

CHAD

NO ADVANCEMENT – Efforts Made but Complicit in Forced Child Labor

In 2023, Chad is receiving an assessment of no advancement. Despite initiatives to address child labor, Chad is assessed as having made no advancement because it demonstrated complicity in the use of forced child labor. Government officials used their authority to approve the sale of children by parents for use as livestock herders. Government and military officials also exploited children directly in forced labor as herders. Otherwise, the government adopted a child protection policy and provided training on trafficking in persons issues, including child labor, for Ministry of Justice and law enforcement officials. However, the government did not publish key data on its civil and criminal child labor law enforcement efforts. In addition, gaps remain in Chad’s legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the lack of prohibition against the use of children in illicit activities and the exclusion of non-citizens without formal refugee status from free public education.



PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Statistics on Children’s Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent of Population
Working	5 to 14	45.8% (Unavailable)
Hazardous Work by Children	15 to 17	Unavailable
Attending School	5 to 14	39.1%
Combining Work and School	7 to 14	27.0%

Children in Chad are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including forced labor in livestock herding, mining, and domestic work. Children also engage in child labor in agriculture.

Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity



Agriculture

Farming and forestry. Herding cattle and other livestock. Fishing, including catching, smoking, and selling fish.



Industry

Working in mining[†] and carpentry. Producing construction materials and carrying heavy loads.[†]



Services

Domestic work. Street work, including vending, garbage scavenging, and carrying heavy loads.[†] Street begging[†] in urban centers. Working in auto repair shops.



Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor[‡]

Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Forced labor in agriculture, herding, begging, domestic work, fishing, forestry, mining, and street vending. Recruitment by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict.

[†] 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.



SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

The suggested government actions below would close gaps USDOL has identified in Chad’s implementation of its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

Legal Framework

Ensure that laws specifically prohibit children from being used, offered, or procured for illicit activities.

Raise the minimum age for work from 14 to 16 to align with the compulsory education age.

Ensure that laws providing free basic education include all children in Chad, including non-citizens.

Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor (Cont.)

Enforcement

Investigate, prosecute, convict, and penalize government and military officials who engage in forced child labor or child trafficking.

Ensure that child labor violations are prosecuted to the full extent of the law and officials who seek to interfere with legal mechanisms and processes are penalized in accordance with the law.

Ensure that the role of the Child Protection Brigade's child trafficking and child labor complaint mechanism is well-known and understood by the public.

Ensure that the labor inspectorate provides inspectors with sufficient resources—including training, transportation, and budget allocations—to conduct inspections in both the formal and informal sectors.

Collect, store, and publish data on law enforcement efforts in a central database, including information about labor inspectorate funding; the number and type of inspections conducted; whether civil violations were found, penalties imposed, and fees collected; and the number of criminal investigations conducted, violations found, prosecutions initiated, convictions obtained, and penalties imposed.

Increase the number of labor inspectors from 36 to 140 to ensure adequate coverage of the labor force.

Ensure that criminal law enforcement agencies are sufficiently funded, that law enforcement officers are trained, and that existing penalties are enforced according to the law.

Ensure that the judicial system receives sufficient resources, including training on child labor laws and funding for digital infrastructure, to effectively prosecute cases and manage data on the worst forms of child labor.

Investigate, prosecute, and when appropriate, convict and sentence religious teachers complicit in facilitating the worst forms of child labor, such as forced begging.

Coordination

Establish and fund a coordinating mechanism to prevent and eliminate child labor and report on its activities.

Government Policies

Adopt a policy to address all relevant worst forms of child labor in Chad, including human trafficking.

Ensure that activities are undertaken to implement key policies, including the Child Protection Policy and Women & Peace Policy, related to child labor during the reporting period and that data on these activities are published.

Social Programs

Ensure access to education for all children by eliminating school-related fees; increasing the number of schools, grade levels, classrooms, and teachers available throughout the country; implementing programs to increase enrollment of girls; and providing accommodations for students with disabilities.

Ensure that all children are issued birth certificates so they can enroll in school and take year-end exams.

Establish or expand programs to provide services to children subjected to the worst forms of child labor, such as forced child labor in mining, herding, construction, domestic work, and commercial sexual exploitation.

Increase access to social protection for refugees and internally displaced children who may be vulnerable to labor exploitation.



CHILDREN AT HIGHER RISK

Children entrusted to extended family or strangers who promise to care for them face increased risk in Chad, as frequently these situations lead to forced labor. Girls are more likely to be subjected to domestic servitude in Chad, including through the practice of forced early marriage, while boys are more likely to be exploited in pastoral activities, mining, or construction. Reporting suggests that boys sent to Koranic schools, or *mouhadjirin*, may be forced to beg and surrender the money they receive to their teachers. Children in Chad's internally displaced and refugee communities, whose numbers have increased significantly due to the conflict in neighboring Sudan, are also vulnerable to labor exploitation and human trafficking due to the instability of their situation and lack of access to support systems.



