

In 2017, Mali made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government increased the minimum age for work to 15 in compliance with international standards and expanded the list of hazardous occupations or activities prohibited for children. The Police's Brigade for the Protection of Morals and Children, in collaboration with Interpol, conducted an operation that rescued 40 child victims of forced begging and prosecuted 9 individuals associated with this crime. In addition, under the National Policy for Promotion and Protection of Children, the government conducted activities to increase birth registration and provided social services for children withdrawn from armed conflict. It also participated in a number of programs targeting the worst forms of child labor, including a program that built eight sites in northern Mali to provide reintegration services to former combatants, including children. However, children in Mali engage in 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. Although the government made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas during the reporting period, the law does not explicitly prohibit using, procuring, or offering children for illicit activities and research could not determine if penalties were applied for violations related to the worst forms of child labor. In addition, resource constraints severely limited the government's ability to fully implement the National Plan to Combat Child Labor and existing social programs are insufficient to adequately address the extent of the problem, particularly in artisanal gold mining, hereditary slavery, and debt bondage.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Mali engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in hereditary slavery and in armed conflict. (1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6) Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture, particularly in the production of cotton and rice. (7; 8; 1) 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 | 25.1 (1,216,300) |
| Attending School (%) | 5 to 14 | 46.0 |
| Combining Work and School (%) | 7 to 14 | 13.4 |
| Primary Completion Rate (%) | | 51.0 |

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (9)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Demographic and Health Survey, 2012–2013. (10)

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,† transporting,† and applying chemical fertilizers,† particularly in the production of rice and cotton (7; 8; 11; 12; 1) |
| | Raising livestock,† including oxen and small ruminants (8; 13; 12; 14) |
| | Fishing† (8; 13) |

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

| Sector/Industry | Activity |
|--|---|
| Industry | Artisanal gold mining, † including digging shafts, † extracting ore from underground tunnels, † crushing ore, † and amalgamating ore with mercury † (15; 16; 17; 18; 1; 19; 20; 21) |
| | Assembling fishing canoes † (8) |
| Services | Domestic work † (22; 23; 1) |
| | Street work, including as market vendors, † beggars, † and in the transportation sector (8; 24; 23; 1) |
| 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, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (25; 2) |
| | Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (26; 1; 27; 28; 2) |
| | Forced recruitment by armed rebel and extremist Islamic militia groups for use in armed conflict (3; 1; 20; 29; 2; 4) |
| | Hereditary slavery (23; 25; 30; 5; 2) |
| | Forced begging by Koranic teachers, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (17; 1; 2) |

† 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.

Children, especially of the Bellah community (also known as black Tuaregs), are subject to hereditary slavery in northern Mali. (23; 25; 30; 5; 2) Some children are born into slavery, while others are born free, but remain in a dependent status through which they are forced to work with their parents for their former masters in exchange for food, money, and lodging. Child slaves perform agricultural or domestic labor and are often sexually abused. (31; 2) In addition, children, particularly those of Songhai ethnicity, work in debt bondage in the northern salt mines of Taoudenni. (32; 2)

Children involved in artisanal gold mining in western and southern Mali are exposed to toxic substances and extreme temperatures, transport heavy loads, and work for long hours. (15; 16; 17; 18; 1; 19; 20; 21) Some boys placed in the care of Koranic teachers for education are forced by their teachers to beg on the street or to work in fields, after which they must then surrender the money they have earned to their teachers. (32; 17; 1; 2)




Intermittent fighting and violence in central and northern Mali continued throughout 2017, resulting in the killing and displacement of children. (3; 33; 20; 29; 2; 4) Although the incidence of child soldiers decreased during the reporting period, children continued to be forcibly recruited and trained by non-state armed groups, including the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA), the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA), the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA), and Tuareg Imghad and Allies Self-Defense Group (GATIA), all signatories of the 2015 Peace Accord. (33; 3; 34; 4) Research found limited evidence of ties between the government and GATIA, a non-state armed group led by a Malian general, including the provision of in-kind support to GATIA. (35; 36; 2; 20; 33) The UN verified that GATIA recruited at least nine children during the reporting period. (3; 37)

