, these ores are often mined by children like Paul. His story is not unique. Thousands of children just like him, some as young as 4 years old, work in small-scale or "artisanal" mines around the world, excavating cobalt and other minerals. These children miss out on education and suffer from debilitating, sometimes life-long physical and mental health problems.

ILAB is taking significant steps to address these risks in mineral supply chains. Through our research, programming, and engagement, we can provide a more hopeful future for children like Paul. In fact, ILAB works closely with the governments of the DRC and other African countries, as well as with industry and civil society partners, to address child labor in clean energy supply chains. ILAB is promoting traceability, improving labor standards, and supporting local communities to reduce the risks of child and forced labor through projects like the Global Trace Protocol and Combatting Child Labor in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Cobalt Industry. (20; 21) ILAB is also committed to helping countries formalize and legalize their artisanal and small-scale mining sectors, which will strengthen safety, environmental, and labor protections.

A just transition to a greener future is central to the Biden-Harris administration's strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa. The U.S.-African Leaders Summit, marking a watershed moment in the U.S.-Africa relationship, brought us one step closer to this goal. (22) The summit assembled American and African leaders in Washington to build on shared values, including addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development. At the conclusion of the summit, the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the DRC and Zambia committing to support the joint development of an electric vehicle battery value chain within the two countries. (23)

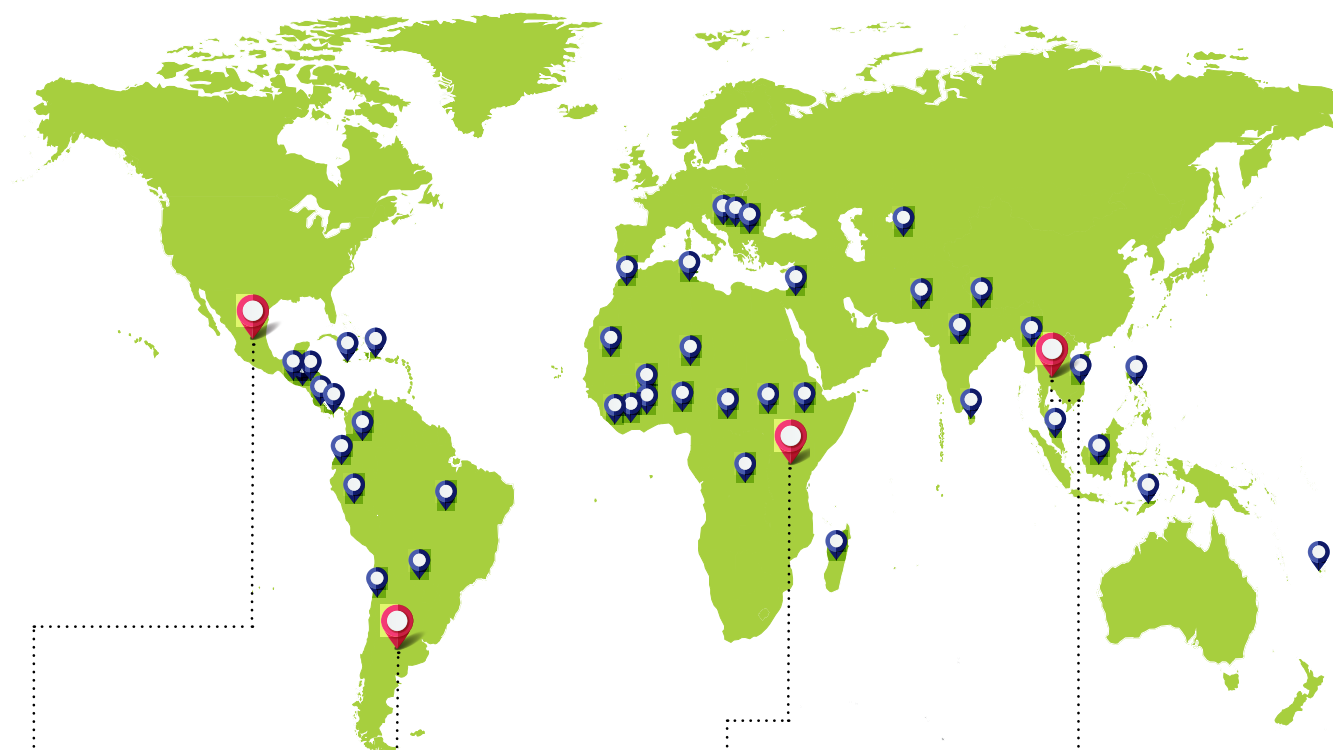
We are in a singular position to signal to the world that clean energy supply chains can be free of child and forced labor. ILAB's work helps to ensure that minerals critical to this transition are produced in ways that enhance the dignity of all workers. The partnerships forged at the U.S.-African Leaders Summit demonstrate a commitment to achieving this goal. They offer children like Paul real hope for a brighter, cleaner future.

Figure 3

ILAB's Projects

Addressing Child Labor and Forced Labor Around the World

ILAB supported **56** active projects & initiatives within **47** countries in 2022



EQUAL – Equal Access to Quality Jobs for Women and Girls in Mexico

In Mexico, women face many gender barriers to full inclusion in the labor market and access to decent work. There is limited government enforcement of laws on child labor, gender-based discrimination, and working conditions in agriculture, where many women and adolescent girls work. The EQUAL project is working to reduce the risk of child labor, forced labor, and other labor rights violations for women and adolescent girls (aged 15-17) working within the coffee and sugarcane sectors.

PAR – Multi-stakeholder Strategy for Child Labor Elimination in Agriculture in Argentina

Child labor in Argentina affects 9.4 percent of all children aged 5-15. Much of this occurs in agriculture. This project raises the visibility and understanding of child labor in agriculture. It contributes to improved tools and coordination among government, the private sector, and civil society to confront the problem, focusing on blueberry and yerba mate production.

CAPSA – Capacity Strengthening of Governments to Address Child Labor and/or Forced Labor, and Violations of Acceptable Conditions of Work in Sub-Saharan Africa

There are an estimated 79 million child laborers and 3.4 million forced laborers in sub-Saharan Africa. In Kenya, the CAPSA project is building government capacity to combat child labor and forced labor more effectively by helping them strengthen law enforcement, improve assistance for victims, and enhance coordination between law enforcement and social protection entities.

FAIR Fish – Fostering Accountability in Recruitment for Fishery Workers in Thailand

In the Asia-Pacific region, a large workforce of migrant workers catch, farm, and process most of the world's seafood. Many are recruited by third parties into exploitative jobs in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The FAIR Fish project works directly with seafood and fishing companies and their recruiters to improve responsible recruitment processes and address forced labor and human trafficking in recruitment.

Learn more about the people and places behind these projects.

Check out our stories and videos here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/success-stories>

Figure 4

ILAB's Impact Making a Difference Since 1995



Demonstrating commitment and leadership in the worldwide movement to end child labor, which has contributed to a global **reduction of 86 million** child laborers since 2000

Providing education and vocational training opportunities to nearly **2 million** children



Increasing the capacity of **more than 85 countries** to address child labor and forced labor

Improving livelihoods for **nearly 200,000** vulnerable families



Training **more than 65,000** labor inspectors and law enforcement officials

Providing **more than 70,000** teachers with training to work with children affected by child labor



Supporting the collection of information on child labor and forced labor **through more than 300** surveys, including **more than 90** national child labor surveys

Visit www.dol.gov/EndChildLabor to learn more

The following pages provide an overview of global child labor in the year 2022 and detail the meaningful efforts that many countries made, as well as the enormous obstacles that remain before we can achieve a total abolition of child labor, especially in its worst forms. A world free of child labor is an ambitious goal—and a worthy one, without a doubt. Children deserve a world where they are free to develop into successful adults. To achieve that future, international cooperation is crucial. ILAB remains a leading voice on these efforts and part of the wider U.S. government commitment to put labor at the forefront of all our actions.

Overview of 2022 Assessments

This year, only 4 of 131 countries, down from 9 last year, achieved the highest assessment of Significant Advancement: **Argentina, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Uzbekistan** (see Figure 5 for a global breakdown of country assessments). These countries made meaningful efforts during the reporting period in all relevant areas—legal frameworks, enforcement, coordination, policies, and social programs. In some cases, these efforts included taking suggested actions recommended in our 2021 report. Each of the four countries met and/or exceeded the baseline of minimally acceptable protections needed to receive ILAB's highest assessment of Significant Advancement. All four countries achieving Significant Advancement this year received the same assessment last year. This is the second year in a row for both **Côte d'Ivoire** and **Uzbekistan**, the latter of which achieved its first ever Significant Advancement in 2021. **Argentina**, for its part, achieved its eighth consecutive assessment of Significant Advancement with this year's report. Moreover, this year's report represents the tenth Significant Advancement assessment for **Colombia**. Laudable as an assessment of Significant Advancement is, it represents a country's efforts only during the reporting period—from January 2022 to December 2022. Even countries that have achieved a Significant Advancement have more work to do, especially in the areas of labor and criminal law enforcement.

It is important to highlight that seven additional countries and territories would have received an assessment of Significant Advancement had they met the baseline level of protections. These countries are **Brazil, Cabo Verde, Madagascar, Moldova, Nigeria, Thailand, and Uganda**.

In total, 69 countries received an assessment of Moderate Advancement in 2022, a decline from 73 countries last year. These countries made meaningful efforts during the reporting period to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in some relevant areas affecting laws and regulations, enforcement, coordination, policies, and social programs. Unfortunately, 25 countries—an increase from 15 last year—received an assessment of Minimal Advancement for making efforts in only a few relevant areas.

Other countries also made efforts to address child labor during the year; yet because they simultaneously continued or established a detrimental law, policy, or practice that delayed advancement in eliminating the worst forms of child labor, the highest assessment level these countries could receive was Minimal Advancement. Twenty-one countries—**Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Cambodia; the Central African Republic; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the Dominican Republic; Gabon; Iraq; Kazakhstan; Kenya; the Kyrgyz Republic; Mali; Mauritania; Saint Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha; Somalia; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Ukraine; Yemen; and Zimbabwe**—implemented or maintained a law, policy, or practice related to education, minimum age for work, labor inspection, impunity for perpetrators, criminal treatment of victims, or the recruitment and use of child soldiers that undermined their advancement. Three of these countries were new to this assessment level in 2022: **Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Dominican Republic**. Three countries were also removed from this level: the **Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas), Montserrat, and Pakistan**.

Figure 5

Global Breakdown of Country Assessments

4 Significant Advancement

Argentina | Colombia | Côte d'Ivoire | Uzbekistan

69 Moderate Advancement

Albania | Angola | Belize | Benin | Bhutan | **Bolivia** ↑ | Bosnia and Herzegovina | **Botswana** ↑ | Brazil | Burkina Faso | Burundi | Cabo Verde | Cameroon | Chile | Comoros | **Costa Rica** ↓ | **Djibouti** ↑ | **Ecuador** ↓ | Egypt | El Salvador | Ethiopia | Gambia, The | Georgia | Ghana | **Guatemala** ↓ | Guinea | Guinea-Bissau | **Honduras** ↓ | India | Indonesia | Jamaica | **Jordan** ↓ | Kosovo | Lesotho | Liberia | Madagascar | Malawi | Maldives | Mauritius | Mexico | **Moldova** ↑ | Mongolia | Morocco | Nepal | Nigeria | Norfolk Island | Oman | **Pakistan** ↑ | Panama | Paraguay | Peru | Philippines | Saint Lucia | Samoa | Senegal | Serbia | Sierra Leone | **Solomon Islands** ↑ | South Africa | Sri Lanka | Suriname | Tanzania | Thailand | Togo | Tunisia | Uganda | **Vanuatu** ↑ | Western Sahara | Zambia

46 Minimal Advancement

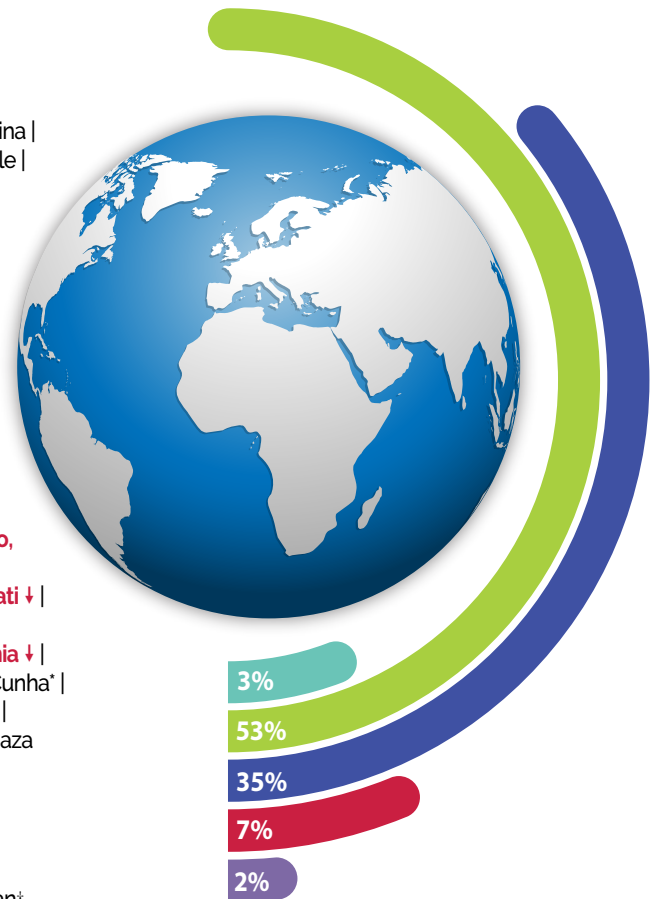
Algeria | Armenia* | Azerbaijan* | **Bangladesh** ↓ | Cambodia* | Central African Republic* | **Chad** ↓ | **Congo, Democratic Republic of the*** ↓ | **Congo, Republic of the** ↓ | **Cook Islands** ↓ | Dominica | **Dominican Republic*** ↓ | Eswatini | **Fiji** ↓ | Gabon* | Guyana | Haiti | Iraq* | Kazakhstan* | Kenya* | **Kiribati** ↓ | Kyrgyz Republic* | Lebanon | Mali* | Mauritania* | **Montenegro** ↓ | **Mozambique** ↓ | **Namibia** ↓ | Nicaragua | **Niger** ↓ | **Niue** ↑ | **North Macedonia** ↓ | Papua New Guinea | **Rwanda** ↓ | Saint Helena, Ascension, and Tristán da Cunha* | **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** ↓ | **São Tomé and Príncipe** ↓ | Somalia* | Timor-Leste* | **Tokelau** ↑ | Tonga* | Tuvalu | Ukraine* | West Bank and the Gaza Strip | Yemen* | Zimbabwe*

9 No Advancement

Afghanistan | Anguilla | British Virgin Islands | Burma‡ | Eritrea‡ | **Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)*** † | Grenada | **Montserrat*** † | South Sudan‡

3 No Assessment

Christmas Island | Cocos (Keeling) Islands | Wallis and Futuna



* Efforts made but regression or continued law, policy, or practice that delayed advancement
 † Efforts made but complicit in forced child labor

↑ Increase in assessment level
 ↓ Decrease in assessment level

Five countries received an assessment of No Advancement because they made no effort to prevent the worst forms of child labor: **Anguilla**, the **British Virgin Islands**, the **Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)**, **Grenada**, and **Montserrat**. **Afghanistan** also received a No Advancement during the reporting period due in part to the escalating humanitarian crisis following the Taliban takeover in 2021. The Taliban actively recruited and used children as part of their security forces and considered some child trafficking victims, especially those engaged in *bacha bazi* or armed conflict, as criminals, housing them in juvenile detention centers and subjecting them to torture and other forms of ill treatment rather than referring them to victim support services.

In addition, some countries could only receive an assessment of No Advancement because they had a policy or demonstrated a practice of being complicit in the use of forced child labor in more than isolated incidents. The list remains unchanged for 2 years now, since the 2020 report, and comprises **Burma**, **Eritrea**, and **South Sudan**. These countries were found to be complicit in the use of worst forms of child labor during the reporting period, Burma in forced labor for non-combat roles in conflict areas, Eritrea in public works projects, and South Sudan in forced recruitment for armed conflict. Learn more about the U.S. government's business advisory related to conducting business in South Sudan in Box 3.

Figure 6

Baseline of Minimally Acceptable Protections



In order for a country to be eligible to receive an assessment of Significant Advancement, a country must have:

LEGISLATION

- ✓ Established a minimum age for work that meets international standards;
- ✓ Established a minimum age for hazardous work that meets international standards;
- ✓ Established legal prohibitions against forced labor that meet international standards;
- ✓ Established legal prohibitions against child trafficking that meet international standards;
- ✓ Established legal prohibitions against commercial sexual exploitation of children that meet international standards;
- ✓ Established legal prohibitions against the use of children for illicit activities that meet international standards;

ENFORCEMENT

- ✓ Designated a competent authority or implemented institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor;
- ✓ Imposed penalties for violations related to the worst forms of child labor;
- ✓ Took active measures to ensure that children are not inappropriately incarcerated, penalized, or physically harmed for unlawful acts as a direct result of being a victim of the worst forms of child labor;
- ✓ Took active measures to investigate, prosecute, convict, and sentence public officials who participate in or facilitate the worst forms of child labor;
- ✓ Made a good-faith effort to collect and publish labor and criminal law enforcement data; and

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

- ✓ Directly funded a significant social program that includes the goal of eliminating child labor or addresses the root causes of the problem (e.g., lack of education opportunities, poverty, discrimination)

Box 3

Ongoing Business Risks in South Sudan

The U.S. Department of Labor, with the U.S. Departments of State and Commerce, issued a Business Advisory on South Sudan to highlight the growing reputational, legal, and economic risks to U.S. businesses and individuals conducting or contemplating business in South Sudan, particularly with companies that have strong ties to South Sudan's extended transitional government. (24)

These risks stem from the government's August 2022 decision to extend the 4-year transitional government, which was mandated to conclude in February 2022, despite failing to address pervasive and endemic corruption in the public and private sectors of the economy. Leaders in the country allocate resources to fund and equip security forces and militias loyal to political elites who have been implicated in human rights violations, including in the forcible recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, which ranks among the worst forms of child labor. Reports also indicate that the government forcibly uses children in combat and in support roles as cooks, porters, and spies. These and other actions exacerbate reputational, economic, and legal risks for foreign businesses and individuals operating in South Sudan.

"The transitional government in South Sudan has shown an unwillingness to address the corruption and illegal activity in its ranks that have given rise to labor and human rights violations throughout the country," said Deputy Undersecretary for International Affairs, Thea Lee. This "business advisory reminds U.S. businesses that engaging with companies or individuals associated with a government complicit in human rights violations legitimizes these unethical practices," she also remarked.

The Department of Labor strongly encourages businesses and individuals with operations in South Sudan to avoid the reputational, legal, and economic risks of association with the South Sudanese transitional government and with companies that have significant ties to the transitional government.

For this year's report, only **Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and Wallis and Futuna** received No Assessment. This assessment is reserved for countries or territories in which the population of children is either non-existent or extremely small, there is no evidence of the worst forms of child labor and the country appears to have an adequate preventative legal and enforcement framework on child labor, or a country is included in the report for the first time or receives a suggested action for the first time.

Overview of Meaningful Efforts

Despite the persistence of child labor and its worst forms, there are notable efforts worthy of recognition. These efforts offer insights into how various countries tackle child labor and demonstrate that together, and through collective action, the world can move forward in its goals to eliminate child labor.

Legal

In this year's reporting cycle, several countries undertook meaningful efforts to ratify key international commitments in support of fundamental principles and rights at work. For example, **Mexico** ratified the ILO Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention 29. The Government of **Panama** ratified the ILO Labor Inspection (Agriculture) Convention 129, which is meant to strengthen the country's labor inspection capacity in agricultural sectors. **Botswana** acceded to the ILO Labor Inspection Convention 81 and the Labor Inspection (Agriculture) Convention 129, which together outline principles for development of strong labor inspection systems, including in the agricultural sector—the sector in which child labor occurs most commonly on a global scale. **Chad's** government also ratified the International

Figure 7

Minimum Age for Work

ILO C. 138 sets the minimum age for work at 15 years (or 14 as appropriate)* and specifies that it shall not be less than the compulsory education age.

85

countries do not have a minimum age for work that meets international standards

Of the 85 countries, **19** have laws that exclude certain groups of working children from minimum age protections. **3** countries also have no minimum age for work at all.

Niue ■ Tokelau ■ Tonga

* Countries whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed may initially specify a minimum legal working age of 14 when ratifying the convention.

Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Finally, on July 1, 2022, the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention 190 entered into force in **Mauritius**. This Convention provides a common framework for action and a unique opportunity to shape a future of work based on dignity and respect and reinforces the rights of everyone to a world free from violence and harassment.

Bhutan also ratified the Palermo Protocol; the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; and the United Nations Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air. In addition, Australia ratified the ILO Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention 29, a fundamental Convention for the abolition of forced labor, including forced child labor, which extends to Australia's various external territories, namely **Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and Norfolk Island**. Lastly, the Government of the **Solomon Islands** also ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and the Optional

Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

Other countries and territories took steps to provide children with protections against hazardous work. **Bangladesh** revised its list of hazardous work prohibited for children to include five additional sectors: dried fish manufacturing; informal street-based child labor; production, collection, and transportation of bricks; tailoring and informal production of garments; and waste management. **Liberia** also approved a new hazardous work list, which identified specific occupations and tasks prohibited for children, including sugarcane cleaning and harvesting, rubber tapping, palm cutting, bush clearing, and harvesting cocoa. **Angola** published a new list of hazardous work and established criteria for permissible work for children ages 16 and above, including the requirement to have a medical statement of good physical and mental health and an evaluation of the risks of that activity. These delineations of what constitutes hazardous work are essential to ensuring that children do not perform hazardous and dangerous tasks. Learn more about

Figure 8



Minimum Age for Hazardous Work

ILO C. 138 sets the minimum age for hazardous work at 18 years (or 16 under certain strict conditions)*



22 countries do not have a minimum age for hazardous work that meets international standards

Anguilla ■ Belize ■ Dominica ■ Eritrea ■ Ethiopia ■ Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) ■ Grenada ■ Guyana ■ Kazakhstan ■ Nepal ■ Niue ■ Pakistan ■ Panama ■ Papua New Guinea ■ Saint Vincent and the Grenadines ■ Solomon Islands ■ Timor-Leste ■ Tokelau ■ Tonga ■ Uganda ■ Ukraine ■ Vanuatu

What is Hazardous Child Labor?