BARRIERS TO EDUCATION ACCESS

Chad was the first country in the region to integrate its network of refugee schools into the national education system; these schools are fully accredited and receive state funding. Notwithstanding this positive development, Chad only guarantees education for children who are citizens or refugees, rather than for all, leaving children who fall outside these groups unable to access schooling. Furthermore, poor access to birth registration documents in rural Chad creates an obstacle for children once they reach third grade, when formal identification is required to take year-end exams. While basic education is free by law, some schools require additional payment for textbooks and for supplemental fees. Other barriers to education include shortages of schools, classrooms, and teachers, and the inability of some schools to offer all grade levels. Girls experience higher dropout rates than boys, and children with disabilities face barriers to school attendance, including inadequate facilities.




LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Chad has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor. However, Chad’s laws do not meet international standards because there is no specific legal prohibition against the use of children in illicit activities and non-citizens without formal refugee status are excluded from free public education.

Child Labor Laws and Regulations	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work, 14 Years		Article 52 of the Labor Code; Article 1 of the Decree Relating to Child Labor
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work, 18 Years		Articles 6 and 7 of the Decree Relating to Child Labor
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children		Articles 6 and 10 of the Decree Relating to Child Labor; Articles 5, 19, and 22 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons
Prohibition of Slavery, Debt Bondage, and Forced Labor		Article 20 of the Constitution; Chapter 1, Article 5 of the Labor Code; Articles 5 and 15 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 292(e), 292(c), 327, 328, 330, and 331 of the Penal Code
Prohibition of Child Trafficking		Articles 3, 5, 6.2, and 7.1 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 10, 330, and 331 of the Penal Code
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children		Articles 335, 336(a), 362–364, 443, and 446 of the Penal Code; Articles 81–85 of the Law on Cyber Security and Fight Against Cyber Criminality; Articles 5, 16, and 22 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities		
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment, 18 Years		Article 32 of the Law on the Organization of the Armed Forces; Article 1 of the Ordinance Prohibiting the Use of Children in Armed Conflict; Article 52 of Military Statute N° 006/PR/06; Article 5 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 10, 286(cc), 288(g), and 370 of the Penal Code
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military		Article 32 of the Law on the Organization of the Armed Forces; Article 22 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; Articles 5, 18, and 22 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 10, 286(cc), 288(g), and 370 of the Penal Code
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups		Article 1 of the Ordinance Prohibiting the Use of Children in Armed Conflict; Articles 5, 18, and 22 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 10, 286(cc), 288(g), and 370 of the Penal Code

Legal Framework for Child Labor (Cont.)

Child Labor Laws and Regulations	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Compulsory Education Age, 16 Years ‡		Articles 21, 23, 25, and 28 of the Law Orienting the Education System; Article 38 of the Constitution
Free Public Education		Article 9 of the Law Orienting the Education System; Article 38 of the Constitution

‡ Age calculated based on available information

Chad lacks a specific legal prohibition on children being used, offered, or procured for illicit activities. Furthermore, as the minimum age for work is lower than the compulsory education age, children may be encouraged to leave school before completion of compulsory education. Lastly, while Chad’s laws provide for free basic education for citizens and refugees, they do not meet the international standard because they do not cover non-citizen children without refugee status.



ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

In 2023, labor and criminal enforcement agencies in Chad took actions to address child labor. However, insufficient resources and government complicity in child labor crimes hindered enforcement efforts.

Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Ministry of Public Service, Employment, and Social Dialogue (MOPS): Oversees Chad’s labor inspectorate and enforces child labor laws. Administers a directorate charged with addressing the worst forms of child labor and maintains a specific point of contact to assist in coordinating child protection and human trafficking issues. In 2023, MOPS officials received training on child labor exploitation.

National Police’s Child Protection Brigade (CPB): Enforces child protection laws. Investigates allegations of child exploitation, including human trafficking and the worst forms of child labor, and removes children from exploitative situations. Includes 100 “focal points” spread throughout all 23 provinces. These focal points are not trained investigators, but they are responsible for coordinating investigations with the country’s seven hub offices and referring allegations to investigators. The CPB is active in Chad’s largest cities (N’Djamena, Moundou, Sarh, Mongo, Mao, and Abéché). The CPB or other local authorities notify the Ministry of Justice (MOJ)’s Directorate for Protection and Legal Monitoring of Children, UNICEF, and local NGOs when there is a case of child trafficking or exploitation. The government’s regional child protection technical committees also identify and refer child trafficking victims to the CPB and the Ministry of Gender and National Solidarity. The CPB coordinates with the Ministry of Gender, MOPS, and MOJ from its UNICEF-funded headquarters in N’Djamena to provide children with shelter, assist with investigations, and search for long-term accommodations. However, lack of resources hampered its ability to effectively fulfill its mandate.

