

GUINEA

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

In 2023, Guinea made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government passed the Law to Combat Human Trafficking and Similar Practices in Guinea, which increases victim protections, mandates the creation of a victim fund, and establishes an anti-trafficking committee. The labor inspectorate increased worksite inspections by at least 46 percent, from 441 in 2022 to at least 646 in 2023. Law enforcement agencies also increased border security and surveillance to identify potential child trafficking situations. In addition, the government developed and validated a 3-year national action plan to address human trafficking and hosted a regional workshop to improve anti-trafficking coordination between Guinea, Togo, and Côte d'Ivoire. It also resumed direct cash transfers, after a 2-year hiatus, to households facing poverty, which helps reduce their vulnerability to child labor. Although the government made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas during the reporting period, it does not meet the international standard for the minimum age for work. Guinea's legal protections do not cover children working outside of a formal employment relationship or children who are self-employed, and they allow children under the age of 13 to perform light work. In addition, the government lacks a coordinating mechanism and national policy to address all relevant worst forms of child labor, and social programs do not address the extent of the child labor problem.



PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent of Population
Working	5 to 14	31.2% (Unavailable)
Hazardous Work by Children	15 to 17	Unavailable
Attending School	5 to 14	54.2%
Combining Work and School	7 to 14	17.3%

Children in Guinea are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including forced labor in artisanal mining and forced begging.

Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity



Agriculture

Working in agriculture, including farming cashews, cocoa, and coffee. Herding livestock. Working in fishing, sometimes with exposure to inclement weather, dangerous waters, dangerous equipment, poor sanitation, and lack of fresh food and water. Working in forestry, including transporting dead wood, working with kilns, and carbonization of dead wood.



Industry

Mining[†] gold and diamonds, including exposure to toxic chemicals. Quarrying.[†] Manufacturing, including soapmaking and dyeing, sometimes with exposure to hazardous chemicals. Construction,[†] including carrying heavy loads, operating machinery, and fabricating construction materials.



Services

Street work, including vending, begging, shoe shining, and carrying heavy loads as porters in markets and the transportation sector. Working in restaurants. Domestic work.



Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor[‡]

Forced labor in street vending, domestic work, construction, artisanal mining, herding, fishing, and farming. Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Forced begging. Use in illicit activities, including in the production and trafficking of drugs.

[†] 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 Guinea's implementation of its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

Legal Framework

Raise the minimum age for light work to age 13 to comply with international standards and 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 to be engaged in light work.

Ensure that all children are protected by the minimum age for work laws, including children working outside of a formal employment relationship and children who are self-employed.

Establish by law free public education through lower secondary school.

Enforcement

Ensure that the government conducts an adequate number of labor inspections throughout the country.

Provide consistent training, including initial courses, refresher courses, and training on new laws, for labor law and criminal enforcement officials.

Ensure labor inspections are conducted in all regions of the country, including in the agricultural sector, where child labor is known to be present, and publish inspection data.

Ensure that labor inspectors and criminal law enforcement officers, including the Special Police Unit of the Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals, receive adequate human and material resources to enforce labor laws, including office supplies, fuel, and vehicles.

Publish complete data on labor law enforcement, including the number of penalties imposed and collected.

Publish data on criminal law enforcement efforts to address the worst forms of child labor, including the number of investigations conducted, violations found, prosecutions initiated, convictions made, and penalties imposed.

Coordination

Establish a coordinating mechanism to prevent and eliminate all forms of child labor.

Government Policies

Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor.

Increase investments in education and concrete actions to implement the Ten-Year Education Plan for Guinea and make information about implementation measures publicly available.

Social Programs

Enhance efforts to make education accessible for all children by eliminating fees and associated costs, improving school infrastructure, providing transportation, protecting students from violence and sexual harassment in schools, ensuring that pregnant students may continue their studies, and increasing school and teacher availability.

Provide all children with access to birth registration or identity documentation.

Institute programs to address the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture, domestic work, forced begging, mining, and street work.



CHILDREN AT HIGHER RISK

Children whose parents send them to live and work with family members or strangers purportedly in exchange for schooling, in arrangements known as *confiage*, are frequently exploited in forced domestic work and other forced services. Children sent to Koranic schools also face increased vulnerability to forced begging or forced labor in their teachers’ agricultural interests. Finally, undocumented migrants and stateless children face higher risks of child labor due to their lack of identification documents.