Although the Constitution guarantees free and compulsory education, many children, especially girls, do not attend school because parents are expected to pay fees for registration, uniforms, books, and materials costs, which are prohibitive for many impoverished families. (32; 23; 38; 39; 1) Many children in Mali are not registered at birth. Unable to present their birth certificate, unregistered children may have difficulty accessing services, including education. (32; 35; 40; 1) In addition, evidence suggests that incidences of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, including corporal punishment, prevent some children from remaining in school. (32; 23; 41) During the reporting period, numerous attacks on schools in northern Mali resulted in lootings, destruction of learning materials and infrastructure, and military occupancy. (1; 3; 20; 42; 43; 4) Many teachers and students remained displaced and some teachers in insecure areas felt that it was unsafe to return to school. (1; 34; 20) The lack of access to education may increase the risk of children’s involvement in the worst forms of child labor. (43)

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 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 child labor, including recruitment by non-state armed groups and the prohibition of using children in illicit activities.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

| Standard | Meets International Standards: Yes/No | Age | Legislation |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----|---|
| Minimum Age for Work | Yes | 15 | Article L.187 of the Law 2017-021 modifying the Labor Code (44) |
| Minimum Age for Hazardous Work | Yes | 18 | Hazardous Occupations List; Article 1 of the 2017-4388 Amendment to Hazardous Occupations List; Article D.189.14 of the Labor Code (45; 46; 47) |
| 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 (45; 46; 47) |
| Prohibition of Forced Labor | Yes | | Article L.6 of the Law 2017-021 modifying the Labor Code; Article 1 of the Trafficking in Persons Law (48; 44) |
| Prohibition of Child Trafficking | Yes | | Article 244 of the Penal Code; Article 7 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 63 of the Child Protection Code (48; 49; 50) |
| Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children | Yes | | Article 228 of the Penal Code; Article 1 and 7 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 57 of the Child Protection Code (48; 49; 50) |
| Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities | No | | Article 193 of the Penal Code (49) |
| Prohibition of Military Recruitment | | | |
| State Compulsory | 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 (49; 50; 51) |
| State Voluntary | 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 (49; 50; 52; 51) |
| Non-state | No | 15 | Articles 31.23, 31.31, and 32 of the Penal Code (49) |
| Compulsory Education Age | Yes | 15‡ | Articles 26 and 34 of the Law of Education (53) |
| Free Public Education | Yes | | Article 18 of the Constitution (54) |

‡ Age calculated based on available information (49)

In June 2017, the government amended the Labor Code to increase the minimum age for work from 14 to 15 in compliance with international standards. (1; 44) In addition, the government amended the hazardous occupation list to expand the number of hazardous occupations or activities prohibited for children, including raising and herding livestock, fishing, domestic work, and market vending. (1; 47)

The Labor Code allows children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform domestic or light seasonal work, as long as it does not impede school attendance and it does not exceed 4.5 hours of work per day. (45) However, the law does not specify the

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conditions under which light work may be undertaken. (55; 44) In addition, Malian law does not criminalize hereditary slavery and neither prohibits using, procuring, or offering a child for the production and trafficking of drugs as established by international standards. (26; 50; 5)

The Child Protection Code provides protection for children under age 18, while the Penal Code establishes criminal penalties for several of the worst forms of child labor. (49; 50) For example, Articles 50 and 58 of the Child Protection Code identify begging as a form of economic exploitation of children, while Article 183 of the Penal Code specifies punishments for engaging a child in begging. (17) However, the Penal Code does not provide penalties for some of the prohibitions enumerated in the Child Protection Code. (49; 50) Specifically, Article 17 of the Child Protection Code prohibits children under age 18 from participating in armed conflicts or joining the armed forces, yet Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code provide criminal penalties only for those recruiting and enlisting children under age 15. (49; 50; 52)

