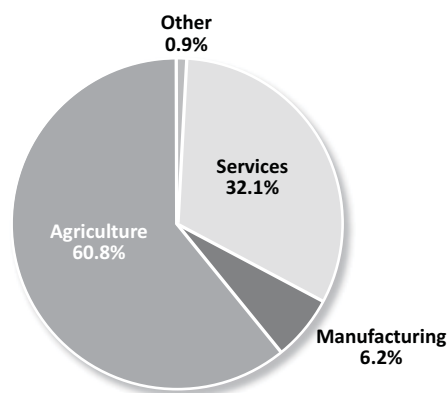


In 2011, Paraguay made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government expanded a cash transfer initiative conditioned on removing children from exploitative work and adapted other social programs to reach more children involved in hazardous work. Despite this progress, current legislation does not specifically prohibit internal trafficking for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. Furthermore, there is a lack of sufficient resources to enforce labor laws in remote areas. Children continue to work in hazardous activities in agriculture and domestic service sectors, in which they may face a variety of occupational health and safety risks.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	15.3 (113,072)
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	90.3
Combining Work and School	10-14 yrs.	12.1
Primary Completion Rate		93.5

Working Children by Sector, ages 10-14



Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2007, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)

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

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children are engaged in the worst forms of child labor in Paraguay, particularly in hazardous activities in agriculture.(3-5) Children, primarily boys and many of indigenous descent, work in hazardous activities in the



production of cotton.(6, 7) Children work in the worst forms of child labor in sugarcane.(8, 9) A 2011 quantitative study on child labor in the sugarcane sector in Paraguay estimated that children comprise over 25 percent of the sugarcane workforce, and about one out of four of those children suffered injuries, on average, twice a year while working.(8) The most common injuries entailed lacerations to the upper or lower extremities while cutting down or peeling the sharp outer leaves of the sugarcane, and other risks included carrying heavy loads and prolonged exposure to extreme heat, snakes and insects.(8) Although evidence is limited, children reportedly work in the worst forms of child labor in the production of soy, sesame, wheat, manioc, peanuts, beans and *stevia* (a plant-based sweetener).(6, 7) Children working in agriculture may use hazardous tools, carry heavy loads and apply harmful pesticides.(6, 8-10)

Children, primarily girls and many of indigenous descent, work as *criadas*, or child domestic servants, who often work long hours and may be subject to physical and sexual exploitation by their employer. Children also work as street vendors and in markets, and are vulnerable to severe weather, traffic accidents and crime.(4, 9, 11-13)

Children, primarily boys, also work in hazardous activities in the production of limestone and bricks, as well as in the manufacturing, construction, and transportation sectors, which may require them to carry heavy loads and expose them to vehicular accidents and toxic dust.(4, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15) Although the evidence is limited, there are reports that children

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work in the production of charcoal, which may subject them to working long hours and carrying heavy loads.(10, 12)

Children in Paraguay are trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation and forced domestic service from rural to urban areas, including Asunción, Encarnación and Ciudad del Este. Through organized networks, Paraguayan children are trafficked from Paraguay to Santa Cruz and La Paz, Bolivia, for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation.(16, 17) Limited evidence suggests that in the Chaco region, indigenous children work raising cattle, a potentially dangerous activity, and sometimes work under conditions of debt bondage.(4, 13, 18, 19) The production of child pornography is a problem in Paraguay.(20-22)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Child and Adolescent Code establishes the minimum age for work at 14, and light work is permitted for children between the ages of 12 and 14. The Government, however, has not yet adopted regulations governing the nature and conditions of the light work permitted for children between ages 12 and 14.(23, 24) The List of Work Endangering Children (Decree 4951) prohibits children under age 18 from working in 26 broad classifications of work including work with dangerous tools, toxic substances, cattle, prolonged exposure to extreme climactic conditions and work in public transport, public areas, mines and domestic service. The Labor Code establishes fines for employing children under age 18 in dangerous forms of work.(25, 26) However, research has not identified the specific legal provisions that stipulate penalties for violations of the List of Work Endangering Children or which ministries enforce Decree 4951.(24-26) Education is compulsory until the age of 15.(27)