ILO Recommendation 190¹ calls on governments to consider the following when determining work that is prohibited for children.



Work which exposes children to physical, psychological, or sexual abuse



Work underground, under water, at dangerous heights, or in confined spaces



Work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads



Work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health



Work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer

¹International Labor Organization. Recommendation 190. Geneva: June 1999. <https://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc87/com-chir.htm>.

about the minimum age for work in Figure 7 and hazardous child labor in Figure 8.

Some countries also took steps to expand civil legal protections against child labor and ensure that laws comprehensively cover those at risk. For example, in **Sri Lanka**, the government amended its Children and Young Persons Ordinance to define individuals

under 18 years old as children, compared to 16 years old previously, which brings this law into compliance with international standards. **Mongolia's** Ministry of Labor issued a decree that clarifies the list of light work activities permitted to children between the ages of 13 and 15. **Chile** increased prison sentences for perpetrators of child trafficking and the commercial

sexual exploitation of children and passed a law to protect minors from economic exploitation. In **Zambia**, updates to the country's Trafficking in Persons Act brought the country's legal framework in line with international standards. Strong legal standards that are backed by robust enforcement are the bedrock that countries need to end child labor, including its worst forms.

Enforcement

New developments in laws coupled with meaningful enforcement help build a strong system of protection against child labor, especially its worst forms. To that end, several countries strengthened online protections for children as the world grows increasingly digital. **Tunisia** launched a digital platform in late 2022 to improve coordination among service responders of abuse against children, including child labor. In **Burkina Faso**, the Ministry of Labor created a mobile application for labor inspectors to help determine the dangers children are exposed to, direct them toward appropriate services, and verify that they have been removed from worksites. Further, in **Thailand**, 220 police officers received training on digital forensic investigations and evidence collection, while in **Albania**, the State Inspectorate for Labor and Social Services developed an online tool to improve transparency around penalties, particularly when a fine can be issued and the amount of the fine.

Efforts to protect children depend on good data. In 2022, countries published new data on labor and criminal law enforcement, sometimes for the first time. For example, **Samoa** published information about its number of labor inspectors and **Lesotho** and **Tanzania** made new enforcement data available. For the first time in several years, **Benin** published criminal law enforcement data on cases related to the worst forms of child labor. **Botswana** provided information covering all labor law enforcement data points in this year's report, offering an opportunity for a deeper level of dialogue and targeted

enforcement recommendations. Also, for the first time, **Egypt** provided comprehensive criminal law enforcement data.

Beyond making data available, some countries made meaningful efforts to increase their number of labor inspectors and raise funding levels for their labor inspectorates. For example, **Colombia** created an elite group of inspectors to better focus on child labor and increased its total corps of labor inspectors by about 32 percent relative to last year. While the number of labor inspectors remains insufficient, **Panama** made progress by nearly doubling its number of labor inspectors, from 105 to 198, and **Haiti** hired 29 new labor inspectors. **Georgia** further increased its number of labor inspectors from 109 to 123, which provides for an adequate number of labor inspectors to perform their mandated duties. **Georgia** also created a group of specialized labor inspectors to identify instances of forced labor and trafficking for labor exploitation and opened branch offices to increase its operational presence in the western part of the country.

Similarly, some countries in Africa significantly increased their number of labor inspectors. **Ghana**, for example, quadrupled its number of labor inspectors from 48 to 189, and **Benin** more than doubled its number of labor inspectors from 35 to 72. Zanzibar—a sub-region operating autonomously in terms of labor law enforcement from Mainland **Tanzania**—increased annual funding for its labor inspectorate from \$10,000 to \$183,000. The Government of **Guinea** significantly increased its labor inspectorate funding from \$11,500 to \$174,182. In Asia, **Maldives** increased its labor inspectorate's budget, raising the number of labor inspectors from 23 to 32, including those labor inspectors designated for opening branches on additional islands. While these increases are encouraging, in many instances, further increases in the number of labor inspectors are necessary to ensure adequate coverage for a country's labor force.

Other countries enhanced and delivered training in novel ways. **Belize** introduced new standard operating procedures for trafficking in persons and began training prosecutors and magistrates on using the procedures to refer survivors to care. In **Albania**, inspectors received training on regulations related to the employment of minors, while **Chile** developed training modules on child labor and migration for enforcement personnel. In **Guinea-Bissau**, the National Guard, lacking financial and logistical resources, created grassroots committees within villages near border locations to identify human traffickers using illegal border crossings.

Regarding criminal enforcement efforts, **Argentina's** government prosecuted at least 16 individual defendants for child exploitation and achieved 6 convictions that sentenced 12 individuals with prison terms ranging from 6 to 25 years. The Government of **Suriname** also secured 10 convictions for crimes related to child labor. Two police officials in the country were found guilty and received prison sentences for child trafficking. In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, 6 offenders were sentenced to a total of 74 years imprisonment, the highest length sentence for trafficking in persons to date in that country.

Madagascar's National Police and Gendarmerie collaborated with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation on a case that led to the conviction of an American offender for online sexual exploitation of underage Malagasy girls. **Guinea-Bissau** initiated the first child labor prosecutions in nearly 10 years.

Those who prey on workers often cross borders, impeding officials seeking to enforce laws because officials have reached the limits of their jurisdiction. Because of this reality, partnerships with other countries remain essential to address persistent labor abuse and bring justice to criminals and compassion to survivors. In 2022, **Suriname** signed bilateral and regional enforcement arrangements with neighboring **Brazil**, **Guyana**, and French Guiana, that included language on joint efforts to combat cross-border criminal activities, including human trafficking. Officials in **Bangladesh** and **India** also worked together to repatriate 21 women and children who were victims of trafficking. Learn more about global enforcement efforts in Figure 9.

Coordination

New coordination mechanisms and action plans are some of the meaningful efforts made this year.

Figure 9

Global Enforcement Efforts*



31

Have an adequate number of labor inspectors



99

Have a mechanism to assess civil penalties



80

Conducted routine labor inspections



78

Conducted unannounced inspections



105

Have a complaint mechanism for labor violations

*Out of 131 countries

Coordination among government ministries, both those enforcing laws and those providing services, helps ensure that criminals are prosecuted, and victims receive care and support. At times, these interagency bodies also help to conduct trainings on child labor-related issues and ensure that the training is uniform across the government.

Cambodia established 14 municipal and provincial committees on countering child labor. **Suriname's** National Commission on Combating Child Labor was highly active in calendar year 2022: it met six times, translated television and radio awareness-raising programs into six languages, and distributed flyers about child labor across the country.

Despite the ongoing aggression and territorial incursions made by Russia against **Ukraine**, the Ukrainian government established a coordination body to support the temporary domestic and international evacuation of Ukrainian children living in various government institutions in areas affected by Russia's invasion. In **Serbia**, the government signed a plan to streamline collaboration to improve the status of street children. **Tunisia** launched a digital platform to improve coordination among agencies that respond to child abuse. And in **Algeria**, the National Authority for the Protection and Promotion of Children launched an online platform to increase coordination among civil society organizations working on child protection issues.

In cooperation with UN Office on Drugs and Crime, **Senegal's** National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons developed standard operating procedures for the identification, investigation, and referral of cases of trafficking in persons. **Côte d'Ivoire's** government created the National Sustainable Cocoa Committee, and **Comoros** established the National Committee on the Prevention of Illegal Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons. In **Madagascar**, a regional committee in Fianarantsoa conducted field visits to markets, brickmaking sites, and stone quarries to monitor child labor and raise awareness among parents. Lastly, **Mozambique's** Ministry of Labor

and Social Security convened the government's first national conference on the elimination of child labor and subsequently held eight province-level conferences on child labor and human trafficking.

Policy

During this year's reporting period, countries established or implemented policies to address child labor. In the **Philippines**, the Department of Education passed a new education plan, which will serve as a roadmap for improving the government's delivery and quality of basic education, covering education from 5 to 18 years of age, as well as non-formal education for youths and adults. The country also approved the fourth National Strategic Action Plan Against Trafficking in Persons to provide government agencies with direction for the Philippines' anti-trafficking in persons responses. **Thailand** drafted and approved its fifth National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor.

In **Brazil**, the Rio de Janeiro City Government launched its first municipal plan to combat the sexual exploitation of children. In **Honduras**, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security approved the creation of a special child labor seal to incentivize the private sector to implement good practices and promote compliance with standards for preventing child labor. The **Dominican Republic** also launched a plan to rescue children and adolescents found living on the streets and vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor.

Jordan updated its national framework to reduce child labor and extended it to 2030. **Morocco** approved a national strategy to address trafficking in persons, which also applies to **Western Sahara**. The **Central African Republic** established a national action plan to combat child trafficking, which includes a specific focus on preventing children from being recruited and used in armed conflict. **Madagascar** launched a new national action plan on trafficking in persons.

As a sign of international cooperation across Africa, **The Gambia** signed an MOU with **Nigeria**, which includes commitments to coordinate on

prosecutions and facilitate the safe return of survivors to their country of origin. In December 2022, **Benin** also cooperated with the Governments of **Burkina Faso**, **Togo**, and **Côte d'Ivoire** on a joint operation that resulted in the arrest of 15 suspected traffickers and the release and reintegration of 90 child trafficking survivors.

Programs

Countries also undertook surveys to learn about the prevalence and sectoral distribution of child labor. This information allows for more targeted efforts to address child labor. For instance, the Government of **Fiji** published the results of its Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in August 2022. **Bangladesh** launched its first national study on trafficking in persons, which will help provide baseline information about the extent of human trafficking and examine how these crimes are committed. And **Uzbekistan** worked with the International Labor Organization to conduct a survey of working conditions in the construction sector.

The Government of **Ethiopia** supported a study of child domestic servitude to learn how to better prevent this form of child labor. In **Djibouti**, the Ministry of Women and Families conducted a study on over 1,130 children engaged in forced begging. The study found that 84 percent of the children were from Ethiopia, almost 35 percent had been verbally assaulted, over 32 percent physically assaulted, and nearly 5 percent sexually assaulted. This detailed information helps countries target social programs and efforts to address child labor. In Box 4, learn more about how data on child labor at the local level can make a difference in communities.

Data can also lead to more targeted and innovative programs. **Indonesia** is commended on the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection's launch of a 3-year program to combat online sexual exploitation of children, with support from UNICEF. **Bolivia**'s municipal government of Santa Cruz trained 300 university students to volunteer in a program that offers services and support to children who work

in the markets with their families. In **Thailand**, the Thailand Safe Internet Coalition, a partnership led by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, UNICEF, and Thai telecommunications companies and internet service providers, was formed to strengthen reporting of online abuse, enhance coordination, improve provision of services for survivors, and increase the awareness of children, young people, and parents to online risks. The Ministry, in tandem with the Royal Thai Police, Court of Justice, and NGOs, also held a series of meetings with human trafficking survivors to create and publish guidelines for the public on identifying victims of online sexual exploitation.

The Government of **Cambodia** committed \$10 million to the implementation of its National Action Plan on Early Childhood Care and Development, which prioritizes an expanded early learning curriculum, improved teaching materials, and a reinforced preschool teaching workforce. The Government of **Albania** and the UN signed a new commitment to continue working on economic and social reforms to improve the situation for vulnerable populations throughout the country. And **Guinea**'s government, with funding from the European Union, opened shelters for trafficking survivors, including child survivors.

Other countries made efforts to grow and enhance existing programs. For example, in 2022, **Argentina**'s Universal Child Allowance Program increased the payment amount by nearly 10 percent to beneficiaries in comparison to the prior year. In addition, **Brazil**'s *Auxílio Brasil* cash transfer program reached unprecedented levels by extending assistance to over 21.5 million families, and **Togo**'s Safety Nets and Basic Services Project expanded unconditional cash transfers to 83,681 program participants.

More work remains, but these examples provide a snapshot of the hundreds of meaningful efforts made by the countries and territories in this year's report. Read on to learn more about the work that remains and major gaps in relevant areas.

Box 4

Turning Data Into Action to Mitigate Child Labor

At just age 15, Isabel knows what it is like to worry about money. Two years ago, her father got sick, lost his job, and had to find part-time construction work in another city in Mexico. The family's income was tight, putting Isabel and her siblings at high risk of engaging in child labor.

Isabel and her siblings avoided that fate in part thanks to their local municipality of Villa Victoria and Mexico's child labor risk identification model, the *Modelo de Identificación del Riesgo de Trabajo Infantil* (MIRTI). The MIRTI helped to identify the family as vulnerable to child labor, and, in turn, the municipal government used this information to provide a scholarship to help with Isabel's school expenses and funds to cover some of the family's expenses. This support helped to reduce the risk for Isabel and her siblings of engaging in child labor and increased their likelihood of staying in school, which is their mother's hope.

"I want my children to be someone in life, to progress, to keep studying, to have the opportunities that I didn't have," says Antonia, Isabel's mother.

The MIRTI was developed in 2018 as part of the Regional Initiative for Latin America Free of Child Labor (RILAC) with the support of ILAB's MAP 16 project. (25; 26) Mexico is the first country in the region to adopt the new model. As part of this process, the project provided training to officials on how to implement the MIRTI, building their capacity to carry it forward.

Out of the 32,000 children in Villa Victoria, 14,000 are at risk for or engaged in child labor. Isabel's age group, youth 12 to 17 years old, are most at risk of dropping out of school to migrate to Mexico City for work or to get a job locally selling goods or harvesting maize and potatoes. In Mexico, many children who reach the legal working age of 15 drop out of school to work, but they often find themselves in precarious jobs, leaving them vulnerable to poverty and labor exploitation.

"The MIRTI helped us quantify the number of child laborers and families at risk. Before the MIRTI we didn't know how to best channel our limited resources to help our community," says Laura Colin Santana, Secretary of the Municipality of Villa Victoria.

The model uses existing survey and administrative data to develop maps showing vulnerability to child labor, making it a cost-effective method to get information about child labor risk into the hands of policymakers at the local, state, and national levels. With this information, officials can direct resources, like meals, medical and legal assistance, scholarship funds, and other social support to vulnerable communities and families.

Ana Alejandra is familiar with the challenges facing families in the municipality. In her role as a census volunteer for the MIRTI, she interviews children and families and gathers data on child labor in Villa Victoria.

"I never imagined there were so many children working," Ana says, noting that some child laborers she meets are as young as 10 years old.

She always asks child laborers why they are working to try to identify alternative solutions for them, and she encourages them to stay in school, even if they continue to work.

While the municipality lacks the resources to meet the needs of all vulnerable kids and families, the MIRTI is helping make the child labor problem more visible, which in turn helps Villa Victoria secure more resources from the state to support children and families. Still, there is more work ahead and more families to serve.

"If we have data on child labor at the local level, all we have to do is channel our resources and join forces to make a difference in the community," says Isis Gutiérrez Salmerón, Honorary President of the Municipal System for Integral Family Development, one of the municipal agencies partnering with the MIRTI.

Overview of Major Gaps

Gaps remain in our collective efforts as a global community to abolish child labor, in particular its worst forms. When children engage in child labor, they sacrifice their education, wellbeing, and development, which limits their future opportunities. Today, children remain vulnerable to dangerous work in many sectors, including the back-breaking process of brickmaking; repeated exposure to hazardous chemicals and risky conditions in mining; and horrific abuse from commercial sexual exploitation, all due to gaps in legislation, enforcement, coordination mechanisms, policies, and programs.

Legal

Laws matter. Laws are the framework a country has in place to ensure children are protected from child labor, including its worst forms, and that prosecutors use to ensure those who commit these crimes face penalties. However, this year's report describes many gaps in this area. Of the 2,047 suggested actions presented in this year's report, 508 out of the over 2,000 total (or 25%) relate to deficiencies in laws and regulations. See Figure 10 for more information about global gaps in laws and regulations.

Ninety percent of countries in this report do not meet international standards for at least one category of child labor law. For example, out of the 131 countries in this report, 29 countries do not have minimum age protections that extend to the informal sector. Twenty-five countries do not have laws that prohibit child trafficking in accordance with international standards. In addition, prohibitions related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children do not meet international standards in 39 countries; 17 countries do not have adequate prohibitions related to forced labor; and 39 countries have not adequately prohibited the use of children in illicit activities.

Many countries' laws providing free and compulsory education do not meet international standards. This is particularly acute in Caribbean countries, such as **Dominica**, **Grenada**, and **Saint Lucia**, which only guarantee free education to citizens of Member States or Associated Member States of the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States. Another example from the Caribbean is **Jamaica**, which restricts free education to citizens of the country, leaving children without citizenship vulnerable to child labor. In 35 countries across every region covered in this report, the minimum age for work is also lower than the

Figure 10

Global Gaps in Law and Regulations*



25 Countries' prohibitions of child trafficking do not meet international standards

39 Countries' prohibitions of commercial sexual exploitation of children do not meet international standards

17 Countries' prohibitions of forced labor do not meet international standards

39 Countries' prohibitions of the use of children in illicit activities do not meet international standards

*Out of 131 countries



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Anas, age 12, cuts iron in a workshop. After the death of his father, Anas is the only breadwinner in the family. He works 11-hour shifts as a metalsmith, operating dangerous machinery that puts his health, safety, and future at risk. Taizz, Yemen. September 29, 2020.

compulsory education age, which may encourage children to drop out of school before completing their compulsory education.

Enforcement

Gaps related to enforcement account for 769 of the 2,047 (or 38%) suggested actions in this year's report, the single largest category, as was the case in 2021. Data are also key to solving this problem. Unfortunately, many countries do not collect and/or publish information on enforcement of child labor laws. With more than 160 unique suggested actions related to the lack of information, it is evident that insights into labor and criminal law enforcement are missing on a global scale.

Despite the lack of labor law enforcement data, it is evident that many inspectorates do not have sufficient funding and/or are not fully staffed with labor inspectors. Countries including **Cameroon, Chad, El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Sierra Leone, and Uganda**, among others, face resource constraints and funding levels that limit their ability to fully enforce legislation. Even with committed public servants, many labor inspectorates lack adequate funding, training, and resources to address child labor. Resource constraints, such as insufficient fuel and transport, can result in a lack of inspections in areas where child labor is known to occur, including in rural or remote areas, agricultural fields, and mines. In **Sri Lanka**, routine inspections, especially of factories in the northern and eastern provinces, were limited by insufficient staffing, insufficient budget, and a fuel shortage.

Some labor inspectorates do not have the authority to inspect all workplaces, or even to carry out inspections. In **Botswana**, labor inspectors are not authorized to inspect domestic households, and some labor inspectors have faced obstacles, such as locked gates, or are denied entry to large farms, inhibiting their ability to identify underage workers. In countries like **Armenia** and **Ukraine**, labor inspectors

do not have the authority or lack formal approval to conduct unannounced inspections. And in **Azerbaijan** and the **Kyrgyz Republic**, a moratorium on labor inspections actively hinders labor inspections.

Even though countries may have laws on the books that prohibit the involvement of children in armed forces, several countries failed to enforce those prohibitions. For example, the Government of **Mali** used children in its armed forces in 2022 in violation of national law. In **Somalia**, there is evidence that federal and state security forces continued to recruit and use children in armed conflict in violation of national law. In addition, there is evidence of recruitment and use of children in hostilities by state armed forces in **Yemen** in contravention of Yemeni law. Other enforcement gaps also remain related to the use of children in armed conflict. For instance, in **Iraq**, government authorities inappropriately detained or punished children allegedly affiliated with ISIS—even though some of those children were victims of forcible recruitment and use in armed conflict. Further, the Armed Forces of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** provided ammunition to non-state armed groups known to recruit and use children, including using children in armed conflict.

Since enforcement is the primary challenge for most countries in this report, ILAB has developed tools and resources in addition to its research and reporting to help improve labor enforcement. For example, our *Better Trade Tool* links essential reporting from each of ILAB's three flagship reports to trade data that can be used by labor inspectorates, trade policymakers, corporate compliance officers, and procurement officers to better target the enforcement of child labor laws in the production of key goods and products. (27) *Comply Chain*, another tool that ILAB provides, lays out best practices for a due diligence system to help companies identify and mitigate child labor and forced labor risks in global production. (28) Read more about *Comply Chain* and its recent revamp in Box 5.

Box 5:

Comply Chain: Social Compliance Made Simple

Are you a company looking to adapt to evolving social compliance regulations, including the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA)? Whether just starting or updating established systems, *Comply Chain's* straightforward guidance works for businesses of all sizes.

Are you an industry group helping your members implement effective due diligence? *Comply Chain* is filled with examples, resources, and success stories where worker-driven social compliance practices have helped mitigate child labor and forced labor risks.

Are you a worker organization aiming to improve working conditions? *Comply Chain* highlights where worker voice can critically address child labor and forced labor.

ILAB makes social compliance simple with the click of a button. *Comply Chain: Business Tools for Labor Compliance in Global Supply Chains* helps companies address child labor and forced labor in global supply chains by providing an actionable roadmap to implement eight steps of worker-driven social compliance:

1. Engage Stakeholders and Partners
2. Assess Risks and Impacts
3. Develop a Code of Conduct
4. Communicate and Train Across Your Supply Chain
5. Monitor Compliance
6. Remediate Violations
7. Independent Review
8. Report Performance and Engagement

This year, *Comply Chain* has an improved new web design offering customized navigation, robust examples of good practices, and tailored content helping businesses remediate complex issues in social compliance. (28) New features provide information on the latest human rights due diligence laws and regulations around the world—from the U.S. to Australia—improving workers' lives and business practices in the process.