The Inter-Ministerial Circular references Article 28 of the Penal Code, which states that crimes committed out of self-defense or under a force that could not be resisted should not be penalized as prescribed by the Penal Code. Although the Inter-Ministerial Circular states that Article 28 of the Penal Code is applicable to children involved in armed conflict, it does not define the age range of the children it covers. (49; 56) Considering the non-existence of criminal penalties in the Child Protection Code and the lack of criminal penalties in the Penal Code for those who recruit and enlist children ages 15 and older, the absence of a defined age range in this Inter-Ministerial Circular may leave children ages 15 to 17 unprotected. (56; 49; 49)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

| Organization/Agency | Role |
|--|---|
| Ministry of Labor's National Directorate of Labor | Enforce labor laws and investigate Labor Code infractions, including those regarding child labor. (57; 32; 58) |
| Ministry of Justice | Initiate and coordinate with courts the implementation of laws related to the worst forms of child labor. (57; 2) |
| Ministry of Internal Security's Police Brigade for the Protection of Morals and Children | Investigate crimes against children, including human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. (2; 1) |
| Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family (MPFEF) | Develop and implement programs to protect vulnerable children and monitor alleged violations of child labor laws, including those related to the worst forms of child labor. (57; 38; 58) |

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2017, labor law enforcement agencies in Mali took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including with financial and human resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2016 | 2017 |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| Labor Inspectorate Funding | \$48,000 (57) | \$71,942 (1) |
| Number of Labor Inspectors | 100 (57) | 109 (1) |
| Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |
| Training for Labor Inspectors | | |
| Initial Training for New Employees | Yes (35) | No (1) |
| Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor | N/A | No (1) |
| Refresher Courses Provided | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |

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

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2016 | 2017 |
|--|--------------|-------------|
| Number of Labor Inspections Conducted | Unknown (57) | 334‡ (1) |
| Number Conducted at Worksites | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Number of Child Labor Violations Found | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties were Imposed | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that were Collected | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Routine Inspections Conducted | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |
| Routine Inspections Targeted | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |
| Unannounced Inspections Permitted | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |
| Unannounced Inspections Conducted | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |
| Complaint Mechanism Exists | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |

‡ Data are from January 1, 2017 to June 30, 2017.

In 2017, the National Directorate of Labor employed 70 full-time labor inspectors and 39 full-time labor controllers, of which 3 inspectors and 10 controllers are dedicated to child labor. (1) Despite increasing the number of inspectors by 9 in 2017, the number of labor inspectors remains likely insufficient for the size of Mali's workforce, which includes more than 6 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed countries, Mali should employ about 157 inspectors. (11; 59; 60; 61). One labor inspector in each region is designated as the point of contact for the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE) to facilitate regional coordination. (1) During the reporting period, the government conducted targeted inspections in high-risk child labor sectors, including in artisanal mining and agriculture. (1) However, despite these efforts and the government's move toward decentralization, funds are rarely allocated to inspectorate regional offices. (1) In addition, reports indicate that a lack of trained staff, equipment, transportation, and funding hampered the Labor Inspectorate's ability to conduct adequate child labor inspections and legal proceedings, especially in remote areas of northern Mali. (32; 55; 1; 62)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2017, criminal law enforcement agencies in Mali took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including with financial and human resource allocation.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

| Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement | 2016 | 2017 |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| Training for Investigators | | |
| Initial Training for New Employees | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Refresher Courses Provided | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |
| Number of Investigations | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Number of Violations Found | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Number of Prosecutions Initiated | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Number of Convictions | Unknown (57) | Unknown (1) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services | Yes (57) | Yes (1) |

In 2017, the Ministry of Security's Morals Brigade employed 25 staff, including 8 investigators and 17 officers. The Government of Mali reported that the number of criminal law enforcement agents is inadequate given the prevalence of the worst forms of child labor in the country. (57; 1) Although the total number of investigations conducted throughout the country during the reporting period is unknown, the Morals Brigade investigated 1 case of child trafficking and 10 cases of commercial sexual exploitation. (1) In November 2017, the Morals Brigade, in collaboration with Interpol, conducted an operation in the greater Bamako area that

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rescued 40 child victims of forced begging and prosecuted 9 individuals associated with this crime. (63; 1; 33) In addition, the Ministry of Justice distributed 200 copies of the Trafficking in Persons Law to judges and police officers, and translated the law into 13 local languages to facilitate a number of trainings for criminal law enforcement agents. (2; 33)