The Penal Code prohibits commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, including recruiting, facilitating and benefitting economically from child prostitution.(24, 28) It also prohibits child pornography, including its production, distribution and possession.(28) Both the Constitution and the Penal Code prohibit slavery, forced labor or analogous conditions. The Penal Code establishes penalties for forced labor.(28, 29)

The Penal Code has increased penalties for the international trafficking of a child.(20, 28, 30) However, current legislation does not specifically prohibit internal trafficking for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation.(9, 31)

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	15
	Free Public Education	Yes

The law establishes the minimum age for conscription into the military at age 18.(32) The revised Penal Code prohibits the use of children in illicit activities.(9)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The National Council for Children and Adolescents (National Council) is the national coordinating body that establishes policies to protect children's rights and approves specific programs aimed at children and adolescents. The National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate the Exploitation of Children (CONAETTI) is responsible for developing and implementing child labor policies.(24, 33) It includes representatives from the Ministries of Justice and Labor (MJT), Health and Social Welfare, and Education and Culture; National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents, the Social Action Secretariat, the Women's Secretariat, and civil society are also represented.(33)

MJT is responsible for inspecting workplaces for child labor. It can issue fines against businesses found employing children in work prohibited by the Labor Code. Child laborers identified by inspections are referred to other agencies for educational and social services. MJT employs 43 labor inspectors in eight state-level branch offices, and they inspect for all types of labor violations, including child labor.(9) The number of inspectors nationwide increased by four from 2010 to 2011.(9) However, MJT did not have sufficient vehicles to enforce labor laws in remote areas.(9) MJT indicated that it conducted 1,544

labor inspections during its reporting cycle, which was from July 2010 to June 2011.(9, 34) Although inspectors did not target child labor, MJT inspections in 2011 found children working in two brick factories in Tobatí and in seven limestone quarries in the Department of Concepción.(9) During 2011, CONAETI trained inspectors, mediators and legal advisors on child labor regulations.(9)

The Public Ministry's Special Directorate to Fight the Trafficking of Persons and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children is responsible for enforcing criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor.(33) It has a unit staffed by two specialized prosecutors who regularly receive high-quality training in human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children.(33) The Public Ministry also acts on referrals from the MJT and the National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents in dangerous cases of child labor and criminal law violations.(33) The National Police operates a unit that investigates cases of trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The unit employs 33 staff members and operates in five cities.(33) In February 2011, the National Police established mandatory training on human trafficking.(20) Along with local prosecutors, the anti-trafficking unit at the Attorney General's Office investigates and prosecutes human trafficking cases.(20)

Prosecutors obtained convictions in four cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children between ages 14 and 16, resulting in prison terms between 2 and 4 years.(9) Four convictions for the distribution of child pornography were also obtained, resulting in prison terms between 3 and 4 years.(9) All of those who were convicted are currently serving time in prison.(9) Following an investigation led by Paraguay's chief human trafficking prosecutor, more than 2 dozen Paraguayan minors were rescued from brothels in Argentina in 2011.(9)

The Women's Secretariat and the National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents have offices dedicated to combating trafficking of children. The Women's Secretariat, the National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents, and the Public Ministry maintain hotlines to report cases of trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and provide social services to trafficking victims upon receiving referrals from law enforcement agencies.(33, 35)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Paraguay's policy framework to address child labor is the National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents (2010 – 2015); it seeks to coordinate policies

to combat the worst forms of child labor, provide access to free and quality education to child laborers and livelihood alternatives for their families, raise awareness of child labor and improve enforcement of child labor laws.(36, 37) As part of the National Plan, an inter-institutional guide details a coordinated institutional response for assisting child laborers.(33) The Government also has a National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents to direct inter-institutional coordination.(38)

The National Plan for Development (2010-2020) includes goals for reducing child labor as part of broader efforts to reduce social exclusion and poverty.(39)

The Government of Paraguay and other MERCOSUR countries are carrying out the Southern Child (Niñ@ Sur) Initiative to defend the rights of children and adolescents in the region. The Initiative includes public campaigns against commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, and child labor; mutual technical assistance in raising domestic legal frameworks to international standards on those issues; and the exchange of best practices related to victim protection and assistance.(40-42) During the reporting period, MERCOSUR member-countries met to discuss violence against children, child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children.(42)

