

In 2019, Paraguay made a significant advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The labor inspectorate increased its budget in order to hire more inspectors; inspectors received training on forced labor, trafficking in persons, child labor, and agricultural inspections; and judges were trained on the worst forms of child labor. The Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security and the Ministry of Children and Adolescents also signed an agreement to strengthen inter-agency coordination on child labor, and the latter launched the Immediate Response Program to provide support to street children. In addition, the government updated the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents for the 2019–2024 period, with a focus on strengthening minimum family incomes, inspection of adolescent work, and access to quality education. Finally, the government enacted a law that provides domestic workers with the same minimum wage as all other workers, effectively changing a law that previously provided domestic workers with only 60 percent of the national minimum wage. However, children in Paraguay are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in debt bondage in cattle raising and in domestic servitude, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Limited funding for law enforcement agencies and social programs hampered the government’s ability to fully address the worst forms of child labor, particularly in rural areas.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Paraguay engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in debt bondage in cattle raising and in domestic servitude, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. (1-3) The 2011 National Survey of Child and Adolescent Activities found that 21 percent of all Paraguayan children were engaged in hazardous work. (4) The 2015 Survey of Activities of Rural Area Children and Adolescents, published in 2016, identified 384,677 children ages 5 to 17 engaged in child labor in agriculture. (1) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Paraguay.

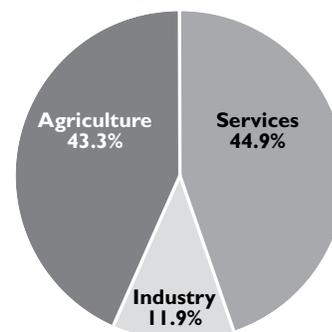
Table 1. Statistics on Children’s Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	10 to 14	7.4 (49,956)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	96.4
Combining Work and School (%)	10 to 14	6.4
Primary Completion Rate (%)		88.0

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020. (5)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization’s analysis of statistics from Encuesta Permanente de Hogares (EPH), 2018. (6)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 10-14



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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 manioc/cassava, corn, beans, peanuts, peppers, sesame, sugarcane, tomatoes, lettuce, melons, sweet potato, onions, carrots, cabbages, yerba mate (stimulant plant), and charcoal (1,7-11)
	Raising poultry, hogs, cattle,† sheep, and goats and producing milk (4,9)
	Fishing, including using hooks and harpoons,† preparing bait, and cleaning fish† (1)
Industry	Construction, activities unknown, and production of bricks (2-4,7,8)
	Limestone quarrying† and gold mining† (2,4,7,8,12)
Services	Domestic work† (2-4,13-18)
	Street work,† including vending, shoe shining, and begging (3,4,7,8,18,19)
	Horse jockeying (7,18)
	Garbage dump scavenging† (4)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Debt bondage in cattle raising, dairy farms, and charcoal factories (2,3,20)
	Commercial sexual exploitation and domestic servitude, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2,3,14,19,21)
	Use in the production of child pornography (2,3,7,8,22-25)
	Use in illicit activities, including drug smuggling and drug trafficking (2,3,7,8)

† 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.

Criadazgo, a practice in which middle-class and wealthy families informally employ and house child domestic workers from impoverished families, is pervasive in Paraguay; the 2011 National Survey of Child and Adolescent Activities estimated that more than 46,000 children were engaged in *criadazgo*. (3,21) Many of these children are in situations of domestic servitude, subjected to violence and abuse, and highly vulnerable to sex trafficking. (4,16,18,19) Lack of political will continues to prevent Congress from considering draft legislation criminalizing or regulating *criadazgo*. (3) Children are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation in Ciudad del Este; in the Tri-Border area between Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil; and along commercial shipping routes on the Paraguay River. (2,3,7,26) Children work alongside their parents in debt bondage on cattle ranches, dairy farms, and charcoal factories in the remote Chaco region. (2,3,7,18) Children shine shoes on the street and in government buildings. (8)