Despite these efforts, there is a lack of trained staff, equipment, transportation, and funding to adequately conduct criminal law enforcement efforts related to the worst forms of child labor, particularly in remote areas. (1; 2) Reports indicate that because of political instability, which hinders labor and criminal law enforcement efforts in northern Mali, the prevalence of hereditary slavery, forced labor, and trafficking in persons has worsened since the conflict began in 2012. (32; 1; 33; 2)

An informal referral mechanism exists among NGOs, UN bodies, the police, and the government to allow withdrawal from armed conflict and provide social services to victims of the worst forms of child labor. (57; 2) During the reporting period, the government collaborated with local organizations to withdraw and provide reintegration services to 53 child victims of human trafficking, including children from Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Libya, and Mali. (33) In addition, the Malian military transferred 26 children associated with armed groups to the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family (MPFEF), which provided medical and psychosocial support, and reunified 21 children with their families. (1; 3) Despite these efforts, reports indicate that resources and facilities available to social services agencies are inadequate. (57; 32)

During the reporting period, the government held three children, ages 16 and 17, in adult detention centers due to their suspected involvement with armed groups. These children were not transferred to social services as required by the Inter-Ministerial Circular and the UN-signed Protocol. (56; 3; 2) In addition, research found no indication that the government either investigated or prosecuted individuals alleged to have illegally recruited and used child soldiers.

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms 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 with coordination between key bodies.

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

| Coordinating Body | Role and Description |
|---|---|
| National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE) | Coordinate Mali's efforts to eliminate child labor, especially its worst forms. Chaired by the Ministry of Labor and includes representatives from other government ministries, civil society, and worker and employer organizations. (26; 64; 65; 1) In 2017, received a budget of \$53,957 to conduct activities, including providing assistance to Malian lawmakers to adopt the legal amendment that increased the minimum age for work to 15 and revised the Hazardous Occupations List. (1) |
| National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices | Coordinate government efforts to combat human trafficking. Chaired by the Ministry of Justice and includes various government agencies and civil society groups. (66; 67; 1; 2) In 2017, received its first ever budget of \$381,000 to conduct training on human trafficking, fund victim services, and purchase transportation equipment. (33) |
| Inter-Ministerial Committee to Prevent Grave Violations Against Children | Conduct awareness-raising campaigns to prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict and implement reintegration programs for former child soldiers. (68; 1) Conduct joint missions with international partners to determine the presence of children in armed conflict. (57; 68) Led by the MPFEF. In 2017, met to implement activities under the Inter-Ministerial Circular and the Protocol on the Release and Transfer of Children, including training child protection actors in northern Mali on best practices for referrals of former child soldiers. (1) |
| Artisanal Gold Mining Summit Committee | Comprises gold mining associations and local government officials that monitor the recommendations from a 2014 summit on artisanal mining, including the ban on child labor in artisanal gold mines. (69; 70) In 2017, facilitated efforts that contributed to the ratification of the UN Minamata Convention on Mercury, which mandates signatory parties to reduce the use of mercury for gold processing in artisanal mines and take specific measures to protect children from mercury exposure. (1; 71) |

Reports indicate that there is confusion with regard to roles and a lack of coordination between the CNLTE and the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices. (66; 33; 2) In addition, despite the increased allocation of resources in 2017, the CNLTE indicated that budget constraints continue to hamper its effectiveness as a whole. (1)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including with funding and implementation.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor[‡]

