

In 2020, Ethiopia made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Under the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation No. 1178, the government overhauled its national counter-trafficking framework, amending penalties for debt bondage, slavery, human trafficking, and certain forms of child labor and sexual exploitation. With external support, the Ministry of Education also announced a school feeding project benefiting 163,021 pre-primary and primary-age students in five regional states. In addition, the Ministry of Labor collaborated with the ILO to develop a digital inspection system, which was completed in 2020. However, children in Ethiopia continue to be subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in forced labor in domestic work and in commercial sexual exploitation. The law in Ethiopia does not include free basic education or a compulsory age for education, leaving children vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor. Social programs to combat child labor have also not sufficiently targeted sectors with high incidences of child labor.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Ethiopia are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including forced labor in domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation. (1-4) According to the results of a 2015 national child labor survey published in 2018, almost 16 million children from the ages of 5 to 17 engaged in child labor. A majority of these children were found in the regions of Oromia, Amhara, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR). (5) The Ethiopian Central Statistics Agency (CSA) did not collect data on child labor during the reporting period. However, the CSA, UNICEF Ethiopia, and the Center for Evaluation and Development published a report entitled "Child Labor Analysis in Ethiopia 2020." (6,7) The report supplemented CSA's 2015 Ethiopia National Child Labor Survey with new data on hard-to-reach children working in urban areas. (6,7) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Ethiopia.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	7 to 14	41.5 (10,202,669)
Attending School (%)	7 to 14	73.1
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	30.8
Primary Completion Rate (%)		54.1

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2015, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2021. (8)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Socio Economic Survey (ESS 3), 2015–2016. (9)

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 apples, bananas, coffee, cotton, khat, and sesame (5,10-15)
	Herding livestock, including cattle (16)
	Fishing (2,5)
Industry	Mining gold† and quarrying† (5,10,17)
	Construction,† including carrying heavy loads and digging (2,5,12)
	Repairing motor vehicles and motorcycles (5)
	Producing handicrafts, including pottery and traditional handwoven textiles (2,5,10,18)

Ethiopia

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Domestic work (5,11,12,19)
	Unpaid household services, including carrying heavy loads of water and firewood (5,10,19)
	Street work, including shoe shining, assisting taxi drivers, vending, portering, and begging (5,6,10,20,21)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (3,6,12,20,22,23)
	Forced labor in domestic work, herding, street vending, construction, and traditional weaving of handwoven textiles, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (6,10,24-26)
	Recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict (6,17)

† 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.

Ethiopian children voluntarily travel to Amhara, a region bordering a key irregular migration route to Europe, to harvest sesame. This sector is allegedly linked to overland smuggling networks, with children earning enough to fund passage to Europe via North Africa. (14,15) Many others journey through Djibouti en route to Persian Gulf states, where they are often intercepted, repatriated, and later routed to a transition center in Addis Ababa. (14) Somaliland intercepts between 50 and 100 children a week, many under the age of 13, from Amhara and Oromia on their way to the Middle East. (14,27) Children who begin as voluntary migrants may be forced into commercial sexual exploitation, or become victims of forced labor. (22,23) Research on child trafficking victims from SNNPR and Oromia indicates that 85 percent were rescued from or escaped domestic work, while 2/3 suffered exploitation and abuse. While 55 percent of the surveyed children were sent to Addis Ababa by family, another 11 percent were actively exploited by brokers within their communities. (26) The children surveyed were mostly from families that continue to play a role in financing and coercing their children to go abroad or to urban areas to look for work. (22,25,28) Trusted community members, known as *manamasas*, recruit and groom vulnerable youth on behalf of local and international human trafficking syndicates. (23,29) Traffickers also exploit children from rural areas surrounding Addis Ababa and other regions of the country for forced labor in the weaving industry, street vending, construction, and domestic work. (10,23,25) Traffickers exploit Ethiopian girls in commercial sex and domestic servitude in neighboring countries. (23) In addition, children in Oromia and Amhara reportedly harvest and sell khat, a stimulant to which they may become addicted due to bodily contact with the plants’ excretions during harvest. (12,14) The plant releases two highly addictive central nervous system stimulants – cathinone and cathine – whose acute and long-term neurological effects include khat-induced psychosis. (13,14)

