

In 2019, Guinea made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The National Assembly adopted a revised Child Code that must be enacted by the President, which includes a more specific list of hazardous child labor activities and more severe penalties for violations related to child labor. However, children in Guinea engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in mining, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in forced begging. Children also perform dangerous tasks in mining. The government lacks a coordinating mechanism and national policy to address all relevant worst forms of child labor. Laws

related to the minimum age for work do not meet international standards because they do not include children working outside of a formal employment relationship and children who are self-employed. In addition, the government does not implement sufficient social programs to address the extent of the child labor problem.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Guinea engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in mining, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in forced begging. (1,2) Children also perform dangerous tasks in mining. (2-5) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Guinea.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	31.2 (Unavailable)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	54.2
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	17.3
Primary Completion Rate (%)		59.7

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020. (6)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 5 (MICS 5), 2016. (7)

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 and carrying heavy loads† in the production of cashews, cocoa, coffee, and rubber (5,8-13)
	Herding livestock (8,9)
	Fishing, including capturing and processing fish (8-10,14-16)
Industry	Mining† granite, gold, and diamonds (1,3,8-10,12)
	Manufacturing, activities unknown (9)
	Construction,† including carrying materials and the fabrication of construction materials, such as bricks (4,9,17,18)
Services	Street work, including as market vendors, beggars, petty traders, shoe shiners, and porters in the transportation sector (3,4,8-10,15,19-21)
	Working in restaurants and informal cottage industries, including as waitresses (8,9)
	Domestic work (3,8,10,12,14,16,22)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced labor as market vendors and in domestic work, mining, herding, fishing, and farming, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (8-10)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (8,20,22)
	Forced begging by Koranic teachers (8,10,22)

† 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.

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Children in Guinea are subjected domestically and abroad for forced labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude. Some Guinean boys are subjected to forced labor in gold and diamond mining, including in Senegal and Mali, while Guinean girls are involved in domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation in various West African and Middle Eastern countries. (8-25)




Boys placed in the care of Koranic schools in Guinea are sometimes forced by their teachers to beg on the street or to work in fields, and must then surrender the money they have earned to their teachers. (8,10,11,24) In addition, through the system of *confiage*, parents who are unable to care for their children send them to relatives or strangers who are expected to provide food, shelter, and schooling to the children in exchange for housework. In practice, some of these children receive care and an education, while many become domestic workers and are victims of labor exploitation and abuse. (10,15,23)

The Government of Guinea guarantees free compulsory primary education, but many children do not attend school. Birth registration is required to attend school in Guinea, and some Guinean children lack identity documents, which may affect their access to education. (26) In addition, the lack of school infra-structure, cost of school fees and supplies, shortage of teachers, and reported school violence impede access to education, which may increase the vulnerability of children to the worst forms of child labor. (2,3,10,15)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Guinea 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 Guinea'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	16	Article 137.5 of the Labor Code; Article 412 of the Child Code (27,28)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles 2–4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 137.4 of the Labor Code (17,28)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 415–418 of the Child Code; Articles 2 and 4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 135 of the Mining Code; Article 137.6 of the Labor Code (17,27-29)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 194–195 and 323 of the Penal Code; Articles 4 and 137.6 of the Labor Code; Articles 356–360, 385, and 397–399 of the Child Code (27,28,30)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 195 and 323–324 of the Penal Code; Articles 356–360 and 385 of the Child Code (27,30)

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

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 346–348 and 355 of the Penal Code; Articles 356–360 of the Child Code (27,30)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Article 383 of the Child Code; Article 344 of the Penal Code (27,28,30)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 429 of the Child Code (27)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*		
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Article 792.7 of the Penal Code; Article 429 of the Child Code (27,30)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 6, Title I of Education Decree 97/196/PRG/SGG (31)
Free Public Education	No		

* No conscription (33)

In December 2019, the revised Child Code was adopted by the National Assembly and is now awaiting enactment by the President. Furthermore, the revised Child Code provides additional definitions and associated fines for violations of child trafficking. (5,34,35) Guinean law prohibits hazardous occupations and activities for children; however, these prohibitions do not cover agriculture. Children working in this sector may be exposed to unhealthy environments, including hazardous substances and dangerous equipment. (9,10,17,28,36)

