

## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT – EFFORTS MADE BUT CONTINUED PRACTICE THAT DELAYED ADVANCEMENT

In 2022, Mali made minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The transition government recruited three additional labor inspectors. However, despite this initiative to address child labor, Mali is assessed as having made only minimal advancement because it continued to implement a practice that delays advancement to eliminate child labor. The transition government used children in its armed forces during the reporting period in violation of national law. Children in Mali are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in hereditary slavery and in armed conflict. Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture, particularly in the production of cotton and rice, and in artisanal gold mining. Although Mali's 2012 Trafficking in Persons Law criminalizes trafficking for the purpose of slavery, it does not more broadly criminalize the act of slavery. Malian law also does not explicitly prohibit using, procuring, or offering children for illicit activities, and allows children under the age of 18 to be penalized for acts they were forced to commit as a direct result of being recruited and used by armed groups. In addition, Mali lacks a national action plan to address all worst forms of child labor that exist in the country, and social and rehabilitation services remain inadequate for child labor victims.



### I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

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

**Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education**

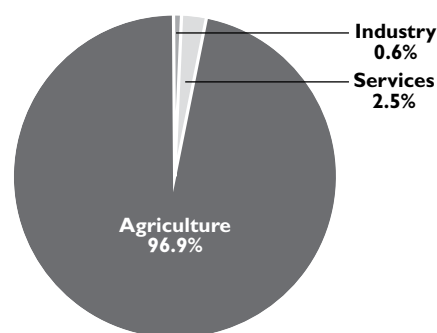
Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	30.4 (1,891,233)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	50.1
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	19.1
Primary Completion Rate (%)		49.6

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2017, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2023. (1)

Source for all other data: Enquete Modulaire et Permanente Aupres des Menages, 2020. (2)

These data are not comparable with data presented in last year's report due to changes in survey source, survey questionnaire, or age range surveyed.

**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	Cultivating,† harvesting,† ginning,† processing, transporting,† and applying chemical fertilizers,† particularly in the production of cotton and rice (3-9)
	Raising livestock,† including oxen and small ruminants (4-6,8,9)
	Fishing,† including collection, throwing nets, and piloting small boats (5,10)
Industry	Artisanal gold mining,† including digging shafts,† extracting ore from underground tunnels,† crushing ore,† and amalgamating ore with mercury† (6,11-14)
	Rock quarrying† (4)

**Table 2. Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity (Cont.)**

Sector/Industry	Activity
Industry	Assembling fishing canoes† (5,8)
	Construction† (6)
Services	Domestic work† (6,9)
	Street work,† including market vending,† begging,† and in the transportation sector (5,6,8,15,16)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced labor in artisanal mining, domestic work, street work, production of salt, and farming (including in the production of rice) (3,4,6,7,17,18)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (6,9,15)
	Forced recruitment of children by state armed groups for use in armed conflict (9,19,20)
	Hereditary slavery (3,9,16,21)
	Forced begging by Koranic teachers (6,7,9)
	Use in illicit activities, including in the trafficking of drugs (4,6,9)

† 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.

There was an increase in the worst forms of child labor in Mali due to insecurity from armed conflict and deteriorating socioeconomic conditions in 2022. (9) During the reporting year, non-state armed groups forcibly recruited and used children as combatants and in support capacities. (9) Non-state armed groups also controlled some artisanal gold mines in northern Mali and used children for forced labor at those locations. (4,10,22) In addition, despite the Ministry of Defense banning the military from recruiting and using children under the age of 18 in armed conflict in 2020, the Armed Forces of Mali (FAMa) used children in its forces during the reporting period. (19,23)

