

In 2020, Guinea made minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government enacted a revised Child Code, which provides higher penalties for child labor violations and enumerates a more comprehensive hazardous work list. The government also approved a new National Action Plan to Fight Against Trafficking in Persons. However, children in Guinea are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in artisanal mining, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in forced begging. The government lacks a coordinating mechanism and national policy to address all relevant worst forms of child labor. Laws related to the minimum age for work also do not meet international standards because they do not include children working outside of a formal employment relationship and children who are self-employed. In addition, the government does not implement sufficient social programs to address the extent of the child labor problem.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Guinea are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in artisanal mining, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in forced begging. (1-3) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Guinea. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

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

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2021. (4)

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

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Farming and carrying heavy loads† in the production of cashews, cocoa, coffee, and rubber (6-10)
	Herding livestock (7)
	Fishing, including capturing and processing fish (3,7,11-13)
Industry	Mining† granite, gold, and diamonds (1,3,7,9,14)
	Manufacturing, activities unknown (3)
	Construction,† including carrying materials and the fabrication of construction materials, such as bricks (3,15-17)
Services	Street work, including as market vendors, beggars, petty traders, shoe shiners, and porters in the transportation sector (7,12,14,15,18,19)
	Working in restaurants and informal cottage industries (7)
	Domestic work (7,9,11,13,14,20)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced labor as market vendors and in domestic work, mining, herding, fishing, and farming, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (3,7)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (3,7,18,20)
	Forced begging by Koranic teachers (3,7,20)

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

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Children in Guinea are subjected domestically and abroad to forced labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude. Some Guinean boys are subjected to forced labor in artisanal gold and diamond mines, while Guinean girls are involved in domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation in various West African and Middle Eastern countries. (7-13,16-23)

Boys placed in the care of Koranic schools in Guinea are sometimes forced by their teachers to beg on the street or to work in fields, and must then surrender the money they have earned to their teachers. (7,8,22) In addition, through the system of *confiage*, parents who are unable to care for their children send them to relatives or strangers, who are expected to provide food, shelter, and schooling to the children in exchange for housework. In practice, some of these children receive care and an education, but many become domestic workers and are victims of labor exploitation and abuse. (12,21) There are significant factors hindering access to education, such as the limited number of public schools, the lack of teachers (particularly in rural areas), funding, and poor infrastructure. Also, the cost of schooling remains prohibitively high for many Guinean parents. (20,24) Further, children are required to have birth registration to access education and health care and the government provided no support to children with disabilities in regular schools. (24-26,27)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Guinea has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Guinea's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the minimum age for work.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	No	16	Article 137.5 of the Labor Code; Article 919 of the revised Children's Code (24,28)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles 2–4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 137.4 of the Labor Code; Articles 922 and 925 of the revised Children's Code (16,24,28)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 2 and 4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 135 of the Mining Code; Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Articles 909–936 of the revised Children's Code (16,24,28,29)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 194, 195, and 323 of the Penal Code; Articles 4 and 137.6 of the Labor Code; Articles 912–915 and 922 of the revised Children's Code (3,24,28,30)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 195, 323, and 324 of the Penal Code; Articles 893–901 and 912 of the revised Children's Code (24,30)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 346–348 and 355 of the Penal Code; Articles 820, 852–856 of the revised Children's Code (24,30)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Article 890 of the Revised Children's Code; Article 344 of the Penal Code (24,28,30)

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

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 941 of the revised Child Code (24)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*		
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Article 792.7 of the Penal Code; Article 941 of the revised Child Code (24,30)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 6, Title I of Education Decree 97/196/PRG/SGG (31)
Free Public Education	No		

* No conscription (32)

In June 2020, the revised Child Code entered into force, which provides higher penalties for crimes related to child trafficking, forced labor, violence against children in the workplace, and child pornography. (3,24) It also provides additional hazardous work prohibitions, including work at night, using mechanical tools, handling explosives or corrosives, and extracting ore in quarries or mines. (24) The revised Child Code and Labor Code allows children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform light work, which does not meet international standards as it applies to children under age 13. In addition, these laws do not prescribe the number of hours per week permitted for light work, nor do they specify the conditions under which light work may be done. Moreover, these laws only apply to workers with written employment contracts, leaving self-employed children and children working outside of formal employment relationships vulnerable to exploitation. (3,33) Although the revised Child Code provides free basic education for certain vulnerable groups, such as disabled and orphaned children, it does not provide free education for all children. (24) The updated constitution, enacted in 2020, stipulates free education up to the age of 16 under conditions provided by the law; however, the government has not yet enacted legislation to institute free basic education standards within Guinea's legal framework. (34)

