



In 2014, Argentina made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government ratified ILO Convention 189 Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers in its effort to ensure compulsory schooling and minimum age protections for young domestic workers. The Government's Provincial Commissions for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor (COPRETI) provided key trainings to labor inspectors on child labor issues, and the Executive Council to Fight Human Trafficking provided additional training to officials on human trafficking issues. The National Registry of Agricultural Workers and Employers (RENATEA) also launched a program to lengthen the school day and create child care centers for children of agricultural laborers to reduce their vulnerability to child labor. However, children in Argentina are engaged in child labor, including in agriculture, and in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Argentina has not adopted a list of hazardous occupations that are prohibited for children, and the country appears to lack programs that target working children in several key sectors.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Argentina are engaged in child labor, including in agriculture. Children are also engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation sometimes as a result of human trafficking.(1-9) In 2012, the Government of Argentina began incorporating a child labor module into the Permanent Survey of Households. However, the survey does not fully encompass rural areas, leaving the prevalence of child labor in agricultural activities unknown.(10, 11) Preliminary results of the 2012 survey, which were released in 2013, indicated a decrease in child labor. However, the full results have not been made publicly available.(11, 12) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Argentina.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	6.5 (395,869)
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	98.9
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	6.7
Primary Completion Rate (%)		109.3

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2011, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015.(13)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 4, 2011-2012.(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	Harvesting bell peppers,* blueberries, carrots,* corn,* cotton, garlic, grapes, olives, onions,* potatoes,* strawberries, and tomatoes (9, 15-30)
	Harvesting yerba mate (3, 5, 26, 31-33)
	Harvesting tobacco (1, 6, 19)
Industry	Production of garments (34, 35)
	Production of bricks (17, 36, 37)
	Manufacturing aluminum pots* (38)
	Construction, activities unknown (17, 19, 39)
	Mining* (19)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Street begging and performing, windshield-washing, automobile caretaking (12, 17, 40, 41)
	Refuse collection, recycling, and garbage scavenging (11, 17, 40-42)
	Domestic service (19, 40, 41, 43, 44)
	Transporting goods* (22)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2, 19, 40, 45)
	Forced labor in the production of garments (46-48)
	Used in the production of pornography* (7)

* Evidence of this activity is limited and/or the extent of the problem is unknown.







‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a) – (c) of ILO C. 182.

Children of Bolivian immigrants are engaged in child labor in agriculture and domestic service, and are engaged in forced child labor in the production of garments.(18, 30, 44, 48) While the extent of the problem is unknown, reports indicate that there has been an increase in the trafficking of Bolivian children to Argentina for labor and commercial sexual exploitation.(49, 50) Reports also indicate that Paraguayan children are trafficked to Argentina for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation.(2, 45, 51, 52)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Argentina 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	✓

During the reporting period, the Government ratified ILO Convention 189 Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers. (53) ILO Convention 189 requires signatories to specify a minimum age of employment for domestic workers, as well as ensure that work performed by domestic workers who are under the age of 18 and above the minimum age does not deprive them of compulsory education, or interfere with opportunities to participate in further education or vocational training. The Convention enters into force for Argentina in 2015.(54)

The Government has established laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Articles 2, 7, and 17 of the Prohibition of Child Labor and Protection of Adolescent Work Law (26.390); Article 9 of the Special Code on Contracting Domestic Workers (26.844); Article 1 of the Child Labor Law (26.847); Article 25 of the Child and Adolescent Rights Protection Law (26.061); Article 55 of the Law on Agrarian Work (26.727) (55-59)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 10 of the Prohibition of Child Labor and Protection of Adolescent Work Law (26.390); Articles 176 and 191 of the Law on Labor Contracts (20.744); Article 62 of the Law on Agrarian Work (26.727) (55, 59, 60)

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor (cont)