Children, especially from the Bellah community, are subject to hereditary slavery in northern and southwestern Mali. (6,9,10,24) Some children are born into slavery, while others are born free but remain in dependent status. As a result, these children, along with their parents, are forced to work for their parents' former masters in exchange for food, money, and lodging. (24) Enslaved children perform agricultural or domestic labor and are often sexually abused. (24) In addition, research indicates that children were abducted from Timbuktu and Gossi to be used as slaves during the reporting period. (9) Children, particularly those of Songhai ethnicity, also work in debt bondage in the northern salt mines of Taoudenni. (24) Moreover, as many as 45,753 children in the north, south, and west are also involved in artisanal gold mining, in which they are exposed to toxic substances and extreme temperatures, transport heavy loads of water and minerals, and work long hours. (4,6,9,14,22) Around mining sites, children also are victims of commercial sexual exploitation and domestic servitude, and are involved in trafficking narcotics. (4,6,9) Many of the children working in mines are from neighboring countries in the region. (6,9)

Some boys placed in the care of Koranic teachers for education are forced by their teachers to beg on the street or work in fields, after which they must surrender the money that they have earned to their teachers. (3,9,24) Research indicates that children forced to beg were not only from Mali, but also from neighboring countries, including Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire. (4,6) While the transition government frequently encounters cases of child begging, it does not have the capacity or the appropriate facilities to provide shelter and social services to these children, given the widespread nature of this issue in the country. (4,6,9)

The Constitution guarantees free and compulsory education for citizens; however, many children, especially girls, do not attend school because parents are expected to pay fees for registration, uniforms, transportation costs, and supplies, as well as teachers' additional salary payments, all of which are cost prohibitive for many impoverished families. (3,6,8,15,25,26) Long distances between villages and schools, and lack of schools, classes, and teachers, are also significant barriers to education. (4,6) In addition, many children in Mali are not registered at birth, which may prevent them from accessing services such as education. (3,15,25,27) Research indicates that there are hundreds of thousands of children in Mali without birth certificates, and that while lack of documentation does not exclude children from schooling, these students may not be allowed to take national exams. (4,6) Evidence also suggests that incidences of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, including corporal




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punishment, prevent some children from remaining in school. (16,25) Furthermore, internally displaced children faced interruptions in their education and barriers to enrolling in school after fleeing their homes. (4,6) Ongoing insecurity and attacks on schools have resulted in as many as 1,731 school closures by 2022. (20,28)

## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Mali 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 transition government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Mali's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the lack of criminal penalties for crimes related to the recruitment of children by non-state armed groups.

**Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor**

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 326 of the Labor Code; Article L.187 of the Law 2017-021 modifying the Labor Code (29,30)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Hazardous Occupations List; Article 1 of the 2017-4388 Amendment to Hazardous Occupations List; Articles 326 and D.189.14 of the Labor Code (29,31,32)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Hazardous Occupations List; Article 1 of the 2017-4388 Amendment to Hazardous Occupations List; Article 189 of the Labor Code (29,31,32)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	No		Article L.6 of the Law 2017-021 modifying the Labor Code; Article 1 of the Trafficking in Persons Law (30,33)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 244 of the Penal Code; Articles 1 and 7 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 63 of the Child Protection Code (33-35)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 228 of the Penal Code; Articles 1 and 7 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 57 of the Child Protection Code (33-35)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		Article 183 of the Penal Code; Articles 18 and 50 of the Child Protection Code (34,35)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 17 of the Child Protection Code; Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code; Article 5 of the Military General Statute (34-36)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 17 of the Child Protection Code; Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code; Article 5 of the Military General Statute (34-36)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		Articles 31.23, 31.31, and 32 of the Penal Code (34)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15‡	Articles 26 and 34 of the Law of Education (37)
Free Public Education	No		Article 18 of the Constitution; Article 4 of the Law of Education (26,37)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (34)

