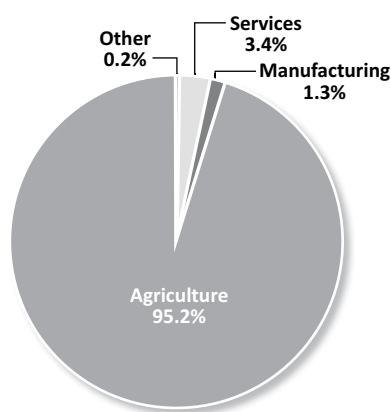


In 2011, Ethiopia made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government of Ethiopia began to participate in a USDOL-funded project that targets 20,000 children engaged in and at risk of entering exploitative child labor. The Government will coordinate the provision of services and provide occupational safety and health training to labor inspectors as a part of the project. During the reporting period, the Government also conducted awareness-raising activities to combat child labor and piloted a child labor free zone. However, the Labor Proclamation only applies to contractual labor, and thus fails to protect many children who perform unpaid work, work on the streets, or as child domestics. The Government has drafted but did not yet adopt an updated list of hazardous occupations for children. In addition, Ethiopia has yet to adopt the National Action Plan on Child Labor and Protocol and Guidelines. The worst forms of child labor continue to exist, particularly in dangerous forms of agriculture and domestic service.

### Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	50.1 (8,854,463)
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	29.2
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	17.2
Primary Completion Rate		72.2

### Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



#### Sources:

**Primary completion rate:** Data from 2010, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)

**All other data:** Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from LFS Survey, 2005.(2)



### Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Ethiopia are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in dangerous activities in agriculture and domestic service.(3-6) Although evidence is limited, there is reason to believe that the worst forms of child labor are used in the production of coffee, cotton, onions, sugarcane and tea.(7-13) Children also herd and take care of cattle, which may require them to work long hours and expose them to disease or injury.(3, 12, 14-17) Children working in agriculture may use dangerous tools, carry heavy loads and apply harmful pesticides.(6, 15) Children reportedly catch fish, making them vulnerable to risks including drowning.(4, 14, 16, 18)

Children—mostly girls—work in domestic service, potentially exposing them to sexual and other forms of abuse. Child domestics may also suffer from a variety of mental health problems.(4, 15, 19-21) Girls collect firewood and water, activities, which may require them to walk long distances with heavy loads.(11, 15, 22)

Children work in the production of gold. In small-scale gold mining they may dig their own mining pits and carry over 10 gallons of water daily.(11, 12, 23, 24) Anecdotal evidence indicates that children may work in quarries.(4, 14) Children also reportedly crush clay into powder to make pottery products. This type of work may cause respiratory illnesses from prolonged exposure to clay dust.(5, 25, 26)

In urban areas, many children live and work on the streets as shoe shiners, vendors and beggars, which may expose them to severe weather, vehicle accidents and criminal

elements.(4, 5, 12, 16, 27-31) Some child beggars are intentionally maimed or blinded to raise their earnings. Children also work in the transportation, construction and manufacturing industries, potentially carrying heavy loads, working with sharp tools and risking exposure to toxic substances.(4, 5, 14-16, 32, 33)

Although the extent of the problem is unknown, reports indicate that children may comprise a considerable share of the workforce in the traditional weaving industry in Addis Ababa and in the Gamo Gofa and Wolayita Zones.(16, 19, 34-37) Child weavers may work long hours, face physical, sexual or emotional abuse from their employers and develop injuries as a result of crouching while working on traditional weaving looms.(15, 38, 39) Anecdotal evidence suggests that some child weavers suffer starvation and are held in debt bondage.(39, 40)

Children in Ethiopia are also exploited in other worst forms of child labor, including in prostitution. The commercial sexual exploitation of children is most prevalent in urban areas, especially in Addis Ababa.(5, 30, 41) Girls are recruited to work in prostitution at brothels, hotels, bars, rural truck stops and in resort towns.(5, 19, 41) Girls may also be involved in the production of pornography and in sex tourism.(41-43) There are no reports from 2011 that suggest that children continue to be recruited by local militias in the Somali Regional State.