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 enforcement agencies 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 Social Laws	Enforces all labor laws, including those related to child labor, through its labor inspectorate. (12,35,33) Oversees the Child Labor Monitoring and Surveillance System, which aims to identify and remove children from exploitative labor conditions. (36) In June 2020, the National Labor Directorate, previously under the Ministry of Technical Education, Vocational Training, Employment, and Labor moved to the Ministry of Labor and Social Laws. (3)
Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals (OPROGEM) Special Police Unit	Investigates cases related to the protection of minors, including the worst forms of child labor. (7,12,15,18,32) Formulates, plans, and monitors all activities, programs, and policy measures for safeguarding vulnerable population groups and protecting morality. (13) There is 1 representative of OPROGEM in each of the 33 central police stations of the country who specializes in issues related to the trafficking of women and children. (37) In July 2020, OPROGEM arrested a group of women accused of exploiting eight children, including seven albino children, who were forced to beg in Conakry. (3)
Ministry of Social Action and Vulnerable People	Provides protection and social services for victims of child labor and human trafficking. (12,38) During the reporting period, the Ministry for Social Action, Promotion of Women and Children changed its name to the Ministry of Social Action and Vulnerable People. (3) In addition to the name change, the Ministry's mandate as the lead agency for child protection issues was clarified. (39,40)
Ministry of Justice	Delivers judgements through its juvenile court, concerning the placement of any children in a service center. The Juvenile Court also collaborates and monitors cases with the National Directorate of Supervised Education and Youth Protection (<i>Direction Nationale de l'Éducation Surveillée et de la Protection de la Jeunesse</i>), which is under the Ministry of Justice, and is, by law, the supervising body of public social services centers. (3,15)

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Labor Law Enforcement

In 2020, labor law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including allocation of financial and other resources.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2019	2020
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (41)	Unknown (3)
Number of Labor Inspectors	189 (41)	200 (3)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (28,41)	Yes (3,28)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	No (41)	Yes (3)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A (41)	No (3)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (41)	No (3)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	376† (41)	200 (3)
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown (41)	116 (3)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	9† (41)	0 (3)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	9† (41)	N/A (3)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	0 (41)	N/A (3)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (41)	Yes (3)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (41)	Yes (40)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (41)	Yes (3,28)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (41)	Yes (3)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (41)	Yes (3)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	No (41)	No (3)

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

During 2020, the government employed 200 individuals as part of its labor inspectorate and conducted 200 inspections, 2 of which focused exclusively on child labor. Many of the inspections conducted during the reporting period took place in mining areas, specifically Boké, Boffa, Sigui, and Dubreka. (3,15,41) The labor inspectorate does not have a dedicated budget and maintains only a single vehicle, with a portion of each inspector's salary used to cover fuel costs for inspection trips, restricting the labor inspectorate's ability to conduct labor inspections. (3,15,20,41)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2020, criminal law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including with the allocation of financial and human resources and publishing information.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2019	2020
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	No (41)	N/A (3)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A (41)	N/A (3)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (41)	Yes (3)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (41)	2 (40)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (41)	2 (40)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (41)	2 (40)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (41)	Unknown (3)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (41)	Unknown (3)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (41)	Yes (3)

Research indicated that the Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals Special Police Unit was

understaffed, underfunded, and without sufficient office supplies, transportation, or fuel to enforce laws related to the worst forms of child labor. (12,15,32,42) The government did not provide complete information for inclusion in this report on its criminal law enforcement efforts, including the number of convictions or whether it imposed penalties for violations. (3) During the reporting period, the government implemented new standard operating procedures to identify human trafficking victims, including children, and refer them to services. The government distributed written materials and trained government and civil society stakeholders on the new standard operating procedures. (43)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including ensuring that coordinating bodies are provided budgets in line with their responsibilities.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices (CNLTPPA)	Coordinates anti-human trafficking efforts, including for children. Led by the Ministry of Social Action and Vulnerable People, includes representatives from OPROGEM, Ministry of Labor and Social Laws, and other ministries. (7,18,22,38) Met three times during the reporting period. The President of CNLTPPA and the President of Expertise France hosted a workshop for government officials to increase awareness about trafficking in persons. (3) CNLTPPA's president also announced continued funding, with international assistance, for the national human trafficking hotline, which they noted in 2020 received 2,196 calls—593 of which were regarding minors. (3)
Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child (CGSDE)	Implements, coordinates, and monitors government efforts on child protection issues, including child labor. Led by the Ministry of Social Action and Vulnerable People, with participation from the Ministry of Labor and Social Laws. (18,32,40,44) Prepares periodic reports to treaty bodies in the UN (Committee on the Rights of Children), and the African Union (African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of Children), while leading workshops to disseminate recommendations on child protections matters from these treaty bodies. (39) Research was unable to determine whether specific activities were undertaken by the CGSDE during the reporting period.