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children	No		
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 15 of the Constitution; Articles 1 and 24 of the Modifications to the Prevention of and Sanction Against Trafficking in Persons and Assistance to Victims Law (26.842) (61, 62)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 1 and 25-26 of the Modifications to the Prevention of and Sanction Against Trafficking in Persons and Assistance to Victims Law (26.842); Article 9 of the Child and Adolescent Rights Protection Law (26.061) (57, 62)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 1 and 21-23 of the Modifications to the Prevention of and Sanction Against Trafficking in Persons and Assistance to Victims Law (26.842); Article 6 of the Crimes Against Sexual Integrity Law (25.087); Article 2 of the Modification to the Penal Code (Law 26.388) (62-64)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 11 of the Possession and Trafficking of Drugs Law (23.737) (65)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	Yes*	18	Article 19 of the Voluntary Military Service Law (24.429) (66)
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Article 8 of the Voluntary Military Service Law (24.429) (66)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	18	Articles 16 and 29 of the National Education Law (26.206) (67, 68)
Free Public Education	Yes		Articles 15-16 of the Child and Adolescent Rights Protection Law (26.061) (57)

* No conscription in practice (69)

Argentina has not adopted a comprehensive list of hazardous occupations prohibited for children.(45) Article 2 of Law 26.388 (Modification to the Penal Code) prohibits the use of children in pornographic shows and in the production, publication, and distribution of child pornography.(64) However, Law 26.388 does not criminalize the possession of child pornography for personal use.(39)

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 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security (MTESS)	Enforce child labor laws, in part through its Coordinating Body for the Prevention of Child Labor and the Regulation of Adolescent Work (COODITIA), which trains inspectors in child labor and adolescent work issues. Oversee the Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor (CONAETI).(40, 70, 71) Oversee the National Registry of Agricultural Workers and Employers (RENATEA) which, through its own team of inspectors, assists in the enforcement of child labor laws in the agricultural sector.(12, 72)
Ministry of Justice and Human Rights	Maintain a Tribunal for adjudicating disputes in domestic service work and telephone lines for reporting cases of child labor and forced labor.(73)
Office for the Rescue and Care of Trafficking Victims	Provide emergency legal and other assistance to victims of labor and sex trafficking, including child victims. Part of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights.(41, 74, 75)
Public Prosecutor's Anti-Trafficking Division (PROTEX)	Prosecute crimes of trafficking in persons for labor and commercial sexual exploitation, instruct federal personnel in the investigation of trafficking, and design criminal policy in trafficking.(76-78)
National Immigration Directorate	Direct the National Immigration Police, oversee the rights of migrants, and assist in investigating cases of international trafficking.(18, 79)
Federal Police	Conduct trafficking investigations through its Trafficking in Persons Division.(35)
Federal Administration of Public Revenue (AFIP)	Ensure employer compliance with national laws, assist in workplace and labor-related inspections, and initiate prosecutions of labor violations through the Penal Section of its Social Security Directorate.(35, 80, 81)

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

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2014, the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security (MTESS) employed 566 labor inspectors, which is 19 inspectors more than the MTESS employed in 2013.(12, 82) The National Registry of Agricultural Workers and Employers (RENATEA), which assists the MTESS in the enforcement of labor laws in the agricultural sector, reported employing 50 labor inspectors.(12, 83) Although research could not determine whether all 566 MTESS inspectors received training in child labor issues in 2014, the MTESS's Coordinating Body for the Prevention of Child Labor and the Regulation of Adolescent Work (COODITIA) conducted numerous trainings on child labor and adolescent work for labor inspectors and government officials located around the country.(71) In addition, RENATEA reported that it provided 10 training sessions to its inspectors on identifying and reporting hazardous child labor in the agricultural sector.(12, 83) The budget for the MTESS in 2014 was approximately \$8.7 billion.(12)