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The Education Law only formally guarantees the right of education for citizens. (37) Articles 189.35 and 189.36 of the Labor Code allow children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform domestic or light seasonal work, as long as it does not impede school attendance or exceed 4.5 hours of work per day. (29) However, Mali's light work framework does not meet international standards because it applies to children under the age of 13 and does not specify the conditions under which light work may be undertaken. (30,38) Although Mali's Trafficking in Persons Law criminalizes human trafficking for the purpose of slavery, it does not more broadly criminalize the act of slavery, and Mali's Labor Code, while prohibiting forced labor generally, does not specifically prohibit hereditary slavery. In addition, Malian law does not prohibit using, procuring, or offering a child for the production and trafficking of drugs as established by international standards. (15,21,33,35)

While the Child Protection Code provides protection for children under age 18, and the Penal Code establishes criminal penalties for several forms of child labor, some offenses included in the Child Protection Code do not carry criminal penalties, such as the prohibition of child recruitment by non-state armed groups. (34,35,39) Moreover, although the Child Protection Code prohibits children under age 18 from participating in armed conflicts or joining the national armed forces, it only provides for imprisonment of those who recruit children in cases of repeat offenses. Meanwhile, the Penal Code only provides criminal penalties for child recruitment if the children recruited are under age 15. (34,35) Article 28 of the Penal Code states that crimes committed out of self-defense or under a force that could not be resisted should not be penalized as prescribed in other articles of the Penal Code. Although a 2013 Interministerial Circular on the Prevention, Protection, and Rehabilitation of Child Soldiers states that Article 28 of the Penal Code is applicable to children involved in armed conflict, the Circular does not define the age range of the children it covers. (34,40) This means that some children under age 18 who are affiliated with non-state armed groups may be penalized for crimes they were forced to commit as a direct result of being a victim of child labor. (34,40)

### III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The transition 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 their child labor laws.

**Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement**

Organization/Agency	Role & Activities
Ministry of Labor, Civil Service and Social Dialogue (MOL)	Enforces labor laws and investigates Labor Code infractions, including those regarding child labor. (8,9,25) Chairs the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE), which coordinates Mali's efforts to eliminate child labor and includes representatives from other government ministries, civil society, and worker and employer organizations. (8,15,41,42) One labor inspector in each region is designated as the point of contact for CNLTE staff to facilitate regional coordination. (3,4,15,43) During the reporting period, CNLTE only received 25 percent of its budget. The available funds it received were insufficient to cover its facilities and transportation needs. (9)
Ministry of Justice's Special Judicial Office and Specialized Investigation Brigade	Enforce criminal laws, including those related to child labor, child trafficking, child commercial sexual exploitation, recruitment and use of child soldiers, and the use of children in illicit activities. (3,4,6,8,44,45)
Ministry of Security's Police Brigade for the Protection of Morals and Children (BPMC), and the Brigade to Fight Migrant and Human Trafficking	Investigate crimes against children, including human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. (3,6,9,15)

#### **Labor Law Enforcement**

In 2022, labor law enforcement agencies in Mali took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor, Civil Service and Social Dialogue (MOL) that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including insufficient financial and human resource allocation.

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**Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2021	2022
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$115,000 (6)	\$17,250 (9)
Number of Labor Inspectors	113 (6)	116 (9)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (29)	Yes (29)
Training for Labor Inspectors Provided	N/A (6)	Yes (9)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted at Worksite	571 (6)	Unknown (9)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown (6)	Unknown (9)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	85 (6)	Unknown (9)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	45 (6)	Unknown (9)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (6)	Yes (9)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (6)	Yes (9)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (29)	Yes (9)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (6)	Yes (9)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (6)	Yes (9)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (6)	Yes (9)

The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Mali's workforce, which includes approximately 6.5 million workers. Research indicates that Mali does not have an adequate number of labor inspectors to carry out their mandated duties. (43,46) There are 15 inspectors and comptrollers dedicated to child labor issues. (6) Although all regions have labor inspectors, government services are limited or non-existent in some areas due to the insecurity caused by the presence of non-state armed groups. (3,15,43) In addition, reports indicate that a lack of trained staff, equipment, vehicles, and funding hampered the labor inspectorate's ability to conduct child labor inspections and legal proceedings, especially in remote areas of northern Mali. (3,8,25,43,47) Moreover, the transition government rarely collects statistics on the matter, and there is no central database to maintain any data related to the worst forms of child labor. (10) Finally, the reported number of child labor victims is likely lower than the actual number of victims, given the widespread nature of child labor and inadequate enforcement of child labor laws in Mali. (3,4)

**Criminal Law Enforcement**

In 2022, criminal law enforcement agencies in Mali took actions to address child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including insufficient financial and human resource allocation.

**Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2021	2022
Training for Criminal Investigators Provided	No (6)	Yes (9)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (6)	Unknown (9)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (6)	Unknown (9)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (6)	Unknown (9)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (6)	Unknown (9)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (6)	Yes (9)

Reports indicate that because of political instability, which hinders labor and criminal law enforcement efforts in western and northern Mali, the prevalence of hereditary slavery, forced labor, and human trafficking worsened in 2022. (3,8,9,24,25,43,48) Mali also lacked trained staff and funding to adequately conduct criminal law enforcement efforts related to the worst forms of child labor, particularly in remote areas. (3,24,43) For example, the number of law enforcement agents working for the Brigade for the Protection of Morals and Children (BPMC)–54—is inadequate given the prevalence of the worst forms of child labor in the country. (3,6) Research also showed that the BPMC's budget was insufficient, and it had only three vehicles to conduct inspections and

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very limited amounts of fuel for each quarter in 2022. Additionally, there were reports that staff did not receive office materials and had to use personal resources for official documents and furniture. (6,9)

The government did not provide information on whether new criminal investigators received initial training, whether refresher courses were provided, the number of investigations carried out, whether violations were found, whether prosecutions were initiated, the number of convictions, or imposed penalties for violations related to the worst forms of child labor for inclusion in this report. (9) Many justice sector actors also noted government officials' interference in cases involving slavery-related practices in an effort to have the charges dismissed. (49,50)

### IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The transition 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 a lack of clarity about the roles of coordinating bodies.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Activities
National Committee to Track Child Labor (CDN)	Functions under MOL and acts as the main coordinating body for the elimination of child labor in Mali. Composed of several ministries, NGOs, business organizations, and trade unions. (9) During the reporting period, CDN held regular meetings. (9)

Reports indicate that there is confusion with regard to roles and a lack of coordination between the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE) and the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices. (8,24,48,51)

### V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The transition 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 a national child labor action plan covering all worst forms of child labor.

**Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor**

Policy	Description & Activities
National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2018–2022)	Aimed to enhance the legal framework to prevent human trafficking, improve enforcement efforts, and provide effective protection and care for survivors. Led by the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices. (52) Called for the establishment of a formal body to coordinate government efforts to address human trafficking, and allocated a budget of \$10 million for the 5-year period, or \$2 million per year. The transition government pledged to contribute \$350,000 annually. (22,51) In 2022, several anti-trafficking trainings, workshops, and community outreach events were carried out. (8)
Interministerial Circular and the Protocol on the Release and Transfer of Children Associated with Armed Groups and Armed Forces	Provides a framework that highlights the responsibility of the government to prevent children's involvement in armed conflict, and to protect and reintegrate those children who become involved. (15,53,54) During the reporting period, at least 14 child soldiers were removed from armed groups. (9)

‡ The transition government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (3,15,55)

In 2020, the National Plan to Eliminate Child Labor (PANETEM) ended, and a new PANETEM is being developed, but has not yet been finalized. (6) Although Mali has adopted the National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, research found no evidence of a policy on other worst forms of child labor.