Companies seeking to comply with the UFLPA can leverage *Comply Chain* as a vital resource. The UFLPA establishes a rebuttable presumption that goods produced wholly or in part in Xinjiang, China, or produced by entities on the UFLPA Entity List, are made with forced labor and are therefore prohibited from importation into the United States. In order to overcome the presumption, importers must comply with the UFLPA Strategy "Guidance to Importers." The Guidance to Importers incorporates the key principles found in *Comply Chain*, which is also referenced in numerous U.S. Government resources to help businesses develop and strengthen robust social compliance systems to counter forced labor risks in their supply chains. (29) For example, see the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Operational Guidance for Importers and the interagency Xinjiang Supply Chain Business Advisory. (30; 31)

Coordination

Effective coordination is a cornerstone to the eventual elimination of child labor. Coordination enables government departments and ministries to enforce laws, implement national policies and programs, and support survivors in receiving social services. This year's report, however, highlights many persistent gaps in coordination.

The major gap—as in previous years—is the inability of coordinating bodies, including mechanisms such as intergovernmental committees responsible for coordinating efforts to address child labor, to carry out their mandates. Much of this is due to insufficient funding. In other cases, it is due to a lack of capacity, insufficient staffing, and limited data to inform decision-making. As one example, in **Peru**, some regional committees for the prevention and eradication of child labor do not fulfill their mandate to create action plans to combat child labor, while others have action plans but fail to provide the necessary funding to implement them.

Challenges are also noted in coordination between those responsible for investigating child labor and those providing services. Countries in this grouping include **Namibia**, where there is a suggested action to establish a framework for communication between government ministries and civil society to facilitate the prompt referral of cases. **Azerbaijan, Kenya, Mongolia, and Zambia**, among others, face similar challenges when it comes to referrals to ensure social services for victims of child labor.

Also, there are countries with no active national coordinating mechanisms to address child labor, or that lack mechanisms in key sectors in which there is a demonstrated child labor problem. These countries include **Armenia, the Central African Republic, the**

Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Georgia, Guinea, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Tonga, and Ukraine. Similarly, **Pakistan's** child protection units lack adequate staffing and face delays in receiving funding. **Sierra Leone's** village-level and chiefdom-level child welfare committees are non-existent in some areas, and non-operational in others, despite requirements that these function as part of Sierra Leone's Child Right Act.

Policy

Policies to address child labor support governments in developing and prioritizing a roadmap to ensure that children are free from child labor, including work that harms their health, safety, and morals. This is particularly important because many children engaged in child labor are working outside the protection of the law and remain vulnerable to poor working conditions and serious occupational safety and health risks, among other concerns.

There is a continuing gap relating to the lack of publicly available information and the status of policy implementation. The lack of public information is a likely indication of inactivity or inadequate implementation of a policy. This is the case in countries such as **Costa Rica, Mauritania, and Namibia.**

Additional gaps relate to the scope of existing policies. Policies ought to respond to all child labor issues. For example, in **Comoros and Mauritius**, research found no evidence of policies that address the most pressing child labor concerns, such as the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Other countries, including **Bhutan, Gabon, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**, and **Senegal**, lack any policy related to child labor. And in **India**, only 11 of the 29 states have child labor action plans.



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A Yemeni boy with a Kalashnikov assault rifle during a gathering of newly-recruited Huthi fighters in the capital Sanaa to mobilize more fighters to battlefronts in the war against pro-government forces in several Yemeni cities. Sanaa, Yemen. July 16, 2017.

Programs

Social programs can help address child labor by countering factors that both lead to and reinforce systems of poverty, which prevent children from pursuing their education and instead thrust them into work at the expense of their futures. These factors often include, but are not restricted to, limited access to social services, lack of reliable data to design impactful programs, and the outsized impact of climate change.

Caring for those impacted by child labor and trafficking is paramount. Sadly, the report notes many gaps, including the lack of adequate social services for survivors. In **Sierra Leone**, research indicates that shelter space is insufficient to accommodate all survivors of human trafficking and other vulnerable children due to inadequate funding. In **India**, certain shelter homes, including Ujjawala and Swadhar Greh, have high rates of non-registration. Due to a reported loophole in the law, if the government does not process a shelter home's registration application by a prescribed time, the organization will automatically gain licensure. Some corrupt officials purposely miss the licensing deadline to allow politically connected shelters to gain licensing. Moreover, in some instances the homes function as hostels and offer accommodations for a fee. In 2022, authorities reported multiple instances in which children ran away from these shelters because of unsafe conditions and/or alleged abuse by caretakers.

Accurate data on the prevalence and types of child labor are also essential to designing programs that effectively address child labor. However, many countries lack reliable data on child labor or have data that are outdated, non-existent, or not publicly available. Countries such as **Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Eswatini, Haiti, Comoros, Solomon Islands, and Uzbekistan** fall into this category.

Responding to the growing climate crisis is also an area of increased focus by countries, and

many countries, especially in Asia and Africa, are documenting the impact of climate change on child labor. In **Bangladesh** in 2022, for example, almost 20 million children were vulnerable to extreme weather, floods, river erosion, and sea-level rise. In **Nepal**, climate-related disasters have often increased child labor, particularly following the 2017 floods in the south. In **Namibia**, there was also a significant increase in the number of Angolans migrating to the country because of climate change-induced drought, which has led to emerging trends of locals hiring Angolan children as domestic workers, for street vending, and for agricultural activities. In addition, NGO and local media reporting indicate children of refugee status along the border of Namibia and Angola are increasingly recruited by criminal organizations to smuggle drugs, fuel, diamonds, and wildlife products. Deteriorating economic conditions in **Zimbabwe** and the ongoing effects of climate change (including droughts, flash floods, and crop failures) strain rural households and make children more vulnerable to child labor and commercial sexual exploitation.

Social programs can help. In **Kenya**, the government-funded social safety net program, with support from the World Bank, provided relief to 278,945 households with orphans and vulnerable children in 2022. In addition, the government allocated approximately \$11 million to respond to the drought and food crises facing Kenya's northern counties, reaching 58,000 families as of August 2022. These actions partially mitigate vulnerability to climate shock and extreme poverty that contribute to child labor in Kenya.

Climate change's impact on global stability will only increase in the absence of effective and timely action. The collective global need to transition to a clean future is urgent, but it is vital that the transition is just and supportive to workers and their families.

Figure 11 presents by region a summary analysis of government efforts and persistent challenges from this year's report.

Figure 11

Regional Analysis of Government Efforts and Challenges

REGION	EFFORTS	CHALLENGES
Indo-Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded initiatives to increase childcare and education access, specifically for children with disabilities, children living in rural areas, and other communities at high risk of child labor. Developed legal and policy initiatives to address rising online commercial sexual exploitation of children. Increased funding for cash transfers and other social protection interventions to respond to the needs of vulnerable families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of sectoral-specific information on child labor to inform policies and programs. Expired and outdated national policies to address child labor. Limited regulations identifying hazardous occupations and tasks for children under age 18.
Europe & Eurasia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed new trainings and procedural guidance to strengthen criminal law enforcement officials' response to child exploitation cases, including specialized interviewing techniques and referral to social services providers. Implemented social program and policy interventions to expand education access for children living with disabilities and other underserved communities. Enacted new laws codifying procedures related to government responses to the worst forms of child labor and other forms of child exploitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaps in court procedures and training for judicial personnel resulting in frequent reclassification of child trafficking cases to lesser crimes. Restricted authority of labor inspectors to access worksites and conduct unannounced inspections. Lack of minimum age protections to cover children working outside of formal employment agreements.
Latin America & the Caribbean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased national- and municipal-level coordination to address specific challenges related to child labor within communities. Enacted new laws to increase criminal penalties for violations related to the worst forms of child labor. Offered criminal law enforcement officials specialized trainings related to trafficking in persons, including high risk sectors for labor exploitation and procedures for identifying child survivors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of centralized systems for criminal law enforcement agencies to collect and share data related to the worst forms of child labor. Insufficient schools, teachers, and educational resources serving rural and marginalized areas where migrant children and minority communities most frequently live. Limited information on criminal law enforcement activities, including investigations, prosecutions, and convictions.
Middle East & North Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased labor inspections, including in high-risk sectors for child labor. Launched new online resources to facilitate coordination and community awareness on human trafficking. Enacted new laws to increase penalties and strengthen protections of children from human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of enforcement and policy initiatives in rural areas and conflict zones. Lack of implementation of national policies related to trafficking in persons and other worst forms of child labor. Insufficient scope of programs and policy initiatives to address child labor beyond human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Regional Analysis of Government Efforts and Challenges *(Cont.)*

REGION	EFFORTS	CHALLENGES
South and Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collected new prevalence data on child labor to support programming and policy priorities. ■ Expanded educational resources, including access to computers and other learning technologies to meet the needs of children living in rural communities. ■ Enacted laws to protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including commercial sexual exploitation and use in illicit activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Insufficient coordination between national and local authorities resulting in limited local-level implementation of enforcement guidelines and policy initiatives related to child labor. ■ Low capacity of judicial and criminal law enforcement officials to interview and respond to the needs of survivors of the worst forms of child labor due to a lack of training. ■ Resource constraints caused infrequent or no labor inspections beyond major urban centers.
Sub-Saharan Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Made publicly available information about labor law enforcement efforts, including worksite inspections targeting high risk sectors for child labor. ■ Created new government agencies mandated to coordinate efforts to address child labor. ■ Formed partnerships with non-governmental and civil society organizations to increase monitoring of sectors at high risk for child labor and address specialized challenges, such as labor migration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Limited resources and authority to monitor the informal sector, leaving children working in this sector unprotected. ■ Continued recruitment of children into armed conflict. ■ Lack of access to birth registration and other national documentation, limiting children's access to education and social protection programs.

Call to Action

A clean-energy future is a future without child labor. And a clean industry starts with affording adult workers fundamental freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, so they can advocate for better wages and working conditions free of child labor. Eliminating child labor requires partnerships among governments, civil society, worker organizations, and businesses to create real, sustainable change: A just transition to a cleaner economy. All governments must pass and enforce strong labor laws, and protections for collective

bargaining. Workers, we need to hear your voice. Companies, we're calling on you to take supply chain transparency and due diligence seriously. If child or forced labor is in your supply chain, address it. Civil society, we need your help elevating the voices of survivors of labor exploitation on the global stage. You are often closest to the communities most vulnerable and have a unique ability to help prevent and mitigate these abuses. We call on all relevant stakeholders to raise awareness of these conditions and advocate for a just transition to a truly clean-energy future free from labor abuses.



Acting U.S. Secretary of Labor, Julie Su, meets with Department of Labor interns at the U.S. Department of Labor. Washington, D.C. July 20, 2023.

The U.S. Experience

“To all workers who are toiling in the shadows, know that we see you, we stand with you, and we will fight for you.”

Julie A. Su, Acting Secretary of Labor
March, 2023

All countries struggle with the complexity and challenges of child labor. The United States is no exception. For more than a year, the U.S. Department of Labor has been sounding the alarm on the increase in the number of children employed in violation of federal child labor laws. In fact, since 2018, we have seen a 69 percent increase in the number of minors employed illegally in the United States. Minors have been found in meatpacking plants, in construction, and at factories supplying major retail food brands.

Children are extremely vulnerable to exploitation for many reasons. They often work for subcontractors, or subcontractors of subcontractors. Multinational brands source products and services from these subcontractors but frequently claim to have no visibility into them. While governments hold ultimate responsibility for enforcing labor laws, companies need to step up, too, and no longer hide behind plausible deniability. They need to gain visibility across the breadth of their supply chains to root out abuses. This can be done, but it will take a stronger commitment from the top leadership of corporations.

Meanwhile, some U.S. states are rolling back child labor laws. As United States Solicitor of Labor Seema Nanda put it, “It is irresponsible for states to consider loosening child labor protections. Federal and state entities should be working together to increase accountability and ramp up enforcement—not make it easier to illegally hire children to do what are often dangerous jobs.”

The U.S. government has a pivotal role in protecting children and adults from labor exploitation. The Department takes these egregious violations very seriously, investigates every child labor complaint we receive, and acts to hold employers accountable. For example, in February 2023, the Department of Labor announced the resolution of one of the largest child labor cases in its history. In Kieler, Wisconsin, Packers Sanitation Services Inc., one of the nation’s largest food safety sanitation services providers, paid \$1.5 million in civil penalties after the Wage and Hour Division (WHD) found the company employed at least 102 children—from 13 to 17 years of age—in hazardous occupations and had them working overnight shifts at 13 meat processing facilities in eight states. The division found that children were working with hazardous chemicals and cleaning meat-processing equipment, including back saws, brisket saws, and head splitters.

In February 2023, the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services also announced an array of new actions to increase their efforts to thoroughly vet sponsors of migrant children, investigate child labor violations, and hold companies accountable, including:

- Creation of a Department of Labor-led interagency task force to promote further collaboration and improve information-sharing between federal agencies, and to advance the health, education, and well-being of children in the United States;
- Implementation of a national strategic enforcement initiative on child labor in which WHD will use data-driven, worker-focused strategies to initiate investigations where child labor violations are most likely to occur;
- Increased scrutiny of companies and subcontractors using illegal child labor to increase corporate accountability for systematic abuses of child labor laws;
- A call on Congress for increased funding for the Department of Labor's enforcement agencies, and to increase civil money penalties for companies that use child labor;
- And *more*.

In July 2023, the U.S. Department of Labor and its partners from the Interagency Task Force to Combat Child Labor Exploitation announced *recent actions* to hold companies accountable for violating federal child labor laws.

This included enhanced child labor enforcement efforts from the Wage and Hour Division. Between October 1, 2022 and July 20, 2023, as a result of this stepped-up enforcement, the agency concluded 765 child labor cases finding 4,474 children employed in violation of federal child labor laws and assessed employers with more than \$6.6 million in penalties. These cases reflect a 44 percent increase in children found employed in violation of federal law and an 87 percent increase in penalties assessed from the same time period in the previous fiscal year. In addition,

the agency announced it was pursuing more than 700 open child labor cases. This enforcement data demonstrates the department's commitment to identifying and addressing the child labor violations more aggressively than in the department's history.

In efforts to tackle child labor, WHD enforces regulations on legal working age, permissible hours of work, earned wages, and hazardous occupation prohibitions for minor employees. WHD investigators across the country conduct inspections at workplaces to ensure that labor laws are enforced and working conditions are fair. Many investigations also take place in industries that employ workers vulnerable to labor trafficking. As a result, WHD is often the first federal agency to identify cases of trafficking in persons and refer these cases to criminal law enforcement agencies. Through its *YouthRules!* initiative, WHD also provides information to young workers, parents, educators, and employers to safeguard the rights of workers under the age of 18 and help ensure that children's work experiences are legal, safe, and do not disrupt their education. (32) Learn more in Figure 12.

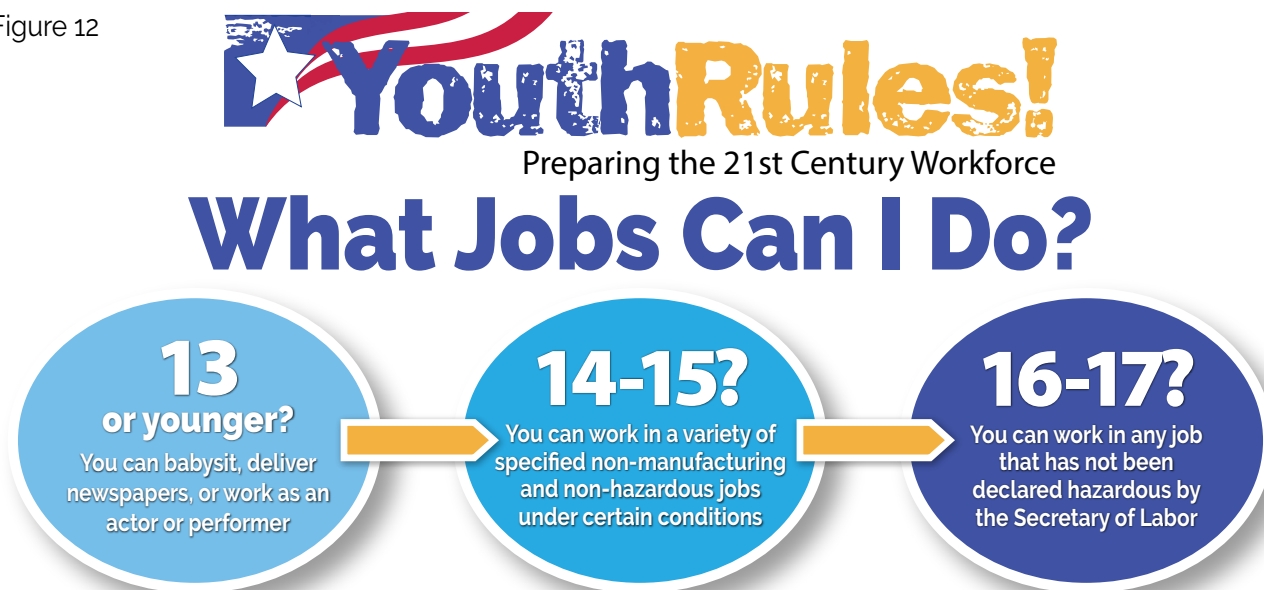
The Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) ensures safe and healthy working conditions by setting standards to reduce and eliminate workplace hazards.

Finally, the Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics measures labor market activity, working conditions, price changes, and production in the U.S. economy to support private and public decision-making. The Bureau of Labor Statistics also conducts research and publishes reports on youth employment trends.

The Federal Minimum Ages for Work

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) guarantees basic rights and protections to ensure the safety and well-being of child workers. The child labor regulations of the FLSA are designed to ensure children's educational opportunities are not harmed by early

Figure 12



For more information on the specific jobs you can and can't do, visit www.youthrules.gov/know-the-limits

To Find Out More: Visit youthrules.dol.gov or Call 1-866-4US-WAGE

employment and to prohibit children's employment in jobs that are detrimental to their health and safety.

The FLSA and its implementing regulations have established the following standards:

Non-Agricultural Work

- A minimum age of 14 for light work in non-agricultural industries, with limits on the times of day, number of hours, and tasks that can be performed by 14- and 15-year-olds. (33; 34)
- A minimum age of 16 for most employment in non-hazardous, non-agricultural industries. (33)
- A minimum age of 18 for employment in hazardous occupations as deemed by the Department's issuance of 17 non-agricultural Hazardous Occupations Orders. (33; 34)

Agricultural Work

- A minimum age of 14 for agricultural work outside of school hours, without limits on permitted occupations (other than hazardous work limits) or the number of hours such children may work. (33) A minimum age of 12-14 for non-hazardous

agricultural work outside of school hours with the consent of a parent employed on the same farm. No minimum age for children in non-hazardous agricultural work outside of school hours with the consent of their parents on farms that use less than 500 man-days of agricultural labor in any calendar quarter.

- A minimum age of 16 for agricultural employment in hazardous occupations, as identified by the Department of Labor, except for children employed by a parent on a farm operated by the parent. (33; 34)

All states have child labor standards and mandatory school attendance laws. When state and federal child labor standards differ, the rule that provides the most protections for the young worker is the one that must be followed.

According to Department of Labor records, there were 2,243,000 youth, ages 16 to 17, employed in the United States in 2021, and 2,463,000 employed in 2022. Despite the restrictions and limitations placed on youth work, there were 17 fatal occupational injuries in the United States among youth ages 16

to 17, and 7 fatal occupational injuries among youth below the age of 16 in 2021 (the most recent year for which data are available).

Wage and Hour Division

The Wage and Hour Division determines an employer's status of compliance with the FLSA's child labor regulations in every investigation conducted. Learn more in Figure 13.

For example, a WHD investigation found Dunkin's franchise locations in Maryland and West Virginia allowed 19 minors to work in violation of child labor laws, leading the employer to accept responsibility for the offenses and to sign an agreement with the Department of Labor to prevent future violations at its eight locations in three states. The employer also paid a fine of \$41,181 to resolve the violations. In Salt Lake City, Utah, a federal investigation found Specialty Consulting Services LLC, a restaurant supply company, allowed 22 employees—ages 14 and 15—to work as many as 46 hours per workweek, and to begin work after midnight—both illegal practices under child labor laws. The company was assessed \$16,595 in penalties to resolve the child labor violations. And in Dundee, Ohio, a lathe mill paid an enhanced child labor enforcement penalty of \$22,093 after federal investigators found the company employed a 15-year-old worker illegally in a hazardous occupation—the operation of a sawmill—which led the worker to suffer injury when he became entangled in the gears of a powered wood-processing machine.

In addition to its rigorous enforcement efforts, WHD aims to prevent violations from occurring in the first place by educating employers, workers, and the public about federal child labor law compliance. For example, the agency's Southeast Regional Office hosted a webinar in April 2023 that featured training on child labor rules and a panel discussion with stakeholders, including state officials and school and industry representatives. In May 2023, WHD's Southwest Regional Office hosted a 2-day Department of Labor forum that included a child labor and

workplace safety panel discussion featuring WHD and OSHA officials.

WHD online resources include fact sheets, FAQs, on-demand video training, PowerPoint presentations, and extensive information on all laws enforced by the agency, including a comprehensive child labor webpage to help parents, educators, young workers, and employers better understand federal child labor laws. (35; 36)

The agency also provides a free Timesheet App in English and Spanish for Android and Apple mobile device users that allows employers and employees to track their hours of work and calculate wages due. (37) The app can empower young workers to ensure they are receiving the wages they are due or get assistance if a dispute arises.

