

In 2015, Mali made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government adopted and modestly implemented the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices (2015-2017), which provides protection and social assistance to victims of human trafficking, including children. The Government also established a referral mechanism between the National Directorate of Labor and the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family to ensure that victims of child labor receive appropriate social services. In northern Mali, the Government made progress in providing access to education by reopening 89 percent of the schools for the 2014/15 academic year. However, children in Mali are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in gold mining and the production of rice. Children were also abducted and forcibly recruited by armed rebel and extremist Islamic militia groups, and some of these children were detained and charged with crimes for their association with these groups. Laws relating to the worst forms of child labor do not provide adequate coverage, and gaps in enforcement have left children unprotected.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Mali are engaged in child labor, including in the production of rice.(1-4) Children are also engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in gold mining.(5-9) Children were also abducted and forcibly recruited for use in armed conflict in northern Mali by rebels and extremist Islamic militia groups.(3, 8, 10-12) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Mali.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

| Children | Age | Percent |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Working (% and population) | 5-14 yrs. | 25.1 (1,216,300) |
| Attending School (%) | 5-14 yrs. | 46.0 |
| Combining Work and School (%) | 7-14 yrs. | 13.4 |
| Primary Completion Rate (%) | | 53.1 |

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2014, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015.(13)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Demographic and Health Survey, 2012–2013.(14)

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 | Seeding,*† weeding,*† plowing,*† harvesting,*† transporting,*† and applying chemical fertilizers,*† particularly in the production of rice and cotton (1, 2, 8, 15) |
| | Raising livestock,* including oxen* and small ruminants* (2, 4, 6, 16) |
| | Fishing* (6, 17, 18) |
| Industry | Gold mining,† including digging shafts,† extracting ore from underground tunnels,† crushing ore,† and amalgamating ore with mercury† (5, 8, 9, 19-22) |
| | Assembling fishing canoes*†(17) |
| Services | Domestic work, transportation* (8, 15, 18, 23) |

Table 2. Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity (cont)

| Sector/Industry | Activity |
|---|---|
| Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor† | Forced labor in mining, domestic work,* commerce,* and farming,* including in the production of rice, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (3, 8, 23-25) |
| | Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking* (3, 26-29) |
| | Use in armed conflict as a result of forced recruitment by armed rebel and extremist Islamic militia groups (3, 8, 10, 11) |
| | Hereditary servitude (3, 8, 25, 30) |
| | Forced labor in the production of salt* (3, 8) |
| | Forced into begging by Koranic teachers, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (3, 7, 8) |

* Evidence of this activity is limited and/or the extent of the problem is unknown.

† 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.

Children, especially of the Bellah community, also known as black Tuaregs, who were former slaves, are subject to hereditary slavery in northern Mali.(3, 8, 25, 30) In addition, children, particularly those of the Songhai ethnicity, work in debt bondage in the northern salt mines of Taoudenni.(3, 8) Boys placed in the care of Koranic teachers for education are forced by their teachers to beg on the street or to work in fields; they must then surrender the money they have earned to their teachers. Other Koranic teachers force boys to perform agricultural labor on their personally owned land.(2, 3, 7, 8, 16)

The Government signed a peace agreement with armed groups of northern Mali in June 2015. Despite this progress, intermittent fighting and violence continued throughout 2015, resulting in the killing and displacement of children.(12, 31) Although the incidence of child soldiers decreased during the reporting period, children continued to be abducted, forcibly recruited, and trained by armed rebel and extremist Islamic militia groups, including the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA), the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA), the Allies Tuareg Self-Defense Group (GATIA), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Ansar al-Dine, and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) in northern Mali. (3, 8, 10-12) Reports also indicate that in 2015, children were held in state-owned adult prisons and charged with committing terrorism against the Government due to their past involvement with extremist groups during the 2012–2013 armed conflict.(3, 10, 32)

In northern Mali, the Government made progress in providing access to education by reopening 89 percent of the schools for the 2014/15 academic year.(33) However, educational infrastructure is still damaged as a result of the conflict; many teachers and students remain displaced and some teachers in insecure areas felt it was unsafe to return to school.(8, 12, 33, 34)

