

In 2019, Morocco made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government adopted Law 51.17, which requires the government to enact compulsory education for children between the ages of 4 and 16 by 2025, and significantly increased the number of prosecutions related to the worst forms of child labor, from 5 cases in 2018 to 170 cases in 2019. However, children in Morocco engage in the worst forms of child labor, including forced domestic work. Children also engage in child labor in producing artisanal handicrafts. Laws related to the minimum age for work and the use of children for illicit activities do not meet international standards, and labor inspectors are not authorized to assess penalties. In addition, research could not determine whether penalties were imposed for violations related to the worst forms of child labor. Furthermore, the scope of government programs that target child labor is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem.

## I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Morocco engage in the worst forms of child labor, including forced domestic work. Children also engage in child labor in agriculture and producing artisanal handicrafts. (1-6) Government statistics from 2017 showed 30,545 children ages 7 to 15 working; however, the government has not yet made the full data set available, including microdata, leaving the nature and causes of children's involvement in specific forms of child labor unknown. (7,8) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Morocco.

**Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education**

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	10 to 14	4.5 (150,178)
Attending School (%)	6 to 14	82.9
Combining Work and School (%)	10 to 14	0.7
Primary Completion Rate (%)		93.6

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2018, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020. (9)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from *Enquête sur la Population et la Santé Familiale (DHS), 2003–04*. (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	Planting and harvesting argan, grain, olives, vegetables, and fruits (1)
	Herding goats, cattle, and sheep and raising all three of them for the production of fertilizer, and cattle for the production of milk and butter (1)
	Fishing (2,3,7,11)
	Forestry, activities unknown (2,3,12)
Industry	Construction, including in carpentry† (3,13)
	Textiles (14)
	Producing artisanal crafts (2,3,13)
	Metallurgy, including welding (3,13)
Services	Begging (15,16)
	Domestic work (2,4,11)
	Working as salespersons in stores and as tour guides (13)
	Tailoring textiles (13,14)
	Working as waiters in cafés or restaurants (13)
	Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles (14)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Street vending (13)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (3-6)
	Forced domestic work, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2-4,6)
	Begging as a result of human trafficking (3,4,6)
	Illegal sand extraction (21)

† 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.

# Morocco

## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT

Morocco is a source, destination, and transit country for children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. (19,16)

According to local union observations, rural Moroccan girls, some as young as age 6, are recruited for domestic work in private urban homes. Girls from Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, and Senegal are brought to Morocco for this same purpose. (15) Some of these girls are subjected to physical and verbal abuse, excessive working hours without regular periods of rest or days off, and no access to educational opportunities. (15)

Children face barriers to accessing education, including distance to schools, inadequate transportation, prohibitive costs associated with attending school, and the lack of safety and inclusiveness to accommodate students of diverse backgrounds and abilities. These barriers to education increase their vulnerability to child labor, especially in rural areas. (1,2,18,22,23) Children with disabilities face additional barriers to education, such as inadequate facilities and support. (24,25) Some migrant children, particularly unaccompanied children from sub-Saharan Africa and children from rural areas, face additional barriers to accessing education, such as lack of knowledge of the language of instruction. Furthermore, because birth certificates are required to attend school past the fifth grade, many unregistered children remain out of school and vulnerable to child labor. (22,23)

## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Morocco 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 Morocco's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including prohibiting the use of children in illicit activities.

**Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor**

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	No	15	Article 143 of the Labor Code (26)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 147 of the Labor Code (26)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Hazardous Child Labor List, Decree No. 2-10-183; Article 181 of the Labor Code (26,27)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	No		Articles 10 and 12 of the Labor Code; Article 467-2 of the Penal Code (26,28)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 448.1, 448.4–448.5 of the Law on Trafficking in Human Beings (29)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	No		Article 503-2 of the Penal Code (28)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		Article 467-2 of the Penal Code (28)

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

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	19	Article 4 of Royal Decree of 9 June 1966 (30)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 4 of Law No. 44-18 (31)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Articles 448.1 and 448.4 of the Law on Trafficking in Human Beings (29)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15	Article 1 of Law No. 04-00 (32)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 1 of Law No. 04-00 (32)

The government adopted Law 51.17, which requires the government to enact compulsory education for children between the ages of 4 and 16 by 2025. (23,33)

Despite regulations to inform agencies on implementing the Law on Setting Up Employment Conditions of Domestic Workers in 2016, there remain enforcement issues, such as the inability of labor inspectors to inspect closed private residences, in which many domestic workers are employed. (22,34) In addition, the law does not provide explicit protections for self-employed children, those who work in the traditional artisan or handicraft sectors for businesses with fewer than five employees, or those who work on private farms or in residences. Despite assurances from the Government of Morocco that inspectors could inspect in the case of any established labor relationship, often verified through witnesses in the absence of contracts, there is an absence of explicit legal protections that conform to international standards, which require all children to be protected under the law establishing a minimum age for work. (4,14,26,35)