Although some information on specific MTESS inspection efforts was publicly available for 2014, research could not identify the total number of labor inspections conducted by the MTESS during the reporting period.(12, 84) Information on the specific sectors and geographic localities in which MTESS inspections were carried out, as well as on the total number of children removed from child labor, was also not publicly available.(12) RENATEA conducted 865 labor inspections in the agricultural sector in 2014. These inspections were conducted in approximately half of Argentina's 23 provinces where agricultural labor is prevalent. Inspections were conducted in operations involving the production of potatoes, tomatoes, grapes, tobacco, cotton, and yerba mate, among others; inspections were also conducted on livestock-raising undertakings.(83) Through these inspections, RENATEA identified 50 children engaged in child labor.(83) RENATEA reported that its inspectors refer children rescued from child labor to the COODITIA for the provision of services and the initiation of legal action against the employer; however, research could not identify whether the 50 children RENATEA rescued in 2014 were referred to the COODITIA. Research could also not find information on whether the MTESS inspectors followed this referral process during the reporting period, or on the number of children who received these referrals.(12) Information on the number of fines issued or penalties assessed for child labor violations was not publicly available.(12)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2014, the number of investigators from the Public Prosecutor's Anti-Trafficking Division (PROTEX), the Federal Police, or other criminal law enforcement agencies dedicated to investigating the worst forms of child labor was not known. Although PROTEX investigators led and participated in trainings on human trafficking, research could not determine the extent to which these trainings addressed the worst forms of child labor, including child commercial sexual exploitation, forced child labor, or the use of children in illicit activities. Research could also not determine whether agencies engaged in enforcing criminal laws related to child labor had sufficient resources to carry out their duties.

PROTEX reported that it initiated 286 investigations for crimes of human trafficking in 2014. It pursued 139 cases related to commercial sexual exploitation and 59 cases related to labor exploitation.(85) Although these cases were not disaggregated to differentiate between adult and child exploitation, PROTEX reported that 9 percent of the victims were children. PROTEX also reported that, in 2014, there were 22 prosecutions for sex trafficking that involved 5 minors, and 11 prosecutions for labor trafficking that involved 11 minors.(85) In 2014, PROTEX reported that there were 24 sentences issued, with 37 individuals convicted of sex trafficking, and 18 individuals convicted of labor trafficking. Sentences for sex trafficking ranged from 1 to 14 years of imprisonment, and sentences for labor trafficking ranged from 2 to 6 years of imprisonment.(85) Research did not identify how many of these sentences were issued for trafficking crimes involving minors.

The Office for the Rescue and Care of Trafficking Victims and the National Secretariat for Childhood, Adolescence, and Family (SENNAF) provide legal and other assistance to trafficking survivors. However, research could not determine the number of child trafficking victims who received these services during the reporting period.(49)

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 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor (CONAETI)	Coordinate efforts to monitor and eradicate child labor at the national level and implement Argentina's National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor.(40, 86-89) Composed of the MTESS, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the Ministry of Security, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Health. Includes representatives from the Argentine Industrial Union, the General Confederation of Labor, and the National Secretariat of the Argentine Episcopal Conference.(40) UNICEF and IPEC also provide advisors. Overseen by the MTESS.(40)
Provincial Commissions for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor (COPRETI)	Coordinate efforts, with oversight by CONAETI, to prevent and eradicate child labor at the provincial level.(40, 87, 90). Composed of representatives of governmental and nongovernmental institutions, labor unions, and religious institutions. There are 23 COPRETI.(40, 87, 90)
National Secretariat for Childhood, Adolescence, and Family (SENNAF)	Establish, through its Childhood and Adolescence Protectorate, public policies to secure rights of children and adolescents; coordinate child protection efforts with other government ministries and entities of civil society; and provide assistance to trafficking victims. Overseen by the Ministry of Social Development.(91)
Federal Council for Childhood, Adolescence, and Family	Uphold rights of children and adolescents; deliberate on, assess, and plan public policies on child and adolescent rights; and secure the transfer of federal monies to fund provincial programs. Composed of representatives from national and provincial agencies that coordinate with the SENNAF and formed through the Ministry of Social Development.(92)
Child and Adolescent Labor Monitoring Office (OTIA)	Conduct qualitative and quantitative research on child and adolescent labor to provide policy analysis and inform programming to eradicate child labor and regulate adolescent labor. Created through the Undersecretariat of Technical Programming and Labor Studies of the MTESS.(87, 93)
Coordinating Unit for Children and Adolescents in Danger of Commercial Sexual Exploitation	Provide guidance to relevant institutions, run workshops and research programs regarding commercial sexual exploitation, and assist children, adolescents, and their families. Formed within the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights.(94)
Network of Businesses Against Child Labor	Develop initiatives to sensitize stakeholders to issues of child labor and programs to prevent and eradicate child labor. Developed through a partnership between the MTESS, CONAETI, and the businesses that comprise it.(86, 95)
Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CDNNyA)	Develop programs and policies on child labor and the sexual exploitation of children for the City of Buenos Aires.(40, 96)
Executive Council to Fight Human Trafficking and Exploitation and to Protect and Assist Victims	Coordinate executive branch efforts to combat human trafficking. Composed of representatives of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the Ministry of Security, and the MTESS.(49)