Children from rural and indigenous communities face difficulties accessing and completing their education, including language barriers and inadequate facilities and staff. (2,27,28) A study released in 2019 by the Coordinator for the Rights of Infancy and Adolescence of Paraguay estimated that half of all children in indigenous communities do not attend school. (29) The 2011 National Survey of Child and Adolescent Activities indicated that children who speak Guaraní exclusively are more likely to be involved in child labor and have higher rates of school absence compared to other working children; poverty is pervasive in rural Paraguay, where Guaraní is the predominant language. (4,30) Public transportation is limited in rural areas and school infrastructure and staff are often lacking in rural and indigenous communities. (3) The government has noted that girls from rural areas leave school at an earlier age than boys, and has estimated that more than 50 percent of children with disabilities could not attend school due to lack of access to public transportation. (7,8) Such challenges may leave these children more vulnerable to child labor. Approximately 13 percent of children engaged in child labor in agriculture do not attend school and 11.8 percent of working children ages 14 to 17 have not completed primary school. (1,31)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Paraguay 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 Paraguay's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the lack of prohibition of child recruitment by non-state armed groups.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	14	Article 1 of Law No. 2332; Article 58 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code (32,33)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 54 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code; Article 3 of Decree No. 4951; Articles 122 and 125 of the Labor Code; Article 15 of the First Employment Law; Article 5 of Law No. 5407 on Domestic Work (32-38)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Article 54 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code; Article 2 of Decree No. 4951; Article 15 of the First Employment Law; Articles 122, 125, and 389 of the Labor Code; Article 5 of Law No. 5407 on Domestic Work (32-38)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 5–7 of the Comprehensive Law Against Trafficking in Persons; Articles 125, 129, 223, and 320 of the Penal Code; Articles 10 and 54 of the Constitution (39-42)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 6 and 7 of the Comprehensive Law Against Trafficking in Persons; Articles 125, 129, and 223 of the Penal Code; Article 54 of the Constitution (39-42)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 135 and 223 of the Penal Code; Article 2.19 of Decree No. 4951; Article 31 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code (32,34,40,42)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 1 of Law No. 1657; Article 32 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code (32,43)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Articles 3 and 5 of the Obligatory Military Service Law (44,45)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Articles 3 and 5 of the Obligatory Military Service Law (44,45)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	17	Article 2 of Law No. 4088; Article 32 of the General Education Law No. 1264, Decree 6162 (46,47)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 76 of the Constitution; Article 32 of the General Education Law No. 1264 (39,46)

In 2019, the Paraguayan government passed a law that provides domestic workers with the same minimum wage as all other workers in the country, effectively changing a law from 2015 that provided domestic workers with only 60 percent of the national minimum wage. This change may affect child labor because adults who work as domestic workers would have reduced need for their children to work. (48,49) As the minimum age for work is

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lower than the compulsory education age, children may be encouraged to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. (32,33,46-48)

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 (MTESS) 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, Employment and Social Security (MTESS)	Enforces laws related to child labor, inspects workplaces for child labor, and recommends penalties or fines for companies found in violation of labor laws. Refers cases involving criminal violations of child labor to the Ministry of Adolescents and Children (MINNA). (2,3,9)
Paraguayan National Police	Maintains a special unit of 33 police officers, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Unit, which handles trafficking in persons complaints, including in relation to children, with offices in 5 cities. (2,9)
Public Ministry (Attorney General)	Responsible for the investigation and prosecution of criminal laws against forced child labor, child trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, and use of children in illicit activities. (3) Provides support to local prosecutors throughout Paraguay. (2) Maintains the Specialized Unit to Combat Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents (ATU). (2) Comprises 3 specialized prosecutors based in Asunción and 35 assistants. (2,9,17)
Ministry of Adolescents and Children (MINNA)	Maintains a unit dedicated to fighting child trafficking and a hotline to report cases of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children. Provides social services to victims referred by law enforcement agencies and refers cases of sexual exploitation and child labor to the Public Ministry's ATU. (2,3,9,50)
Ministry of Women's Affairs	Provides social services to female victims of human trafficking, half of whom are estimated to be children. Houses an office staffed with five personnel dedicated to combating trafficking of children. (2,9)

Labor Law Enforcement

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

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$1.1 million (2)	\$1.8 million (3)
Number of Labor Inspectors	26 (2)	25 (3)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (2)	No (3,51)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (2)	N/A (3)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A (52)	N/A (3)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	684 (2)	1,591 (3)
Number Conducted at Worksite	234 (2)	341 (3)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	137 (2)	3 (3)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	30 (2)	9 (3)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	6 (2)	5 (3)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (2)	Yes (3)

In 2019, Paraguay's labor inspectorate increased its budget in an effort to hire 50 more inspectors in the 2020 calendar year. (51,53,54) During the reporting period, MTESS carried out both proactive and reactive inspections in sectors and geographical areas in which children are at high risk of engaging in child labor, although inspections were general and not specifically seeking incidents of child labor. (3) As part of Paraguay's plan for continual training of labor inspectors and in coordination with the Okakuaa Project, 38 inspectors were trained on forced labor, trafficking in persons, child labor, and agricultural inspections throughout the year. (51) MTESS also emphasized its commitment to the use and sustainability of the labor inspection computerized system through the issuance of a formal decree and training for labor inspectors nationwide on how to use the system. (20,55) The recently created Complaints and Followup Office received the majority of complaints on irregular work of adolescent workers and those working as cleaners. (51)