Employment and Training Administration

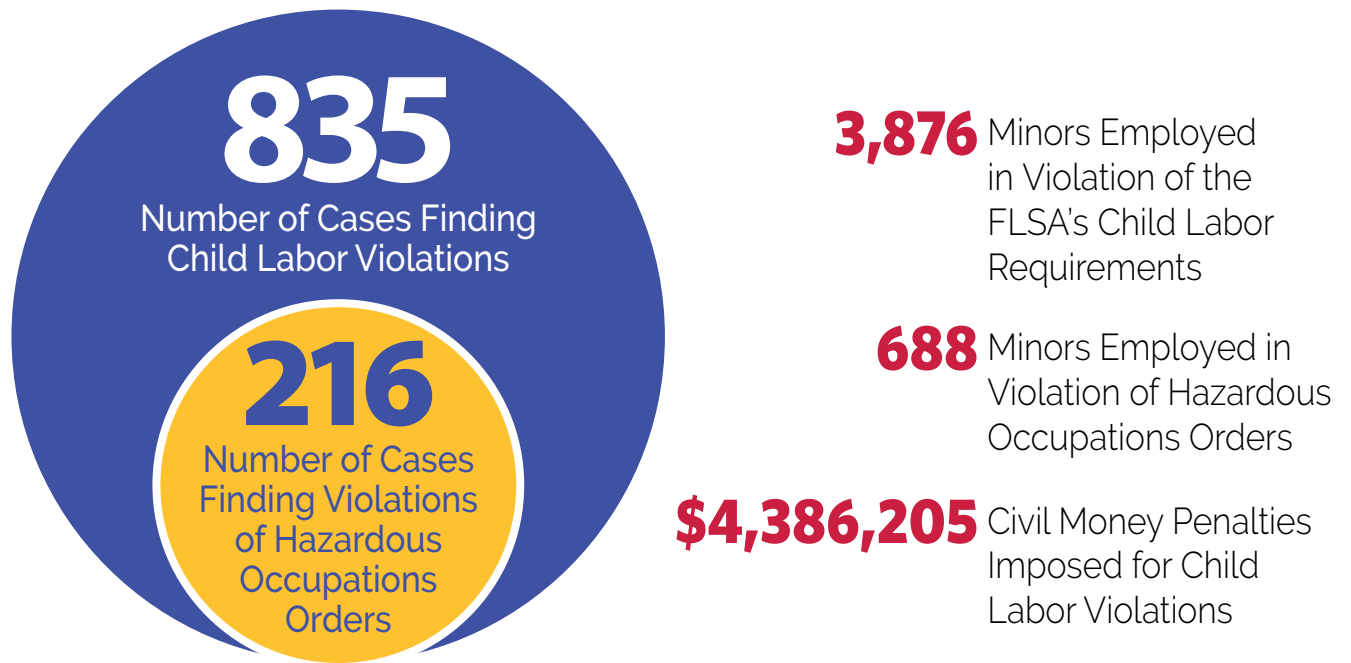
The Department's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) provides workforce training and development programs to remove barriers to good jobs and improve economic mobility for all Americans. ETA programs include Registered Apprenticeship Programs, YouthBuild, Job Corps, Reentry Employment Opportunities, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Youth Formula Program. These programs seek to empower historically disadvantaged populations, including women, people of color, and youth, by providing them with work-ready skills and pathways to industry accreditation.

In 2023, ETA awarded more than \$90 million in YouthBuild grants to provide youth ages 16 to 24 with education and training to expand the clean-energy workforce. These grants will teach young adults who are not currently in school or in the workforce in-demand construction skills focused on green building techniques, including weatherization processes, use of sustainable building materials, and solar panel installation. Also in 2023, ETA awarded \$33 million

Figure 13

Wage and Hour Division Rigorously Enforces the Fair Labor Standards Act, Including Child Labor Laws

Fiscal Year 2022 Enforcement Data



More specific information about each of these cases can be found in the WHD's enforcement database at dol.gov/DataEnforcement and WHD's website at dol.gov/WHDFiscalYearData.

in Growth Opportunities grants (part of the Reentry Employment Opportunities Program) for career exploration, job training, paid-work experiences, conflict resolution skills, mentorship, and supportive services to justice-involved young people.

Conclusion

The child labor problem in the U.S. shows we are not immune to challenges that other countries also face. But our response shows that we at the U.S. Department of Labor are committed to turning the

tide. Others need to step up. Corporations need to be vigilant to root out child labor in their own operations as well as in their supply chains, no matter how far down the chain it goes. Union leaders need to have their voices heard when they call for an end to exploitative labor. Front-line human rights defenders—such as the press—need to keep exposing these abuses through their reporting. With concerted effort, we can protect more children and punish more unscrupulous employers for all violations occurring on their watch.

About the Iqbal Masih Award



The United States Congress established the Iqbal Masih Award for the Elimination of Child Labor in 2008 to recognize exceptional efforts by an individual, company, organization, or national government to end the worst forms of child labor. The award reflects the spirit of Iqbal Masih, a Pakistani child sold into bonded labor as a carpet weaver at age 4. He escaped his servitude at age 10 and became an outspoken advocate of children's rights, drawing international attention to his fight against child labor. Iqbal was killed in Pakistan in 1995 at the age of 12, as he continued to call for an end to child labor. Further information about the Iqbal Masih Award and USDOL's efforts to combat child labor is available on the USDOL website at www.dol.gov/Iqbal.

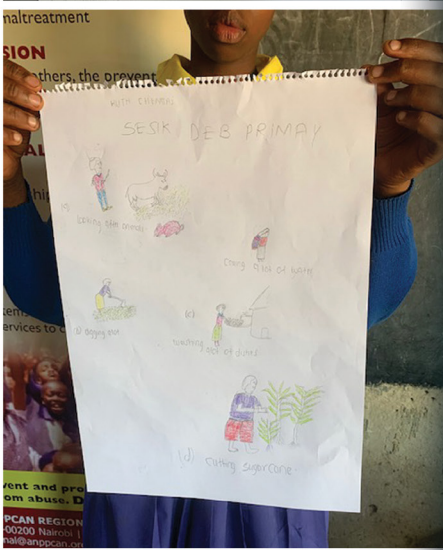
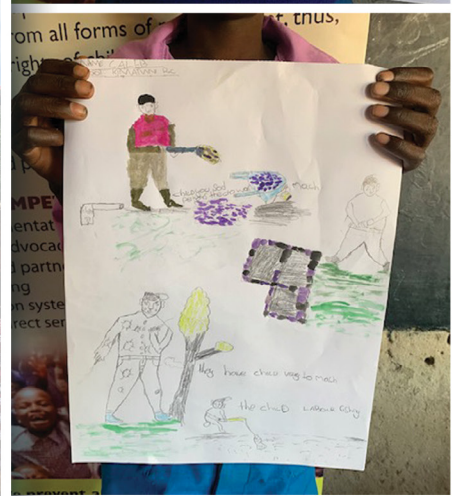
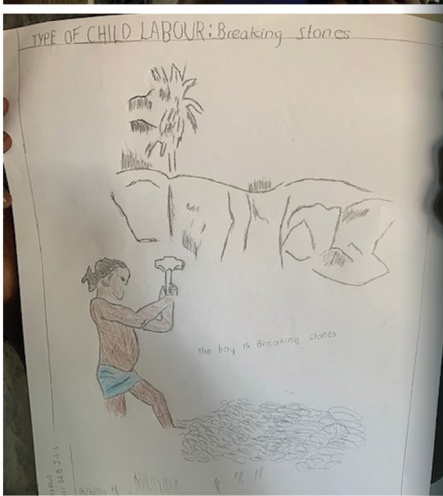
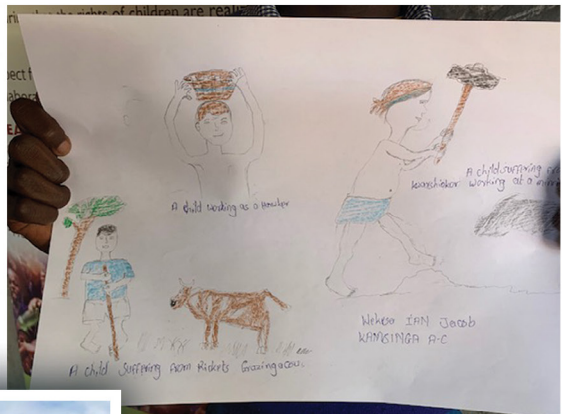
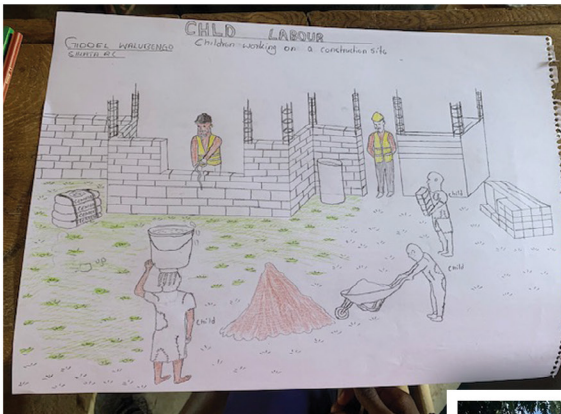
In 2023, Acting U.S. Secretary of Labor Julie Su selected Lalitha Natarajan, an activist and advocate working in India, to receive the Iqbal Masih Award in recognition of her extraordinary efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor.

Lalitha Natarajan

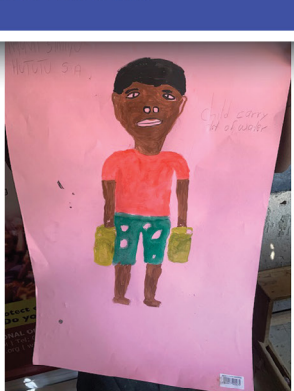
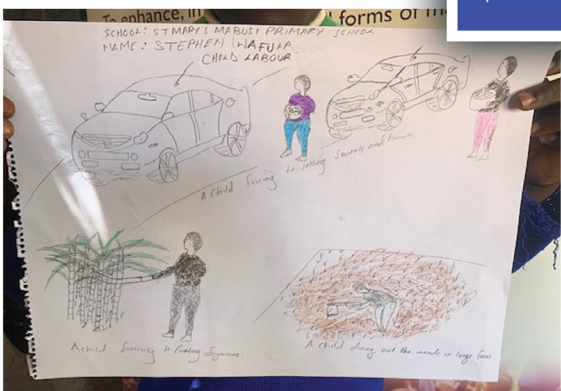
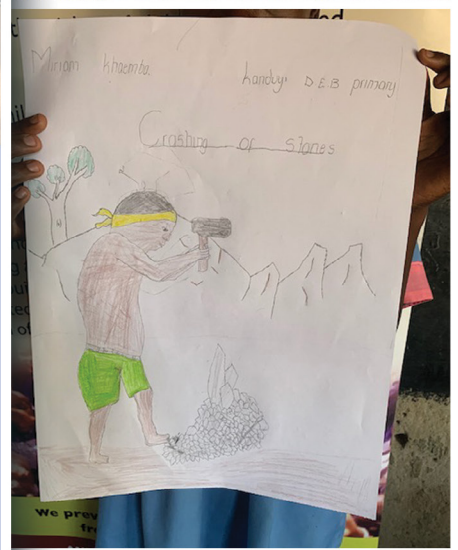
Lalitha Natarajan has championed the cause to end child labor and modern slavery as an activist and ally for vulnerable communities in India for over 20 years. She has dedicated her career to rescuing children from forced labor across the state of Tamil Nadu, including from stone quarries and food processing factories. Lalitha has worked with NGOs and international human rights agencies, helping public officials enhance child laborer rescue and

rehabilitation programming. She has also served as a human rights interlocuter on legal and empowerment training programs serving women, children, and marginalized caste members. Since embarking on her legal career in 2015, she has focused on issues pertaining to women's and children's rights. Lalitha has fought cases for individuals and families who have suffered from bonded labor where there is little or no recourse to legal aid. In the face of repeated harassment and threats, Lalitha continues to advocate for children's rights and fights to bring child rights offenders to justice.





World Day Against Child Labor
 Through the Kenya Schoolhouse Program, children were given the platform to express concerns about forms of child labor that exist within their county of Bungoma and their country of Kenya. Children created art depicting child labor and participated in a processional walk.



Appendix 1

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AF	Sub-Saharan Africa
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
CEACR	International Labor Organization Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
EAPCCO	Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography, and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes
EFA	Education for All
EU	European Union
EUR	Europe and Eurasia
FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
ILO	International Labor Organization
ILO C. 29	International Labor Organization Convention No. 29: Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labor, commonly known as the "Forced Labor Convention"
ILO C. 138	International Labor Organization Convention No. 138: Convention Concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, commonly referred to as the "Minimum Age Convention"
ILO C. 182	International Labor Organization Convention No. 182: Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, commonly referred to as the "Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention"
ILO R. 190	International Labor Organization Recommendation No. 190: Recommendation Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, commonly referred to as the "Worst Forms of Child Labor Recommendation"
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Indo-Pacific
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LFS	Labor Force Survey

LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Survey
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MERCOSUR	Common Market of the South (America); full members include Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela (membership currently suspended)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAS	Organization of American States
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Palermo	Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Program on Child Labor
TDA	Trade and Development Act
TVPRA	Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act
UCW	Understanding Children's Work
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UN CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USDOJ	U.S. Department of Justice
USDOL	U.S. Department of Labor
USDOS	U.S. Department of State
USHHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
WFP	World Food Program
WHD	Wage and Hour Division
WHO	World Health Organization



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A Mexican teen artist works on wooden sculptures. Yucatan, Mexico. October 7, 2017.

Appendix 2

Definitions Related to Child Labor and Forced Labor

Definitions related to child labor are guided by ILO C. 138 on Minimum Age and ILO C. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. ILO's Resolution Concerning Statistics of Child Labor, developed during the 18th International Conference of Labor Statisticians (ICLS), and amendments made during the 20th ICLS provide the international framework for measuring children's work. See Appendix 7 for additional definitions.

Working Children

Per the Resolution Concerning Statistics of Child Labor developed during the 18th ICLS, working children are those engaged in any productive activity for at least 1 hour during the reference period. Productive activity includes market production and certain types of non-market production, principally the production of goods and services for their families' use. The 20th ICLS introduced changes to the definition of working children to align that definition with internationally accepted definitions of work for adults. The new definition classifies working children as those engaged in any activity to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for their own use. In summary, the new definition includes the production of additional types of services for family use, unpaid trainee work by children, volunteer work by children, and other work activities by children. Since most countries are in the process of adapting survey instruments to reflect this new definition, the definition of working children from the 18th ICLS Resolution has been used in this report. The work that children perform may be within the formal or informal economy, inside or outside of family settings, whether paid or unpaid. This includes children working in domestic service outside the child's own household for an employer, paid or unpaid. (38; 39)

Child Labor

Child labor is a subset of working children and is work below the minimum age for work, as established in national legislation that conforms to international standards. The definition includes the worst forms of child labor. Child labor is a subset of working children because child labor excludes children who work limited hours per week in permitted light work and those who are above the minimum age who engage in work not classified as a worst form of child labor. (38; 39)

Worst Forms of Child Labor

The term "worst forms of child labor" refers to activities described and as understood in ILO C. 182. (6) Under Article 3 of the Convention, the worst forms of child labor comprise the following activities:

- All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, and forced or compulsory labor, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- The use, procuring, or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography, or for pornographic purposes;
- The use, procuring, or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; and
- Work which, by its nature or the circumstances under which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.

Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor

For this report, the term "categorical worst forms of child labor" refers to child labor understood as the

worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182. This category does not include the worst forms of child labor identified under Article 3(d) as “hazardous work.” (6)

Hazardous Work

The term “hazardous work” refers to the worst form of child labor identified in ILO C. 182, Article 3(d), “work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.” ILO C. 182, Article 4, directs countries to consult with employers and workers to identify the types of hazardous work that should be prohibited by law or regulation. Hazardous work lists may describe specific activities, occupations, industries, or conditions. (6)

Forced Labor

Forced labor, under international standards, is defined as all work or service that is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the worker does not offer themselves voluntarily. (40) Menace of penalty refers to the means of coercion and includes threats or violence against workers or workers’ families and close associates; restrictions on workers’ movement; debt bondage; withholding of wages or promised benefits; withholding of documents; and abuse of workers’ vulnerability through the denial of rights or threats of dismissal or deportation. (41) “Circumstances that may give rise to involuntary work, when undertaken under deception or uninformed, include, inter alia, unfree recruitment at birth or through transactions such as slavery or bonded labor; situations in which the worker must perform a job of a different nature from that specified during recruitment without [their] consent; abusive requirements for overtime or on-call work that were not previously agreed to with the employer; work in hazardous conditions to

which the worker has not consented, with or without compensation or protective equipment; work with very low or no wages; in degrading living conditions imposed by the employer; work for other employers than agreed to; work for a longer period of time than agreed to; and work with no or limited freedom to terminate the work contract.” (41)

Slavery and Practices Similar to Slavery

Slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. (42) Practices similar to slavery include the following practices:

- Debt bondage, defined as the status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of their personal services or the services of a person under their control as security for a debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied towards the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined;
- Serfdom, defined as the condition or status of a tenant who is by law, custom, or agreement bound to live and labor on land belonging to another person and to render some determinate service to such other person, whether for reward or not, and is not free to change their own status; and
- Forced or compulsory labor. (43)

Forced Child Labor

Forced child labor is a categorical worst form of child labor under ILO C. 182. (4) Children are in forced child labor if subjected to work under the threat or menace of penalty. Forced child labor also includes work performed with or for the child’s parents for a third party under the threat or menace of any penalty directly applied to the child or parents. (6; 41; 44)

Appendix 3

ILO Instruments Related to Child Labor and Forced Labor

The ILO brings together government, employer, and worker representatives of member states to establish and supervise the implementation of international labor standards and develop policies and implement programs to advance decent work. (45) International labor standards are legal instruments drawn up by these ILO constituents that set out basic principles and rights at work. They can take the form of either conventions, protocols, or recommendations. Conventions and protocols are international treaties that are legally binding on ratifying member states. Ratifying countries commit themselves to implementing the convention or protocol in national law and practice, and reporting on its application at regular intervals. Recommendations are non-binding and provide guidelines for action, either as a complement to a convention or as a stand-alone instrument. The following paragraphs describe key ILO instruments related to child labor and the minimum ages set by countries related to these instruments.

ILO Convention No. 138: Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973

ILO C. 138 establishes that the minimum age of admission into employment or work in any occupation “shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling, and, in any case, shall not be less than fifteen” (Article 2(3)). Countries whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed may initially specify a minimum legal working age of 14 when ratifying the Convention. In addition, Article 7(1) says that national laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of children ages 13 to 15 years for light work. Countries that specify a minimum legal working age of 14 may permit light work for children ages 12 to 14. (46)

ILO Convention No. 182: Worst Forms of Child Labor, 1999

ILO C. 182 defines the worst forms of child labor and requires ratifying countries to take immediate action to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor for persons under age 18.

Among other actions, ILO C. 182 requires ratifying countries to take effective and timebound measures to prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labor; help remove children from the worst forms of child labor and provide for their rehabilitation and social integration; ensure that children removed from the worst forms of child labor have access to free basic education and, wherever possible and appropriate, vocational training; identify and reach out to children at special risk; take into account the special situation of girls; consult with employer and worker organizations to create appropriate mechanisms to monitor implementation of the convention; and assist one another in implementing the convention. (6)

Worst Forms of Child Labor Recommendation No. 190, 1999

Recommendation No. 190 supplements ILO C. 182 and provides non-binding practical guidance in applying the Convention. Among other provisions, it includes a list of working conditions and types of work that should be considered when determining what comprises hazardous work. (47)

ILO Convention No. 29: Forced Labor, 1930

ILO C. 29 prohibits all forms of forced or compulsory labor, which is defined as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the person has not offered himself voluntarily.” (40)

ILO Convention No. 105: Abolition of Forced Labor Convention, 1957

ILO C. 105 prohibits forced or compulsory labor as a means of political coercion or education, or as a punishment for holding or expressing political views or views ideologically opposed to the established political, social, or economic system; as a method of mobilizing and using labor for economic development; as a means of labor discipline; as a punishment for having participated in strikes; and as a means of racial, social, national, or religious discrimination. (48)

Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention, 1930

The Protocol reaffirms the forced labor definition in ILO C. 29. It requires ratifying countries to take effective measures to prevent and eliminate forced and compulsory labor, to sanction perpetrators, and provide victims with protection and access to appropriate remedies, such as compensation. It also requires ratifying countries to develop a national policy and plan of action to address forced

or compulsory labor in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations. (78) The Protocol supplements ILO C. 29; as such, only ILO member states that have ratified the convention can ratify the protocol. (49)

Forced Labor (Supplementary Measures) Recommendation No. 203, 2014

Recommendation No. 203 provides non-binding practical guidance in the areas of prevention, protection of victims and ensuring their access to justice and remedies, enforcement, and international cooperation. It supplements both the protocol and the convention. (50)

ILO Convention No. 81: Labor Inspection Convention, 1947

ILO C. 81 establishes the duties, functions, and responsibilities of countries' labor inspection systems and labor inspectors. These functions include enforcing legal provisions related to general conditions of work and worker protection in all workplaces as defined by national laws or regulations. (51)



Appendix 4

How to Read a TDA Country Profile

● **Country Overview.** Each country profile begins with a single-paragraph overview of 2022 and a statement identifying the assessment level assigned to the country for 2022. Following the assessment statement, the paragraph offers a summary of key findings, including any meaningful efforts made (defined as efforts in key areas where the government advanced its commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor); the most common or egregious forms of child labor found in the country; and highlights of those areas in which key gaps in government efforts remain.

● **Section I: Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of Child Labor.** The first section of each country profile attempts to provide, to the extent that information is available, a comprehensive picture of the worst forms of child labor in the country.

● **Table 1, Statistics on Children's Work and Education,** contains at least four variables: percentage of working children, school attendance rate, percentage of children combining work and school, and primary completion rate. Most country profiles have data for at least one of these variables. A smaller set of profiles contains data on children's work by sector. The age and methodologies of the original surveys that provide the underlying data vary, and in some cases, the surveys may not reflect the true magnitude of the child labor problem in the country.