In November 2020, a conflict erupted in northern Tigray between government forces and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF); the conflict is ongoing. (30) By early December, more than 45,000 Ethiopians fleeing the war had crossed into Sudan, up to one-half of whom were children. (30) Hundreds of children crossed the border alone, leaving them vulnerable to labor exploitation and human trafficking. Moreover, unconfirmed reporting indicates the TPLF has recruited children, most of them teenagers, during the conflict. (6,17,30,31) Reports on the Tigray conflict also indicate sexual and gender-based violence is being used against women and girls. (32,33) At least 200 rape victims under the age of 18 were admitted to local hospitals in January; the majority reported that perpetrators wore Ethiopian army uniforms. (34) A military blockade has also disrupted emergency humanitarian aid distribution networks. (33,34) As a result of the ongoing violence in Tigray, some 2.3 million children in the region lack access to humanitarian assistance, and 1.3 million were unable to attend school. (6,35,36) In addition, 12,000 children who fled to Sudan to escape the conflict in Tigray had no access to education other than makeshift classrooms set up by NGOs operating across the border. (17,37)




Precise figures are in dispute, although the UN and other humanitarian organizations estimate that 1.1 million children were displaced in 2020, 66 percent due to armed conflict. (12,35,36,38) Ethnic unrest was also recorded in Oromia, Amhara, and SNNPR, and research suggests the Oromo Liberation Army-Shane may have recruited child soldiers. (6,39)

In 2020, COVID-19 pandemic-induced school closures affected an estimated 26 million children, 77% of whom are of primary school age. (17,40) With infrastructure for remote learning effectively non-existent, many children remained out of school for many months, and some have still not returned. These children are acutely vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, including child labor. (17,40) Armed conflicts and resulting humanitarian crises have also disrupted education in other parts of the country. Children in rural areas face additional barriers to education, including the distance they must travel to reach school; a lack of sanitation, which especially affects adolescent girls; sexual harassment; the requirement to pay for uniforms and supplies; and a lack of teachers. Somali and Afar regions had the lowest rates of school attendance, with only 38.6 percent of school-age children enrolled in the Somali region and 50.2 percent enrolled in the Afar region. (5,6,41) Armed elements, including the TPLF and the Ethiopian National Defense Force, targeted schools in Tigray with rocket and artillery fire. Non-state armed groups in Tigray and the western part of Oromia also occupied schools for military purposes. (12,27,42,43) These factors increase children's risk of entering the workforce at a young age. (11,12,36,41)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Ethiopia 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 Ethiopia's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including free and compulsory education.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	14	Articles 4.1, 89.1–89.2, 89.3, and 185 of the Labor Proclamation 1156/2019 (44)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	No	18	Article 36.1(d) of the Constitution; Articles 89.3–89.4 of the Labor Proclamation 1156/2019 (44,45)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 89.3–89.4, and 186.1 of the Labor Proclamation 1156/2019; Directive on Prohibited Occupations for Young Workers (44,46)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 18.3 of the Constitution; Article 596 of the Criminal Code; Articles 3.1–3.2, and 4.1–4.3 of the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation No. 1178-2020 (45,47,48)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 18.2 of the Constitution; Articles 597, 635, 636, and 637 of the Criminal Code; Articles 3.1–3.5 and 4.1 of the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation No. 1178-2020 (45,47,49)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 634–636 of the Criminal Code; Articles 3.1–3.5 and 4.1 of the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation No. 1178-2020 (47,48)

Ethiopia

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

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

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 525 of the Criminal Code; Articles 3.1–3.2 and 4.1–4.3 of the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation No. 1178-2020 (47,48)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18‡	Article 270 of the Criminal Code (47)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*		
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		Articles 3.1–3.2 and 4.1–4.3 of the Proclamation to Provide for the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (48)
Compulsory Education Age	No		
Free Public Education	No		

* No conscription (47)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (6)

