

In 2018, Mozambique made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government amended the Law on the National System of Education, raising the compulsory education age to 15. The government also drafted a revision to the Labor Law establishing 15 as the minimum age for work and eliminating the exception that allows children as young as age 12 to work. Furthermore, the Attorney General's Office significantly increased its training capacity and expanded training for law enforcement officers, including a series of workshops for journalists focusing on victim identification and reporting methods that ensure victim safety and improve the government's ability to prosecute human trafficking cases. However, children in Mozambique engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced domestic work. Children also perform dangerous tasks in the production of tobacco. Labor inspectors do not receive sufficient training, and the government lacks both the appropriate resources to enforce child labor laws and a coordination mechanism to address child labor. In addition, existing programs are insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem in Mozambique.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Mozambique engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced domestic work. (1-5) Children also perform dangerous tasks in the production of tobacco. (6) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Mozambique. Data on some of these indicators are not available from sources used in this report.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	22.5 (1,526,560)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	69.5
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	22.4
Primary Completion Rate (%)		46.4

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2017, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019. (7)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3, 2008. (8)

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	Production of cashews, coconuts, cotton,† sesame, sugarcane,† tea, tobacco,† and tomatoes (1,2,6,9-15)
	Fishing,† including preparing nets† (1,6,11)
	Forestry,† activities unknown (6,11)
	Herding livestock,† including cattle (1,6)
	Hunting, including small and wild animals (1,6,15,16)
Industry	Mining,† including gold and gemstones† (1,3,4,6,14,17-20)
	Construction,† including crushing stone† and making bricks† (1,6)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Domestic work,† including caring for babies and other children† (1,3,6,9,10,13,19-21)
	Street work, including car washing,† street vending, and garbage scavenging† (1,2,6,11,13,14,20-23)
	Selling alcoholic beverages in markets† (13,22)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1,5,6,14,24,25)
	Forced labor in agriculture, domestic work, mining, and vending, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1-5)
	Use in illicit activities, including drug trafficking, stealing, and assisting poachers in the illegal poaching industry (1,6,13)

† 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.

Mozambican children, lured from rural areas with promises of work and educational opportunities, are subjected to forced domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation in urban areas in Mozambique and South Africa. (2,3,5) Research indicates that Mozambican children are also trafficked to South Africa for forced labor in agriculture, street vending, and commercial sexual exploitation. (2,5)




Reports indicate cases of children in situations of debt bondage in the artisanal mining sector. Several accidents, including some that resulted in deaths, have been documented by local authorities in this sector. (26,27)

Although primary education is free, families must provide school supplies and uniforms. (28,29) Moreover, barriers to education for children include lack of schools, classroom space, and trained teachers. Many students, particularly in rural areas, face difficulties traveling long distances to get to school. (28,30-32) In addition, physical and sexual abuse is common in schools. Research found that some male teachers demand sex from female students. (1,29)

II. Legal Framework for Child Labor

Mozambique 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 Mozambique’s legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the minimum age for work.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	No	15	Article 26 of the Labor Law; Article 4 of the Regulations on Domestic Work (33,34)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 23 of the Labor Law (34)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes	18	Hazardous Work List (35)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 5 and 10–11 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Articles 196 and 198 of the Penal Code (36,37)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 5 and 10–11 of the Trafficking in Persons Law (36)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 5 and 10–11 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Articles 226–227 of the Penal Code (36,37)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Articles 33 and 40 of the Law on Drugs (38)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 23 of the Law on Military Service (39)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 2 of the Law on Military Service (39)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Articles 5 and 10 of the Trafficking in Persons Law (36)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15‡	Article 6 of the Law on the National System of Education; Article 41 of the Law of Basic Child Protection (40,41)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 41 of the Law of Basic Child Protection (40)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (40,41)

In November 2018, the government amended the Law on the National System of Education, raising the minimum compulsory education age to 15. The law was signed by the President and became effective in March 2019. (16,41)

The Regulations on Domestic Work allow children ages 12 to 15 to conduct domestic work with the permission of their legal guardian. (33) The Labor Law also states that children ages 12 to 15 may work under certain conditions defined by the Council of Ministers. (34) The minimum age of 12 for light work is not in compliance with international standards. (42) However, in 2018 the government drafted a revision to the Labor Law establishing 15 as the minimum age for work, which would eliminate the current exception that allows children as young as age 12 to work; the draft was submitted to Parliament for consideration. (16,43)

The Labor Law's minimum age protections do not apply to children working outside of formal employment relationships; however, the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security began developing new regulations to protect children working in the informal sector. (34,42,44,45)

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, Employment, and Social Security that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