● **Table 2, Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity,** groups types of children's work by sector, using categories established by the ILO and Understanding Children's Work for national child labor surveys (Agriculture, Industry, and Services), and a fourth category intended to capture work understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182, referred to in the report as "Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor." Sectors and specific activities performed by children are sorted into these categories according to internationally accepted industry and occupational codes.

● The first table note identifies sectors or activities determined to be hazardous by national law or regulation as understood under Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182, and the second table note provides the definition of Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor.

● The table is followed by a narrative highlighting additional sector-specific information and social, economic, or political issues that affect the prevalence of child labor, such as barriers to accessing education, or major socio-economic shocks to the country that may inhibit the government's ability to address child labor, such as a natural disaster or armed conflict.

In 2022, Mexico made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government approved the ratification of the International Labor Organization's Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention and increased the number of municipal-level bodies responsible for coordinating efforts to address child labor. In addition, the government's Benito Juárez Wellbeing National Scholarship Program reached 1.2 million more students in 2022 than in 2021. However, children in Mexico are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in illicit activities, such as the production and trafficking of drugs. Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture, including in the production of chile peppers, coffee, sugarcane, and tomatoes. Although 55.2 percent of all employment in Mexico occurs in the informal sector, federal and some state-level labor inspectors carry out inspections in that sector only after receiving formal complaints. Further, the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare does not have an internal system to track cases of child labor violations, and the 529 federal labor inspectors in the country are likely insufficient to cover the country's more than 57 million workers. Criminal law enforcement agencies also lack human and financial resources, and social programs to prevent and eliminate child labor are insufficient.



Mexico

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

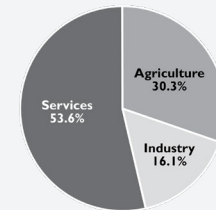
Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Mexico.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	4.0 (866,293)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	97.5
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	4.4
Primary Completion Rate (%)		102.7

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2020, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2023. (1)
Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil, 2019. (2)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/ Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Working in agriculture,† including in the production of avocados, beans, chile peppers, coffee, cotton, cucumbers, eggplants, beans (green), guavas, melons, nuts, onions, pineapples, sugarcane, tobacco,† and tomatoes (3-12) Cattle raising (12,13) Packing shrimp (12)
Industry	Manufacturing† footwear, garments, leather goods, and textiles (2,5,13-15) Producing baked goods (16,17) Construction,† activities unknown (2,12,13) Mining,† including amber and coal (2,12,13,18-21) Loading wood and working in carpentry workshops (12)
Services	Street work† as vendors, shoe shiners, beggars, car washers, and porters (3,12,16,22-24) Working in auto repair garages and bars† (2,5,12)

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.
‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

● Children's work in agriculture often includes long working hours, use of sharp tools, handling pesticides, and carrying heavy loads. (4,45,46) Indigenous children, migrant children, and those working in agriculture are particularly vulnerable to child labor. (26,31,32,47,48) Children from indigenous populations are more likely to work across all sectors, including in agriculture, than non-indigenous children. (31,49,50) Indigenous children are also less likely to attend school due to the lack of schools near their homes, educational materials, and instruction in native languages. (51,52)

Section II: Legal Framework for Child Labor. The second section indicates whether a country has ratified key international instruments related to child labor and assesses whether a country's legal framework meets international standards. This section begins with a statement about the extent to which the government has ratified key international conventions concerning child labor.

Table 3, Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor, lists the relevant UN conventions concerning child labor. A checkmark indicates the country's ratification, acceptance, or accession to the instrument, considering that the latter two actions have the same practical legal effect regarding the substantive obligations of the instrument as ratification. If other relevant international instruments, beyond those listed in the table, were ratified during the reporting period, this may be recognized in a short narrative following the table.

A statement above **Table 4, Laws and Regulations on Child Labor,** indicates whether the government's laws and regulations related to child labor meet ILO C. 138 and C. 182, or whether gaps exist in the legal framework to adequately protect children from child labor.

Table 4 lists each of the relevant legal standards and notes which laws meet and do not meet international standards. Notes under Table 4 identify whether a government does not use conscription for military service, whether a government does not have a standing military, and whether an age is calculated based on available information.

The table is followed by a narrative describing any relevant laws that the government enacted or advanced to a significant step in the legislative process during the reporting period. The narrative also discusses why existing laws do not meet international standards.







Section III: Enforcement of Laws on Child Labor. The third section describes the roles of government agencies in enforcing laws related to child labor and reports on efforts made during the reporting period. It begins with a statement about whether the government has established institutional mechanisms to enforce laws and regulations on child labor and notes whether gaps exist within the authority or operations of the ministries responsible for law enforcement.

Table 5, Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement, lists the agencies charged with enforcing such laws, identifies each agency's role, and describes gaps in agency responsibilities or new information during the reporting period. A table note identifies whether an agency responsible for child labor enforcement was created during the reporting period.

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Mexico has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
 ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
 UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
 UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The government ratified the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention, 1930 on November 10, 2022. (65)

The government's laws and regulations are in line with relevant international standards (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 123 of the Constitution; Article 22 bis of the Labor Code; Article 47 of the Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents; Article 6 of the General Education Law (66-69)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles 23 and 175 of the Labor Code (69)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 175 and 176 of the Labor Code (69)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 1 and 5 of the Constitution; Articles 11, 12, and 22 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 47 of the Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents (65-67,70)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 10 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 47 of the Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents (67,70)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 200–205-Bis of the Federal Penal Code; Articles 13 and 18 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 47 of the Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents (67,70,71)

In 2022, the Mexican Senate revised the Military Service Law to remove the exception that allowed children aged 16 and 17 to enroll in voluntary state military service. (73-76) In April 2022, Mexico also amended the Labor Code to allow children as young as age 15 to work in some forms of agricultural employment. Previously, all work in agriculture was considered hazardous; under the new provision, only work using chemicals, handling machinery, operating heavy machinery, and determined by the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS) is considered hazardous. (69,77-79) In addition, as the minimum age for work at age 15 is lower than the compulsory education age of 18, children may be encouraged to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. (78,80)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the operations of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate enforcement of child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role & Activities
Secretariat for Labor and Social Welfare (STPS)	Leads efforts to enforce child labor laws, conduct labor inspections, and refer cases for investigation. (69,81-86) The STPS inspectorate is responsible for labor law enforcement in 22 industrial sectors under federal jurisdiction, including the sugar and tobacco industries, three types of enterprises, and labor matters affecting two or more states. The state-level labor inspectorates are responsible for labor law enforcement in all other situations. (66,69,87) Federal and state labor inspectorates carry out labor inspections in formally registered businesses. (81,82,88,89) The Federal Attorney for the Defense of Labor (PROFEDET), a decentralized unit of STPS, receives and prosecutes labor rights violations, including cases involving workers under age 18. (12)
Office of the Attorney General of the Republic (FGR)	Prosecutes crimes involving human trafficking, including those considered as categorical worst forms of child labor, such as human trafficking. (72,90) The FGR's Specialized Unit for Crimes against Women and Trafficking in Persons (FEVIMTRA) and the Specialized Unit on Trafficking in Minors, People, and Organs (UEITMPO) are responsible for investigating and prosecuting human trafficking cases at the federal level, while the Specialized Office for Organized Crime (FEMDO) investigates and prosecutes cases linked to commercial sexual exploitation of children. (12,26,75,86,91-93) In addition, all 32 states have specialized trafficking in persons prosecutors or units, which are responsible for investigating and prosecuting cases of human trafficking at the state level. (93-96) Federal and state trafficking in persons units also receive some cases of child trafficking from the National Institute of Migration and the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance. (97,98)

Table 6, Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor. provides information on labor law enforcement data from the current and previous reporting years, including information about the labor inspectorate's financial and human resources, authority to conduct inspections and assess penalties, and actions and mechanisms to enforce labor laws.

Table 7, Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor. provides information on criminal law enforcement data from the current and previous reporting years, including information about actions and mechanisms to enforce laws related to the worst forms of child labor.

Notes under each table identify whether the data included in the tables fall outside of the calendar year. A narrative follows each of these tables with more specific information on government mechanisms and efforts and includes findings for which ILAB concludes that government efforts fall short.

Section IV: Coordination of Government Efforts on Child Labor. The fourth section provides information on the key institution charged with coordinating efforts related to child labor. It begins with a statement indicating whether the government has established a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, and whether any gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor.

Table 8, Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor. lists the country's key coordinating body and its composition, if known, including its respective mandate, as well as its efforts during the reporting period. A table note states whether the mechanism was created during the reporting period.

Section V: Government Policies on Child Labor. The fifth section describes a country's policies and plans to address child labor and the development of policies that explicitly incorporate the issue of child labor. It begins with a statement indicating whether the government has established policies related to child labor, and whether policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor.

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2022, labor law enforcement agencies in Mexico took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of STPS that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the lack of unannounced inspections being conducted in all sectors.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2021	2022
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$1,536,366 (9)	\$1,658,234 (12,99)
Number of Labor Inspectors	471 (9)	529 (12)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (89)	Yes (89)
Training for Labor Inspectors Provided	Yes (9)	Yes (12)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted at Worksite	35,098† (9)	38,337† ‡ (12)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	2† (9)	0† (12)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	2† (9)	N/A† (12)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown (9)	Unknown (12)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (9)	Yes (12)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (9)	Yes (12)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (89)	Yes (89)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (9)	Yes (12)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (9)	Yes (12)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (9,100)	Yes (12)

† Data are for federal inspectorate only. (9,12)
‡ Data are from January 1, 2022, to October 31, 2022. (12)

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2021	2022
Training for Criminal Investigators Provided	Yes (9)	Yes (12)
Number of Investigations	484† (110)	383 (12,111)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (9)	27 (12)
Number of Convictions	42‡ (56)	25 (12)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (56,112)	Yes (12)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (9)	Yes (12)

† Data are from January 1, 2021, to July 31, 2021. (110)
‡ Data reported may not be complete. (56)

The Specialized Unit for Crimes against Women and Trafficking in Persons (*FEVIMTRA*) and Mexico's National Guard participated in trainings on child trafficking and other crimes against children, including some aimed at identifying commercial sexual exploitation cases. (12) However, reports indicate that the lack of training for criminal law enforcement officers on how to perform prosecutorial and police investigative functions hampered their ability to adequately investigate and prosecute cases involving child labor. (9,26,56,110,113,114)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established a key mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including low levels of participation by state authorities in coordinating mechanisms.

Table 8. Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Activities
Inter-Institutional Commission for Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and the Protection of Adolescent Workers of the Permitted Age in Mexico (CITI)	Coordinates Mexico's activities to develop policies, approve programs, and monitor and evaluate efforts to eliminate child labor. Meets on a quarterly basis, chaired by STPS, and includes representatives from the secretariats of the Interior, Economy, Foreign Affairs, Wellbeing, Agriculture, Transportation, Education, Health, Tourism, Social Security, System for Integral Family Development (SNDFI), and FGR, and NGO networks and international technical and financial partners, such as ILO, UNODC, IOM, and academia. (12,100) There are also state level (CITI Estatales) and municipal-level committees through a National Network of Local Commissions for Preventing and Eradicating Child Labor and Protecting Adolescent Workers (CITIs Network). However, some states do not have active CITI committees, and only about half of the 32 states engaged with CITI at the federal level. (12) In addition, of the active state CITIs, only the state CITIs of Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Jalisco, and the State of Mexico reported on their activities during the reporting period. (9,12) CITI also began implementing its Plan of Action on Child Labor 2021–2024. (9,100,104) Although this plan requires the CITI Secretariat to conduct monitoring activities on a quarterly basis, it lacks an accompanying budget for activities. (118,119)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including a lack of coverage of all worst forms of child labor.

Table 9, *Key Policies Related to Child Labor*, lists the country's key policies and provides a description of each policy's objectives and any developments in implementation, to the extent known, that occurred during the reporting period. Table notes identify policies that were approved during the reporting period and whether there are additional small-scale policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor.

The narrative following the table includes findings related to whether existing policies sufficiently address child labor issues in the country.

Section VI: Social Programs to Address Child Labor. The sixth section describes social programs launched or implemented during the reporting period that focus on child labor. It begins with a statement as to whether the government funded or participated in social programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, and whether gaps exist in these social programs.

Table 10, *Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor*, lists the country's key social programs and descriptions, including its activities and accomplishments, to the extent known, during the reporting period. Where possible, programs are hyperlinked to project websites for additional information. Table notes identify social programs that are funded by the government or were launched during the reporting period, and whether the government had additional small-scale social programs with the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor.

The narrative following the table may include an analysis of the extent to which social programs were sufficient to address the scope of child labor or covered the key sectors in which children are known to work in the country. Not all country profiles will have a paragraph after Table 10.

Section VII: Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor. Table 11, *Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor*, includes a list of suggested actions for the country to consider taking to advance the elimination of child labor.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description & Activities
National Program for the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare (2020–2024)	Seeks to strengthen worker rights in Mexico and increase the participation of workers in the formal sector. (12) The program prioritizes addressing child labor as part of STPS's social inclusion strategy. (120) In 2022, STPS, in collaboration with Save the Children, trained 44 civil servants from the state government of Aguascalientes on child labor issues. (12,121)
National Program for Children and Adolescents (PRONAPPINA) (2021–2024)	Aims to guarantee the rights of children and adolescents by establishing mechanisms to support their growth and development. (12,122) In February 2022, the government launched an action plan to accompany PRONAPPINA. (123) In addition, under this program, the government published the Strategy for the Prevention of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents and delivered a technical training to develop indicators on the rights of children and adolescents. (12,124)
National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons (PNTdP)† (2022–2024)	Guides the work of the Inter-agency Commission to Prevent, Sanction, and Eradicate Crimes on Human Trafficking and for the Protection and Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking, under the General Law on Human Trafficking. (125) Published by the Secretariat of the Interior (SEGOB) in December 2022, this program delineates the Government of Mexico's public policy on human trafficking, in alignment with the National Development Plan 2019–2024. (9,12,126) Thirteen federal government agencies, including SEGOB, STPS, and the Secretariat of Tourism, are responsible for implementing the plan. (125) PNTdP has five key objectives: (1) promoting amendments to the legal framework on human trafficking at the federal level, (2) outlining coordination efforts on human trafficking at the national level, (3) strengthening services to survivors of human trafficking, (4) promoting research to inform actions and public policies, and (5) promoting the human rights of survivors of human trafficking. (125)

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

‡ The government has other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (127)

Although the government has policies to address some of the worst forms of child labor, research could not confirm whether there is a policy to address the use of children in illicit activities. (100,120,128)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

The government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including a lack of programs to address child labor in all sectors and in all states.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description & Activities
Benito Juarez Wellbeing National Scholarship Program†	A \$39.3 million Secretariat of Public Education cash transfer program that offers scholarships for families living in poverty and students at risk of school desertion. The Wellbeing Basic Education Family Scholarship provides bimonthly payments of \$92 per household for all children under age 15 enrolled in school, while the Benito Juarez Scholarship provides bimonthly payments of \$92 to each child enrolled in high school. (129-131) Although the program reached 11 million students in 2022, it has been criticized for providing insufficient cash transfers, lacking monitoring and evaluation, and having implementation issues. (132-137)
Education Programs‡	Managed by the National Institute of Indigenous Peoples, the Indigenous Education Support Program (PAEI) promotes access to public education for children and adolescents from indigenous and Afro-Mexican communities through scholarships, lodging, and nutritional assistance. (138) With funding close to \$87 million, the program helped 80,607 students in 2022. (138) However, during the reporting period, the government eliminated the Indigenous People's Education Diversity Program, the Educational Program for Migrant School Population, and the Full-Time Schools Program. (9,139-141) The termination of the Full-Time Schools Program impacted 3.6 million students. Starting in April 2022, due to advocacy and legal action by parents, civil society organizations, and state-level authorities, Secretariat of Public Education expanded the scope of The School is Ours (LEEN) program from its initial focus on building and improving educational infrastructure to also include an extended school schedule and meal services. (139,142-144)
Assistance for At-Risk Children and Adolescents Program (PAMAR)†	Implemented by SNDF at the state and municipal levels to assist youth at risk for child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation and in illicit activities, by providing shelters, psychosocial assistance, and training. (9,56) Research could not confirm whether the program was active in all states and municipalities where the program is needed.

For information about USDOL's projects to address child labor around the world, visit <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/ilab-project-page-search>

† Program is funded by the Government of Mexico.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (12,48,100,145-147)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Mexico (Table 11).



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Zawahir, age 7, is a refugee from Yemen at Caritas Education Center, which had just reopened its doors to students. Obock, Djibouti. July 13, 2015.

Appendix 5

TDA Country Assessment Criteria

Each country in this report receives an assessment to indicate the USDOL's findings on the country's level of advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor during the reporting period. There are five possible assessment levels: Significant Advancement, Moderate Advancement, Minimal Advancement, No Advancement, or No Assessment.

Significant Advancement

For a country to be assessed as having significantly advanced efforts in 2022, the country must have (1)

instituted the minimum requirements related to laws and regulations, mechanisms, and programs to address and prevent the worst forms of child labor (see Exhibit 1); and (2) during the reporting period, made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas covering laws and regulations, enforcement, coordination, policies, and social programs, which may have included taking suggested actions recommended in the 2021 report.

Exhibit 1

Minimum Requirements Needed to be Considered for a Significant Advancement Assessment

In order for a country to be eligible to receive an assessment of Significant Advancement, a country must have:

- Established a minimum age for work that meets international standards;
- Established a minimum age for hazardous work that meets international standards;
- Established legal prohibitions against forced labor that meet international standards;
- Established legal prohibitions against child trafficking that meet international standards;
- Established legal prohibitions against commercial sexual exploitation of children that meet international standards;
- Established legal prohibitions against the use of children for illicit activities that meet international standards;
- Designated a competent authority or implemented institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor;
- Imposed penalties for violations related to the worst forms of child labor;
- Took active measures to ensure that children are not inappropriately incarcerated, penalized, or physically harmed for unlawful acts as a direct result of being a victim of the worst forms of child labor;
- Took active measures to investigate, prosecute, convict, and sentence public officials who participate in or facilitate the worst forms of child labor;
- Made a good-faith effort to collect and publish labor and criminal law enforcement data; and
- Directly funded a significant social program that includes the goal of eliminating child labor or addressing the root causes of the problem, such as lack of educational opportunities, poverty, or discrimination.

Moderate Advancement

A country moderately advanced its efforts in eliminating the worst forms of child labor in 2022 if it made meaningful efforts during the reporting period in some relevant areas covering laws and regulations, enforcement, coordination, policies, and social programs, which may have included taking suggested actions recommended in 2021.

Minimal Advancement

Three types of countries made minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in 2022. The first is a country that made meaningful efforts during the reporting period in a few relevant areas covering laws and regulations, enforcement, coordination, policies, and social programs, which may have included taking suggested actions recommended in 2021.

The other two types of countries are those that, regardless of meaningful efforts made in relevant areas, minimally advanced as a result of establishing or failing to remedy regressive or significantly detrimental laws, policies, or practices that delayed advancement in the elimination of the worst forms of child labor. Examples of regressive or significantly detrimental laws, policies, or practices include lowering the minimum age for work below international standards, recruiting or using children in armed conflict, and continuing to impose administrative barriers to child labor inspections. The following points make distinctions between regression and continued law, policy, or practice:

Regression in Law, Policy, or Practice that Delayed Advancement. This type of country made meaningful efforts in a few or more relevant areas but established a regressive or significantly detrimental law, policy, or practice during the reporting period that delayed advancement in eliminating the worst forms of child labor.

Continued Law, Policy, or Practice that Delayed Advancement. This type of country made meaningful efforts in a few or more relevant areas but failed to remedy a regressive or significantly detrimental law, policy, or practice established in previous years, which delayed advancement in eliminating the worst forms of child labor.

No Advancement

Three types of countries made no advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in 2022. The first is a country that made no meaningful efforts to advance the elimination of the worst forms of child labor during the reporting period.

The other two types of countries are those that, regardless of whether meaningful efforts in relevant areas were made, had a policy or demonstrated a practice of being complicit in the use of forced child labor in more than isolated incidents, which is considered an egregious form of exploitation. Complicity can occur when a government is involved in forced child labor at any level of government, including at the local, regional, or national level. Such incidents involve direct or proactive government action to compel children under age 18 to work. The following points make distinctions between a country making no efforts and being complicit and a country making efforts but being complicit:

No Efforts and Complicit in Forced Child Labor.

This type of country made no meaningful efforts, took no suggested actions reported in 2021, and had a policy or demonstrated a practice of being complicit in the use of forced child labor in more than isolated incidents in 2022.

Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor.

This type of country made meaningful efforts, which may have included taking suggested actions reported in 2021 but had a policy or demonstrated a practice of being complicit in the use of forced child labor in more than isolated incidents in 2022.

No Assessment

This assessment is reserved for countries in which the population of children is either non-existent or extremely small (fewer than 50), there is no evidence of the worst forms of child labor and the country appears to have an adequate preventive legal and enforcement framework on child labor, or when a country is included in the report for the first time or receives a suggested action for the first time. This year, no assessment has been made regarding Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and Wallis and Futuna.