Limited budgets for the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices (CNLTPPA) and the Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child affect their ability to operate and coordinate efforts to address child labor. (2,12,32,42,45) Although the government has established a coordination mechanism on human trafficking, research found no evidence of mechanisms to coordinate the government's efforts to address child labor. (46)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including covering all worst forms of child labor.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Economic and Social Development Plan (<i>Plan National de Développement Economique et Social</i>) (2016–2020)	Sought to promote sustainable development and social equality focusing on four pillars: promotion of good governance for sustainable development; inclusive and sustainable transformative economics; inclusive development of human capital; and sustainable management of natural capital. Overseen by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and supported by the World Bank. (47,48) Included activities to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children, human trafficking, and child labor. (47)
National Action Plan for Trafficking in Persons†	Focuses on six strategies to fight against child trafficking, including strengthening the legal framework, reinforcement of prevention devices, promotion of assistance and support of victims, strengthening cooperative partnerships, and monitoring and evaluation. (46,49) Managed by the CNLTPPA. Approved in June 2020. (37,46,49)

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

On September 8, 2020, the CNLTPPA, Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, international organizations, private sector companies, labor unions, and civil society organizations met for 4 days to create a national strategy for

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reducing and dismantling networks associated with trafficking in persons. (3) Although the Government of Guinea has adopted a National Action Plan for Trafficking in Persons, research found no evidence of a policy on other worst forms of child labor. (13,15,41,51)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2020, the government participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the adequacy of efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
World Bank Country Program	World Bank projects in Guinea that aim to increase access to quality basic education and youth employment, improve school infrastructure, and strengthen safety nets for vulnerable populations, especially those affected by the Ebola virus disease outbreak. (52-55) During the reporting period, the World Bank approved an \$80 million COVID-19 pandemic emergency response program focusing on development. (3)
UNICEF Rapid Response to COVID-19 Pandemic (2020–2021)*	Works on expanding continuous learning during pandemic closures through print, radio, TV, and online, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as children in rural areas and those with disabilities; also mobilizes a back-to-school campaign, safe reopening of schools through water, sanitation, and hygiene programs, and provide guidance to parents on school health. In May 2020, UNICEF provided \$7 million in grant funding to support the Ministry of Education and Alphabetization (MENA) to fight the pandemic. (56)
Ten-Year Education Program for Guinea (2020–2029)*	Launched under the third tier of the National Economic and Social Development Policy. Provides for tuition-free schooling and makes provisions to ensure vulnerable students such as orphans, disabled, and albino students have access to education. Implemented by the MENA at the primary school level and published October 2019 and covering the 10 year period from 2020–2029. (50)

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

During the reporting period, the Guinean Association of Social Workers and several local NGOs have established a toll-free line to report abuse against women and children. Call center employees collect information and then refer the caller to the appropriate agency for assistance or protection. (3) Research found that the scope of programs implemented by the Government of Guinea is insufficient for the extent of the problem, including addressing children engaged in agriculture, domestic work, forced begging, mining, and street work. (36)

Reports indicate that social services available are not effective to meet the needs of the victims, and, as a result, the government relied on NGOs to provide shelter and other basic services to victims. Moreover, financial shortfalls still constrain services. (3,7,12,15,20,22,32,42)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Guinea (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Raise the minimum age for light work to age 13 to comply with international standards; ensure that the law's light work provisions specify the conditions in which light work may be undertaken and the number of hours that are permitted for children engaged in light work.	2015 – 2020
	Ensure that all children are protected by law, including children working outside of a formal employment relationship and children who are self-employed.	2009 – 2020
	Establish by law free basic education.	2019 – 2020
Enforcement	Provide consistent training, including initial and refresher courses and training on new laws, for labor law officials.	2009 – 2020
	Publish information on labor inspectorate funding and the numbers of convictions and imposed penalties related to the criminal enforcement of child labor laws.	2011 – 2020
	Establish a referral mechanism between the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry for Social Action and Vulnerable People to protect and rehabilitate children involved in child labor.	2016 – 2020

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Ensure labor inspectors and criminal law enforcement officers receive adequate resources to enforce labor laws, including office supplies, fuel, and vehicles.	2020
Coordination	Ensure that the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices and the Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child receive adequate funding to fulfill their missions.	2010 – 2020
	Ensure that Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child is active.	2018 – 2020
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor.	2014 – 2020
Social Programs	Enhance efforts to eliminate barriers and make education accessible for all children by improving school infrastructure and increasing school and teacher availability; and remove any school-related fees.	2010 – 2020
	Ensure all children have access to education regardless of whether or not they have birth registration.	2020
	Ensure that social services are properly funded and adequately meet the needs of victims of the worst forms of child labor.	2010 – 2020
	Institute programs to address the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture, domestic work, forced begging, mining, and street work.	2010 – 2020

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