In February 2020, the government enacted the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation No. 1178, and the law was published in April. (29,48) The proclamation amends penalties for commercial sexual exploitation of children, child trafficking, and certain forms of child labor exploitation. (6,48) However, under the new law, the recruitment of children by non-state armed forces is not criminalized. (48) Moreover, not all Ethiopian laws related to child labor are in compliance with international standards. The types of hazardous work prohibited for children do not cover traditional weaving, an area of work in which there is evidence that children use dangerous machinery, equipment, and tools, and lift or transport heavy loads. (44,46) Moreover, Article 89.5 of the Labor Proclamation allows children ages 15 to 16 to engage in certain forms of hazardous work following the completion of a government-approved and inspected vocational training course. This contradicts ILO C. 138, which prohibits hazardous work for all children under age 16. (44,50) The Government of Ethiopia notes that, in practice, children begin apprenticeships after the completion of 10th grade, typically at age 16 or 17. (51) The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) is currently revising the accompanying Directive on Prohibited Occupations for Young Workers; research has not determined whether this will extend further protections to young workers. (12,17) Finally, Ethiopia does not have a minimum compulsory education age, and its laws do not provide for free public education. (6)

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 authority of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws, including financial resource allocation.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA)	Conducts labor inspections of formal worksites through its regional Bureaus of Labor and Social Affairs. (12) Through its National Referral Mechanism (NRM), coordinates victim referral to social services providers. (28)
Ethiopian Federal Police Commission	Enforces criminal laws against the worst forms of child labor, including child trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. (12) Combats child trafficking and assists vulnerable children through its Special Child Protection Units in Addis Ababa and other major cities. (12,24,52) Refers cases to the Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth (MoWCY), which develops and implements programs to protect vulnerable children and monitor alleged violations of child protection laws, including the worst forms of child labor. (1,53) MoWCY also maintains rehabilitation centers and coordinates foster families for children rescued from the worst forms of child labor. (12)
Office of the Attorney General	Prosecutes criminal violations of child labor laws, including through its Special Investigative Unit for Women and Children. (12)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2020, labor law enforcement agencies in Ethiopia took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the authority of MOLSA that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including financial and human resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2019	2020
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$220,673 (12)	\$153,000 (17)
Number of Labor Inspectors	685 (12)	621 (17)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (12,44)	No (6,17,44)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	No (12)	Yes (17)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (12)	Yes (17)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (12)	Yes (17)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	41,738 (12)	43,360 (17)
Number Conducted at Worksite	41,738 (12)	43,360 (17)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown (12)	3 (17)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown (12)	Unknown (17)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown (12)	Unknown (17)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (12)	Yes (17)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (12)	Yes (17)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (44)	Yes (44)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (12)	Yes (17)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (12)	Yes (17)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (12)	Yes (17)

The government imposed a state of emergency in March and April of 2020 to mitigate community transmission of COVID-19. To protect inspectors and workers, MOLSA only conducted complaint-based inspections during this period. (17) In 2020, labor inspections focused on the construction, mining, and agricultural sectors, including the floricultural industry, in which child labor is known to occur; the government also conducted on-site inspection in local languages. Nevertheless, data on violations are not aggregated at the national level, and the government did not publish the number of child labor violations identified as a result of these inspections. (4,12,17) Labor inspectors refer child labor violations to judicial authorities, who are able to assess penalties. (6,44) During the reporting period, however, the government did not provide information on prosecutions or convictions related to child labor. (17)

Although the total number of labor inspectors dropped from the previous reporting period, the inspectorate hired 74 new labor inspectors in 2020, bringing the total number of inspectors to 621. (17) In 2020, the government began to implement a strategy to automate and digitalize inspection workplace systems. MOLSA collaborated with ILO to develop a digital inspection system, which was completed in 2020. (6) Implementation is planned for 2021. (17) With support from the German Society for International Cooperation, the labor inspectorate provided Training-of-Trainers (ToT) sessions on the 2019 Labor Proclamation and the use of labor inspection monitoring equipment. The ToT trainings were provided three times during the reporting period. (17)

However, the number of labor inspectors remains insufficient for the size of Ethiopia's workforce, which includes 52.8 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed economies, Ethiopia would employ about 1,321 inspectors. (54,55) In addition, MOLSA and other stakeholders report that a lack of resources and poor coordination among agencies hampered their ability to enforce child labor laws. (4,12)