Although Paraguay has ratified ILO C. 81, its labor inspectors are contractors rather than public officials and they do not receive sufficient training on child labor issues. (2,3) Due to the instability of contract employment, the authority and training of these labor inspectors may be called into question. (56) The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Paraguay's workforce, which includes over 3 million workers. According to the ILO's recommendation of 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in developing economies, Paraguay would employ about 229 inspectors. Government agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and labor organizations agree that inadequate funding and the insufficient number of labor inspectors hamper the labor inspectorate's capacity to enforce child labor laws, especially in the informal sector, including in agriculture and domestic work, and particularly in rural areas like the Chaco region. (2,3,7) The inspectorate is particularly limited by the lack of dedicated vehicles or travel funds. (2,3,7) The Labor Ministry, other government agencies, and NGOs agree that labor inspectors receive useful and necessary training, but that inspectors could benefit from more training specific to child labor. (3)

An additional constraint to labor law enforcement is the lack of efficient and timely cooperation by judicial authorities in granting workplace inspection search warrants to the Public Ministry and MTESS when an employer does not permit an inspector to enter a workplace to conduct an inspection. The system is paper-based and orders routinely take more than 3 months to arrive. (2,3,8-10,61) Research was unable to determine whether the government has implemented a 2016 agreement with judicial and law enforcement authorities that would accelerate the authorization of search warrants.

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2019, criminal law enforcement agencies in Paraguay 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 insufficient training for criminal investigators.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A (2)	N/A (3)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Number of Investigations	376 (2)	211† (3)
Number of Violations Found	107 (2)	107 (3)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (2)	32 (3)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (2)	13 (3)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (56)	Yes (3)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	No (2)	Yes (3)

† Number of Investigations conducted between January and November of 2019.

From January to November of 2019, the Specialized Unit to Combat Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents (ATU) processed 211 child labor cases, 119 of which involved sexual exploitation,

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66 involved human trafficking, and 26 involved the use of children in illicit activities. (3) Out of 13 convictions for child labor crimes, nine involved pimping, two child pornography, and two human trafficking. (3) Three individuals received prison sentences related to child labor ranging from 3 to 12 years. (3) The ATU also increased child labor and forced labor investigations in the rural Chaco region, in which the worst forms of child labor, human trafficking, and debt bondage were most prevalent. (57)

In July 2019, 25 of Paraguay's Peace Judges received training on the child labor manual and access to justice at the community level for cases of child labor. (51) In August, 28 trial-court judges were trained in a workshop on legal prohibitions and sentences on the worst forms of child labor, with specific focus on indigenous communities. (51) During the reporting period, the government also created a working group led by the ATU to assist indigenous victims of human trafficking. (21) Through its Assistance Program for Victims of Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation, the Ministry of Adolescents and Children (MINNA) inaugurated a new shelter for trafficking victims in San Lorenzo. (21)

Training for criminal investigators was considered insufficient. (3) Government agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and labor organizations have also observed a need for more specialized prosecutors to support local prosecutors nationwide and increase the Public Ministry's ability to investigate and prosecute cases involving human trafficking. (8-10,14) Overall, Paraguay's criminal law enforcement agencies lack resources, including vehicles, fuel, staff and training, to sufficiently identify, investigate, and prosecute cases of the worst forms of child labor, especially in remote areas. (21) As a result, the number of convictions of crimes related to the worst forms of child labor is insufficient. Additionally, existing penalties are inadequate deterrents. (2,7-10,14) Inconsistent application of fines and criminal penalties remain significant challenges in the elimination of the worst forms of child labor. (3) In 2019, the National Police's Anti-Trafficking Unit budget remained low and staff decreased from 38 to 36. (21)

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 insufficient financial and human resources.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Child Labor and Protect Adolescent Labor (CONAETI)	Leads government efforts against child labor and includes representatives from MTESS, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, MINNA, and other government agencies, and labor union representatives, industry associations, and NGOs. (2) Met seven times during the reporting period and discussed the application of the national strategy, the need to raise the minimum age for work, and the strengthening of the labor training program. (3,51)
Inter-Institutional Working Group on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking	Coordinates inter-agency efforts to combat all forms of trafficking in persons, including child trafficking, and collects and reports statistics on those efforts. (3) Headed by the Ministry of Foreign Relations. (2) Held four plenary sessions and two committee sessions during the reporting period. (3,21)
Defense Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CODENIs)	Coordinate efforts to protect children's rights at the municipal level, including by maintaining a registry of adolescent workers and coordinating with vocational training programs for adolescents. (32) Continued to meet and undertake activities in 2019, though each municipal government's capacity varied based on political will and financial and human resources. (3) In coordination with MTESS, worked during the reporting period to promote decent work for adolescents and increase participation in the Registry of the Adolescent Worker (RAT), including a workshop with indigenous students on their rights as workers. (51)