In July 2014, the National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor (CONAETI) convened the 23 Provincial Commissions for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor (COPRETI) to provide training on how the labor inspection process is integral to the protection of children's rights.(71) The COPRETI of Salta, Jujuy, Mendoza and San Luis also held separate programs on child labor issues for regional labor inspectors and government officials.(71)

Also during the reporting period, the Executive Council to Fight Human Trafficking and Exploitation and to Protect and Assist Victims reported hosting 92 trafficking seminars for government officials and representatives from civil society in 19 provinces. A total of 5,210 attendees participated in the sessions.(49)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

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

Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and the Regulation of Adolescent Work (2011-2015)	Calls for actions to address child labor and regulate adolescent work, including awareness-raising, inter-institutional collaboration, stronger inspection mechanisms, and programming in rural and urban settings. Implemented by CONAETI and seeks to mainstream child labor issues into labor and health policies.(88, 97, 98)
National Action Plan for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (2012-2015)	Promotes the dignity and rights of children and adolescents in Argentina. Objectives include preventing and eliminating child labor, including its worst forms.(99)

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Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor (cont)

Policy	Description
Third Program for Decent Work for Argentina (2012-2015)	Pursues a decent work and social well-being agenda in the context of Argentina's Millennium Development Goals (2003-2015) and in consultation with the ILO. Social and economic objectives include the prevention and eradication of child labor.(11, 100)
MERCOSUR United Against Child Labor Campaign	Develops public awareness about the need to combat child labor in MERCOSUR. Addresses child labor in agriculture, domestic work, and sexual exploitation, with particular emphasis on communities along country borders.(101)
Second Presidential Declaration on the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor in MERCOSUR (2012)	Promotes greater articulation between governmental agencies, levels of government, and with civil society among MERCOSUR members.(100)
MERCOSUR Southern Child Initiative	Aims to defend the rights of children and adolescents in the region by raising awareness and seeking coordination among member states regarding the commercial sexual exploitation of children, child trafficking and pornography, child labor, and migrant labor; by improving country legal frameworks to harmonize them with international conventions affecting children; and by exchanging best practices.(102)
Regional Plan for Adolescent Work (2011)	Promotes decent work for adolescent workers. Articulated within MERCOSUR's Strategy for Employment Growth.(100)
Fight against Human Trafficking Agreement between the Government of Colombia and the Government of Argentina†	Establishes a work plan to prevent, identify, and collaborate in the fight against human trafficking between the Government of Colombia and the Government of Argentina. Agreement signed in Argentina in July 2014; aims to strengthen efforts to assist Colombian victims of human trafficking found in forced labor in Argentina.(103)
Declaration of the Regional Initiative: Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labor (2014 – 2020)†	Aims to increase regional cooperation on eradicating child labor by 2020 through signatories' efforts to strengthen monitoring and coordination mechanisms, government programs, and South-South exchanges. Reaffirms commitments made in the Brasilia Declaration from the Third Global Conference on Child Labor (October 2013), and signed by Argentina at the ILO's 18th Regional Meeting of the Americas in Lima, Peru (October 2014).(104-106)