BARRIERS TO EDUCATION ACCESS

Significant factors hinder access to education and therefore leave children vulnerable to child labor. Barriers to education include the limited number of public schools, lack of transportation, the lack of teachers (particularly in rural areas), and violence in schools. Accommodations for children with disabilities are also lacking, leading some parents to decide not to enroll those children in school. Guinean families must pay school fees and other indirect costs, which can be prohibitively expensive. Girls face particular barriers to school attendance and completion, and sometimes leave school early due to cultural barriers, pregnancy, and sexual harassment at school.



LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Guinea has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor. However, Guinea’s laws do not meet international standards on free basic public education or on the minimum age for work, as minimum age laws only apply to children with written employment contracts and allow children under the age of 13 to perform light work without a limit on the number of hours or the conditions of work.

Child Labor Laws and Regulations	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work, 16 Years		Articles 121.4 and 137.5 of the Labor Code; Article 919 of the Children’s Code
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work, 18 Years		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 Children’s Code
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children		Articles 2 and 4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 147 of the Mining Code; Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Articles 909–936 of the Children’s Code
Prohibition of Slavery, Debt Bondage, and Forced Labor		Articles 6, 893–905, 912–915, and 922–923 of the Children’s Code; Articles 3, 36, 38, and 46 of the Law on Human Trafficking
Prohibition of Child Trafficking		Articles 893–901 and 912 of the Children’s Code; Articles 3, 36, and 46 of the Law on Human Trafficking
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children		Articles 346–348 and 355 of the Penal Code; Articles 820, 852–856, and 867–871 of the Children’s Code; Article 39 of the Law on Human Trafficking
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities		Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Article 890 of the Children’s Code; Article 344 of the Penal Code
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment, 18 Years		Article 941 of the Children’s Code
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*	
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups		Article 792.7 of the Penal Code; Article 941 of the Children’s Code
Compulsory Education Age, 16 Years		Article 6, Title 1 of Education Decree
Free Public Education		

* Country has no conscription

On April 6, 2023, the National Council of the Transition, the transition government’s legislative body, adopted the Law to Combat Human Trafficking and Similar Practices in Guinea. The new law brings together existing provisions from the Children’s Code and the Penal Code in one place. It also provides additional protections for victims and witnesses, establishes a victim fund, and mandates that the government establish an anti-trafficking committee. On April 26, 2024, it was enacted by the President and announced to the public in a state television broadcast. Alongside this positive development, several gaps in the legal framework remain. Guinea’s Children’s Code and the Labor Code allow children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform light work, which does not meet international standards that set the minimum age for light work at 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. Guinea has no law providing for free basic education for all children; the former Constitution, which stipulated free public education, was dissolved by the transition government in 2021 and has yet to be replaced.

 **ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR**

In 2023, labor and criminal law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to address child labor. However, insufficient financial, human, and material resources hindered enforcement efforts.

Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Ministry of Labor and Public Service: Enforces all labor laws, including those related to child labor, through its General Labor Inspectorate. Labor inspectors can impose civil penalties directly or draft reports of criminal violations and refer them to the Ministry of Justice for prosecution. In 2023, labor inspectors participated in a capacity-building workshop and received training on human trafficking. In addition, the Conakry Regional Labor Inspectorate prepared terms of reference to inspect 15 sectors for labor violations, including the port and airport, banking, education, construction, hotel, mining, informal economy, fishing, non-governmental organizations, mechanics, industries, telecommunications, media, private surveillance, and security. However, insufficient financial, human, and material resources hindered their ability to fulfill their mandate.

Ministry of Security and Civil Protection: Investigates violations of criminal law. Through its Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals (OPROGEM), investigates criminal cases related to the protection of minors, including the worst forms of child labor. There is an OPROGEM representative in each of the 33 central police stations of the country who specializes in issues related to the trafficking of women and children. In practice, OPROGEM focuses on urban areas, while gendarmes in the Ministry of Defense’s Central Service for the Protection of Vulnerable Persons (SCPPV) investigate criminal cases related to the protection of minors, including the worst forms of child labor, in rural areas where there is less police presence. Both enforcement units refer cases to the Juvenile Court in the Ministry of Justice for prosecution. OPROGEM and SCPPV units received training on trafficking in persons during the reporting period. However, more training for judicial and security sector actors is still needed, and insufficient resources continue to hinder their ability to investigate and prosecute cases related to the worst forms of child labor.