In November 2019, MTESS and MINNA signed an agreement to strengthen inter-agency coordination in the context of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents. (3,51,59) Through the alliance, adolescents and their families will receive job training through the National Professional Promotion Service and encourage formal employment for parents so that children will be less vulnerable to child labor. (59,60) The MTESS, in cooperation with Project Okakuaa, trained 331 representatives of Defense Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CODENIs) in 4 regions on

the digital Registry for Adolescent Workers. (51) Fifty members of the National Institute of Rural Development (INDERT) were trained on the subjects of child labor and protection of adolescent workers. (51) INDERT and the MTESS also signed an alliance in January to work together to eradicate child labor in rural areas, specifically in livestock fairs, by exchanging information and developing joint actions. (61)

The MTESS also signed a resolution in September 2019 that proposes decentralizing the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Child Labor and Protection of Adolescent Work into department-level commissions to better focus its efforts at the regional level. (51,62)

While the Inter-Institutional Working Group for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons was effective in fostering dialogue and coordination among government agencies on anti-Trafficking in Persons efforts, it faced challenges in collecting and reporting statistics and a lack of participation from all relevant government agencies. (21) Coordination between the MTESS and the ministries of Education and Health remains insufficient to combat the worst forms of child labor. In addition, the CODENIs require additional financial and human resources to fulfill their mission to address child labor. (2,8,9,17,21,63)

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 implementation.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents (2019–2024)†	Aims to raise awareness and strengthen enforcement of child labor laws. Provides child laborers with access to free quality education and offers livelihood alternatives for their families. (2,8) The government continued to support this strategy and again updated it in 2019, with a focus on strengthening minimum family incomes, inspection of adolescent work, and access to quality education. (3,64,65) In June, members of MTESS traveled to Santiago, Chile for an exchange with the Chilean government on best practices in combating child labor and the protection of adolescent workers, with a focus on how to operationalize the national child labor prevention strategy at the local level. (66)
National Strategy to Prevent Forced Labor (2016–2020)	Aims to prevent and eradicate forced labor and care for victims. (63) During the reporting period, the government held two meetings to discuss the second national plan to prevent forced labor for the 2020–2024 period and the role of the National Commission on Fundamental Work Rights and Prevention of Forced Labor. (20,51,67) In November, MTESS also held a seminar on “Best Practices in the Prevention of Forced Labor” in cooperation with the Government of Brazil as part of this national plan. Labor inspectors, public defenders, and members of the national police participated. (68) A similar seminar on forced labor inspection procedures was held in September with the Government of Peru. (20)
National Plan for Development (2014–2030)	Aims to reduce social exclusion and poverty, including by preventing and eliminating child labor. (69) The government continued to implement this plan during the reporting period. The Technical Secretariat for Planning worked with UN agencies and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on implementation. (56)
National Plan on Human Rights	Promotes human rights, including the prevention and elimination of child labor and forced labor. (70) In 2019, in line with this national plan and under the Okakuaa Project, civil servants and officials from the Department of Human Rights and the Supreme Court of Justice prepared a manual for judges, “Guidelines on the Regulatory System for the resolution of Cases of the Worst Forms of Child Labor.” (20,71)

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

Although the Inter-Institutional Working Group on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking approved a National Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons in 2017, it is still pending a presidential decree for its implementation. (21)

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 coverage and funding to fully address the problem in all sectors.