Trafficking of children is a serious problem in Ethiopia. Children are trafficked from Oromia and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Region (SNNPR) to other regions of the country for forced labor in domestic service and the weaving industry.(34, 44, 45) Children are also trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation, begging, street vending, cattle herding and manual labor.(44-46) Children are reportedly trafficked from Ethiopia to Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, Europe and the Middle East for labor and commercial sexual exploitation.(45, 47, 48)

The Government of Ethiopia has improved access to education by building schools, increasing the number of teachers and expanding its Technical and Vocational Education and Training Program. Children in rural areas, however, are still at risk of entering the workforce at a young age due to the limited number of schools.(5, 49-52) Droughts and floods also hinder access to education in Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Diredawa, Gambella, Harar, Oromia, Somali Region, SNNPR and Tigray.(53) In addition, many children in Ethiopia are not registered at birth. Unable to prove citizenship, nonregistered children may have difficulty accessing services such as education.(19, 32, 54, 55)

## Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Labor Proclamation of 2004 sets the minimum age for employment at 14 and the minimum age for hazardous work at 18.(56) The law forbids employers from using “young workers,” defined as children ages 14 to 18, when the nature of the job or the conditions under which it is carried out might endanger the life or health of a child.(56, 57) The Labor Proclamation also prohibits children from working at night, working overtime or in dangerous occupations, including digging tunnels, working underground, in sewers, with electric transformers and transmission lines.(56, 58) In 2011, the Government drafted a Young Workers’ Directive, which includes an updated list of hazardous occupations for children, including work in mines, glass factories, deep-sea fishing, domestic labor and on the streets.(52) The Directive had not been adopted by the end of the reporting period.

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	No
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	No
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	No
	Minimum Age for Work	14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	14
	Free Public Education	Yes

The Labor Proclamation only applies to contractual labor, excluding many children who perform unpaid work and work on the streets or as child domestics.(29, 59, 60) In addition, the law allows children above the age of 14 to engage in hazardous work if this work is performed following a government-approved vocational training course. ILO Convention 138 calls for the prohibition of all hazardous work by children under the age of 16, even if the work is performed as part of vocational training.(56, 60)

The Constitution provides protections for children from trafficking, slavery and forced labor.(57) Some communities in Ethiopia have also enacted local by-laws against trafficking. The Criminal Code prohibits trafficking, child pornography, commercial sexual exploitation of children and the use of children in illicit activities.(12, 58, 61) The Criminal Code sets the minimum age for conscription and voluntary recruitment into the military at 18.(61)

### **Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement**

Although the Government of Ethiopia has established an Inter-Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking to coordinate anti-trafficking efforts, it has not created a mechanism to coordinate efforts to combat most worst forms of child labor.(45, 59)

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) is the lead agency for trafficking in persons programming and its Occupational Safety, Health and Working Environment Department (OSHWED) is responsible for data collection, analysis and policymaking for labor purposes.(45, 46, 62) Officials from federal ministries and agencies participate weekly in a Technical Working Group on Trafficking, which aims to identify trafficking trends and areas in need of public awareness campaigns on trafficking.(45) In some communities, there are also child protection committees, which include children, police, health workers and teachers.(16, 35)

The MOLSA is also the primary federal agency responsible for labor inspections, which are organized through federal and regional offices. OSHWED enforces occupational safety, health and wage and hour protections, which include child labor laws, at industrial enterprises in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa.(58, 63) In 2011, OSHWED employed 130 labor inspectors and worked with the University of Gondar, which has a new bachelor's degree program in Occupational Safety and Health, to strengthen the capacity of the inspectorate.(12, 64) The ILO reports that this department is understaffed and lacks sector-specific occupational health and safety guidelines, which weakens enforcement efforts.(63) The Regional Bureaus of Social and Labor Affairs (BOLSAs) and City Administration are responsible for labor inspections at the zonal offices and regional and city levels. Both OSHWED and BOLSAs lack equipment and their inspectors do not have access to suitable transportation, sometimes relying on employers and trade union representatives for rides.(63) Labor inspectors' salaries are not competitive and turnover is high.(62, 63)

Labor inspectors visit enterprises to conduct investigations and use checklists specific to small, medium and large

enterprises.(59, 63) If a labor violation is found, labor inspectors may require the employer to correct the situation within a given timeframe or the labor inspector may report the incident to the Minister of Labor.(56, 63) Labor inspectors do not have the authority to impose immediate sanctions, and fines can only be issued by a court.(56, 63) Although labor inspectors bring cases to court, they lack training on presenting evidence in court.(64) In addition, the labor relations board, an institution that settles labor disputes, can receive labor complaints and issue decisions on alleged violations.(39) According to the MOLSA, they carried out approximately 35,000 labor inspections in 2011. The MOLSA does not disaggregate child labor data and research found no information on how many citations were issued and whether appropriate sanctions were applied.(12, 62, 63)