TDA Country Assessments, by Assessment

COUNTRY	REGION	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
SIGNIFICANT ADVANCEMENT		
Argentina	LAC	Significant Advancement
Colombia	LAC	Significant Advancement
Côte d'Ivoire	AF	Significant Advancement
Uzbekistan	IP	Significant Advancement
MODERATE ADVANCEMENT		
Albania	EUR	Moderate Advancement
Angola	AF	Moderate Advancement
Belize	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Benin	AF	Moderate Advancement
Bhutan	IP	Moderate Advancement
Bolivia	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Bosnia and Herzegovina	EUR	Moderate Advancement
Botswana	AF	Moderate Advancement
Brazil	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Burkina Faso	AF	Moderate Advancement
Burundi	AF	Moderate Advancement
Cabo Verde	AF	Moderate Advancement
Cameroon	AF	Moderate Advancement
Chile	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Comoros	AF	Moderate Advancement
Costa Rica	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Djibouti	AF	Moderate Advancement
Ecuador	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Egypt	MENA	Moderate Advancement
El Salvador	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Ethiopia	AF	Moderate Advancement
Gambia, The	AF	Moderate Advancement
Georgia	EUR	Moderate Advancement
Ghana	AF	Moderate Advancement
Guatemala	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Guinea	AF	Moderate Advancement
Guinea-Bissau	AF	Moderate Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
MODERATE ADVANCEMENT (CONTINUED)		
Honduras	LAC	Moderate Advancement
India	IP	Moderate Advancement
Indonesia	IP	Moderate Advancement
Jamaica	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Jordan	MENA	Moderate Advancement
Kosovo	EUR	Moderate Advancement
Lesotho	AF	Moderate Advancement
Liberia	AF	Moderate Advancement
Madagascar	AF	Moderate Advancement
Malawi	AF	Moderate Advancement
Maldives	IP	Moderate Advancement
Mauritius	AF	Moderate Advancement
Mexico	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Moldova	EUR	Moderate Advancement
Mongolia	IP	Moderate Advancement
Morocco	MENA	Moderate Advancement
Nepal	IP	Moderate Advancement
Nigeria	AF	Moderate Advancement
Norfolk Island	IP	Moderate Advancement
Oman	MENA	Moderate Advancement
Pakistan	IP	Moderate Advancement
Panama	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Paraguay	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Peru	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Philippines	IP	Moderate Advancement
Saint Lucia	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Samoa	IP	Moderate Advancement
Senegal	AF	Moderate Advancement
Serbia	EUR	Moderate Advancement
Sierra Leone	AF	Moderate Advancement
Solomon Islands	IP	Moderate Advancement
South Africa	AF	Moderate Advancement
Sri Lanka	IP	Moderate Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
MODERATE ADVANCEMENT (CONTINUED)		
Suriname	LAC	Moderate Advancement
Tanzania	AF	Moderate Advancement
Thailand	IP	Moderate Advancement
Togo	AF	Moderate Advancement
Tunisia	MENA	Moderate Advancement
Uganda	AF	Moderate Advancement
Vanuatu	IP	Moderate Advancement
Western Sahara	MENA	Moderate Advancement
Zambia	AF	Moderate Advancement
MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT		
Algeria	MENA	Minimal Advancement
Chad	AF	Minimal Advancement
Congo, Republic of the	AF	Minimal Advancement
Cook Islands	IP	Minimal Advancement
Dominica	LAC	Minimal Advancement
Eswatini	AF	Minimal Advancement
Fiji	IP	Minimal Advancement
Guyana	LAC	Minimal Advancement
Haiti	LAC	Minimal Advancement
Kiribati	IP	Minimal Advancement
Lebanon	MENA	Minimal Advancement
Montenegro	EUR	Minimal Advancement
Mozambique	AF	Minimal Advancement
Namibia	AF	Minimal Advancement
Nicaragua	LAC	Minimal Advancement
Niger	AF	Minimal Advancement
Niue	IP	Minimal Advancement
North Macedonia	EUR	Minimal Advancement
Papua New Guinea	IP	Minimal Advancement
Rwanda	AF	Minimal Advancement
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	LAC	Minimal Advancement
São Tomé and Príncipe	AF	Minimal Advancement
Tokelau	IP	Minimal Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT (CONTINUED)		
Tuvalu	IP	Minimal Advancement
West Bank and the Gaza Strip	MENA	Minimal Advancement
MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT– Efforts Made but Regression in Law/Policy/Practice that Delayed Advancement		
Bangladesh	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practices that Delayed Advancement
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement
Dominican Republic	LAC	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement
MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT– Efforts Made but Continued Law/Policy/Practice that Delayed Advancement		
Armenia	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Azerbaijan	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Cambodia	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Central African Republic	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Gabon	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Iraq	MENA	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Kazakhstan	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Kenya	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Kyrgyz Republic	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law and Practice that Delayed Advancement
Mali	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Mauritania	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Saint Helena, Ascension, and Tristán da Cunha	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Somalia	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Timor-Leste	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT- Efforts Made but Continued Law/Policy/Practice that Delayed Advancement (CONTINUED)		
Tonga	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Ukraine	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Yemen	MENA	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Zimbabwe	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
NO ADVANCEMENT		
Afghanistan	IP	No Advancement
Anguilla	EUR	No Advancement
British Virgin Islands	EUR	No Advancement
Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)	EUR	No Advancement
Grenada	LAC	No Advancement
Montserrat	EUR	No Advancement
NO ADVANCEMENT – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor		
Burma	IP	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor
Eritrea	AF	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor
South Sudan	AF	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor
NO ASSESSMENT		
Christmas Island	IP	No Assessment
Cocos (Keeling) Islands	IP	No Assessment
Wallis and Futuna	EUR	No Assessment

Comparisons in TDA Assessments From 2021 to 2022, by Country

COUNTRY	REGION	2021 ASSESSMENT LEVEL	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
Afghanistan	IP	No Advancement	No Advancement
Albania	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Algeria	MENA	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Angola	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Anguilla	EUR	No Advancement	No Advancement
Argentina	LAC	Significant Advancement	Significant Advancement
Armenia	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Azerbaijan	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Bangladesh	IP	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practices that Delayed Advancement
Belize	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Benin	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Bhutan	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Bolivia	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Bosnia and Herzegovina	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Botswana	AF	Minimal Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Brazil	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
British Virgin Islands	EUR	No Advancement	No Advancement
Burkina Faso	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Burma	IP	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor
Burundi	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Cabo Verde	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Cambodia	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Cameroon	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2021 ASSESSMENT LEVEL	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
Central African Republic	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Chad	AF	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Chile	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Christmas Island	IP	No Assessment	No Assessment
Cocos (Keeling) Islands	IP	No Assessment	No Assessment
Colombia	LAC	Significant Advancement	Significant Advancement
Comoros	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	AF	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement
Congo, Republic of the	AF	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Cook Islands	IP	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Costa Rica	LAC	Significant Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Côte d'Ivoire	AF	Significant Advancement	Significant Advancement
Djibouti	AF	Minimal Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Dominica	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Dominican Republic	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement
Ecuador	LAC	Significant Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Egypt	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
El Salvador	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Eritrea	AF	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor
Eswatini	AF	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Ethiopia	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	No Advancement
Fiji	IP	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Gabon	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2021 ASSESSMENT LEVEL	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
Gambia, The	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Georgia	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Ghana	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Grenada	LAC	No Advancement	No Advancement
Guatemala	LAC	Significant Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Guinea	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Guinea-Bissau	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Guyana	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Haiti	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Honduras	LAC	Significant Advancement	Moderate Advancement
India	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Indonesia	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Iraq	MENA	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Jamaica	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Jordan	MENA	Significant Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Kazakhstan	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Law that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Kenya	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Kiribati	IP	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Kosovo	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Kyrgyz Republic	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law and Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law and Practice that Delayed Advancement
Lebanon	MENA	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Lesotho	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Liberia	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Madagascar	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Malawi	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Maldives	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2021 ASSESSMENT LEVEL	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
Mali	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Mauritania	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Policy and Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement
Mauritius	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Mexico	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Moldova	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law and Practice that Delayed Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Mongolia	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Montenegro	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Montserrat	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	No Advancement
Morocco	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Mozambique	AF	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Namibia	AF	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Nepal	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Nicaragua	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Niger	AF	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Nigeria	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Niue	IP	No Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Norfolk Island	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
North Macedonia	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Oman	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Pakistan	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Panama	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Papua New Guinea	IP	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Paraguay	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Peru	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Philippines	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Rwanda	AF	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2021 ASSESSMENT LEVEL	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
Saint Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Saint Lucia	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Samoa	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
São Tomé and Príncipe	AF	Moderate Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Senegal	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Serbia	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Sierra Leone	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Solomon Islands	IP	Minimal Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Somalia	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
South Africa	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
South Sudan	AF	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor
Sri Lanka	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Suriname	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Tanzania	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Thailand	IP	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Timor-Leste	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Togo	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Tokelau	IP	No Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Tonga	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Tunisia	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Tuvalu	IP	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Uganda	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Ukraine	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement

COUNTRY	REGION	2021 ASSESSMENT LEVEL	2022 ASSESSMENT LEVEL
Uzbekistan	IP	Significant Advancement	Significant Advancement
Vanuatu	IP	Minimal Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Wallis and Futuna	EUR	No Assessment	No Assessment
West Bank and the Gaza Strip	MENA	Minimal Advancement	Minimal Advancement
Western Sahara	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Yemen	MENA	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement
Zambia	AF	Moderate Advancement	Moderate Advancement
Zimbabwe	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement



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Juan Gabriel, age 11, spins thread at his home while schools are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the school closure, he has worked with his 11 siblings in the coffee fields daily, instead of only on weekends. His father helps them with schoolwork dropped off by teachers. Nuevo Yibelloj, Chiapas, Mexico. September 11, 2020.



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A young boy shows freshly caught fish after returning from the sea in the early morning hours on the day a ban on marine fishing was lifted. Accra, Ghana. August 1, 2021.

Appendix 6

TDA Laws and Ratifications, by Country

COUNTRY	RE- GION	2022 ASSESSMENT	ILO C. 138	ILO C. 182	CRC	CRC OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS		PALER- MO PRO- TOCOL	MIN. AGE FOR WORK	EDUCATION	
						CRC- CSEC	CRC- AC			COMPUL- SORY EDUCA- TION AGE	FREE PUBLIC EDUCA- TION
Afghanistan	IP	No Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	15	Yes
Albania	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Algeria	MENA	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Angola	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	14	Yes
Anguilla	EUR	No Advancement	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	12	17	Yes
Argentina	LAC	Significant Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	18	Yes
Armenia	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	18	Yes
Azerbaijan	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Bangladesh	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practices that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	19	14	Yes
Belize	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	14	Yes
Benin	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	11	No
Bhutan	IP	Moderate Advancement	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	13	N/A	Yes
Bolivia	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	17	Yes
Bosnia and Herzegovina	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Botswana	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	N/A	Yes
Brazil	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	17	Yes
British Virgin Islands	EUR	No Advancement	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	16	17	Yes
Burkina Faso	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes

COUNTRY	RE- GION	2022 ASSESSMENT	ILO C. 138	ILO C. 182	CRC	CRC OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS		PALER- MO PRO- TOCOL	MIN. AGE FOR WORK	EDUCATION	
						CRC- CSEC	CRC- AC			COMPUL- SORY EDUCA- TION AGE	FREE PUBLIC EDUCA- TION
Burma	IP	No Advancement - Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	10	Yes
Burundi	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	15	No
Cabo Verde	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Cambodia	IP	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	N/A	Yes
Cameroon	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	14	12	No
Central African Republic	AF	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Chad	AF	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	16	No
Chile	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	18	Yes
Christmas Island	IP	No Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	17.5	17.5	Yes
Cocos (Keeling) Islands	IP	No Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	17.5	17.5	Yes
Colombia	LAC	Significant Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	18	Yes
Comoros	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	No
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	AF	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	12	No
Congo, Republic of the	AF	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	16	16	Yes
Cook Islands	IP	Minimal Advancement	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	16	16	No
Costa Rica	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	17	Yes

COUNTRY	RE- GION	2022 ASSESSMENT	ILO C. 138	ILO C. 182	CRC	CRC OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS		PALER- MO PRO- TOCOL	MIN. AGE FOR WORK	EDUCATION	
						CRC- CSEC	CRC- AC			COMPUL- SORY EDUCA- TION AGE	FREE PUBLIC EDUCA- TION
Côte d'Ivoire	AF	Significant Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Djibouti	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Dominica	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	No
Dominican Republic	LAC	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	14	Yes
Ecuador	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Egypt	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
El Salvador	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Eritrea	AF	No Advancement – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	14	No
Eswatini	AF	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	12/13	No
Ethiopia	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	N/A	No
Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)	EUR	No Advancement	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	14	16	Yes
Fiji	IP	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Gabon	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Gambia, The	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	16	Yes
Georgia	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	15	Yes
Ghana	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Grenada	LAC	No Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	No
Guatemala	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	15	Yes
Guinea	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	No
Guinea-Bissau	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	15	No

COUNTRY	RE- GION	2022 ASSESSMENT	ILO C. 138	ILO C. 182	CRC	CRC OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS		PALER- MO PRO- TOCOL	MIN. AGE FOR WORK	EDUCATION	
						CRC- CSEC	CRC- AC			COMPUL- SORY EDUCA- TION AGE	FREE PUBLIC EDUCA- TION
Guyana	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Haiti	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	15	Yes
Honduras	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	17	Yes
India	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	14	Yes
Indonesia	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	No
Iraq	MENA	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	12	Yes
Jamaica	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	No
Jordan	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Kazakhstan	IP	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	17	Yes
Kenya	AF	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	16	18	No
Kiribati	IP	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	15	Yes
Kosovo	EUR	Moderate Advancement	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	15	Yes
Kyrgyz Republic	IP	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Continued Law and Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	17	Yes
Lebanon	MENA	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	14	15	Yes
Lesotho	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	13	Yes
Liberia	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	15	14	Yes
Madagascar	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Malawi	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	18	Yes
Maldives	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes

COUNTRY	RE- GION	2022 ASSESSMENT	ILO C. 138	ILO C. 182	CRC	CRC OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS		PALER- MO PRO- TOCOL	MIN. AGE FOR WORK	EDUCATION	
						CRC- CSEC	CRC- AC			COMPUL- SORY EDUCA- TION AGE	FREE PUBLIC EDUCA- TION
Mali	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	No
Mauritania	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	16	14	Yes
Mauritius	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Mexico	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	18	Yes
Moldova	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	18	Yes
Mongolia	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Montenegro	EUR	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Montserrat	EUR	No Advancement	No	No	No	No	No	No	16	16	Yes
Morocco	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Mozambique	AF	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Namibia	AF	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	18	Yes
Nepal	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	14	Yes
Nicaragua	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	12	Yes
Niger	AF	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	N/A	Yes
Nigeria	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	12	15	Yes
Niue	IP	Minimal Advancement	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	N/A	16	Yes
Norfolk Island	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	No
North Macedonia	EUR	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	Yes
Oman	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Pakistan	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	Yes
Panama	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	15	Yes
Papua New Guinea	IP	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	16	N/A	No
Paraguay	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	17	Yes

COUNTRY	RE- GION	2022 ASSESSMENT	ILO C. 138	ILO C. 182	CRC	CRC OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS		PALER- MO PRO- TOCOL	MIN. AGE FOR WORK	EDUCATION	
						CRC- CSEC	CRC- AC			COMPUL- SORY EDUCA- TION AGE	FREE PUBLIC EDUCA- TION
Peru	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	17	Yes
Philippines	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	18	Yes
Rwanda	AF	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	12	No
Saint Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha	EUR	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	16	16	Yes
Saint Lucia	LAC	Moderate Advancement	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	No
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	LAC	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	16	Yes
Samoa	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	15	16	No
São Tomé and Príncipe	AF	Minimal Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	15	15	Yes
Senegal	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	Yes
Serbia	EUR	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Sierra Leone	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Solomon Islands	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	12	N/A	No
Somalia	AF	Minimal Advancement - Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	15	14	Yes
South Africa	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	No
South Sudan	AF	No Advancement - Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	14	13	Yes
Sri Lanka	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Suriname	LAC	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	12	Yes
Tanzania	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14	13	No
Thailand	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	Yes

COUNTRY	RE- GION	2022 ASSESSMENT	ILO C. 138	ILO C. 182	CRC	CRC OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS		PALER- MO PRO- TOCOL	MIN. AGE FOR WORK	EDUCATION	
						CRC- CSEC	CRC- AC			COMPUL- SORY EDUCA- TION AGE	FREE PUBLIC EDUCA- TION
Timor-Leste	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	Yes
Togo	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	No
Tokelau	IP	Minimal Advancement	No	No	No	No	No	No	N/A	16	Yes
Tonga	IP	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	N/A	18	No
Tunisia	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
Tuvalu	IP	Minimal Advancement	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	15	15	No
Uganda	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	16	13	No
Ukraine	EUR	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Law that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	17	Yes
Uzbekistan	IP	Significant Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	18	Yes
Vanuatu	IP	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	14	N/A	No
Wallis and Futuna	EUR	No Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	Yes
West Bank and the Gaza Strip	MENA	Minimal Advancement	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	16	Yes
Western Sahara	MENA	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15	15	Yes
Yemen	MENA	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Continued Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	14	15	Yes
Zambia	AF	Moderate Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	15	N/A	Yes
Zimbabwe	AF	Minimal Advancement – Efforts Made but Regression in Practice that Delayed Advancement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	16	16	No



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A child laborer works in a cooking pot manufacturing plant. In this type of aluminum factory, 30–50 percent of employees are children who earn \$3.00–3.50 per day for their work. Dhaka, Bangladesh. June 12, 2021.

Appendix 7

Reference Materials—Key Concepts and Definitions

Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions

In this report, 109 country profiles include a statistical table (Table 1, Statistics on Children’s Work and Education) with data on the percentage of working children, school attendance rate, percentage of children who combine school and work, and/or primary completion rate. For a smaller set of profiles, a chart lists the percentages of children who work by sector.

This appendix provides definitions and descriptions of the sources for these data and some of the strengths and weaknesses inherent within them. In a few cases, more current sources of data may be available than the ones used in this report; however, the most reliable, standardized sources available to date are used to allow for cross-country comparisons. Because reliable child labor surveys are not available for many countries, in some cases USDOL uses statistics from child labor surveys that are more than 10 years old (data from earlier than 2013). If data did not exist from the sources described below, if no other reliable and publicly available source of data exists for a country, or if data exist but have not been analyzed to allow for cross-country comparisons, this report concludes that the statistics are “unavailable.”

Working Children

Many of the statistical tables in the country profiles in this report present data on the percentage and number of working children. Data presented in the current report may differ from data that were presented in previous reports because updated data have become available.

Definition

The term “working children” describes children engaged in any productive activity for at least 1 hour during the reference period. Productive activity includes market production and certain types of non-market production, principally the production of goods and services for their own use. The work that children perform may be in the formal or informal economy, inside or outside family settings, or for pay or profit. This includes children working in domestic service outside the child’s own household for an employer, paid or unpaid. This definition is in accordance with the Resolution to Amend the 18th ICLS Resolution Concerning Statistics of Child Labor, adopted by the 20th International Conference of Labor Statisticians (ICLS) in 2018, and the ILO and UNICEF report *Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward*. (38; 52) The 20th ICLS definition classifies working children as those engaged in any activity to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for their own use. The definition also includes the production of additional types of services for family use, unpaid trainee work by children, volunteer work by children, and other work activities by children. Since most countries are in the process of adapting survey instruments to reflect this new definition, the definition of working children from the 18th ICLS Resolution has been used in this report.

Working Children Versus Children Engaged in Child Labor

This report presents statistics on “working children” rather than on “children involved in child labor.” These terms are defined precisely in Appendix 2, “Definitions Related to Child Labor and Forced Labor.” The definition of working children does not

vary among countries and, therefore, statistics on working children are comparable across country profiles. In contrast, the definition of children involved in child labor is based on national legislation, including, for example, the minimum age for work, which varies from country to country. As a result, child labor data based on this measurement are not comparable across countries. Furthermore, these country-level statistics may not disaggregate child labor from the broader category of child work, thereby including children who work only a few hours a week in permitted light work. For the purposes of this report, ILAB is unable to clearly articulate the proportion of working children who are involved in child labor.

Data Sources and Limitations

Data are primarily from the ILO's analysis of four survey types: (1) the ILO's Statistical Information and Monitoring Program on Child Labor (SIMPOC) surveys; (2) national Labor Force Surveys (LFS); (3) UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS); and (4) other national and regional household surveys, including Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS).

According to ILO researchers, typical surveys on children's work do not collect sufficiently detailed information on children's activities to accurately measure economic activity. (53) This observation was repeated in December 2008 at the 18th ICLS. A resolution adopted at the conference provides guidelines for governments on collecting child labor data. Specifically, the guidance indicates that countries can choose to use a broad framework to measure children's work and child labor that encompasses unpaid household services or countries can use a narrower definition of children's work that excludes such services, as long as the definition used is clearly specified. This resolution is contributing to the collection of more comparable data on children's involvement in non-market activities. In addition, although the 20th ICLS introduced changes to the definition of working children to align it with internationally accepted definitions of work for adults, since most countries are in the process of adapting

survey instruments to reflect this new definition, the definition of working children from the 18th ICLS Resolution has been used in this report. (38; 39)

In analyzing the data from the above-mentioned surveys, the ILO attempted to apply a standard definition of children's work, although UNICEF's MICS and ILO's SIMPOC reports, for example, each use a different definition of work. As of the writing of this report, MICS reports include household chores in their definition of work, while some SIMPOC reports do not, depending on each country's basis for reporting. To the extent possible, the ILO applied a common definition of work to the micro-data described. To date, this has resulted in the individual analysis of more than 250 datasets. While every attempt was made to present a standardized child work statistic, differences across surveys have the potential to affect the comparability of statistics across countries and across years. Some of these differences are explained in greater detail here; however, in general, they include differing age groups, questionnaire content and wording, purpose of the survey, sample design, non-sampling errors, and the year of data collection.

In general, data are presented for children ages 5 to 14; however, some of the profiles present a work statistic for children ages 6 to 14, 7 to 14, or 10 to 14, depending on the age categories used in the original survey. The wording of work-related questions also may affect the results. For example, the question on work in these surveys usually refers to work during the past 7 days; however, some surveys may refer to work activities during the past 12 months, and thus they are likely to capture a higher proportion of working children than surveys with 7-day timeframes. The purpose of the survey—whether specifically to measure children's work and child labor (SIMPOC surveys) or measure labor force participation of adults—may affect estimates of children's work. (54) Sample design may also affect survey results. For example, children's work is often clustered geographically; SIMPOC surveys are designed to capture children's work in such geographic areas. As a result, estimates of working children vary across surveys that do not

use the same sample design. (53) The ILO and UNICEF continue to investigate the effects of these survey differences on estimates of children's work.