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

In September 2014, Argentina participated in the First Meeting of the Working Groups of the XVIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor to foster continued dialogue and cooperation on labor issues throughout the Americas. Held in Bridgetown, Barbados, these discussions promoted the exchange of information on policies and programs that seek to formalize the informal sector, uphold workers' rights, and prevent and eliminate child labor.(107, 108)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2014, the Government of Argentina funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms. The Government has other programs that may have an impact on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Universal Child Allowance Program (Asignación Universal)*‡	Government of Argentina program funded in part by the World Bank that provides a monthly cash transfer to unemployed parents and workers in the informal economy, contingent upon parents' fulfillment of health and education requirements for their children.(11, 109, 110) Includes pregnant women and currently covers 3.5 million children under age 18.(11)
RENATEA Awareness-Raising Campaigns‡	RENATEA campaigns that raise awareness of child labor in agriculture and inform families and children of the right to education.(83, 111)
CONAETI Awareness-Raising Campaigns	CONAETI/Network of Businesses Against Child Labor campaigns that make businesses and the general public aware of child labor in sourcing and supply chains.(95)
Harvest Day Care and Future Programs (Jardines de Cosecha y Porvenir)	COPRETI/Network of Businesses Against Child Labor programs that aim to reduce child labor in the production of crops, such as tobacco and blueberries, where labor is often performed by entire families. Children are placed in day care centers that have educational and recreational programs.(15, 112-116)
Care Program's Extended School Day/ Child Care Centers (Programa Cuidar)†‡	RENATEA program to lengthen the school day and create child care centers in agricultural regions designed to reduce children's vulnerability to child labor in the agricultural sector.(12, 117)

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor (cont)

Program	Description
Heads of Household Program (Programa Jefes de Hogar)*‡	MTESS program that seeks to improve the employability of families who have experienced economic hardship. (118)
UNICEF Argentina's Program for the Protection of Children's Rights	Works to protect children from child labor, commercial sexual exploitation, violence, and abuse. Fosters the development of protection systems and dialogue between civil society and local, provincial, and federal state agencies. Priority areas for 2011-2014 concern indigenous and immigrant children and the urban poor.(119)
Regional Action Group for the Americas (Grupo de Acción Regional para las Américas)	Conducts prevention and awareness-raising campaigns to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Latin America. Members include Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.(120-122)
Elimination of Child Labor in Latin America (Phase 4)	\$4.5 million Government of Spain-funded, 4-year project implemented by ILO-IPEC to combat child labor in 19 countries, including Argentina.(123)
Education and Monitoring Program for the Eradication of Child Labor	\$1.3 million Government of Spain-funded, 2-year project implemented by ILO-IPEC that aims to strengthen public policies and government capacity to combat child labor in 19 countries in Latin America, including Argentina. Includes the objective of developing information systems on the worst forms of child labor.(123)

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

† Program was launched during the reporting period.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Argentina.

During the reporting period, Argentina continued to implement social programs designed to combat child labor.(12) However, programs that address child labor in agriculture do not address the scope of the problem in the sector; research also did not find programs that specifically targeted children working in urban activities, such as refuse collection or street begging and performing.

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 Argentina (Table 9).

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Adopt a list of hazardous occupations prohibited for children.	2009 – 2014
	Criminalize the possession of child pornography.	2009 – 2014
Enforcement	Make information publicly available on MTESS child labor enforcement efforts, including the number of labor inspections, the sectors and geographic localities in which inspections are carried out, and the sanctions imposed as a result.	2009 – 2014
	Publicly report on the total number of children removed from child labor, including its worst forms, as well as on the number of children who received services, including the agencies that refer and receive child labor victims.	2014
	Publicly report on the number of criminal investigators who investigate child labor-related crimes and ensure that they have training and adequate resources to enforce laws on the worst forms of child labor.	2014
Social Programs	Fully incorporate rural areas into the Permanent Survey of Households and make findings on child labor publicly available.	2013 – 2014
	Assess the impact that social programs, especially cash transfer programs, may have on reducing the worst forms of child labor.	2010 – 2014
	Expand programs that target child labor in agricultural activities.	2012 – 2014
	Develop specific programs that target child labor in informal urban activities, such as refuse collection or street begging and performing.	2009 – 2014

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