The Ministry of Justice and the police investigate and prosecute criminal violations of laws that protect against the worst forms of child labor.(12) The Government of Ethiopia has a special court to hear trafficking cases.(65) As Child Protection Units are no longer operational, police departments and district officials refer victims of the worst forms of child labor to NGO shelters and government orphanages.(45) The police and the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment are also no longer operating a hotline to report trafficking cases.(45)

At the local level, Child Protection Committees, Child Rights Clubs, and Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Task Forces promote children's rights and train members on child labor, case management, international child labor standards and Ethiopian child labor laws. In some cases, such groups may provide children with direct food transfers and school supplies.(66, 67)

The Human Trafficking and Narcotics Section in the Organized Crime Investigation Unit of the federal police collaborates with the prosecutor's office in conducting investigations, prosecuting offenders and reporting and collecting trafficking data.(12, 44) In 2011, this Unit employed 31 investigators who found 136 cases of human trafficking, which resulted in 77 convictions. There is no information available on whether these cases involved children.(12, 45) Despite these efforts, the United Nations Committee against Torture is concerned with the low prosecution and conviction rates for the internal trafficking of women and children for forced labor and sexual exploitation.(68)

### **Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor**

Although the Government drafted a National Action Plan on Child Labor (2010-2015) and a Protocol and Guidelines on

child labor identification, withdrawal, reintegration and educational policies, these have not yet been adopted.(12, 29, 32)

The Government's National Plan of Action on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children outlines targets for reducing the number of children in the worst forms of child labor, including commercial sexual exploitation.(69, 70) The National Action Plan Against Trafficking and the National Plan of Action for Children also include provisions to reduce the worst forms of child labor. Although all three national plans of action expired in 2010, the Government of Ethiopia reports that they are still being implemented.(29, 71) However, the National Plan of Action for Children was not translated into local languages or adequately distributed to local authorities in charge of its implementation.(54) In 2011, the Government, in cooperation with the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions and industry federations, developed an action plan to combat human trafficking.(72) Although the Government has established the right to free primary education in practice, or until the approximate age of 14, the cost of school supplies keeps some children from attending school.(5, 73)

Child labor issues have been integrated into the following Ethiopian development agendas and policies: Development Social Welfare Policy, the Education Sector Development Program III, National Youth Policy, Decent Work Country Program and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. In addition, the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs and the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office's Standard Service Delivery Guidelines for Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Care includes a component on exploitative child labor.(12, 58, 74-79) However, with the exception of the Standard Service Delivery Guidelines for Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Care, these policies do not have budgets, detailed action plans or targets related to the worst forms of child labor.(58, 74-79)

The Ethiopian Government also supports policies that directly target children and youth. The National Policy Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education supports early education programs for young children and community-based non-formal school readiness programs.(12, 80, 81) The Growth and Transformation Plan 2010-2015 supports the expansion of education services and outlines interventions over the next 5 years to provide greater opportunities for vulnerable households to engage in decent work.(12, 82) The National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy aims to increase employment opportunities for school dropouts and people without formal education through technology and skill accumulation.(83) The question of whether these policies have

an impact on child labor, however, does not appear to have been addressed.

## **Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor**

In 2011, the Government of Ethiopia conducted awareness-raising activities to combat child labor and continued piloting a child labor free zone in Addis Ababa and Adama, in collaboration with the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment. It brought together child protection officers, labor inspectors, police officers and other stakeholders to reintegrate child laborers.(12, 67) The Government of Ethiopia, in partnership with UNICEF, continued to provide over 6,000 street children with formal and non-formal education and access to free health care in Addis Ababa and 14 other major towns.(84) In addition, the Government provided clothing and food to 3,000 people living on the streets, including children.(85)