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Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
USDOL-Funded Projects	USDOL projects that aim to eliminate child labor, including its worst forms, through research, improved monitoring and enforcement, policy development, and awareness raising. These projects include Attaining Lasting Change (ATLAS), a \$7.5 million project that aims to build the capacity of host governments to more adequately combat child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking; and Paraguay Okakuaa (Paraguay Progresses), a \$6.8 million project implemented by Partners of the Americas. Additional information is available on the USDOL website.
Immediate Response Program*†	Program created to provide support to street children. Under the “ <i>Dispositivo de Respuesta Inmediata</i> ,” MINNA employees with a range of specializations, including psychologists and social workers, respond to tips from the MINNA hotline for reporting mistreatment, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, and negligence of children, as well as information from roving street patrols in high-risk areas. (3)
Embrace Program (Programa Abrazo)†	MINNA program to assist children engaged in exploitative work by providing them and their families with health and education services, food deliveries, and cash transfers conditioned on children’s school attendance and withdrawal from work. (2,73) Works closely with the NGO Fortalecer in the implementation of ILO-IPEC programs and with the Sugarcane Growers’ Association, Ministry of Education and Culture, and CONAETI to set up programs tailored to at-risk children who work during the sugarcane harvesting season. (74) The program was redesigned during the reporting period, and under <i>Abrazo</i> , the First Lady of Paraguay announced the construction of two additional health centers in San Lorenzo. (3,75)
Combating Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents in Trips and Tourism†	National campaign of the National Secretariat for Tourism (SENATUR) and the Association of Female Tourism Executives to raise awareness on protecting children from commercial sexual exploitation. (17) Launched campaign in the Department of Itapúa in November 2018. (76) In 2019 under this initiative, Las Lomas Casa Hotel was the first hotel in Paraguay to adopt a seal “The Code”, an international code of conduct of social responsibility for the protection of children and adolescents from sexual exploitation. (77) SENATUR also signed an agreement with MINNA and the Ministry of Women to promote the prevention of trafficking and sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. (78)
Well-Being Conditional Cash Transfer Program (Tekoporã)†	Government-administered program through the Secretariat for Social Action. Provides conditional cash transfers to families in rural communities. (9) Incorporates aspects of the Embrace Program, such as the family monitoring methodology, to ensure participant children do not engage in child labor. In 2019, 168,317 children in Paraguay were added as participants in the program. (80)

* Program was approved during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Paraguay.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (2,3,73,74,79)

As part of the Paraguay Okakuaa Project, MTESS held awareness-raising campaigns among employers on trafficking in persons in the Chaco region during the reporting period. (21)

The 2012 Law Against Trafficking in Persons requires the Ministry of Women’s Affairs to provide compensation and financial assistance to victims of sexual and labor trafficking, including minors, but NGO and government officials report that compensation takes too long to be helpful. (9,10,14,26,41,81) Although Paraguay has programs that target child labor, the coverage and funding of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem, and programs are limited by the absence of government funding in education and health services in rural areas. Additional programs are needed to reach the large numbers of working children, especially in agriculture, including cattle herding and domestic work. (7,9,10,14)

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 Paraguay (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2019
	Raise the minimum age for work to the age of completion of compulsory education.	2018 – 2019
	Protect children from the abuse of the <i>criadazgo</i> system by regulating the practice with legislation.	2019
Enforcement	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by authorizing inspectors to determine and assess penalties for child labor violations.	2016 – 2019

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by making labor inspectors public officials rather than contractors and ensuring that they receive more training specific to child labor.	2017 – 2019
	Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice.	2009 – 2019
	Increase the funding and resources available to the labor inspectorate, including dedicated vehicles and travel funds, to build enforcement capacity to address child labor in the informal sector, agriculture, and domestic work.	2009 – 2019
	Implement the 2016 agreement to accelerate authorization of workplace inspection search warrants to improve the cooperation mechanisms among judicial authorities and labor enforcement officials.	2013 – 2019
	Increase efforts to prosecute crimes related to the exploitation of children in the worst forms of child labor, including by hiring and training more specialized criminal investigators and prosecutors; providing resources, such as vehicles and fuel, to enable investigations in remote areas; and increasing penalties for crimes.	2012 – 2019
	Ensure that fines and penalties for the worst forms of child labor are consistently applied.	2019
	Discontinue the practice of allowing children to shine shoes in government buildings.	2017 – 2019
	Ensure that the National Police's Anti-Trafficking Unit is properly funded and staffed.	2018 – 2019
Coordination	Ensure that the Inter-Institutional Working Group for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons fulfills its mandates, including in collecting and reporting statistics.	2018 – 2019
	Strengthen inter-agency coordinating mechanisms, with particular focus on the communication between the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security and the ministries of Education and Health, to combat child labor, including its worst forms.	2013 – 2019
	Provide additional financial and human resources to the Defense Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents to strengthen their ability to address child labor at the municipal level.	2017 – 2019
Government Policies	Ensure that there is a comprehensive approach to combat trafficking in persons by approving the National Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons.	2019
Social Programs	Further expand government programs to assist more families and children affected by child labor in agriculture in rural areas, including cattle herding, and domestic work.	2010 – 2019
	Increase access to education for children vulnerable to child labor, particularly children with disabilities, children living in rural and indigenous communities with language barriers, and girls who leave school early. Address the lack of infrastructure, staff, and transportation, in order to improve access to education for all children.	2014 – 2019
	Ensure that financial assistance programs for child trafficking and forced labor victims are properly funded.	2018 – 2019

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