| Policy | Description |
|---|---|
| National Plan to Combat Child Labor (PANETEM) (2011–2020) | Aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labor by strengthening child labor laws, training relevant government officials, and mobilizing funds for social programs to withdraw children from child labor. Overseen by the CNLTE. (8; 55; 70) In 2017, worked with Malian lawmakers to adopt the legal amendment that increased the minimum age for work to 15 and revise the Hazardous Occupations List. (57; 55; 72) |
| Roadmap to Combat Child Labor in Agriculture (2015–2020) | Seeks to enhance the legal framework and build the capacity of the government to prevent child labor in agriculture. Led by the Ministry of Agriculture and supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN. (73; 74; 75; 76) In 2017, worked to update the existing hazardous list and developed a training module for agricultural extension services to identify and combat child labor. (75; 77) |
| National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices (2015–2017) | Aims to enhance the legal framework to prevent human trafficking, adequately implement the laws, and provide effective protection and care for victims. Led by the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices. (78; 2) In 2017, organized training sessions for law enforcement agencies on human trafficking. (33) |
| National Policy for Promotion and Protection of Children (2015–2019) | Aims to protect children from abuse, violence, and exploitation and promotes improved access to education and livelihood services for vulnerable children, especially those affected by armed conflict. (79; 1) Overseen by the MPFEF. In 2017, conducted activities to increase birth registration and provided social services for children withdrawn from armed conflict. (1) |
| Inter-Ministerial 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 protect and reintegrate those children who become involved. (56; 68; 80; 1) In 2017, trained child protection actors in northern Mali on best practices for referrals of former child soldiers. (1) |
| National Strategic Education Sector Plan (PRODEC II) (2017–2026) | Sets out a comprehensive map to improve the quality of and access to basic and secondary education, especially in conflict-affected areas of northern Mali. Led by the Ministry of Education and supported by international donors. (57; 55; 81) In 2017, secured additional funding and technical assistance from international donors to ensure effective implementation of the plan. (82) |

[‡] The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (83; 1; 3)

The First Lady of Mali, along with other leading figures, made a declaration in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, on child protection, including child trafficking, exploitation, child labor, and all other forms of violence against children. (84; 85) The government indicated that efforts to implement the National Plan to Combat Child Labor have been slow due to insufficient allocation of resources. (1)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2017, the government participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However gaps exist in these social programs, including with the adequacy of efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

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

| Program | Description |
|--|---|
| Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues (2011–2017) | USDOL-funded project implemented by the ILO in approximately 40 countries to support the priorities of the Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor by 2016 established by the Hague Global Child Labor Conference in 2010. (86) During 2017, conducted a study on the effectiveness of the School Speed Program on reducing child labor and supported activities under the Roadmap to Combat Child Labor in Agriculture. (75) Additional information is available on the USDOL website. |
| South-South Cooperation for the promotion of decent work in cotton-producing countries (2015–2019) | \$6.8 million Government of Brazil-funded project that aims to improve working conditions in the cotton sector, including by combating child labor. (87; 77) In 2017, facilitated exchange programs with Brazilian grower associations to combat child labor in the cotton sector. (77) |

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

| Program | Description |
|---|---|
| Decent Work Country Program (2016–2018) | Identifies two objectives of decent work: (1) to create jobs and guarantee rights at work for vulnerable populations, and (2) extend social protection and promote social dialogue. (70) Includes activities that support the implementation of PANETEM. Overseen by the Ministry of Labor and supported by the ILO. (70) In June 2017, organized a workshop on leveraging global supply chains for sustainable development and decent work for government officials, employers' organizations, and workers' organizations. |
| USAID Country Program (2016–2020) | \$600 million USAID-funded program that supports the government's efforts to improve education, food security, and health; and to provide humanitarian assistance in crisis areas. In 2017, provided quality basic and secondary education to vulnerable communities in northern Mali, including by re-opening schools, training teachers, and providing school kits for students. (88; 1) |
| UNICEF Country Program (2014–2017) | UNICEF-funded program that supports the government's efforts to improve education, birth registration rates, social inclusion, and strengthen child protection programs, including for children in conflict-affected areas of northern Mali. (89) In 2017, provided reintegration services to 2,436 children at risk of exploitation, including those formerly associated with armed groups, and education services to 157,873 children in crisis-affected areas. (89; 90; 43; 1) |
| National Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Program | \$25 million UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)-implemented program that aims to provide reintegration services to former combatants in Mali, including children. (91; 1; 34) In 2017, built eight sites in Tombouctou, Gao, Kidal, and Menaka that will provide reintegration services to former combatants, including children, in Mali. (1) |
| Combating Descent-Based Slavery Program | USDOS-funded program implemented by the American Bar Association to combat hereditary slavery and forced child labor in Mali. In 2017, trained paralegals on laws related to slavery and child labor and best practices on victim referrals to social and economic services. (6; 92) |
| Global Action Against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO ACT)* | \$13 million EU-funded global project implemented by the UNODC, UNICEF, and the IOM to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling. In 2017, conducted training for justice enforcement officials on best practices to identify human trafficking victims and prosecute crimes related to human trafficking. (93; 94) |