As noted, some country profiles also include the sectors in which children reportedly work. For some surveys, the sector of work was not reported by the entire sample of working children. Therefore, the distribution of children working by sector—agriculture, industry, and services—represents children with non-missing data for the sector of work. Additional information on the sectors of work reported in the chart appear in Table 1.

Percentage of Children Attending School

The percentage of children attending school is the share of all children within a specified age group that reported attending school. The ILO data described above in the section “Working Children” are used to develop country-specific school attendance statistics. To be consistent with estimates of working children, the age group for which attendance statistics are calculated for children is generally ages 5 to 14. In some cases, however, different age categories are used, usually ages 6 to 14, 7 to 14, or 10 to 14.

Percentage of Children Combining Work and School

The percentage of children who combine work and school is the share of all children within a specified age group reporting both working and attending school. The ILO data described earlier under “Working Children” are used to develop country-specific statistics on children combining work and school. The age group for which these statistics are calculated is usually for children ages 7 to 14 or 10 to 14.

Primary Completion Rate

This report uses the “gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary education” as a proxy measure for primary completion. This ratio is the total number of new entrants in the last grade of primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the theoretical entrance age to the last grade of primary education. A high ratio indicates a

high degree of current primary education completion. The calculation includes all new entrants to the last grade, regardless of age. Therefore, the ratio can exceed 100 percent, due to over- and underage children who enter primary school late or early or repeat grades.

Data Sources and Limitations

Unlike the other statistics presented in the country profile data tables, which are all based on the ILO analysis described earlier, primary completion rate data are from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The data were downloaded on March 15, 2023, and are available at <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>. Further information on this statistic is available from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics Glossary at <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary>.

UNESCO uses population estimates from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to calculate some of the rates it publishes, including the gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary education. These population estimates change over time. The last revision that affected the statistics used in this report was in March 2023. All population-based indicators, including the gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary education, are re-calculated every year using the latest estimates. For some countries and years, when the new UNDP population estimates are found to be inconsistent with education data, related indicators are removed. All updates made to UNESCO data on the gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary education are reflected in the primary completion rate statistic included in this report.

Labor Law Enforcement: Sources and Definitions

Labor Force Calculation

This report uses data from either government-reported labor force statistics collected by the ILO or from labor force estimates by the ILO modeled on a combination of demographic and economic factors. Both sources of labor force data provide the most recent estimates for countries' total labor force. This

number is used to calculate a “sufficient number” of labor inspectors based on the country’s level of development, as determined by the UN. (55)

Country Classification

For analyses, the Development Policy and Analysis Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (UN DESA) classifies all countries of the world into one of four broad categories: (1) developed economies, (2) economies in transition, (3) developing economies, and (4) least developed countries. The composition of these groupings is intended to reflect basic economic country conditions. Several countries, in particular the economies in transition, have characteristics that could place them in more than one category; however, for analyses, the groupings have been made mutually exclusive. This is decided upon by the UN Economic and Social Council and, ultimately, by the General Assembly deciding on the list of least developed countries based on recommendations made by the Committee for Development Policy. The basic criteria for inclusion require that certain thresholds be met for per capita gross national income, a human assets index, and an economic vulnerability index. For the *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* report, “developed economies” equates to the ILO’s classification of “industrial market economies,” “economies in transition” to “transition economies,” “developing economies” to “industrializing economies,” and “least developed countries” to “less developed countries.” Countries that appear on both “developing economies” and “least developed countries” lists are considered “least developed countries” for calculating a “sufficient number” of labor inspectors. (56)

Number of Labor Inspectors

Article 10 of ILO C. 81 calls for a “sufficient number” of inspectors to do the work required. Because each country assigns different priorities of enforcement to its inspectors, there is no official definition for a sufficient number of inspectors. In 2022, the ILO updated its guidance for assessing the size of country/territory labor inspectorates to emphasize

a holistic evaluation of national context rather than solely a ratio of labor inspectors to labor force size. The factors that need to be considered include the number and nature of the functions assigned to the inspection system; the number, nature, size, and situation of the workplaces liable to inspection; the number of workers; the number and complexity of legal provisions to be enforced; the material and financial resources available to the inspectorate; and the practical conditions under which visits of inspection must be carried out in order to be effective. No single measure is sufficient; however, in many countries, the available data sources are weak. The ratio of inspectors per workforce is currently the only internationally comparable indicator available. In its policy and technical advisory services, the ILO has taken as reasonable benchmarks that the number of labor inspectors in relation to workers should approach 1:10,000 in industrial market economies, 1:15,000 in industrializing economies, 1:20,000 in transition economies, and 1:40,000 in less developed countries. (57; 58)

ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations

The ILO CEACR examines and makes two types of comments on the application of international labor standards by states that are party to the relevant conventions. Direct requests contain the Committee’s technical comments or questions about the state’s application of a particular convention, and these requests are sent directly to governments. Observations, which are published in the Committee’s annual report, contain comments on fundamental questions raised by a state’s application of a particular convention and recommendations for the state. (58)

Glossary of Other Terms

Basic Education

Article 7(c) of ILO C. 182 requires countries to, “ensure access to free basic education.” According to the International Standard Classification of Education, “basic education” corresponds to the first 9 years

of formal schooling and comprises primary and lower secondary education. Primary education is considered to be the first stage of basic education and covers 6 years of full-time schooling, with the legal age of entrance normally being no younger than age 5 or older than age 7. Primary education is designed to give pupils a sound basis in reading, writing, and mathematics, along with an elementary understanding of other subjects, such as history, geography, natural science, social science, religion, art, and music. Lower secondary education is more subject-focused and requires specialized teachers. It corresponds to about 3 years of schooling. Basic education also can include various non-formal and informal public and private educational activities offered to meet the defined basic learning needs of groups of people of all ages. (6)

Article 13 of the UN's 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights indicates that primary education should be compulsory and free to all. Secondary education, including technical and vocational education, should be available and accessible to all, and free education should be progressively introduced. Article 28 of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms the right of the child to an education and the state's duty to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory. (59; 60)

Bonded Labor, Debt Bondage

Bonded labor or debt bondage is, "the status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of his personal services or those of a person under his control as security for a debt if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied towards the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined," as defined in the UN Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (1956). (43)

Bonded labor typically occurs when a person who needs a loan and has no security to offer pledges

their labor, or that of someone under their control, as security for a loan. In some cases, the interest on the loan may be so high that it cannot be paid. In others, it may be deemed that the bonded individual's work repays the interest on the loan but not the principal. Thus, the loan is inherited and perpetuated, and becomes an inter-generational debt. (43)

Bonded labor is prohibited as one of the worst forms of child labor in ILO C. 182. (6)

Child Domestic Worker

A "child domestic worker" works in third-party private households under an employment relationship and engages in various tasks that include cleaning, cooking, gardening, collecting water, or caring for children and the elderly. Child domestic workers sometimes have live-in arrangements, whereby they live in their employer's household and work in exchange for room, board, and sometimes education. Child domestic workers are vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor, including sexual, physical, and verbal abuse, in large part because they often depend on their employers for basic needs and work in locations hidden from public view. (61; 62)

Child Labor Elimination Projects

Since 1995, USDOL has funded over 360 projects in 99 countries. USDOL currently oversees more than \$291 million in active programming to combat exploitative child labor. To date, USDOL-funded projects have provided nearly 2 million children with education and vocational training opportunities as a strategy for preventing and reducing child labor and increasing access to education in disadvantaged communities.

Child Trafficking

The UN's Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) states, "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered 'trafficking in persons' even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph

(a) of this Article.” As such, there does not need to be abuse of power, control, coercion, or fraud present to constitute child trafficking, as the definition for adults requires. The Palermo Protocol provides a commonly accepted definition of human trafficking in Article 3(a) that trafficking in persons means, “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” (63)

The trafficking of children is prohibited as a worst form of child labor in ILO C. 182, Article 3(a). (6)

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

Based on the 1996 Declaration and Agenda for Action of the First World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is defined as, “sexual abuse by the adult and remuneration in cash or kind to the child or third person or persons.” (64) The remuneration dynamic distinguishes CSEC from the sexual abuse of a child, which does not include commercial gain; however, commercial sexual exploitation also involves abuse. The definition of CSEC includes these activities:

- Prostitution in the streets or indoors, and in such places as brothels, discotheques, massage parlors, bars, hotels, and restaurants
- Child sex tourism
- The production, promotion, and distribution of pornography involving children
- The use of children in sex shows (public or private)

ILO C. 182, Article 3(b), prohibits using, procuring, or offering a child for prostitution or for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances. (6)

Compulsory Education Age

The age up to which children and youth are legally required to attend school. (65)

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN’s Convention on the Rights of the Child spells out the basic rights of children, such as the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to be protected from harmful influences, abuse, and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural, and social life. The Convention protects children’s rights by setting standards in health care; education; and legal, civil, and social services. According to Article 32 of the Convention, children have the right, “to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development.” (59)

Hazardous Work

Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182 sets forth, “work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children,” as a worst form of child labor. This is colloquially referred to as “hazardous work.” Countries must determine which types of work are considered to be hazardous work by statute or regulation. ILO R. 190 includes factors for consideration in determining which types of work are hazardous. (47)

ILO Recommendation No. 190: Worst Forms of Child Labor

ILO R. 190 supplements the provisions of ILO C. 182 and provides guidance to ratifying countries regarding its implementation. It provides guidelines to assist countries in determining what types of work should be considered hazardous and thus what type of work countries should prohibit for all children as a

worst form of child labor, in accordance with Article 4 of ILO C. 182. ILO R. 190 describes populations in need of specific attention regarding the worst forms of child labor, such as girls and children involved in hidden forms of work. It also provides guidance regarding specific steps that countries which have ratified ILO C. 182 should take to combat the worst forms of child labor, such as the collection and exchange of data on both the problem and best practices to address it; passage and enforcement of laws that penalize violations with criminal penalties; awareness raising about the problem; establishment of policies against the worst forms of child labor; and international cooperation through technical, legal, and other forms of assistance. (6; 47)

Illicit Activities

ILO C. 182, Article 3(c), prohibits, “the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs.” Illicit activities in this context can include activities that are criminal under national law, however, the term refers to activities considered illicit under international instruments. (6) According to ILO R. 190 and the General Survey on the Fundamental Conventions Concerning Rights at Work, illicit activities can include, “activities which involve the unlawful carrying or use of firearms or other weapons,” and, “the use of children by criminal organizations for transporting weapons and carrying out arson attacks or destroying public or private property, illicit activities such as housebreaking and petty theft, and children being engaged by adults in car breaking, housebreaking, selling drugs and selling stolen goods, use of children for forced or organized begging, gambling, the unlawful carrying or use of firearms or other weapons, or for the commission of an offence or a crime using violence or the threat of violence.” (47)

Informal Sector

While the concept of the informal sector was introduced into international usage in the 1970s, it was only in 1993 at the 15th ICLS that an internationally recognized definition was established for data collection to delineate the “informal sector” as

unincorporated, small, or unregistered enterprises, and the employees of those enterprises. An enterprise is unincorporated if no complete set of accounts are available that would permit a financial separation of the activities of the enterprise from that of its owners, and it produces marketable goods or services. The registration and size criteria are determined according to national circumstances and legislation, which provide a degree of flexibility in identifying the informal sector from country to country. However, all interpretations of this sector share the notion of enterprises whose activities are not covered or are insufficiently covered by law, or whose activities are not covered by law in practice, meaning that the relevant law is not applied or enforced. Workers in such enterprises often lack the benefits of regular, stable, and protected employment. Because employers in the informal sector are generally either not covered by labor laws or are not held accountable for complying with labor protections, including occupational safety measures, children who work in “hazardous” informal settings likely face increased risk of exploitation, including injury. In addition, because businesses in the informal sector are not usually included in official statistics, children working in informal sector enterprises may not be counted in labor force activity rates. (66; 67)

Light Work

This report uses the definition of light work as established in ILO C. 138, Minimum Age for Admission to Employment. Under Article 7(1) of the Convention, “National laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons 13 to 15 years of age on light work which is (a) not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and (b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority, or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received.” Countries that have specified a minimum legal working age of 14 may permit the employment or work of persons ages 12 to 14 in light work as defined in Article 7(1). Under Article 7(2), countries may also permit the employment in light work of children

who are at least age 15 but have not yet completed compulsory schooling. Countries permitting light work under Article 7 must specify limitations on their hours of work, as well as activities and conditions in which light work may be undertaken. (46)

Minimum Age for Work

The minimum age for work is the age at which a child can enter into work other than light work or hazardous work. ILO C. 138 states that the minimum age for admission to employment should not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and should not be less than age 15, or age 14 for developing countries that specified a minimum legal age of 14 upon ratification of ILO C. 138. (46)

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

This optional UN protocol, adopted in 2000, addresses and commits ratifying countries to take action against the involvement of children in armed conflict, which is a worst form of child labor per ILO C. 182, Article 3(a). (68)

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography

This optional UN protocol, adopted in 2000, addresses and commits ratifying countries to prohibit the commercial sexual exploitation of children, which is a worst form of child labor as defined in ILO C. 182, Article 3(b). (6) (69)

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

This document is written by the government of a developing country with the participation of civil society to serve as the basis for concessional lending from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as debt relief under the World Bank's Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. A poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) should be used to measure poverty in the country, identify goals for

reducing poverty, and create a spending and policy program for reaching those goals. A PRSP also should ensure that a country's macroeconomic, structural, and social policies are consistent with the objectives of poverty reduction and social development. A new PRSP must be written every 3 years to continue receiving assistance from international financial institutions such as the World Bank. (70)

Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol)

The Palermo Protocol supplements the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and covers the trafficking of children, also delineated as a worst form of child labor under ILO C. 182, Article 3(a). (71) See "Child Trafficking" above. (6; 63)

Ratification

Ratification is a serious undertaking whereby a state formally accepts the terms of an international agreement, thus becoming legally bound to apply it. Generally, an ILO convention comes into force in a ratifying country 12 months after the government has deposited the requisite instrument of ratification. This grace period provides ILO members time to enact or modify legislation to comply with the convention before it comes into force. (45)

Slavery

Slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. (42)

Unpaid Household Services

For this report, the term "unpaid household services by children" refers to the domestic and personal services a child performs within the child's own household, under the following conditions: (1) for long hours; (2) in an unhealthy environment, including equipment or heavy loads; or (3) in dangerous locations. (61)

Appendix 8

Research Framework and Organization of TDA Country Profiles

Research Methods

This section describes the research methods used for data collection, as well as the sources, analysis of information, and the limitations of these methods in this report.

Data Collection and Sources

Information was gathered for this report through desk research, U.S. embassy reporting, and limited fieldwork. Information also was received from some foreign governments. Desk research consisted of an extensive review of mostly online materials, which included both primary and secondary sources. The sources included academic and independent researchers, media outlets, NGOs, international organizations, foreign governments, and U.S. government agencies. Information also was collected from U.S. government-funded technical assistance and field research projects.

Examples of the sources used in this report are the most recent available editions of country laws relevant to child labor; national-level child labor surveys; NGO reports on the nature of child labor in various countries; and UN reports, including direct requests and observations by the ILO Committee of Experts. (58)

The U.S. Department of State and U.S. embassies and consulates abroad provided important information by gathering data from contacts, conducting site visits, and reviewing local media sources. A request for information from the public was published in the *Federal Register*, and a copy of the request was mailed

to the Washington, D.C.-based foreign embassies of the countries included in this report. (72) Data also were gathered through key informant interviews.

Analysis of Information

The existence of child labor, particularly in its worst forms, often involves violations of laws and regulations, including serious criminal violations. Information on child labor may be intentionally suppressed. Victims of the worst forms of child labor often are unable to claim their rights or even communicate the abuse they are suffering because they are traumatized, unaware of their rights under the law, or politically underrepresented or marginalized. These factors make information on the worst forms of child labor difficult to obtain. Therefore, to compile a credible and comprehensive report, ILAB uses the following criteria to assess information:

Nature of the information

Whether the information about child labor and government efforts to combat it—gathered from research, public submissions, or other sources—was relevant and probative, and covered the “worst forms of child labor” and “government efforts” as used in this report. Specific evidence of government efforts was preferred when it was available.

Date of the information

Whether the source information about child labor was no more than 5 years old. More current information was given priority, and to the extent possible, ILAB uses sources published during the reporting period. Information from sources older than 5 years was generally not considered.

In the case of child labor statistics, however, certain factors contribute to less frequent generation of new data. Because government and other efforts to address exploitative child labor take time to have an impact on national-level rates of child labor, children's involvement in such activities does not change dramatically from year to year. Child labor surveys are carried out infrequently, in part, because the child labor picture does not change frequently, although the number of surveys has increased recently. To present an overall picture of children's work in as many countries as possible, ILAB uses statistics that are, in some cases, more than 10 years old as of the writing of this report. For more information on the statistics used in this report, see "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" in Appendix 7.

In addition, in cases in which previous editions of this report have asserted that the worst forms of child labor exist in the production of goods, and in the absence of evidence that the problem has been effectively eliminated, sources more than 5 years old may be used. This practice makes the report's information on such forms of child labor consistent with USDOL's *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor*, as mandated by the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVPRA). Statements that the worst forms of child labor exist in the production of goods will be removed when there is evidence that the problem has been effectively eliminated.

Source of the information

Whether the information, either from primary or secondary sources, was from a source in which methodology, prior publications, degree of familiarity and experience with international labor standards, or reputation for accuracy and objectivity warranted a determination that it was relevant and probative.

Extent of the corroboration

Whether the information about the use of child labor was corroborated by other sources.

Limitations

While data on the worst forms of child labor and information about government efforts to provide remediation are improving, data are still insufficient to provide a complete understanding of the problem. A lack of information may create the impression that a country has less serious problems with the worst forms of child labor than it actually has. At the same time, a dearth of information may create the impression that a government is doing less than it should when, in fact, efforts to address child labor exist, but are simply unreported or unpublicized. Although countries with open and available information may sometimes appear to have greater problems relative to other countries, this may not be the case. In fact, countries that collect information on child labor are in a better position to eliminate the problem than countries in which such information is suppressed, because with better information, they can target policies and programs toward identified problem areas to achieve maximum impact.

Due to an inability to travel to each country covered in the report, ILAB relies on U.S. embassies, internet research, and submissions received in response to the *Federal Register* notice to gather primary and secondary sources of information. For countries where internet access and technology are limited, there may be less information available online. Countries with more closed government processes and less civil society participation also may have less information readily available. When ILAB is unable to find information about report topics, including the content of important laws or enforcement efforts, this is noted in the report.

Most of ILAB's online research is conducted in English; however, we also gather and read source materials written in Spanish, French, and, to a limited extent, Portuguese, Russian, and Arabic. Materials other than laws written in other languages are generally not reviewed.

Despite ILAB's best efforts to cover relevant topics as comprehensively as possible, this report cannot

address every salient issue that may affect children’s involvement in child labor. For example, there are many factors that affect whether a household sends a child to school, to work, or both. A lack of available information, however, limits the discussion of these issues for some countries. In these cases, we note that the profile’s information is incomplete. Furthermore, ILAB chose to limit its reporting of education to the issue of access, and generally does not cover the quality of education because research on the relationship between the quality of education and child labor is lacking.

Organization and Content of Country Profiles

ILAB organizes country profiles to track the types of efforts outlined in the TDA Conference Committee report. In this report, the Conference Committee indicated that the President should consider certain criteria when determining whether a country has met its obligation under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program to implement its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. (3) Each country profile contains an introductory paragraph that provides an assessment of government actions to advance efforts in eliminating the worst forms of child labor, six sections that describe the problem and different aspects of government efforts to address it, and a set of suggested actions. The following section describes the content in country profiles.

Content of Country Profiles

Each country profile begins with a single-paragraph overview of 2022 and a statement identifying the assessment level assigned to the country for 2022. Following the statement of assessment, the summary includes meaningful efforts taken by a government to implement its commitment to eliminating child labor. The summary also notes where children are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, or if no worst forms

of child labor exist, where they are engaged in tasks for which there is evidence that such tasks fall into the categories suggested by ILO R. 190 for hazardous work—referred to as “dangerous tasks” in this report. Depending on the situation in the country, the summary also may discuss child labor that does not rise to the level of hazardous work. Finally, the paragraph highlights areas in which key gaps in government efforts remain.

Section I: Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of Child Labor

The first section of each country profile provides, to the extent that information is available, a comprehensive picture of child labor in the country. This section begins with a review of available data on working children and school attendance, followed by a presentation of the most common sectors and activities in which children are engaged. The narrative also provides information about the nature and conditions of the work, specific populations that are particularly vulnerable to child labor, government complicity in the use of forced child labor, circumstances that make accessing education difficult, and events during the year that destabilized the country.

Section II: Legal Framework for Child Labor

The second section of the country profile addresses the second criteria included in the TDA Conference Committee report concerning whether the country has, “adequate laws and regulations proscribing the worst forms of child labor.” (73) This section describes a country’s legal framework with regard to child labor and assesses the adequacy of that legal framework by comparing it, in general, to the standards set forth in ILO C. 182 and ILO C. 138, and to other international instruments, including the Palermo Protocol and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols. ILAB considered whether the laws criminally prohibited the categorical worst forms of child labor in ILO C. 182, Articles 3(a)–(c), as suggested by ILO R. 190. In line with the ILO Committee of

Experts, ILAB considered any law that could be used to prohibit child labor, including its worst forms. ILAB also considered whether the country had ratified key international instruments related to child labor.

It is important to note that ILAB analyzes a country's legal framework regarding compliance with international standards, regardless of whether a problem exists in a country. This is to ensure that legal frameworks also serve as preventive mechanisms. For example, even in the case of a country that does not have a problem with the use of children in illicit activities, if there are no laws to prohibit the use of children in illicit activities, the report points out a gap when comparing laws on this issue against international standards.