Ethiopia

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2020, criminal law enforcement agencies in Ethiopia 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 collecting and publishing enforcement statistics.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2019	2020
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (12)	Unknown (6,17)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (12)	Unknown (6,17)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (12)	Unknown (6,17)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (12)	Unknown (6,17)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (12)	Unknown (6,17)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (12)	Unknown (6,17)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (12)	Unknown (6,17)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (12)	Unknown (6,17)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (12)	Yes (6)

The 2020 Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation stipulates aggravated penalties for criminal convictions involving children for a number of offenses, including debt bondage, slavery, human trafficking, and certain forms of labor and sexual exploitation. (48) Under the new legislation, crimes against a child or a mentally ill or physically disabled person carry sentences of 10–20 years and a fine of \$742–\$2,472 (30,000–100,000 birr). (26,48) Moreover, for the first time in 20 years, the Attorney General’s Office disaggregated prosecution datasets for transnational and internal trafficking-in-persons violations. However, the government did not otherwise provide criminal law enforcement data for inclusion in this report. (4,12,23) Enforcement efforts continued to focus on transnational human trafficking for the purpose of forced labor, to the detriment of internal human trafficking, including trafficking children for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. (23)

Ethiopian immigration and border patrol authorities refer human trafficking victims to NGO-run shelters, in which victims are given first aid and assistance to return home. Although the shelters do not disaggregate data for children, NGOs reported that many of those receiving services were younger than age 18, some of whom may have been returning from the Persian Gulf States. (28)

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 coordination between agencies.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Steering Committees	Include the National Steering Committee on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, which coordinates activities on the worst forms of child labor. Members include MOLSA, the MoWCY, and the Ministry of Education. (4,22) The National Steering Committee Against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children also develops action plans and coordinates activities to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children. (22,53) The committee was not active during the reporting period. (56)
MOLSA National Forum to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Combats the worst forms of child labor at the national level. The forum was not active during the reporting period. (4,6,56)

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Anti-Human Trafficking and Smuggling Mechanisms	The government overhauled its national counter-trafficking framework during the reporting period. (26) Under Proclamation 1178/2020, the new structure organizes over 32 government and non-government entities into the National Council and the National Partnership Coalition (NPC). The National Council is responsible for the creation of policies and strategies for the prevention of smuggling and trafficking in persons and issuing directives. (26) The Deputy Prime Minister chairs the Council, which includes representatives from the Federal Attorney General's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Peace, MOLSA, the Refugees and Returnees Affairs Agency, MoWCY, the Commission of Job Creation, the Ministry of Health, the Federal Police Commission, the National Bank, the Central Statistics Agency, the National Intelligence and Security Services, Regional Governments, the Civil Societies Agency, and religious institutions. (26) In 2020, the Council passed the directive for NRM, which establishes the legislation underpinning the NRM's implementation. (26) The NPC, meanwhile, is accountable to the National Council. Its mandate includes researching policies and strategies, developing directives for the national referral system, and preparing program and action plans for implementation. (26) The NPC also oversees ten working groups that specialize in multiple anti-trafficking in persons sectors, including a Women and Children Support and Protection Working Group. (26) The government's efforts are supplemented by IOM-funded community awareness centers and by the German Society for International Cooperation's Better Migration Management Project, which is focused on capacity building. (29)
National and Regional Task Forces on Orphans and Vulnerable Children	Promote children's rights; chaired by members of the federal government and state ministers and led by the MoWCY in all nine regional capitals and two city administrations. (53,57) Research was unable to determine whether task forces were active during the reporting period.

Limited committee budgets, overlapping mandates, and poor coordination between the committees and agencies hindered coordination efforts to address child labor at a national and regional level. (22,28)

