

In 2016, Jordan made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government released the Summary Report on Main Findings of the National Child Labor Survey and redesigned the National Child Labor Database to contain data about child laborers and their referral to social services. In addition, the Government increased the number of double-shifted schools to expand access to education for Syrian refugee children living in Jordan. However, children in Jordan perform dangerous tasks in agriculture. Children also engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in street work. Programs to combat the worst forms of child labor are insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem. In addition, Syrian children still face barriers to accessing education.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Jordan perform dangerous tasks in agriculture.(1-5) Children also engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in street work.(6-8) Based on the 2016 National Child Labor Survey, approximately 70,000 children are engaged in child labor, most commonly in agriculture and trade. Approximately 80 percent of child laborers are Jordanian and about 15 percent are Syrian.(4) Boys constitute nearly 90 percent of those involved in child labor.(4) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Jordan.

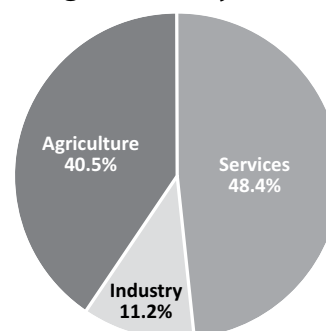
Table 1. Statistics on Children’s Work and Education

| Children | Age | Percent |
|-------------------------------|---------|--------------|
| Working (% and population) | 5 to 14 | 0.8 (11,255) |
| Attending School (%) | 5 to 14 | 94.9 |
| Combining Work and School (%) | 7 to 14 | 0.7 |
| Primary Completion Rate (%) | | 91.0 |

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2014, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016.(9)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children’s Work Project’s analysis of statistics from National Child Labor Survey, 2007.(10)

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 | Farming, including weeding, planting, and harvesting tomatoes and olives (1-4, 6, 11-15) |
| Industry | Mining† and quarrying† (1, 4, 6) |
| | Construction,† including building and painting homes (4, 6, 7, 11, 15-18) |
| | Manufacturing (4, 11, 16) |
| | Carpentry† (6, 7, 17, 18) |
| | Blacksmithing† (7, 17) |
| Services | Repairing automobiles† (4, 7, 12, 18) |
| | Attending donkeys, camels, and horses to transport tourists (19-21) |
| | Street work,† including selling items, washing cars, and begging (6-8, 11, 12, 17-19, 22) |
| | Scavenging scrap metal (23, 24) |
| | Domestic work† (11, 12, 25) |
| | Food services, including restaurants and bakeries (4, 6, 12, 16, 17) |

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

| Sector/Industry | Activity |
|---|--|
| Services | Hotel services† (4, 24) |
| | Hairdressing (6, 11, 19) |
| | Retail (4, 6, 11) |
| Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡ | Forced begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (26, 27) |
| | Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (11, 28-30) |

† 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.

Syrian children are granted access to Jordanian public schools.(31) Yet, as of December 2016, more than 40,000 Syrian refugee children were not enrolled in formal or informal education, a figure representing 17 percent of all Syrian refugee children ages 5 to 17.(32) Jordan has nearly 500 double-shifted schools to address overcrowding (out of approximately 3,700 schools in the country); of these schools, 198 are for refugee children, mainly Syrian.(33) Jordanian children attend in the morning and Syrian children attend in the afternoon to accommodate the large number of students.(26, 31) One hundred second-shift schools were opened in 2013 and 2014, and an additional 98 were opened in 2016.(33) However, Jordanian and Syrian children attending double-shift schools are vulnerable to child labor because the school hours are considerably shorter, and fewer school hours leave more time for work.(33, 34) Syrian refugee children face barriers to education, including the cost of transportation, uniforms, and school materials; lack of refugee registration and required documents; and being unprepared for their appropriate grade level due to interruptions in their early years of schooling.(15, 35, 36)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Jordan 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 has established laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Jordan’s legal framework to adequately protect children from child labor.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

| Standard | Meets International Standards: Yes/No | Age | Legislation |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----|---|
| Minimum Age for Work | Yes | 16 | Article 73 of the Labor Code (37) |
| Minimum Age for Hazardous Work | Yes | 18 | Article 74 of the Labor Code; Article 2 of Ministerial Order of 2011 (37, 38) |
| Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children | Yes | | Article 2 of the Ministerial Order of 2011 (38) |
| Prohibition of Forced Labor | Yes | | Article 3(a) and (b) of the Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking; Articles 17 and 77 of the Labor Code (37, 39) |
| Prohibition of Child Trafficking | Yes | | Article 3(a) of the Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking (39) |

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor (cont)

| Standard | Meets International Standards: Yes/No | Age | Legislation |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----|---|
| Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children | Yes | | Articles 298, 299, 306, 310, 311, 315, and 319 of the Penal Code; Article 3(b) of the Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking (39, 40) |
| Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities | Yes | | Article 8 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (41) |
| Minimum Age for Military Recruitment | | | |
| State Compulsory | Yes | 18 | Article 3(a) of the National Service Act (42) |
| State Voluntary | N/A* | | |
| Non-state Compulsory | No | | |
| Compulsory Education Age | Yes | 16 | Articles 7(a.2) and 10(b) of the Education Act (43) |
| Free Public Education | Yes | | Article 20 of the Constitution (44) |