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	Yes	Conducted Criminal Investigations for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes	Imposed Penalties for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Unknown

In 2023, **168** labor inspectors conducted **646** worksite inspections in the Conakry capital region, finding **2** child labor violations. The government also conducted **1** investigation into suspected worst forms of child labor crimes, although it is **unknown** whether any prosecutions were initiated or perpetrators were convicted.



COORDINATION, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

<p>Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor</p> <p>Guinea established a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor. However, this mechanism does not coordinate efforts to address all worst forms of child labor in the country.</p>	<p>National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices: Coordinates anti-trafficking efforts. Led by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children, and Vulnerable People (MPFEPV), includes representatives from the Ministries of Labor, Security, Justice, Mines, and Education, among others. Coordinates with civil society and foreign donors. Organizes awareness campaigns for human trafficking prevention. During the reporting period, developed the new National Action Plan to Address Trafficking in Persons (2023–2025), adopted a communication strategy to raise awareness among the public, and conducted awareness sessions in local languages to reach target audiences.</p>
<p>Key Policies Related to Child Labor</p> <p>Guinea established policies related to child labor. However, these policies do not cover all worst forms of child labor in the country, including in artisanal mining.</p> <p><i>† Policy was approved during the reporting period.</i></p>	<p>National Action Plan to Address Trafficking in Persons (2023–2025):† Developed based on the anti-trafficking action plan of the Economic Community of West African States, international partner recommendations, and gaps identified in the previous plan, and validated in October 2023. Includes funding to create and operationalize a secure trafficking database accessible to all relevant stakeholders. MPFEPV has included a line in the national 2024 budget for funding to implement this action plan.</p> <p>Ten-Year National Education Plan for Guinea (2020–2029): Launched under the National Economic and Social Development Policy. Sets the goal of progressively providing free primary education in Guinea and makes provisions to ensure that girls and other underserved groups have access to education. Implemented by the Ministry of National Education and Literacy at the primary school level. Has received over \$60 million in funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the French Development Agency, and UNICEF. During the reporting period, stakeholders developed a Partnership Compact setting strategic goals for 2024–2027 to accelerate implementation of the Ten-Year Plan, prioritizing teacher recruitment, and improving girls’ enrollment. The government also launched the first batch of digital educational content in line with the national curriculum, as part of a multi-year initiative to digitize learning in Guinea. However, the percentage of government expenditure allocated to education in 2023 was just under 12 percent, well below its GPE commitment of 20 percent and the level of investment needed to ensure equal-access, universal primary education.</p>
<p>Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor</p> <p>Guinea participated in programs that may contribute to eliminating child labor. However, these social programs are inadequate because they do not address the problem in all sectors where child labor has been identified, including in agriculture, domestic work, forced begging, mining, and street work.</p> <p><i>* Program was launched during the reporting period.</i></p>	<p>Temporary Reception and Child Protection Centers for Trafficking Victims: Facilities that provide shelter and services to trafficking survivors, including children. Managed by NGOs, with support from MPFEPV. Includes a children’s shelter in the N’Zérékoré administrative region, the Catholic Organization for Human Promotion CARITAS Guinea Sonfonia reception center in Conakry, a short-term shelter run by the SCPPV in Conakry, and a shelter in Jean Paul II Hospital in Conakry. Building rehabilitation has been provided as part of an EU project entitled “Support the Fight Against Human Trafficking in the States of the Gulf of Guinea,” which aims to prevent human trafficking in six countries in the Gulf of Guinea.</p> <p>Preventing Risks and Occasions of Trafficking and Exploitation in Communities and Townships (PROTECT):* Two-year USAID-funded program launched in October 2023 to help local communities combat trafficking in persons. Developed jointly between the Government of Guinea, USAID, and development partners. Aims to strengthen government efforts to combat human trafficking and improve coordination with civil society.</p> <p>UNICEF Programs: Multisectoral initiatives developed in cooperation with the Government of Guinea. Include education interventions, child protection initiatives, and birth registration support. During the reporting period, UNICEF provided school scholarships to 2,000 middle school students, including 1,051 girls, to help cover school supplies and other costs, and organized train-the-trainer sessions for educators.</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