The corresponding table indicates where the legal framework meets international standards and where it does not. For example, the table indicates whether the country's minimum age for work complies with the international standard.

ILAB assesses whether a country has created a hazardous work list and whether the types of hazardous work prohibited are comprehensive, based on whether there is evidence that children engage in work which, according to ILO R. 190, may be hazardous. Because the standards on the minimum age for work in ILO C. 138 provide a foundation for protections against the worst forms of child labor, ILAB uses the standards embodied in that convention to assess each country's minimum age for admission to work and the age up to which education is compulsory. ILO C. 138 establishes that countries should set a minimum age of 15 for work, or age 14 for countries with less-developed economies where the country has specified an age of 14 upon ratification of the convention. For countries that permit children to engage in light work, ILAB also indicates whether the country has set a minimum age of 13 for light work, or age 12 for less-developed economies, and whether legislation related to light work determines permitted activities, and the number of hours per week and the conditions under which light work may be conducted.

ILAB assesses whether a country's laws criminally prohibit slavery and practices similar to slavery, including debt bondage and forced labor, as well as human trafficking. In accordance with the Palermo Protocol's standard for child trafficking, ILAB reviews statutes criminalizing international and domestic trafficking for both commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor, including whether the legal protections prohibit the five actions that comprise the human trafficking process—recruiting, harboring, transporting, transferring, and receiving persons.

For the issue of commercial sexual exploitation of children, ILAB assesses whether a country's laws criminally prohibit the using, procuring, and offering of children for prostitution; the production of child pornography; and the use of children in pornographic performances. For illicit activities, ILAB assesses whether laws criminally prohibit the using, procuring, and offering of a child in the production and trafficking of drugs.

In all cases in which countries maintain a military force, ILAB assesses whether the country prohibited the compulsory military recruitment of children and whether the minimum age for voluntary military recruitment is at least age 16, with certain safeguards to ensure voluntariness. For all countries, ILAB assesses whether the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups is criminally prohibited, even if non-state armed groups are not present in the country.

ILAB assesses whether the age for compulsory education aligns with the minimum age for work, in accordance with ILO C. 138, which states that the minimum age for work should not be less than the age up to which education is compulsory, and that it should be at least age 15, or age 14 for developing countries. However, the opposite situation—in which the minimum age for work is higher than the upper cut-off age for compulsory education—also should be avoided because when children are not required to be in school or permitted to work, they are susceptible to the worst forms of child labor.

Section III: Enforcement of Laws on Child Labor

The third section of the country profile addresses the second and third criteria included in the TDA Conference Committee report concerning whether the country has, “adequate laws and regulations for the implementation and enforcement of such measures,” and has, “established formal institutional mechanisms to investigate and address complaints relating to allegations of the worst forms of child labor.” (73) This section describes the role of government agencies in enforcing laws relevant to child labor, including its worst forms, and reports on labor law and criminal law enforcement efforts during the reporting period.

In this section, ILAB analyzes whether and to what degree the country defines enforcement agency roles and investigates and addresses complaints related to allegations of child labor. Because ILO C. 182 only discusses enforcement to a limited extent, other international standards and practices also are considered as general evaluation guidelines, including from ILO C. 81 and ILO C. 129 on Labor Inspection and Labor Inspection in Agriculture, respectively. (51; 74) To the extent possible, ILAB assesses whether the country has taken these actions:

- Established labor inspection systems, including a functioning labor inspectorate.
- Provided sufficient funding and resources to enforce child labor laws and regulations.
- Employed a sufficient number of inspectors to enforce the country’s child labor laws and regulations.
- Provided sufficient training for inspectors, including initial training for new employees, training on new laws related to child labor, and refresher courses.
- Developed and implemented an adequate labor inspection strategy that allows for different types of onsite inspections of worksites—such as routine, targeted, complaint-driven, and unannounced—

and conducted inspections with sufficient frequency and in all relevant sectors.

- Provided sufficient authority to the labor inspectorate to penalize child labor violations and follow through with sanctions, where appropriate.
- Published information on specific inspection results and fines or sanctions imposed for violation of child labor laws and regulations, including the worst forms of child labor.
- Established a complaint mechanism for labor violations.
- Set up a reciprocal referral mechanism between labor authorities and social services.

Although ILAB conducts research and requests law enforcement information on the topics for this year’s report, the information is not always available. For example, in many cases, ILAB does not have enough information to determine whether the number of inspectors was sufficient for the country. Only in certain situations, where a country’s government acknowledges that it does not have a sufficient number of labor inspectors or ILAB obtains information indicating that the number of labor inspectors is insufficient relative to the size of the country’s workforce, does ILAB issue findings of insufficiency. (75)

In addition, ILO R. 190 states that countries should criminally prohibit the categorical worst forms of child labor as set forth in ILO C. 182, Articles 3(a)–(c). (6; 47) Therefore, the report also assesses whether criminal law enforcement in the country has taken these actions:

- Established criminal investigation systems.
- Provided sufficient funding and resources to enforce the worst forms of child labor laws and regulations.
- Provided sufficient training for investigators, including initial training for new employees, training on new laws related to the worst forms of child labor, and refresher courses.

- Conducted a sufficient number of investigations related to the worst forms of child labor.
- Published information on specific investigation results and violations, prosecutions, and convictions related to the worst forms of child labor.
- Imposed penalties for violations related to the worst forms of child labor.
- Established a reciprocal referral mechanism between criminal authorities and social services.

Section IV: Coordination of Government Efforts on Child Labor

The fourth section of the country profile also addresses the third criterion included in the TDA Conference Committee report—whether the country has established, “formal institutional mechanisms to investigate and address complaints relating to allegations of the worst forms of child labor.” (73) This section provides information on key institutions in the country charged with coordinating overall efforts to combat child labor, including its worst forms. Although the TDA Conference Committee report speaks only to whether such mechanisms are in place with regard to investigation and complaints of the worst forms of child labor, ILO C. 182, Article 5, states that, “[e]ach Member shall, after consultation with employers’ and workers’ organizations, establish or designate appropriate mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the provisions giving effect to this Convention.” ILAB applies this concept of monitoring to all provisions of the Convention, not just those directly related to the enforcement of child labor laws. However, because the term “monitor” is often associated exclusively with enforcement activities, ILAB uses the term “coordinate” to describe this function.

Section V: Government Policies on Child Labor

The fifth section of the country profile provides information on the fourth criterion in the TDA

Conference Committee report—whether the country has, “a comprehensive policy for the elimination of the worst forms of child labor.” (73) This section describes a country’s key policies and plans to combat child labor, including its worst forms.

ILAB uses the framework provided in ILO R. 190, Article 15(f), which illustrates measures that countries might take to combat the worst forms of child labor, such as, “encouraging the development of policies by undertakings to promote the aims of the Convention.” (47) In ILO C. 182 and in comments from the ILO Committee of Experts, the terms “programs” and “plans of action” are often used interchangeably. Indeed, in some cases, it is difficult to distinguish among “a policy,” “a plan,” and “a program.” (6; 58) For the TDA Conference Committee report, a policy on child labor is defined as a framework that lays out general principles that are intended to guide a government’s actions on child labor. Although policies may call for the passage of new laws and the establishment of new programs, the actual adoption of laws and program implementation are reported in the “Legal Framework for the Worst Forms of Child Labor” or the “Social Programs to Address Child Labor” sections of the profiles.

Specifically, ILAB assesses whether governments have achieved the following activities:

- Established specific child labor policies, any related development policies that explicitly incorporate the issue of child labor, or any related development policies that do not explicitly target child labor but that could have an impact on the problem (because so few governments distinguish between worst forms of child labor and child labor, any policy on child labor, whether targeted toward the worst forms of child labor or not, may be reported).
- Ensured that these policies include specific action plans, assign responsibilities, establish goals, and set timetables.
- Implemented established policies and plans.

Section VI: Social Programs to Address Child Labor

The sixth section of each country profile provides information on the fifth criterion in the TDA Conference Committee report—whether social programs exist in the country, “to prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labor and assist in the removal of children engaged in the worst forms of child labor.” (73) This section of the country profile reports on key programs focused on child labor and the worst forms of child labor because countries often do not distinguish between the two when creating child labor programs. This section of the profile also reports on programs that focus on child labor specifically, and programs that address poverty, education, and other related matters that could have a beneficial impact on child labor. Only programs launched or implemented during the reporting period are included in this section.

ILAB generally considers the implementation of projects through international organizations to be government efforts because the projects can be carried out only with the consent of the government, and such efforts are sometimes considered part of a country’s national budget.

ILAB applies the standards embodied in Articles 6 and 7 of ILO C. 182 to assess country programs to combat child labor. ILO R. 190 also is considered to determine the types of efforts that governments might make, such as giving special attention to girls, providing training to employers and workers, and raising awareness. With this in mind, ILAB assesses whether governments have taken the following actions:

- Participated in any social programs to combat child labor, including programs aimed at directly preventing and withdrawing children from participation in child labor.
- Implemented social programs with sufficient resources to combat the scope and magnitude of the child labor problem at issue.
- Targeted at-risk populations.
- Implemented social programs successfully and sustainably.

Section VII: Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

The last section of the country profile is a set of suggested actions. These suggested actions serve as a roadmap of efforts that individual countries can follow to more fully address the worst forms of child labor. When the same suggested action has been provided in successive years, the years in which it was previously provided are listed in the table.

Framework for Country Assessments

Objective for Country Assessments

ILAB is using an assessment tool to clearly indicate and highlight the status of efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor by each country that benefits from U.S. trade preferences.

Research Question Guiding Country Assessments

The assessment answers the question “To what extent did the beneficiary country advance efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor during the reporting period?”

Scope of Country Assessment

As discussed, the TDA Conference Committee report outlines the following six criteria that the President is asked to consider in determining whether a country is implementing its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor:

- Whether the country has adequate laws and regulations proscribing the worst forms of child labor
- Whether the country has adequate laws and regulations for the implementation and enforcement of such measures

- Whether the country has established formal institutional mechanisms to investigate and address the worst forms of child labor
- Whether the country has a comprehensive policy for the elimination of the worst forms of child labor
- Whether social programs exist in the country to prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labor and assist in the removal of children engaged in the worst forms of child labor
- Whether the country is making continual progress toward eliminating the worst forms of child labor

The country assessment tool is intended to inform the sixth criterion—whether the country is “making continual progress toward eliminating the worst forms of child labor.” (73) In preparing the assessments, ILAB evaluates the first five criteria, grouping them into the same five areas addressed in the individual country profiles: laws and regulations, enforcement, coordination, policies, and social programs. The assessment is based on an analysis of the status of each country’s efforts in these five areas considered as a whole and compared to the country’s prior efforts. The assessments do not take into account the impact of government actions on the problem, or whether they have a documented effect on eliminating child labor. This type of analysis would require rigorous impact evaluations and assessments based on data from solid research designs, which is beyond the scope of this report. It is important to note that the assessment is not intended to reflect a determination of “whether a country has implemented its commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.” That determination is reserved for the President.

Method for Determining a Country Assessment

Each country profile in this report identifies a set of suggested actions for governments to take to advance efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The implementation—or lack of implementation—of these suggested actions establishes a baseline or point of reference from which to assess a country’s advancement. These actions, in combination with other efforts undertaken by a country, were considered when assessing the level of a country’s advancement during the current reporting period and in comparison with the previous reporting period.

After identifying and assessing a country’s efforts, ILAB considers the significance of the efforts undertaken during the reporting period—actions that could have an impact on eliminating the worst forms of child labor—and the extent to which these efforts addressed the first five TDA criteria, outlined above, in a limited or meaningful manner during the reporting period. In addition, ILAB reviews whether the government established or failed to remedy a regressive or significantly detrimental law, policy, or practice that delayed advancement in eliminating child labor. Finally, ILAB also examines whether countries had a policy or demonstrated a practice of being *complicit in forced child labor* in more than isolated incidents at the national, regional, or local level.

To promote consistency and transparency, and to operationalize these first five TDA criteria, each country’s efforts are analyzed according to a uniform set of guidance questions related to the five general areas of laws and regulations, enforcement, coordination, policies, and social programs. Detailed information is given in “TDA Guidance Questions.”

Appendix 9

TDA Guidance Questions

*Assessment Level***TDA Conference Report Criterion:**

- Whether the country is making continual progress toward eliminating the worst forms of child labor

Guidance Questions

- What efforts did the country make to address child labor during the year?
- Has the government instituted minimally acceptable laws and regulations, mechanisms, and programs to address and prevent child labor?
- Did the government of the country establish or fail to remedy a regressive or significantly detrimental law, policy, or practice that delayed advancement in the elimination of child labor?*
- Was the government of the country complicit in the use of forced child labor in more than isolated incidents?*

*Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of Child Labor***Guidance Questions**

- Were government officials complicit in the use of forced child labor in more than isolated incidents?*
- What are the prevalent types of child labor in each country?
- Has the government conducted research on the prevalence and nature of the worst forms of child labor and made the results publicly available?
- Are specific populations vulnerable to child labor due to gender, race, ethnicity, origin, disability, language, or socio-economic status?

- Were there events during the year that destabilized the country, such as armed conflict; health epidemics and natural disasters; or other social, economic, and political crises?

* A “Yes” response likely means that the country will automatically receive an assessment of *Minimal Advancement* or *No Advancement*.

*Legal Framework for the Worst Forms of Child Labor***TDA Conference Report Criterion:**

- Whether the country has adequate laws and regulations proscribing the worst forms of child labor

Guidance Questions

- Did the laws meet international standards?
- Is the minimum age for admission to employment in line with ILO C. 138?
- Is the minimum age for admission to hazardous work in line with ILO C. 138 and C. 182?
- Are criminal prohibitions on forced child labor, child trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation of children, and use of children in illicit activities in line with ILO C. 182?
- Is the prohibition against recruitment of children under age 18 for state compulsory military service in line with ILO C. 182 and the UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict?
- Is the minimum age for recruitment into state voluntary military service in line with the UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict?
- Is the prohibition against recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups in line with ILO C. 182?

- Does the age up to which education is compulsory align with the minimum age for work and meet the standards in ILO C. 138?
- Is the provision of free public basic education in line with ILO C. 182?
- If the law permits light work, is the minimum age in line with ILO C. 138 and are there appropriate safeguards as outlined in ILO C. 138?
- Has the country ratified ILO C. 182 and C. 138, as well as other relevant conventions and protocols?
- If the country's laws are not compliant with international standards embodied in ILO C. 138 and C. 182, has there been any change in the laws that brings the country closer to being fully compliant?
- Are laws related to child labor available to the public?
- Did the country establish or fail to remedy a regressive or significantly detrimental law that delayed its advancement in the elimination of child labor?*

* A "Yes" response likely means that the country will automatically receive an assessment of *Minimal Advancement* or *No Advancement*.

Enforcement of Laws on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

TDA Conference Report Criteria:

- Whether the country has adequate laws and regulations for the implementation and enforcement of such measures
- Whether the country has established formal institutional mechanisms to investigate and address the worst forms of child labor

In this section of the country profiles, ILAB analyzes whether, or to what degree, a country has defined enforcement agency roles, conducted routine and targeted inspections, and unannounced inspections,

and investigated and addressed complaints related to allegations of the worst forms of child labor. The analysis is based on the following guidance questions.

Guidance Questions

- Does the country have a labor inspectorate?
- Does the country have labor inspectors? Are its labor inspectors public servants as opposed to contractors?
- What was the amount of funding for the labor inspectorate? Was there an increase or decrease in the funding and resources to enforce child labor laws and regulations, and were these resources adequate given the incidence of child labor in the country?
- Was there an increase or reduction in the number of labor inspectors to enforce child labor laws and regulations, and was the number of labor inspectors adequate given the size of the country's workforce?
- Did the country offer initial training to new labor inspectors and investigators, including specialized training on child labor; training on new laws related to child labor, including its worst forms; and refresher courses?
- Did the labor inspectorate fail to conduct labor inspections during the reporting period?*
- Does the labor inspectorate lack legal authorization to conduct unannounced inspections?*
- Did the inspectorate conduct unannounced inspections?
- Did the government develop and implement a labor inspection strategy that allowed for different types of onsite inspections of worksites, such as routine, targeted, complaint-driven, or unannounced?
- Were inspections conducted with sufficient frequency and in all relevant sectors?

- Did the government provide the labor inspectorate with sufficient authority to sanction child labor violations?
- Did the country make available information on labor law enforcement efforts related to child labor, including the number of labor inspections conducted at worksites and by desk review, the number of child labor violations found, and the number of child labor violations for which penalties were imposed and collected?
- Does the government have a mechanism for filing and resolving complaints expeditiously regarding child labor?
- Does a reciprocal referral mechanism exist between labor and criminal authorities and social services?
- Did the government investigate, prosecute, convict, and sentence cases of violations of criminal child labor statutes, including public officials who participate in or facilitate the worst forms of child labor?
- Did the government impose penalties for violations related to the worst forms of child labor?
- Did the country make available information on criminal law enforcement efforts related to the worst forms of child labor, including the number of investigations, violations found, prosecutions initiated, convictions obtained, and penalties imposed?
- Did the government establish or improve a process for information sharing among enforcement authorities?
- Did the government ensure that all children engaged in the worst forms of child labor were protected from inappropriate incarceration, penalties, or physical harm?
- Did the country establish or fail to remedy a regressive or significantly detrimental law enforcement practice that delayed its advancement in the elimination of child labor?*

* A “Yes” response likely means that the country will automatically receive an assessment of *Minimal Advancement* or *No Advancement*.

Coordination of Government Efforts on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

TDA Conference Report Criterion:

- Whether the country has established formal institutional mechanisms to investigate and address complaints relating to allegations of the worst forms of child labor

In this section of the country profiles, ILAB analyzes whether, or to what degree, the country has an institution charged with coordinating overall efforts to combat child labor, including its worst forms. The analysis is based on the following guidance questions.

Guidance Questions

- Does the government have an agency or committee created to coordinate government efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor? Did it create such an agency or committee during the reporting period?
- Does the agency or committee address all sectors of child labor that are prevalent in the country, or does it address only certain sectors?
- Did such an agency or committee meet regularly and take actions, or did it not meet regularly and take few or no actions?

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

TDA Conference Report Criterion:

- Whether the country has a comprehensive policy for the elimination of the worst forms of child labor

Guidance Questions

- Did the government establish any new policies or plans that specifically address the worst forms of child labor or any one of the worst forms of child labor?

- Did the government incorporate the worst forms of child labor specifically as an issue to be addressed in poverty reduction, development, educational, or other social policies, such as poverty reduction strategy papers?
- If the country established any of the above policies or plans, do they designate responsibilities, establish goals, and set timelines?
- Did the government effectively implement existing policies and plans?
- Did the country establish or fail to remedy a regressive or significantly detrimental policy that delayed its advancement in the elimination of child labor?*

** A “Yes” response likely means that the country will automatically receive an assessment of Minimal Advancement or No Advancement.*

Social Programs to Address Child Labor

TDA Conference Report Criterion:

- Whether social programs exist in the country to prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labor and assist in the removal of children engaged in the worst forms of child labor

Guidance Questions

- Did the government fund or participate in any new or ongoing programs that aim to eliminate or prevent the worst forms of child labor?
- Did the government fund or participate in any social protection programs that could reasonably be expected to have an impact on child labor? Were any of the country’s programs shown, through research, to have had an impact on child labor?

- Did the government make efforts to reduce children’s vulnerability to the worst forms of child labor by addressing factors such as
 - ◆ country- and region-specific practices that make children vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor, and
 - ◆ barriers to education, such as a lack of teachers; lack of schools or inadequate facilities; lack of infrastructure to access schools; lack of transportation; violence, including physical and sexual abuse; birth registration requirements; and the charging of school fees?
- Are the country’s programs sufficient to combat particular forms of child labor, considering the scope and magnitude of those problems?
- Do the programs provide services directly to children?
- Do the programs adequately target at-risk populations?
- Were the programs fully funded?
- Are the programs meeting their goals?
- Are the program efforts sustainable?
- Did existing government programs improve or worsen in quality or effectiveness compared with the previous year?
- Did the country establish or fail to remedy a regressive or significantly detrimental social program or other practice that delayed its advancement in the elimination of child labor?*

** A “Yes” response likely means that the country will automatically receive an assessment of Minimal Advancement or No Advancement.*

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Students at the Misael Pastrana School, where about 70 percent of the students are Venezuelans who cross the border every morning to attend class. Cúcuta, Colombia. April 24, 2019.

WHAT CAN **YOU** DO TO HELP ADDRESS CHILD LABOR AND FORCED LABOR?

ASK QUESTIONS

- **Could some of the goods I buy** be made by child labor or forced labor?
- **Do workers have a voice** to speak out against labor abuses?
- **What are companies doing** to end child labor and forced labor in global supply chains?
- **What are governments doing** to combat child labor and forced labor?

TAKE ACTION

- **Empower yourself with knowledge** by downloading USDOL's **Sweat & Toil** app and accessing **Comply Chain** and **Better Trade Tool**.
- **Make your voice heard** by spreading the word among friends, family, and with the companies where you spend your money.
- **Show your support** for organizations that are working to end these abuses.

DEMAND CHANGE

ADVOCATE FOR A WORLD IN WHICH:

- **Workers everywhere can raise their voices** against child labor, forced labor, and other abuses.
- **Companies make serious commitments** to ensure that global supply chains are free of products made by child labor and forced labor, especially those on USDOL's **List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor**.
- **Your investments have a positive social impact** by promoting responsible labor practices.
- **Governments work vigorously** to adopt the country-specific suggested actions in USDOL's **Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor**.

Learn more: dol.gov/EndChildLabor
To contact us, please email GlobalKids@dol.gov
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For more information or to contact us, please visit USDOL's website at:
<https://dol.gov/ChildLaborFindings> or email us at: GlobalKids@dol.gov



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