* No volunteers are accepted to join the armed forces.(45)

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). However, gaps in labor law enforcement remain and some enforcement information is not available.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

| Organization/Agency | Role |
|--|--|
| Ministry of Labor, Directorate of Labor Affairs and Inspection | Enforce labor laws, including those on child labor.(26) Identify cases of child labor through worksite inspections and refer cases to the relevant services. Register instances of child labor in a National Child Labor Database, which allows ministries to monitor and track children as they are identified and referred to services.(46) Maintain a 24/7 hotline to receive labor-related complaints in Arabic, including complaints of child labor.(31, 47) |
| Ministry of Labor, Child Labor Unit | Coordinate government efforts to campaign against child labor, conduct trainings, and raise awareness about child labor issues. In 2015, piloted the National Child Labor Database as a data collection, coordination, and referral mechanism.(26) In 2016, the Web site of the National Child Labor Database was launched at a central location for labor inspectors to enter information on child laborers and share it with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development.(33) |
| Public Security Directorate, Criminal Investigation Unit | Investigate and prosecute violations of the Penal Code, including allegations of the worst forms of child labor. Operate a section to combat human trafficking.(26) |
| Joint Anti-Trafficking Unit of the Ministry of Labor and Public Security Directorate | Investigate cases of human trafficking and forced labor, refer cases for prosecution, and coordinate with foreign embassies to identify victims of human trafficking and repatriate workers.(48) |

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2016, law enforcement agencies in Jordan took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2015 | 2016 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Labor Inspectorate Funding | \$352,187 (26) | \$352,187 (24) |
| Number of Labor Inspectors | 226 (26) | 237 (24) |
| Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties | Yes (49) | Yes (49) |
| Training for Labor Inspectors | | |
| Initial Training for New Employees | Unknown | Yes (33) |
| Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor | Unknown | N/A |
| Refresher Courses Provided | Yes (26) | Yes (24) |
| Number of Labor Inspections | 1,442 (26) | 1,857 (24) |

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2015 | 2016 |
|--|------------|------------|
| Number Conducted at Worksite | 1,442 (26) | Unknown |
| Number Conducted by Desk Reviews | 0 | Unknown |
| Number of Child Labor Violations Found | 1,273 (26) | 1,442 (24) |
| Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed | 1,016 (26) | 1,210 (33) |
| Number of Penalties Imposed That Were Collected | Unknown | Unknown |
| Routine Inspections Conducted | Yes (26) | Yes (24) |
| Routine Inspections Targeted | Yes (26) | Yes (24) |
| Unannounced Inspections Permitted | Yes (49) | Yes (49) |
| Unannounced Inspections Conducted | Yes (26) | Yes (24) |
| Complaint Mechanism Exists | Yes (26) | Yes (24) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services | Yes (3) | Yes (3) |

In 2016, the Ministry of Labor hired 11 new inspectors and responded to 58 complaints of child labor cases, received through its Child Labor Unit hotline.(24) When a labor inspector identifies a child laborer, the inspector issues a warning or fine and asks the employer to send the child home while the inspector is still present.(33) A warning requires the employer to sign a pledge declaring that he/she will cease employing children. Without the pledge, the Ministry of Labor can close the business.(26) The information about the child is then shared with the Ministry of Social Development, which contacts the family to identify the appropriate social services. Meanwhile, the labor inspector conducts unannounced follow-up visits at the worksite to ensure compliance.(33) During the reporting period, 584 businesses signed pledges.(24)

Insufficient resources hampered the Ministry of Labor’s capacity to enforce child labor laws in the agricultural sector.(24) Based on available information, the Ministry of Labor has not issued regulations on labor inspection in agriculture.(33) This is a problem, particularly because a considerable proportion of child laborers work in agriculture, based on the 2016 National Child Labor Survey.(4)

Jordanian children identified during labor inspections are referred to social services from the Child Labor Unit of the Ministry of Social Development.(33, 50) In contrast, Syrian refugee children who are identified during labor inspections are taken to the Azraq refugee camp and separated from their families. Families that live in the Zaatari refugee camp can go to Azraq to reunify with their children.(33, 51, 52) However, those that live in communities (about 80 percent of all Syrian refugees) may fear that by presenting themselves at Azraq, they, too, will have to stay at Azraq and lose some benefits.(51, 52)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2016, criminal law enforcement agencies in Jordan took actions to combat the worst forms of child labor (Table 7).

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor

| Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement | 2015 | 2016 |
|---|----------|----------|
| Training for Investigators | | |
| Initial Training for New Employees | Unknown | Unknown |
| Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor | Unknown | Unknown |
| Refresher Courses Provided | Yes (53) | Unknown |
| Number of Investigations | 206 (53) | 1 (54) |
| Number of Violations Found | 0 (53) | 2 (54) |
| Number of Prosecutions Initiated | N/A | Unknown |
| Number of Convictions | N/A | Unknown |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services | Yes (26) | Yes (26) |

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 8).