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## VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2022, the transition 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 inadequate efforts to address child labor in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description & Activities
Mali Government and NGO-Implemented Programs†	The Directorate for the Promotion of Children and Family (DPCF), led by the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family (MPFEF), coordinates issues related to child labor and child protection. (4,6,8) Additionally, the “Child Travel Card” program ( <i>Titre de Voyage pour Enfant</i> ), created by DPCF in 2002, remained a part of the directorate's efforts to address child trafficking by facilitating proper identification of children traveling within and outside Mali. Failure to show a child travel card will prompt follow-up actions to confirm whether the child is a victim of human trafficking for forced labor, commercial sexual exploitation, or forced migration. (6,9) Research indicates that this program does not cover foreign citizens. (10) Also led by MPFEF, the Interministerial Committee to Prevent Grave Violations Against Children conducts awareness-raising campaigns to prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, implements reintegration programs for former child soldiers, and conducts joint missions with international partners to determine the presence of children in armed conflict. (8,15) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the programs during the reporting period.
ILO-Implemented Projects to Combat Child Labor	ILO-implemented projects to address child labor and forced labor in supply chains. These projects included the CLEAR Cotton Project on Child and Forced Labor (2019–2022), an \$8.5 million EU and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)-funded global project to address child labor and forced labor in cotton and textile supply chains, and ACCEL Africa (2018–2022), a \$26.5 million Government of Netherlands-funded regional project to address child labor in gold mining and cotton supply chains. (6,43,56-58) The South-South Project on Decent Work ( <i>Programme Sud-Sud sur le Travail Décent</i> ) was funded by the government of Brazil (\$400,000) and implemented by the ILO, and was extended until December 2022. The program aimed to provide labor inspection training and capacity building to labor inspectors, and to improve working conditions in cotton production areas by promoting decent work principles and providing social protections to producers. (4,9) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the CLEAR Cotton Project on Child and Forced Labor or the South-South Project on Decent Work during the reporting period.
Foreign Government and Company-Implemented Programs	Fighting Child Labor in the Value Chain of the Cotton, Clothing, and Textile Industries ( <i>Lutte contre le Travail des Enfants dans la Chaîne de Valeur Coton, Textile, et Habillement</i> ) was funded by the EU and FAO and implemented by the ILO between 2018 and 2022. The project reinforced the national legal framework for addressing child labor and forced labor in the cotton sector. (4,9) The project included mapping the supply chain of cotton and clothing, taking into account gender considerations. (4,9) Promoting the Principles and Fundamental Rights in the Cotton Supply Chain Work Environment (2018–2022) was a project funded by Inditex, a Spanish multi-national company working in the cotton sector. This project targeted cotton producers in the cotton-producing region of Sikasso and aimed to promote a favorable work environment for the protection of fundamental worker rights. (4,6) Included awareness campaigns and trainings for relevant partners, local associations, and community leaders toward developing a monitoring system that ensured respect for fundamental worker rights in the cotton sector. The program also promoted women's rights and women's leadership in cotton producer organizations and cooperatives. (4) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the Fighting Child Labor in the Value Chain of the Cotton, Clothing, and Textile Industries program or the Promoting the Principles and Fundamental Rights in the Cotton Supply Chain Work Environment program during the reporting period.

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 transition Government of Mali.

‡ The transition government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (3,15,59,60)

An informal referral mechanism exists among NGOs, UN bodies, police, and other government agencies to allow the withdrawal of children from armed conflict and to provide social services to survivors of the worst forms of child labor. (3,43,51) Despite these efforts, reports indicate that resources and facilities available to social services agencies are inadequate. (3,4,25,43) In addition, while Mali does not fund or participate in programs to address child labor in domestic work, forced begging, or commercial sexual exploitation, it provides in-kind and financial support to NGOs working on these issues. (8)

## 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 Mali (Table 11).

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**Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor**