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 Education and Children's Policies	Promote children's rights and combat child trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, and the worst forms of child labor. The National Children's Policy facilitates access to quality primary and secondary education for out-of-school youth, including in rural areas, and provides measures against exploitation and trafficking in persons. (58) National policies to improve access to quality education include the Education Sector Development Program V (2015–2020), which aimed to improve attendance rates and learning outcomes through enhanced equity, access, quality, and efficiency; the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018–2030), which aims to make education free and compulsory; the Education and Training Policy, which prioritizes government support for education through grade 10; the Pastoralist Area Education Strategy, which provides for alternative education in pastoralist communities; and the National Technical & Vocational Education & Training Strategy, which aims to improve access to vocational education for girls and out-of-school children. (41,59–62) The government has not included child labor elimination and prevention strategies in the Education Sector Development Program, the National Technical & Vocational Education & Training Strategy, or the National Youth Policy. (60–62)
National Action Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2016–2020)	Includes guidelines on child labor identification, withdrawal, reintegration, and educational policies. Overseen by the National Steering Committee on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. (4) In 2020, labor inspectors received training on a digital workplace inspection system, with implementation planned for 2021. (17)
The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2016–2020)	Promoted improved access to education and livelihood services for vulnerable children. Sought to protect children from abuse, violence, and exploitation, and to rehabilitate victims of violence and exploitation. (64) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.
National Human Rights Action Plan II (2016–2020)	Aimed to promote human rights in line with Ethiopia's second Growth and Transformation Plan. Objectives included the creation of detailed manuals on crime investigation, combating both domestic and international trafficking in persons, and improving the ability of civil society organizations to secure local funding towards these objectives. (65,66) The plan also covered human rights violations in the private sector and encouraged private sector companies to undertake human rights due diligence to prevent child labor, forced labor, and other human rights violations. (65,66) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (53,67–72)

Ethiopia

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

In 2019, Ethiopia became a Pathfinder country under Alliance 8.7. This involves accelerating progress toward achieving commitments under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7, which calls for the eradication of child labor by 2025, and the elimination of forced labor, modern slavery, and human trafficking by 2030. (73) To this end, in 2020, Ethiopia's Minister of Labor and Social Affairs attended a virtual conference with SDG Alliance 8.7 Pathfinder countries, during which she shared Ethiopia's pandemic tripartite workplace response protocol. (17) The minister also spoke at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which took place in July 2020 under the auspices of the Economic and Security Council. The aim of the meeting was to develop effective measures to eradicate forced labor; end modern slavery and human trafficking; secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and, by 2025, end child labor in all its forms. (6)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2020, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including adequacy of programs to address the full scope of the problem.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Government of Ethiopia Programs*†	In 2020, the Ministry of Education announced a school feeding project benefiting 163,021 pre-primary and primary school students in 499 schools in 5 regional states. The project targets Oromia, Amhara, Sidama, Somali, and Afar, and its goal is to improve attendance and learning. (17) The Global Partnership for Education, a USAID partner, provided \$21.4 million for the project, which will be implemented by Save the Children. (17) The government also allocated \$48,223,349 (1.9 billion birr) to the same regions to feed 1.4 million students. (17) In 2020, the Addis Ababa City Administration also provided meals, books, and writing equipment to more than 300,000 students. (6) In an effort to address the challenge of lack of food, some schools instituted school feeding programs. Separately, the government established an initiative to provide temporary shelter for destitute urban children. At the direction of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the government set aside two hectares of land in Akaki Kality Sub City; the Tewodros Ashenafi Foundation then provided \$634,357 (25 million birr) for the construction of a transitional shelter with a holding capacity of 2,000 children. (6) The Foundation handed over management of the facility to the Addis Ababa Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs in May 2020. (17) The shelter provides basic services, including psychosocial support, life skills, and education and training, to enable children's reintegration into society. The initiative is part of Ethiopia's national reform agenda. (6,17)
World Vision Programs	Includes Effective Approaches in Ending the Worst Forms of Child Labor (EAPEC) (2019–2022), an international program designed to test and measure innovative approaches to reduce the worst forms of child labor; targets approximately 500,000 at-risk youth in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, and Ethiopia, including victims of child commercial sexual exploitation and child soldiering, and children engaged in hazardous work. The program's efforts are coordinated by World Vision, with funding by a consortium of NGOs and multilaterals, including UN Global Compact, the Global Compact UK, War Child UK, Thompson Reuters, and the private sector. (14,74,75) In 2020, World Vision expanded training programs designed to build detection capacity to all nine regional governments. The NGO trained regional labor inspector team leads to operate monitoring equipment. (17) In addition, World Vision is working directly with Ethiopia's nine regional governments to incorporate child labor issues into their action plans. (14)
World Bank-Funded Projects†	Includes ET Productive Safety Nets Project 4 (PSNP 4) (2014–2020)†, a \$2.77 billion project that aimed to improve access to social safety nets, including cash and in-kind transfers to orphans and vulnerable children. As of December 2020, 8,300,000 individuals had benefited from the program. (76,77-81) The Ethiopia General Education Quality Improvement Program for Equity (GEQIP-E) (2017–2022)† is a \$300 million program that works with the Ministry of Education to improve education quality and access. (82-77) GEQIP-E worked with the Ministry of Education to create budget lines for school grants and textbooks. (78,79) The World Bank approved the Urban Productive Safety Net and Jobs Project (2020–2025)* on September 30, 2020. The project will target disadvantaged youth and the urban poor through labor market inclusion programs, including 6 month apprenticeship programs. (17,84)
UNICEF-Funded Programs	Includes UNICEF-funded programs to improve social safety nets and improve access to education include Child-to-Child and Accelerated School Readiness programs, which extend educational opportunities to internally displaced children, and the Integrated Safety Nets Program (2017–2023). (12,85) UNICEF, the Swedish International Development Agency, and MOLSA are also jointly funding the Urban Productive Safety Net Program, which aims to improve nutritional and educational outcomes in Amhara and Addis Ababa through cash transfers and linking participants to basic social services. (12,86) In 2020, UNICEF educational services reached 1 in 5 vulnerable children in Ethiopia, providing them with early learning, informal, and non-formal educational services. (7,35)