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (1; 95; 96; 97; 98)

Although Mali participates in some programs to reduce the worst forms of child labor, these programs are insufficient to fully address the scope of the problem, especially in artisanal gold mining, slavery, or debt bondage. (1) In addition, Mali does not fund or participate in programs to address child labor in domestic work, fishing, forced begging, and commercial sexual exploitation. During the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor that took place in Argentina in November 2017, the Government of Mali pledged to establish and expand social programs to combat child labor in artisanal gold mining, hazardous agriculture, and the use of children in armed conflict. (99)

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).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

| Area | Suggested Action | Year(s) Suggested |
|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| Legal Framework | Criminally prohibit the use, procurement, or offering of children for the production and trafficking of drugs. | 2009 – 2017 |
| | Ensure that the Labor Code specifies the conditions under which light work may be undertaken to prevent children from involvement in child labor. | 2015 – 2017 |
| | Criminally prohibit hereditary slavery. | 2017 |
| | Criminally prohibit the recruitment of children under 18 into non-state armed groups and in any armed conflict, and ensure that the specific ages of children protected by the Inter-Ministerial Circular on the Prevention, Protection, and Reintegration of Children in Armed Conflict comply with international standards. | 2013 – 2017 |
| | Enact laws to provide penalties for violations of the worst forms of child labor, including the use of children under age 18 in armed conflict. | 2009 – 2017 |
| Enforcement | Publish complete information on the type of labor inspections, violations, and penalties related to child labor, and the number of criminal law investigations, violations, prosecutions, and convictions related to the worst forms of child labor. | 2010 – 2017 |

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor (cont)

| Area | Suggested Action | Year(s) Suggested |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|
| Enforcement | Increase the resources, training, and number of labor inspectors in accordance with ILO's technical advice, and the number of criminal investigators and regional offices responsible for enforcing laws related to child labor to provide adequate coverage of the workforce. | 2012 – 2017 |
| | Take measures to adequately enforce laws related to child labor, particularly in northern Mali, and increase efforts to ensure that perpetrators of the worst forms of child labor, including the use of child soldiers, and hereditary slavery are prosecuted in accordance with the law. | 2013 – 2017 |
| | Ensure that government social services have sufficient resources and facilities to provide the necessary care for victims of the worst forms of child labor. | 2016 – 2017 |
| | Implement the provisions of the Inter-Ministerial 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 actors for appropriate reintegration and social protection services. | 2013 – 2017 |
| Coordination | Streamline coordination across government agencies, including by ensuring effective coordination among the CNLTE, the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices, and other relevant agencies. | 2010 – 2017 |
| | Ensure that the CNLTE has sufficient resources to coordinate efforts to address child labor. | 2012 – 2017 |
| Government Policies | Ensure that the National Plan to Combat Child Labor is implemented, including by allocating sufficient financial and human resources. | 2012 – 2017 |
| Social Programs | Enhance efforts to eliminate barriers and make education accessible for all children, including girls and those living in conflict-affected areas, by removing supply and school-related fees, increasing school infrastructure, teacher availability, the provision of school supplies, and taking measures to ensure the safety of children and teachers in schools. | 2010 – 2017 |
| | Increase birth registration rates to ensure that children have access to social services, including education. | 2010 – 2017 |
| | Expand existing programs to fully address child labor, especially in artisanal gold mining, slavery, and debt bondage. | 2014 – 2017 |
| | Institute new programs to address child labor in domestic work, fishing, forced begging, commercial sexual exploitation, slavery, and debt bondage. | 2009 – 2017 |

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