Guinean law allows children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform light work in the domestic work and agriculture sectors. (17,27,37) The light work framework does not meet international standards as it applies to children under the age of 13. Additionally, the law does not prescribe the number of hours per week permitted for light work, nor does it specify the conditions under which light work may be done as defined by international standards on child labor. The Labor Code imposes only a minimum age for children employed by employers and does not address situations in which children work on their own account, which does not conform to international standards that require all children to be protected under the law establishing a minimum age for work. (26,28,37-39)

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 (MOL) 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 (MOL)	Enforces all labor laws, including those related to child labor, through its labor inspectorate. (15,36,40) Oversees the Child Labor Monitoring and Surveillance System, which aims to identify and remove children from exploitative labor conditions. (41)
Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals (OPROGEM) Special Police Unit	Investigates cases related to the protection of minors, including the worst forms of child labor. (4,8,15,20,33) Formulates, plans, and monitors all activities, programs, and policy measures for safeguarding vulnerable population groups and protecting morality. (16) There is one OPROGEM representative in each of the 33 central police stations of the country who specializes in issues related to the trafficking of women and children. (35)
Ministry for Social Action, Promotion of Women and Children (MASPFE)	Provides protection and social services for victims of child labor and human trafficking. (10,15)
Ministry of Justice	Monitors cases of children referred to social services centers through its National Directorate of Supervised Education and Youth Protection. (4)

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Labor Law Enforcement

In 2019, labor law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the MOL that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including allocation of financial and other resources.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (4)	Unknown (34)
Number of Labor Inspectors	200 (4)	189 (34)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (4)	Yes (34)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	No (4)	No (34)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A (4)	N/A (34)
Refresher Courses Provided	No (4)	Yes (34)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	488 (4)	376‡ (34)
Number Conducted at Worksite	488 (4)	Unknown (34)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	5 (4)	9‡ (34)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	5 (4)	9‡ (34)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	0 (4)	0 (34)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (4)	Yes (34)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (4)	Yes (34)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (4)	Yes (34)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (4)	Yes (34)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (4)	Yes (34)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	No (4)	No (34)

‡ Data are from January 1, 2019 to November 30, 2019.

During 2019, the government employed 189 individuals as part of its labor inspectorate and conducted 376 inspections, 11 of which focused exclusively on child labor. Many of the inspections conducted during the reporting period took place in mining areas, specifically Boke, Boffa, Sigui, and Dubreka. (4,34) During the reporting period, the ILO funded a 3-day refresher training for the labor inspectorate that focused on social dialogue and the status of the labor administration system. (5,34) The Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals (OPROGEM) noted that 29 cases of child labor were identified, 14 of which were referred to the Ministry of Justice. (35) The labor inspectorate does not have a dedicated budget and maintains only a single vehicle, with a portion of each inspector's salary used to cover fuel costs for inspection trips, restricting its ability to conduct labor inspections. (4,22,26,34)

The government did not provide information on its labor inspectorate funding and the number of labor inspections conducted at worksites for inclusion in this report.

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2019, criminal law enforcement agencies in Guinea 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 the allocation of financial and human resources.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	No (4)	No (34)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A	N/A (34)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (4)	Yes (34)
Number of Investigations	20 (4)	Unknown (34)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (4)	Unknown (34)

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (Cont.)

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (4)	Unknown (34)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (4)	Unknown (34)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (18)	Unknown (34)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (4)	Yes (34)

Research indicated that the OPROGEM Special Police Unit was understaffed, underfunded, and without sufficient office supplies, transportation, or fuel to enforce laws related to the worst forms of child labor. (4,15,33,42) The government did not provide information on its criminal law enforcement efforts, including the number of investigations, violations found, prosecutions initiated, convictions, and imposed penalties for violations for inclusion in this report.

