In 2013, Guyana made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government identified and rescued nine girls and one boy as suspected trafficking victims and provided labor inspectors with child labor training. In collaboration with the ILO, the Government implemented the Tackle Child Labor through Education (TACKLE) project through its conclusion in August. During the project period, school attendance and student performance increased, and the Government aims to mainstream the programs initiated under the project. In August, the Government ratified ILO Convention 189 Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers. However, children in Guyana continue to engage in child labor in agriculture and the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation. Guyana’s legislation does not fully protect children from the worst forms of child labor. Children 17 years of age are legally permitted to engage in some hazardous activities. Further, the National Steering Committee on Child Labor appears to be inactive.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Guyana are engaged in child labor in agriculture and the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation. (1-10) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Guyana.

Table 1. Statistics on Children’s Work and Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working (% and population)</td>
<td>5-14 yrs.</td>
<td>23.0 (44,787)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending School (%)</td>
<td>5-14 yrs.</td>
<td>94.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combining Work and School</td>
<td>7-14 yrs.</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Completion Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td>85.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector/Industry</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Agriculture     | Farming, activities unknown (2-4, 7, 9, 10, 13)  
                 | Forestry, including logging,* preservation of lumber,* and work in sawmills* (2-4, 7, 9, 10)  
                 | Fishing,* activities unknown (3, 4, 7, 13)  |
| Industry        | Construction, activities unknown*† (3, 4)  
                 | Welding* (4)  
                 | Mining, including gold mining*† (1-4, 7, 9, 10, 13-16)  |
| Services        | Domestic service (3, 7)  
                 | Work in bars and restaurants* (3, 7)  
                 | Street vending (3, 4, 7, 17)  |
Children in Guyana, including girls as young as 12, are involved in commercial sexual exploitation in Georgetown and in the country's interior. There are reports of young girls being trafficking to mining communities for commercial sexual exploitation.(4-10, 18)

In 2011, with assistance from the ILO, the Government conducted a Child Labor Rapid Assessment to better understand the nature of child labor in the country.(19) However, the results of that survey have not yet been released to the public.(4)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

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

In August 2013, Guyana ratified ILO C. 189 Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.(20)

The Government has established relevant laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).
Although the Employment of Young Persons and Children Act of Guyana prohibits children under age 18 from working at night in industrial undertakings, Article 2 of the Schedule permits children ages 16 and 17 to perform certain types of work that require continuity through day and night, including in certain gold mining processes and in the production of iron, steel, glass, paper, and raw sugar. The Government has issued a list of 22 hazardous occupations and processes that could threaten the health, safety, or moral or personal development of children; the list only prohibits children age 16 and younger from engaging in specified hazardous activities. Therefore, children age 17 are not fully protected from engaging in hazardous work.

Although Article 351 of the Criminal Law Offences Act prohibits the selling, publishing, and exhibiting of obscene material, Guyanese law does not explicitly outlaw child pornography. There is no compulsory recruitment in Guyana.

Despite the legal guarantee of free education in Article 27 of the Constitution of Guyana, some primary schools continue to charge fees; some have even attempted to prevent children from attending school for failure to pay. However, the Government is attempting to address this problem. The Ministry of Education has publicized guidance advising parents and educators that only the Parent Teacher Association has the authority to approve and collect fees from parents, and that no child may be excluded from school for non-payment.

### III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Agency</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Labor, Human Services and Social Security (MLHSSS)</td>
<td>Monitor and enforce child labor laws in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Forestry Commission, the Geology and Mines Commission, and the Guyana Police Force. At the MLHSSS, chief labor officer handles special investigations stemming from child labor complaints and oversees routine labor inspections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana Police Force (GPF)</td>
<td>Enforce criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor, including child trafficking and use of children for illicit activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Law enforcement agencies in Guyana took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms.

#### Labor Law Enforcement

In 2013, officials from the Ministry of Labor, Human Services and Social Security (MLHSSS) were trained on child labor issues. Based on reporting by the Government of Guyana, the MLHSSS conducted 2,218 inspections in 2013 and did not discover any cases of child labor. Labor inspectors prioritized inspections in the mining, logging, and agriculture sectors. According to most recent information, in 2013 the Ministry had employed 17 labor inspectors. According to reports, including from the MLHSSS, there are sometimes delays in accessing the resources needed to carry out inspections to monitor child labor, particularly in remote areas, where law enforcement presence is low.