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Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security	Enforces child labor laws and regulations. The labor inspectorate works with the National Police Force to enforce criminal law. (16) Monitors implementation of the National Action Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor. (46)
Ministry of Industry and Trade's General Inspectorate of Economic Activities	Enforces child labor laws and regulations. (16)
National Police Force	Enforce all criminal laws, including those related to the worst forms of child labor. The criminal investigation branch has a seven-person unit devoted to combating human trafficking and violence against women and children. The unit investigates cases and refers them to the Attorney General's Office. (16)
Attorney General's Office	Coordinates the government's efforts against human trafficking and receives cases for prosecution from the criminal investigation branch of the National Police Force. (16)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2018, labor law enforcement agencies in Mozambique took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including training for labor inspectors.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspectors	Unknown	Unknown
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (18)	Yes (16)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Unknown	Yes (16)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (47)	Unknown
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (18)	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	Unknown	Unknown (16)
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown	Unknown (16)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown (16)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown	Unknown (16)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown	Unknown (16)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (18)	Yes (16)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Unknown	Unknown
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (18)	Yes (16)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Unknown	Yes (16)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (18)	Yes (16)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (18)	Yes (16)

Reports indicate that the number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Mozambique's workforce, which includes approximately 13 million workers. (18,48,49) According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed countries, Mozambique would employ about 325 labor inspectors. (50,51) Insufficient training and limited financial resources may also hamper the labor inspectorate's ability to enforce child labor laws. (45,48) The government does not publicly release information on its labor law enforcement efforts. (16)

The National Action Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor requires training for inspectors and law enforcement officials; however, research was unable to verify whether these trainings took place during the reporting period. (16)

Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security officials can refer victims of child labor to either the police or social workers from the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Action (MGCAS) for family assessments and potential placement of these children in foster homes. (52)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2018, criminal law enforcement agencies in Mozambique 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 allocating financial resources.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (18)	Yes (16)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	Unknown
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Investigations	Unknown	10 (45)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown	7 (45)
Number of Convictions	Unknown	Unknown
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (18)	Yes (16)

Although the government did not provide disaggregated data on child trafficking, reports indicate that there were cases of child trafficking which resulted in arrests and the initiation of prosecutions. (16,53,54) In November 2018, in Zambézia Province, 3 traffickers were taken into custody after attempting to sell a 17-year-old boy; the case is being processed through the courts. During a raid by police, 2 children under age 16 were found being trafficked to work in the agricultural sector in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (54) Due to an increase in human trafficking activity, police strengthened border security and worked with community leaders to raise awareness in the province. (54) In the capital city of Maputo, two suspects were apprehended after attempting to traffic a large number of children to South Africa. (53)

In 2018, the Attorney General's Office significantly increased its training capacity, expanded the training of law enforcement officers, and developed for journalists a series of workshops emphasizing victim identification and proper reporting methods to safeguard the victims and improve the government's ability to prosecute human trafficking cases. (45)

Criminal law enforcement officials work with the MGCAS and the National Reference Group for the Protection of Children and Combating Trafficking in Persons to coordinate referrals of children to social service providers. (18) Furthermore, the MGCAS has a standard operating procedure for handling victims of domestic abuse, including human trafficking victims. This procedure incorporates an intake form used nationwide by law enforcement officials, including border officials, to collect the necessary data from victims and ensure that they receive professional care and referrals to appropriate services. (45)

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 efficacy in accomplishing mandates.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Reference Group for the Protection of Children and Combating Trafficking in Persons	Coordinates efforts to combat all forms of human trafficking. Led by the Attorney General's Office. (55) Provincial-level groups coordinate regional efforts to combat human trafficking. (48) During the reporting year, groups were expanded to all provinces and districts in the country, with improvements in areas of protection, assistance and reintegration of victims. (56) Conducted training for media, magistrates and other professionals combating human trafficking, including examination of current policies and laws with the aim of providing better coverage of the situation in the country. (57)
National Commission on Children's Rights	Oversees and reports on children's rights in Mozambique to the African Charter and other international bodies and performs consultations and deliberations on national action plans and legislation. Led by the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Action. (52) Research was unable to determine whether the National Commission on Children's Rights was active during the reporting period.
Ministry of the Interior's Women and Children's Victim Assistance Units	Provides services to children who have been victims of crimes, including human trafficking. Operates countrywide through facilities in more than 215 police stations. (48,58) Research was unable to determine whether Ministry of the Interior's Women and Children's Victim Assistance Units were active during the reporting period.
Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Action (MGCAS)	Operates three dedicated centers for human trafficking victims, providing support and reintegration services, including to child trafficking victims. In 2018, reintegrated seven child trafficking victims with their families. (45,59) In addition, launched a campaign to remove children from the streets of the city of Maputo and began a study to estimate the number of street children. As of May 2018, removed 65 children from the streets. (60)

Research did not find a coordination mechanism dedicated solely to addressing child labor beyond the scope of human trafficking.