Enforcement Mechanisms and Efforts

Has a Labor Inspectorate	Yes	Has a Complaint Mechanism	Yes
Able to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes	Imposed Penalties for Child Labor Violations	Unknown
Routinely Conducted Worksite Inspections	Unknown	Conducted Criminal Investigations for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes	Imposed Penalties for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes

In 2023, it is **unknown** how many worksite inspections were performed by Chad’s **36** labor inspectors and whether any child labor violations were found. There was **1** investigation into suspected worst forms of child labor crimes with an **unknown** number of prosecutions initiated and perpetrators convicted.‡

‡ Data are up until November 2023.

Government officials used their authority to approve the sale by parents of their children for use as livestock herders. Government and military officials have also exploited children directly in their capacity as herd owners who sign contracts with the parents of children, or

who take receipt of children from traffickers to use them as herders. Observers report that complicity exists at multiple levels, including high-ranking military officers, local government officials, and local security forces. Officials may intimidate victims from pursuing criminal cases, cover up allegations of trafficking crimes, intimidate prosecutors and judges, or not pursue cases to protect suspected traffickers. Despite increased attention brought to the issue by both international partners and local civil society organizations, as well as a robust legislative and penal framework in place since 2018, the Chadian government has continued to allow forced child labor and child trafficking crimes to be perpetrated with impunity by some of its members.



COORDINATION, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

<p>Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor</p> <p>Research found no evidence that Chad established a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor.</p>	
<p>Key Policies Related to Child Labor</p> <p>Chad established policies related to child labor. However, gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including a lack of policies to address all worst forms of child labor.</p> <p><i>† Policy was adopted during the reporting period.</i> <i>‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor.</i></p>	<p>National Road Map to Implement the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons: Adopted in 2019, with the goal of implementing a National Action Plan and ensuring interagency enforcement of the 2018 President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons. Includes provisions for training members of the courts, local authorities, traditional and religious leaders, members of civil society, and members of enforcement agencies. During the reporting period, the government drafted a National Action Plan to Combat Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking (2023–2025) that includes awareness campaigns, establishment of an early warning system in remote areas, and research on the root causes of human trafficking in Chad and the exploitation of girls in domestic work to inform judicial sector and policy actions. The plan was awaiting approval at the end of the reporting period.</p> <p>National Child Protection Policy:[†] Developed with the support of UNICEF and adopted on March 4, 2023. Includes a budgeted action plan. During the reporting period, partners produced proposed revisions to the Child Code to be submitted to Parliament in 2024.</p>
<p>Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor</p> <p>Chad funded and participated in programs that may contribute to eliminating child labor. However, these social programs are inadequate because they do not address the full scope of the problem, including forced child labor in herding, domestic work, and commercial sexual exploitation.</p>	<p>Shelters Program: The Ministry of Gender and National Solidarity, with support from UNICEF and civil society organizations, runs shelters to provide temporary assistance to victims of child trafficking. Shelters provide food, education, medical and psychological care, and reintegration services. Services are funded in part by a National Solidarity Fund maintained by the Prime Minister’s Office. Shelters continued to provide victim services during the reporting period.</p> <p>UNICEF Programs: Multifaceted humanitarian action targeting children, including refugees and internally displaced children in Chad. Includes interventions in education, healthcare, nutrition, and other areas of basic need. The \$21 million Education Cannot Wait (2020–2023) program was developed under the Ministry of National Education’s Transitional Education Plan and supports education for 446,744 at-risk children. Interventions include education services and materials as well as non-formal education and literacy programs for out-of-school adolescent children. UNICEF also supports the digitization of birth registration, providing registration and delivery of birth certificates directly in health centers, and maintains child-friendly spaces to support resilience among crisis-affected children. During the reporting period, UNICEF finalized a national case management system in partnership with the Ministry in charge of Child Protection and provided training on harmonized case management for government and non-governmental social workers.</p> <p>World Food Program (WFP) Programs: Aim to provide food security and educational outcomes in Chad among crisis-affected and vulnerable populations. Seek to promote resilient livelihoods and sustainable food systems, including by providing meals to school children. Prioritize strengthening national institutions to manage food security and coordinating cooperation with humanitarian and development partners in Chad. During the reporting period, provided unconditional food assistance and cash transfers to 2.8 million crisis-affected people, including over 600,000 refugees and returnees fleeing conflict in Sudan; supported 431,758 children and school staff in school-based programs; and reached 240,839 people through asset creation and livelihood programs.</p>

For information about USDOL’s projects to address child labor around the world, visit dol.gov/ILABprojects
 For references, please visit dol.gov/ChildLaborReports