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 ensuring that coordinating bodies are provided budgets in line with their responsibilities.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices (CNLTPPA)	Coordinates anti-human trafficking efforts, including for children. Led by MASPFE, includes representatives from OPROGEM, MOL, and other ministries. (8,10,20,24) In 2019, the CNLTPPA organized training sessions in Conakry, Mamou, Kankan, and N'zerekore. (35)
Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child (CGSDE)	Implements, coordinates, and monitors government efforts on child protection. Led by MASPFE. (20,33,43) Research was unable to determine specific activities undertaken by CGSDE during the reporting period.

Limited budgets for the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices (CNLTPPA) and the Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child affect their ability to operate and coordinate efforts to address child labor. (2,15,33,42,44) Although the government has established a coordination mechanism on human trafficking, research found no evidence of mechanisms to coordinate the government's efforts to address child labor.

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 covering all worst forms of child labor.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Development Plan (2016–2020)	Seeks to promote sustainable development and social equality. Overseen by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and supported by the World Bank. (45,46) Includes activities to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children, human trafficking, and child labor. (45) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the National Development Plan during the reporting period.

Guinea's National Plan of Action to Fight Against Trafficking in Persons expired in 2019, yet CNLTPPA is developing a new 5-year action plan in 2020. (35) Research, however, found no evidence of a generalized child labor policy. (4,16,34,38)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2019, 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 the adequacy of efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

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Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Decent Work Country Program (2016–2019)	Sought to develop a National Action Plan for the elimination of child labor, including all its worst forms. Overseen by MOL and supported by ILO. (47) In 2019, research was unable to determine whether any actions were undertaken to implement the program.
World Bank Country Program	World Bank projects in Guinea that aim to increase access to quality basic education and youth employment, improve school infrastructure, and strengthen safety nets for vulnerable populations, especially those affected by the Ebola virus disease outbreak. (48-51) In 2019, research was unable to determine whether any actions were undertaken to implement this program.

Research found that the scope of programs implemented by the Government of Guinea is insufficient for the extent of the problem, including addressing children engaged in agriculture, domestic work, forced begging, mining, and street work. (41)

Reports indicate that social services available are not effective to meet the needs of the victims, and, as a result, the government relied on NGOs to provide shelter and other basic services to victims. Moreover, financial shortfalls still constrain services. (4,8,15,22,24,33,42)

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 Guinea (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that the hazardous occupations and activities prohibited for children are comprehensive and include sectors in which child labor is known to occur, including agriculture.	2014 – 2019
	Raise the minimum age for light work to 13 to comply with international standards; ensure that the law's light work provisions specify the conditions in which light work may be undertaken and the number of hours that are permitted for children engaged in light work.	2015 – 2019
	Ensure that all children are protected by law, including children working outside of a formal employment relationship and children who are self-employed.	2009 – 2019
	Establish by law free basic education and an age up to which education is compulsory that is consistent with the minimum age of employment.	2019
Enforcement	Provide consistent initial training and refresher training for labor law enforcement officials and initial training for criminal law enforcement officials along with increased resources to effectively enforce child labor laws.	2009 – 2019
	Publish information on labor inspectorate funding and the number of labor inspections conducted at worksites and the numbers of violations, prosecutions, convictions, and imposed penalties related to the criminal enforcement of child labor laws.	2011 – 2019
	Establish a referral mechanism between the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry for Social Action, Promotion of Women and Children to protect and rehabilitate children involved in child labor.	2016 – 2019
Coordination	Establish coordinating mechanisms to combat child labor.	2010 – 2019
	Ensure that the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices and the Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child receive adequate funding to fulfill their missions.	2010 – 2019
	Ensure that Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child is active and undertake activities.	2018 – 2019
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor.	2014 – 2019
	Undertake activities in support of the National Development Plan.	2018 – 2019
Social Programs	Enhance efforts to eliminate barriers and make education accessible for all children by assisting unregistered children to obtain birth and identity documentation that entitles them to attend school; improve school infrastructure and increase teacher availability; remove school-related fees; and ensure the safety of children in schools.	2010 – 2019
	Ensure that social services are properly funded and adequately meet the needs of victims of the worst forms of child labor.	2010 – 2019
	Institute programs to address the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture, domestic work, forced begging, mining, and street work.	2010 – 2019

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