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 lack of implementation of existing policies.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2017–2022)	Aims to map 70 percent of occurrences of worst forms of child labor by province and activity by 2019, and to withdraw 20,000 children from the worst forms of child labor and enroll them in the Basic Social Subsidy program. (46) Mandates the coordination of several key government agencies, including the Attorney General's Office and MGCAS. A multi-sector group comprising representatives from government, civil society, employers, and unions, including the informal sector, was also created in the plan to address child labor issues. (16) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the National Action Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor during the reporting period.
National Action Plan for Children II (2013–2019)	Establishes four priority areas for government action against child labor: child survival, child development, child participation, and child protection. (61) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the National Action Plan for Children II during the reporting period.

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (62)

Although the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons was not approved during the reporting period, the outline of both the action plan and its referral mechanism, which contains provisions that address victim identification, have been in widespread use by law enforcement for more than 2 years. (45)

VI. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

In 2018, the 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 adequacy to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Basic Social Subsidy Program†	Government and donor-funded program that provides financial subsidies to orphaned children living in poor and vulnerable households, and child heads of households. Aimed at improving secondary school attendance, and reaching more than 3.3 million direct program participants by 2024. (64,65) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the Basic Social Subsidy Program during the reporting year.
Programs for Street Children‡	Government and civil society operate 176 shelters that provide education, occupational training activities, and health and psycho-social care for street children. (66,67) Active in 2018. (16)
Victims of Violence Centers‡	Government-funded program implemented by the Ministry of the Interior's Women and Children's Victim Assistance Units that provide temporary shelter, food, limited counseling, and monitoring for victims of crime following reintegration. Includes 22 centers located throughout the country. (48,59) Active in 2018. (16)
Speak Child-116	NGO-funded program that works with the government to run a hotline to receive complaints of child abuse, including those related to child labor and sexual exploitation. (44) In September 2018, participated in a collaborative workshop with SMS Biz, a hotline for adolescents led by a local NGO. The workshop focused on improving victim care and inter-organizational cooperation. (68)
Memorandum of Understanding to Combat Child Labor in Tobacco Growing (2018–2021)*	\$1.2 million, 3-year project, funded by the Eliminating Child Labor in Tobacco Growing Foundation, focusing on education, awareness raising, institutional capacity-building, and revision of the government's legal framework. Incorporates training for law enforcement officials. (69-71)
Internet Watch Foundation Website*	Internet Watch Foundation launched a dedicated website, established by the government, to report suspected cases of online commercial sexual exploitation of children, including their use in the production of pornography. (72-74)
Trafficking in Persons Awareness Campaign*†	The Attorney General's Office launched several campaigns aimed at raising public awareness of human trafficking during the reporting period. Conducted numerous awareness-raising activities at the central and provincial levels aimed at informing the public about the various manifestations of human trafficking, and equipping communities with defensive strategies and prevention methods. (45,75)

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Mozambique.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (76)

Although a draft report on the analysis of national child labor data from the Integrated Household Survey was completed in 2017, the government has not yet published the study's findings. (63)

Research found no evidence that the government has carried out programs to assist children engaged in domestic work. The scope of existing programs is also insufficient to fully address the extent of the child labor problem.

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 Mozambique (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that all children are protected under the law, including children working outside of formal employment relationships.	2015 – 2018
	Approve a revision to the Labor Law establishing 15 as the minimum age for work.	2018
Enforcement	Make law enforcement information publicly available, including labor inspectorate's funding, number and training of labor inspectors, type of labor inspections conducted, child labor violations found, and number of child labor penalties imposed and collected, as well as the training of investigators responsible for enforcing laws related to the worst forms of child labor and the number of violations found and convictions achieved.	2009 – 2018
	Allocate sufficient resources for law enforcement agencies, including by increasing the number of labor inspectors to provide adequate coverage of the workforce.	2009 – 2018
	Provide labor inspectors with sufficient training and financial resources to ensure their capacity to enforce child labor laws.	2009 – 2018

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Coordination	Ensure the operational functionality of the National Commission on Children's Rights and the Ministry of the Interior's Women and Children's Victim Assistance Units.	2017 – 2018
	Establish coordinating mechanisms to combat all worst forms of child labor.	2010 – 2018
Government Policies	Implement the National Action Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor and National Action Plan for Children II, including providing training for inspectors and law enforcement as mandated in the National Action Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor.	2018
	Approve the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons.	2018
Social Programs	Take measures to ensure that all children have access to education by providing supplies and establishing an adequate number of schools. Take preventative steps to protect children from physical and sexual abuse in schools.	2010 – 2018
	Publish the results of the child labor study and use the findings to inform policies and programs.	2015 – 2018
	Implement the Basic Social Subsidy Program, institute programs to address child labor in domestic work, and expand existing programs to address the scope of the child labor problem.	2010 – 2018

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