The Government of Ethiopia began to participate in a 4-year, \$10 million project funded by USDOL and implemented by World Vision, which targets 20,000 children engaged in or at risk of entering exploitative child labor, particularly in the traditional weaving industry and in rural areas.(16) This project will also assist 7,000 households of targeted children to promote sustainable livelihoods, and will collaborate with the MOLSA to coordinate the provision of services and provide occupational safety and health training to labor inspectors. This project operates primarily in Addis Ababa and in the Gamo Gofa and Wolayita Zones.(16)

During the reporting period, Ethiopia participated in a \$1 million project funded by the Government of Italy to support the development of a national action plan on the worst forms of child labor.(86) Ethiopia is also participating in the Regional Program for Eastern Africa (2009-2012), which aims to combat the trafficking of children. With support from UNODC, this Program aims to collect data on trafficking in persons, develop a border control system and promote the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols.(87)

During the reporting period, the Government of Ethiopia, in partnership with UNICEF, launched a 3-year pilot cash transfer program in two districts of the Tigray Region to assist vulnerable populations, including child laborers. This program aims to increase school enrollment and attendance and improve the nutrition and health of the children in the targeted districts.(12, 88, 89) The program will operate through Community Care Coalitions and will assist approximately 3,300 households. Depending on the results of the pilot, the

Minister of Labor and Social Affairs reported that it may be expanded to the rest of the country.(12, 88)

In 2011, the Government of Ethiopia continued to implement Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) Phase II. This is Africa's largest social protection program operating in 318 food insecure districts and assists over 7.7 million beneficiaries.(90-95) The PSNP Phase II has several components, one of which provides cash and in-kind transfers to OVCs and households without able-bodied adults who can work. This component has been shown to reduce the amount of time children spend doing household work and increase the amount of time children spend in school.(90-95) However, in rare cases, another component to promote employment through public works has been shown to increase the amount of time children work, as families substitute adult family members' labor with children's labor to receive benefits under this program.(92-94)

The Government of Ethiopia also participates in the General Education Quality Improvement Project (2008-2013) to improve the quality of general education throughout Ethiopia. Funded by the World Bank and other donors at \$417 million, this Project consists of curriculum development, textbook assessment, teacher training and school construction.(96) Furthermore, the Government's Standard Service Delivery Guidelines for Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Care and Support Programs aims to ensure that OVCs are enrolled in school and, at a minimum, complete some technical and vocational training.(74)

While the Government participates in and implements several programs to combat the worst forms of child labor, its efforts have not targeted sectors with a high incidence of the worst forms of child labor, such as dangerous work in agriculture and domestic service.

**Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the elimination of the worst forms of child labor in Ethiopia:**

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Enact the Young Workers' Directive.	2011
	Ensure protection for children who are working on a non-contractual basis and engaging in unpaid work.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Amend the Labor Proclamation to raise the minimum age children may enter hazardous work following vocational training from age 14 to 16, in line with ILO Convention 138.	2009, 2010, 2011
Coordination and Enforcement	Establish a coordinating mechanism to combat all worst forms of child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Develop sector-specific occupational health and safety guidelines.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Strengthen the capacity of labor law enforcement officials by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing labor inspectors with competitive salaries to reduce turnover.</li> <li>• Providing enforcement personnel with high-quality and regular training on child labor laws and procedures to bring a case to court.</li> <li>• Ensuring that labor inspectors in the MOLSA have adequate resources to conduct systematic inspections in all sectors of the economy.</li> </ul>	2009, 2010, 2011 2009, 2010, 2011 2009, 2010, 2011
	Gather and publish information about the number of child labor investigations, citations and criminal prosecutions initiated and issued, and penalties applied.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Separate trafficking statistics for children and adults.	2011

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Coordination and Enforcement	Provide training on internal trafficking to personnel in the Human Trafficking and Narcotics Section and regional police to improve the likelihood of successful prosecutions and conviction of offenders.	2011
Policies	Adopt the National Action Plan on Child Labor and the Protocol and Guidelines.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Translate the National Plan of Action for Children into local languages.	2010, 2011
	Include budgets, action plans and targets related to the worst forms of child labor in development agendas and policies.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Ensure that children can complete primary school by subsidizing or defraying the cost of school supplies.	2010, 2011
Social Programs	Develop social protection programs for the withdrawal or prevention of children working in dangerous forms of agriculture and domestic service.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Ensure that employment promotion programs do not promote child labor.	2010, 2011
	Improve access to education in rural areas by building additional schools.	2010, 2011
	Ensure the registration of all children at birth.	2010, 2011

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