#### Criminal Law Enforcement

The Guyana Police Force (GPF) works on criminal cases involving victims of the worst forms of child labor in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs, the MLHSSS, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of...
Amerindian Affairs, depending on the circumstances of the cases.(4) In 2013, the Government identified and rescued nine girls and one boy as suspected trafficking victims.(35) During the reporting period, the GPF also conducted training sessions on trafficking in persons for students; nurses; regional officials; and police officers stationed in Bartica, Lethem, and Port Kaituma.(9) However, the Government’s capacity to carry out prosecutions is limited. With only 33 justices and magistrates, the courts have a backlog of cases on all matters of law with more than a 2-year waiting period.(2, 4, 9, 10, 36)

### IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinating Body</th>
<th>Role &amp; Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Steering Committee on Child Labor (NSCCL)</td>
<td>Recommend policies and programs to eliminate child labor.(2, 10) A committee within the MLHSSS. Includes representatives of the National Commission on the Rights of the Child, the Bureau of Statistics, the National Teacher’s Union, the GPF, as well as of the Ministries of Education; Amerindian Affairs; Health; and Culture, Youth and Sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission on the Rights of the Child</td>
<td>Protect and promote children’s rights in accordance with the UN CRC, which includes addressing the worst forms of child labor.(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidence suggests the National Steering Committee on Child Labor (NSCCL) has stopped meeting on a regular basis, potentially limiting its ability to carry out its mandates.(39)

### V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Guyana has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five-year Strategic Plan on the Rights of the Child*</td>
<td>Protects and promotes children’s rights in Guyana and advances the UN CRC.(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Policy*</td>
<td>Aims to provide equal access to quality education for all children and eliminate barriers to education, especially for the poor.(40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The impact of this policy on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

### VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

In 2013, the Government of Guyana funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tackle Child Labor through Education (TACKLE)</td>
<td>Jointly launched by the European Commission and the ILO to combat child labor through education in 12 African and the Caribbean countries and the Pacific group of states.(41) In Guyana, aims to increase school attendance, by reducing truancy and school dropout rates.(1, 19, 42) Provided entrepreneurial, technical, vocational and life skills training to out-of-school and unemployed youth.(4) In 2013, School Retention and Child Labor Program supported by TACKLE continued to serve communities in Region 4, providing nutrition enhancement, transportation support to school, homework assistance, and psychosocial support for parents and children. During the reporting period, program also undertook awareness-raising activities.(34) Concluded in August 2013.(43) During 5-year project period, participating schools experienced higher student retention, improved student behavior, and better performance on examinations.(44) The MLHSSS is seeking support from the private sector to mainstream the program into its service delivery.(44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafficking Hotline‡</td>
<td>Government-funded hotline to assist trafficking victims, run by trained operators.(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter for Trafficking Victims‡</td>
<td>Government-run shelter that houses abused and trafficked women and children for up to 6 months. Provides services, including psychological counseling and practical skills training.(1, 2, 4, 9, 10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the Government has programs to target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to address the extent of the problem fully.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Guyana (Table 9).

Table 9. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Suggested Action</th>
<th>Year(s) Suggested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laws</td>
<td>Extend protections of children working at night beyond those employed in industry.</td>
<td>2010 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amend the list of hazardous work to protect children under age 18 in all listed sectors.</td>
<td>2010 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enact a law to prohibit explicitly child pornography.</td>
<td>2010 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement</td>
<td>Ensure sufficient resources are allocated in a timely manner to facilitate labor inspections.</td>
<td>2011 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dedicate more resources, namely judicial personnel, to resolving court cases, including those involving the worst forms of child labor.</td>
<td>2010 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>Ensure the NSCCL engages in regular meetings and coordination efforts.</td>
<td>2009 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expand national education policy to achieve free universal education, as guaranteed by law.</td>
<td>2011 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Programs</td>
<td>Make publicly available the results of the Child Labor Rapid Assessment Survey.</td>
<td>2011 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop new initiatives and expand existing programs to reach all children involved in the worst forms of child labor.</td>
<td>2010 – 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assess the impact the school meals program may have on child labor.</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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