Worldwide, the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates 168 million children are working as child laborers, of which about 85 million participate in hazardous labor. Global estimates from the ILO place the number of children forced into labor or sexual exploitation at 6 million. The U.S. Department of Labor’s bureau of International Labor Affairs works every day to protect children around the world from harmful child labor and other violations of their fundamental human rights.

2013 Regional Outlooks

Asia and the Pacific

Meaningful efforts:
- Improved legal frameworks, particularly related to trafficking in persons.
- New tracking systems to enhance enforcement.

Challenges and existing gaps:
- Lack of adequate legal protections, specifically for children in hazardous labor.
- Lack of or weak intra-governmental coordination.
- Lack of funding for labor inspections.

Europe and Eurasia

Meaningful efforts:
- Increased data collection on child labor.
- Strengthened social protection systems for vulnerable children.
- Improved legal and policy frameworks to protect children from human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.

Challenges and existing gaps:
- Persistent gaps in laws protecting children from all worst forms of child labor.
- Challenges in enforcing child labor laws.
- Insufficient funding for social programs.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Meaningful efforts:
- Expanded social protection programs benefitting child laborers.
- Improved legal frameworks for child domestic workers.
- Increased funding for stronger labor law enforcement.

Challenges and existing gaps:
- Limited or weak labor inspection systems.
- Lack of research or current data on child labor.
- Continued use of children in armed conflict.

Middle-East and North Africa

Meaningful efforts:
- Strengthened legal and policy frameworks to reduce the worst forms of child labor and trafficking in persons.
- Expansion of social programs to address the root causes of child labor.

Challenges or existing gaps:
- Lack of adequate legal protections for children in hazardous labor.
- Lack of or weak intra-governmental coordination.
- Insufficient attention to combatting the use of children in illicit activities, including gangs.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Meaningful efforts:
- Improved legal and policy frameworks.
- Improved availability of data on the worst forms of child labor.
- Establishment and continued implementation of conditional cash transfer programs.

Challenges and existing gaps:
- Limited adoption of hazardous work lists across the region.
- Significant barriers to access education, including costs, limited numbers of schools, and lack of universal birth registrations.
- Limited or weak-labor inspection systems.
- Insufficient social programs to address child labor.
- Continued use of children in armed conflict.
2013 Assessment of Country Efforts to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Country Assessments

Country Assessment by Advancement Level