In addition, the types of hazardous work prohibited for children do not fully cover sectors in which child labor is known to occur, specifically in domestic work or sectors in which work conditions may harm children's health, safety, and morals. (27) Moroccan law does not define using, procuring, or offering children for the production or trafficking of drugs as a separate crime. (34,36)

### 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 and Vocational Integration (MOLVI) 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 and Vocational Integration	Enforces child labor laws and oversees programs on child labor as the lead agency through its Child Labor Task Force. (2,4,6,22,36) Provides occupational health and safety services, administers social security, and organizes labor inspections and employment services through nationwide satellite offices. (2)
Ministry of the Interior	Enforces prohibitions on trafficking in persons, prostitution, and other exploitative crimes involving minors, as established in the Penal Code, through the General Directorate of National Security. (4,6,22)
General Prosecutor	Prosecutes criminal offenses against children and processes cases involving women and children in the court system. (6,22,37)
Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family, and Social Development (MSWFSD)	Ensures the continuity of child protection and child labor elimination efforts and expands children's access to education. Implements the Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children. (3,4) Supports 142 Child Reception Centers that provide services to child victims of violence. (36)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	Coordinates efforts to reduce migrant vulnerability to child labor through its Delegate Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs. Promotes migrant children's access to public education facilities and other social services and assistance. (2,23,37)
Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education, and Scientific Research	Provides education and job training to children, including former child domestic workers and migrant youth through Office of Vocational Training and Work Promotion centers. (32-35)

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## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT

### Labor Law Enforcement

In 2019, labor law enforcement agencies in Morocco took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the authority of MOLVI that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the authority to assess penalties.

**Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (22)	Unknown (23)
Number of Labor Inspectors	297 (22)	317 (23)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (22)	No (23)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	25,822 (22)	24,383† (23)
Number Conducted at Worksite	25,822 (22)	24,383† (23)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	2,824 (22)	160 (23)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	0 (22)	0 (23)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	0 (22)	Unknown (23)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (22)	Yes(23)

† Data are from January 1, 2019 to September 30, 2019. (23)

The activities most frequently inspected included trade, agriculture, metal, and carpentry. The government has 22 inspectors dedicated to agriculture, 23 engineers and 18 physicians in charge of health and safety labor inspections and 54 dedicated child labor inspectors distributed across the country in various governmental departments. (22,23,36,37) During the first 9 months of 2019, the government conducted 24,383 labor inspections, including 317 focused on child labor. (23) However, the government did not provide all of the information on its labor law enforcement efforts for inclusion in this report.

Research indicates that insufficient resources hamper the labor inspectorate's capacity to enforce child labor laws. (4,34,38) Although Morocco employs 317 labor inspectors, the number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Morocco's workforce, which includes more than 12 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in industrializing economies, Morocco would employ about 800 inspectors. (39,40)

The official procedures involved in processing child labor violations require the participation of several agencies for each case, which places considerable administrative burdens on labor inspectors. Research also indicates that the penalties against companies that employ children in hazardous work, set forth in the Labor Code, are insufficient deterrents because the labor inspectorate cannot assess penalties. (23,38,41)

### Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2019, criminal law enforcement agencies in Morocco 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 the publication of criminal law enforcement data.

**Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A (22)	N/A (23)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (22)	Yes (23)
Number of Investigations	12 (22)	154 (23)
Number of Violations Found	1 (22)	Unknown (35)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	5 (22)	170 (23)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (22)	176 (23)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (22)	Unknown (23)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (22)	Yes (23)

Criminal authorities refer victims to appropriate social services through coordination with NGOs and with the government's 54 dedicated child labor points of contact in other government entities. (22,23) The government did not provide information on the number of criminal violations found or penalties.

#### IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8).

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Technical Committee Under the Special Ministerial Commission for Children for the Protection and Improvement of Childhood	Ensures inter-sectoral coordination and monitoring for implementing international conventions on children's issues through a committee of 25 government bodies, chaired by the Head of the Government of Morocco. Establishes strategies and mechanisms to implement national policies and plans for child protection and coordinates the management of efforts at the local and regional levels. (36) Met regularly in 2019. (23)

#### V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies that are consistent with relevant international standards on child labor (Table 9).

**Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor**

Policy	Description
MSWFSD's Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children in Morocco (PPIPEM)	Promotes an interdisciplinary approach to respond to the exploitation of children and other issues. (2-4,42,43) Stakeholders in PPIPEM confirmed that formal meetings for review and discussion of progress related to the policy were held during the reporting period. (35) On December 18, 2019, MSWFSD launched an integrated territorial child protection systems pilot-program in 8 provinces. These programs - part of the Integrated Public Child Protection Policy - established provincial child protection committees and child protection support centers at the provincial level. (23)

#### VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

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

**Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor**

Program	Description
Social Cohesion Support Fund†	Programs that aim to improve access to education. Includes the MSWFSD-funded Tayssir Conditional Cash Transfer Program that provides direct cash transfers to qualifying families whose children meet school attendance criteria; and support programs to provide education to children with disabilities. In 2019, the Social Cohesion Fund provided assistance to 2,087,000 students from low-income families with 11,344 disabled children receiving additional support from the government. (23)

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**Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor (Cont.)**

Program	Description
Measurement, Awareness-Raising, and Policy Engagement Project on Child Labor and Forced Labor (MAPI6)	USDOL-funded project implemented by ILO to conduct research and develop new survey methodologies, improve awareness, strengthen policies and government capacity, and promote partnerships to combat child labor and forced labor. In Morocco, \$362,500 was allocated for activities to support the enforcement of the 2016 Law on Setting Up Employment Conditions of Domestic Workers, which protects children from hazardous domestic work. (44) Additional information is available on the USDOL website.
Government-funded Shelters and Centers†	MSWFSD's <i>Entraide Nationale</i> agency manages three key shelter and support centers—Child Protection Units, Social Assistance Centers, and Orientation and Accompaniment Centers for People with Disabilities—to provide services to child victims of all types of violence, street children, migrant children and refugees, and those with disabilities. (23,34,35,37,45,46) Other shelters and service centers include student dormitories and training and integration programs for vulnerable children. (34,35,37,45) Research was unable to determine any additional action taken during the reporting period.
Government-funded Projects‡	Projects that aim to assist vulnerable children. Includes: After-School Program for a Second Chance (E2C), which provides students with after-school educational assistance as part of non-formal education program; Mouwakaba, a MSWFSD-funded project that assists 2,700 at-risk youth in 6 cities with vocational training; and “Cities without Street Children,” which provides assistance to homeless children in Casablanca and Méknès. These projects were active during the reporting period. (23)
Favorable Opportunities to Reinforce Self-Advancement for Today's Youth	\$12.77 million USAID-funded project implemented by Search for Common Ground that aimed to increase the social and economic inclusion of at-risk youth ages 10–24 living in the marginalized neighborhoods of Tangier and Tetouan. Additional information is available on the USAID website. (38)

† Program is funded by the Government of Morocco.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (2-4,6,37,38,45)

In 2019, the government continued a regularization campaign to provide legal status and documentation to foreign migrants who are vulnerable to exploitation for child labor. (6) Although the government has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem, including for children engaged in forced domestic work. (2,23,34,37)

## 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 Morocco (Table 11).

**Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor**

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that all children age 15 and under are protected by law, including children who are self-employed, work for artisan and handicraft businesses with fewer than five employees, or work on private farms or in residences.	2009 – 2019
	Implement regulations related to the Law on Setting Up Employment Conditions of Domestic Workers, and ensure that inspectors are allowed to inspect all sectors in which children work.	2017 – 2019
	Prohibit by law all types of hazardous work that may harm children's health, safety, and morals, including domestic work.	2016 – 2019
	Ensure that laws prohibit all children age 15 and under from being used, procured, or offered for the production and trafficking of illicit drugs.	2015 – 2019
	Ensure the law provides criminal penalties for forced labor.	2019
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the use, procuring, and offering of a child for prostitution.	2019
Enforcement	Publish information on labor law enforcement efforts, including the amount of labor inspectorate funding.	2015 – 2019
	Authorize the labor inspectorate to assess penalties.	2017 – 2019
	Increase the number of labor inspectors responsible for enforcing laws related to child labor to meet the ILO's technical advice, and ensure that they have sufficient resources.	2012 – 2019
	Reduce administrative burdens and streamline child labor enforcement procedures among government agencies.	2013 – 2019
	Increase penalties for employers who use children in hazardous work to be an effective deterrent.	2012 – 2019
	Publish information on criminal enforcement efforts, including the number of violations found, and whether penalties were imposed related to the worst forms of child labor.	2012 – 2019

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Social Programs	Collect and publish information including microdata from the 2017 survey, on the extent and nature of child labor to inform policies and programs, including in agriculture, industry, and services.	2016 – 2019
	Take measures to ensure children's safety in schools; remove barriers to education, especially for children with disabilities or those who do not speak the language of instruction, children from rural areas, and migrant children; and increase birth registration rates.	2013 – 2019
	Expand existing programs to address the full scope of the child labor problem, including in forced domestic work.	2013 – 2019

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