Paraguay's National Tourism Office is a member of the Joint Regional Group for the Americas. The Joint Regional Group, whose members also include Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela, conducts prevention and awareness-raising campaigns to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Latin America.(43, 44) The Joint Regional Group met in April 2011 in Quito to discuss efforts and advances in combating child sex tourism.(45)

The National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents has an inter-institutional agreement with the National Bureau for Public Contracts to ensure that any goods or services procured by the government are not produced through child labor.(46)

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

The Government of Paraguay operated several programs to combat poverty, and to prevent or remove children in or at risk of the worst forms of child labor. One such program is the Embrace Program (*Programa Abrazo*), which assists children engaged in exploitative urban work by providing their families with cash transfers conditioned on children's school attendance and withdrawal from work.(47) The Program also operates

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14 centers in 11 cities in Paraguay, providing education and training, nutritional support and access to health services.(47) In 2011, the Program opened two new centers to assist families with children working in brick production in Tobatí and Encarnación.(9) Additionally, to commemorate World Day Against Child Labor in June 2011, the Embrace Program announced the expansion of its services to include children who work in domestic service, hazardous agricultural work, and garbage dumps.(48) As of December 2011, the Program had helped more than 5,200 children under age 14.(48)

A second program serves the Chaco region. It is also a cash transfer program conditioned on families' withdrawal of children from child labor and meeting education and health requirements; it helped 700 families and approximately 1,300 children younger than age 14.(49)

The Government also operates the *Tekoporã* Program, which provides conditional cash transfers to families in moderate to extreme poverty. Its primary objective is to increase school attendance among poor children.(9, 33) In 2011, the Government began to link the *Tekoporã* Program and the Embrace Program to more effectively assist working children.(12) However, these efforts only reach a small portion of children affected by the worst forms of child labor.

During August and December 2011, data on child labor were collected for the National Child Labor Survey in order to better understand the country's current child labor situation.(9, 50-52)

Education programs also addressed child labor issues. As examples, the Ministry of Education and Culture has modified its student enrollment form to capture statistics on the working

status of children, and it has implemented teacher trainings on child labor issues.(15, 33)

During the reporting period, the Government participated in a 4-year, USDOL-funded \$6.75 million regional project to promote collaboration across four countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Paraguay) to combat the worst forms of child labor among the most socially excluded populations, including children of indigenous and Afro-descent.(53, 54) The project, which began in 2009, aims to rescue 6,600 children from the worst forms of child labor through education interventions in the four countries. The project also conducts capacity building of government and civil society organizations, raising awareness and conducting research.(18) The project supports programs to reduce child labor in garbage dumps in Encarnación and brick factories in Tobatí through the provision of educational opportunities.(55)

The Government also participated in donor-funded initiatives and worked with local NGOs to combat child trafficking.(9) The Government worked with the IDB on a \$1.2 million regional project to combat the trafficking and sexual exploitation of children in municipalities of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay and aims to strengthen local organizations and governments that work in prevention, detection and victim assistance.(56) The Government also provided some funding to NGOs to assist trafficking victims in Asunción and Ciudad del Este, which furnish short-term legal, medical and psychological services.(9)

The Government of Paraguay has initiated a range of programs to combat child labor and its causes. However, additional programs are needed to reach the magnitude of children working 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 Paraguay:

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Adopt regulations governing the nature and conditions of the light work permitted for children between ages 12 and 14.	2009, 2011
	Revise the Penal Code to prohibit trafficking in persons within the national territory.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Create and publicize the legislation that establishes sanctions for violations of the Decree 4951, the List of Work Endangering Children.	2010, 2011
Coordination and Enforcement	Increase personnel and vehicles available to the Ministry of Justice to conduct child labor inspections.	2009, 2010, 2011

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Social Programs	Further expand the <i>Tekoporã</i> and Embrace Programs to provide assistance to more families and children affected by the worst forms of child labor.	2010, 2011
	Create and further expand social programs to reach children working in domestic service and agriculture.	2009, 2010, 2011

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