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that laws providing free basic education include all children in Mali, including non-citizens.	2022
	Ensure that the Labor Code establishes a minimum age no younger than age 13 for light work and specifies the conditions under which light work may be undertaken, in accordance with international standards.	2015 – 2022
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits hereditary slavery.	2017 – 2022
	Criminally prohibit the use, procurement, or offering of children for illicit activities, including for the production and trafficking of drugs, in accordance with international standards.	2009 – 2022
	Criminally prohibit the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups for use in any armed conflict.	2013 – 2022
	Revise the Interministerial Circular on the Prevention, Protection, and Rehabilitation of Child Soldiers to include the specific ages of children covered by the Circular, while ensuring that these ages are in compliance with international standards. Ensure that children under age 18 are not penalized for acts committed as a result of being forcibly recruited into armed groups or used in armed conflict.	2009 – 2022
Enforcement	Increase labor inspectorate funding and resources, including training, equipment, and transportation to carry out inspections, especially in remote areas of northern Mali.	2012 – 2022
	Increase the number of labor inspectors from 116 to 162 to ensure adequate coverage of approximately 6.5 million workers.	2012 – 2022
	Publish information on labor law enforcement efforts, including the number of child labor violations found and the number of inspections conducted at the worksite.	2010 – 2022
	Collect child labor statistics regularly and create a centralized database to track data on the worst forms of child labor.	2021 – 2022
	Publish information on criminal law enforcement, including whether new criminal investigators received initial training and whether refresher courses were provided, the number of investigations, violations found, and prosecutions initiated, and whether penalties for violations of the worst forms of child labor were imposed.	2020 – 2022
	Implement the provisions of the Interministerial Circular and the UN-signed Protocol, which require that children in detention for their association with armed groups be transferred to social services or to UN child protection agencies for appropriate reintegration and social protection services.	2013 – 2022
	Ensure that criminal law enforcement efforts related to child labor are properly funded and resourced.	2020 – 2022
	Ensure that government officials are held accountable for interference in legal cases related to crimes concerning the worst forms of child labor, including in cases of slavery and the recruitment and use of child soldiers.	2019 – 2022
	Ensure that perpetrators of the worst forms of child labor are prosecuted and convicted in accordance with the law.	2013 – 2022
	Ensure that children are not imprisoned for their association with armed groups.	2022
	Ensure that children under age 18 are not recruited into or used in the national armed forces, in compliance with national law.	2022
	Demobilize any child currently serving in the national armed forces and provide all appropriate social services.	2022
	Coordination	Ensure that all coordinating bodies are active and able to carry out their intended mandates.
Clarify roles for the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE) and the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices coordinating mechanisms addressing child labor, and improve coordination among relevant agencies.		2010 – 2022
Government Policies	Adopt a national policy that addresses all forms of child labor that are prevalent in Mali, such as a national plan to eliminate child labor.	2012 – 2022
Social Programs	Revive and undertake activities to implement social programs to address child labor and make information about implementation measures publicly available.	2021 – 2022
	Expand the Child Travel Card program, which provides identification to Malian children when they are traveling within and outside of the country, to also provide identification to foreign citizen children.	2021 – 2022
	Eliminate barriers to and make education accessible for all children, including girls and those living in conflict-affected areas, by removing school-related fees, expanding school infrastructure, increasing teacher availability, providing free school supplies, and taking measures to ensure the safety of children and teachers in schools.	2010 – 2022
	Increase birth registration rates to ensure that children have access to social services, including education.	2010 – 2022
	Institute new programs to address child labor in all relevant sectors, including domestic work, forced begging, and commercial sexual exploitation.	2009 – 2022
	Ensure that government social services have sufficient resources and facilities to provide the necessary care for survivors of the worst forms of child labor, including for children subjected to forced begging and children used in armed conflict.	2016 – 2022



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## REFERENCES

- 1 UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary education, both sexes (%). Accessed March 15, 2023. For more information, please see “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” in the Reference Materials section of this report. <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>
- 2 ILO. Analysis of Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Statistics from National Household or Child Labor Surveys. Original data from Enquete modulaire et permanente aupres des menages, 2020. Analysis received March 2023. Please see “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” in the Reference Materials section of this report.
- 3 U.S. Embassy- Bamako. Reporting. February 14, 2020.
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