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

| Coordinating Body | Role & Description |
|--|---|
| National Committee on Child Labor | Formulate new policies, amend legislation as necessary, and oversee the implementation of child labor policies, including the National Framework to Combat Child Labor. Led by the Ministry of Labor, members include three other ministries, plus international and civil society organizations.(55) |
| National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking | Coordinate government efforts to combat human trafficking. Chaired by the Ministry of Justice. Other members include representatives from 10 state agencies, including the Counter Trafficking Unit in charge of human trafficking investigations.(54) |

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 9).

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

| Policy | Description |
|---|--|
| National Framework to Combat Child Labor | Outlines the roles and responsibilities of key government agencies, including the ministries of Education, Labor, and Social Development; NGOs; and other stakeholders involved in identifying and responding to cases of child labor. Based on the Framework, Ministry of Labor inspectors monitor child labor and refer cases to the ministries of Social Development and Education for the provision of services.(56) In 2016, the Framework was rolled out in all remaining governorates in the country.(57) |
| Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis (2016–2018)† | Integrates a refugee-based humanitarian response with a resilience response for local communities in areas such as education and social protection.(36) In academic year 2016–2017, a total of 125,000 Syrian refugee children were enrolled in formal education and an additional 67,000 in non-formal education.(32) |
| Plan of Action to Eliminate Child Labor in Tourism in Petra | Employs counselors to respond to children at risk of truancy, raise children’s awareness of the hazards of child labor and the significance of education, incorporate child labor prevention strategies into mainstream programs for legally employed children age 16 and older, and inform students about high-quality employment in the tourism sector.(58) |

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2016, the Government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 10).

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor†

| Program | Description |
|---|---|
| <u>Moving Towards a Child Labor-Free Jordan</u> (2010–2016) | \$4.04 million USDOL-funded, 6-year project implemented by ILO-IPEC to establish a coordinating mechanism on child labor issues and facilitate government implementation of the National Framework to Combat Child Labor. In 2016, the project assisted in conducting the National Child Labor Survey and publishing the summary report, held a regional stakeholder meeting on best practices to address child labor, redesigned the National Child Labor Database, and developed a user manual and training package for the database.(57) For additional information, please visit our Web site . |
| Ministry of Social Development, Child Labor Unit† | Support children engaged in child labor, return them to school, and provide services to their families; provide vocational training for youth; organize training on child labor for families; and maintain the Web site of the National Child Labor Database, which serves as the national child labor monitoring system.(59) |
| Child Begging Assistance† | Ministry of Social Development’s shelter in Madaba that provides social services to children engaged in begging.(24) The ministry conducts awareness raising for parents and links this to financial aid that the family receives.(33) |

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor[‡] (cont)

| Program | Description |
|---|---|
| Non-Formal Education Centers [†] | Operated by the Ministry of Education and local NGO Questscope, and funded by USAID and UNICEF, these centers throughout the country seek to bring school dropouts, including those engaged in or at risk of child labor, back into the educational system. Children attend classes 3 hours a day in a flexible learning environment, with class sizes of around 20 students and specially trained teachers.(33, 34) Targets children ages 13 and older. Upon completion of the curriculum, students receive a certificate indicating equivalency to a 10th-grade education.(34) One center in Petra provides educational services to children at risk of child labor in the tourism industry in Petra.(47, 60) In 2016, 28 new centers were opened, and a total of 4,000 students received services.(33) |
| Social Support Center in Marka [†] | \$350,000 Ministry of Labor-funded center operated in cooperation with the ILO. Activities include identifying child laborers, providing services such as non-formal education, and assisting families in finding alternate forms of supplemental income.(24) |
| National Aid Fund [†] | Under the Ministry of Social Development, pays families approximately \$50 a month through a conditional cash transfer program for withdrawing a child from the labor market and re-enrolling the child in school.(47) |

[†] Program is funded by the Government of Jordan.

[‡] The Government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms.(61, 62)

Although Jordan has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs does not fully address the extent of the problem, including in agriculture, construction, and street vending.

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 Jordan (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

| Area | Suggested Action | Year(s) Suggested |
|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| Legal Framework | Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under 18 into non-state armed groups. | 2016 |
| Enforcement | Publish information about the number of inspections at worksites or by desk reviews and the number of penalties collected for child labor violations. | 2015 – 2016 |
| | Ensure that Ministry of Labor inspectors have the resources needed to carry out inspections in the agricultural sector, and ensure that regulations are issued to mandate labor inspections in agriculture. | 2014 – 2016 |
| | Ensure that refugee children identified during labor inspections are referred to social services and are not taken to Azraq refugee camp and separated from their families. | 2016 |
| | Publish information about training provided to criminal investigators, the number of prosecutions, and the number of convictions for the worst forms of child labor. | 2015 – 2016 |
| Social Programs | Continue to expand access to education for all children. | 2013 – 2016 |
| | Institute programs to address the worst forms of child labor in agriculture, construction, and street vending. | 2013 – 2016 |

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- 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-aged and under-aged children who enter primary school late/early and/or repeat grades. For more information, please see “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” in the Reference Materials section of this report.
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