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

Program	Description
USDOL-Funded Project*	Includes <u>She Thrives: Reducing Child Labor in Ethiopia's Agricultural Sector using a Gender-Focused Approach (2020-2025)</u> , a \$5 million USDOL-funded, 4 year project implemented by Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc. to use a gender mainstreaming approach to address child labor in coffee production in Oromia and the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region. (87) Additional information is available on the USDOL website .

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is co-funded by the Government of Ethiopia. (17,18)

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (88,89)

Although the government participates in and implements several programs to combat child labor, these programs do not sufficiently target sectors with high incidences of child labor, such as agriculture and domestic work. (4) There is also a paucity of rehabilitation and reintegration centers throughout the country for victims of child trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation. (3,22) Moreover, both government and NGO-run shelters were unable to accept referrals of vulnerable children during the first months of the pandemic because they had to create separate areas for newcomers to quarantine. (6)

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 Ethiopia (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Raise the minimum age at which children may enter hazardous work following vocational training from age 15 to age 16, in line with ILO C. 138.	2009 – 2020
	Ensure that the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are comprehensive, including hazardous tasks in traditional weaving.	2016 – 2020
	Criminalize the recruitment of children by non-state armed groups.	2020
	Establish by law free basic education.	2012 – 2020
	Establish by law a compulsory education age, and ensure that the age is consistent with the minimum age of employment.	2012 – 2020
Enforcement	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by permitting labor inspectors to assess penalties.	2013 – 2020
	Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice.	2015 – 2020
	Ensure that labor inspectors have sufficient resources to conduct inspections in all sectors and are able to coordinate adequately with other agencies.	2009 – 2020
	Ensure that both domestic and transnational child trafficking cases are investigated and violations punished.	2013 – 2020
	Gather, disaggregate, and publish information on the number of child labor violations found and penalties applied and collected, the number of investigations conducted, prosecutions initiated, and convictions obtained.	2009 – 2020
Coordination	Clarify individual mandates for coordinating mechanisms charged with combating child labor, and enhance inter-committee communication, coordination, and collaboration.	2015 – 2020
	Ensure all coordinating bodies are funded and able to carry out their intended mandates.	2020
Government Policies	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies in the Education Sector Development Program, the National Technical & Vocational Education & Training Strategy, and the National Youth Policy.	2013 – 2020
	Ensure existing policies and action plans to address the worst forms of child labor are implemented as intended.	2018 – 2020
	Publish activities undertaken to implement key policies related to child labor to address child labor during the reporting period.	2020
Social Programs	Increase access to education for all children by decreasing the distance to schools in rural areas, hiring additional teachers, constructing sanitation facilities, and eliminating school-related costs.	2010 – 2020
	Develop or expand social protection programs to withdraw children from all sectors, including agriculture and domestic work.	2009 – 2020
	Ensure that social services, such as rehabilitation and reintegration centers, are available throughout the country.	2009 – 2020

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