The Constitution guarantees free and compulsory education.(8, 35) However, parents are expected to pay school fees for registration, uniforms, books, and materials. These expenses may deter families from sending their children to school.(8) Many children in Mali are not registered at birth. Unable to prove citizenship, unregistered children may have difficulty accessing services, including education.(8, 36) In addition, evidence suggests that incidences of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, including corporal punishment and the rape of students by teachers, prevent some children from remaining in school.(8, 37) Due to societal discrimination at the local level, some Arab, Peul, and Bellah children are denied access to school based on their ethnicity.(8, 38)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Mali 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 | ✓ |

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor (cont)

| Convention | Ratification |
|--|--------------|
|  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, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

| Standard | Yes/No | Age | Related Legislation |
|---|--------|-----|--|
| Minimum Age for Work | Yes | 14 | Article L. 187 of the Labor Code (39) |
| Minimum Age for Hazardous Work | Yes | 18 | Hazardous Occupation List; Article D.189.14 of the Labor Code (39, 40) |
| Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children | Yes | | Hazardous Occupation List; Article 189 of the Labor Code (39, 40) |
| Prohibition of Forced Labor | Yes | | Article L.6 of the Labor Code; Article 1 of the Trafficking in Persons Law (39, 41) |
| Prohibition of Child Trafficking | Yes | | Article 244 of the Penal Code; Article 7 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 63 of the Child Protection Code (35, 41, 42) |
| Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children | Yes | | Article 228 of the Penal Code; Article 1 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 57 of the Child Protection Code (35, 41, 42) |
| Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities | No | | |
| Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment | Yes | 18 | Article 17 of the Child Protection Code; Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code (35, 42) |
| Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service | Yes | 18 | Article 17 of the Child Protection Code; Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code (35, 42, 43) |
| Compulsory Education Age | Yes | 15‡ | Articles 26 and 34 of the Law of Education (44) |
| Free Public Education | Yes | | Article 18 of the Constitution (45) |

‡ Age calculated based on available information.

The Labor Code allows children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform domestic or light seasonal work, as long as it does not impede school attendance and it does not exceed four and a half hours of work per day.(39) However, the law does not specify the conditions under which light work may be undertaken.(18) Children working in unpaid, temporary, or non-contractual work do not have the same protections under child labor laws and regulations as children working in contractual employment.(18, 46)

Although Mali's Hazardous Occupations List prohibits certain activities for children under age 18, Decree 96-178 from June 1996, which remains in force, permits children ages 16 to 17 to perform certain hazardous activities. The decree conflicts with the protections provided in the Hazardous Occupations List, leaving the possibility for children to work in hazardous activities.(18, 40)

The Child Protection Code provides protection for children under age 18, while the Penal Code establishes criminal penalties for several of the worst forms of child labor.(35, 42) For example, Articles 50 and 58 of the Child Protection Code identify begging as a form of economic exploitation of children, while Article 183 of the Penal Code specifies punishments for engaging a child in begging. However, the Penal Code does not provide penalties for some of the prohibitions enumerated in the Child Protection Code.(35, 42) For example, although Article 17 of the Child Protection Code prohibits children under age 18 from participating in armed conflicts or joining the armed forces, Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code provide penalties only for those recruiting and enlisting children under age 15.(35, 42, 43) Moreover, although Article 18 of the Child Protection Code prohibits the use of children in organized crime, the law does not prohibit using, procuring, or offering a child for the production and trafficking of drugs.(29, 35)

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The Inter-Ministerial Circular (Circular) references Article 28 of the Penal Code, which states that crimes committed out of self-defense or under a force that could not be resisted should not be penalized as prescribed by the Penal Code. The Circular states that Article 28 of the Penal Code is applicable to children involved in armed conflict.(42, 47) However, the Circular does not define the age range of children it covers. Considering the discrepancy between the Penal Code and the Child Code regarding the definition of children involved in armed conflict, the lack of a defined age range in this Circular may leave children ages 16 to 17 unprotected.(47)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

| Organization/Agency | Role |
|--|---|
| Ministry of Labor, National Directorate of Labor | Enforce child labor laws, investigate complaints, and perform unannounced labor inspections.(8, 16, 48) |
| Ministry of Justice | Initiate and coordinate the implementation of child labor laws, with the support of the Ministries of Internal Security, Defense, Territorial Administration, Labor, and the Promotion of Children.(15, 16, 49) |
| Brigade for the Protection of Morals and Children of the National Police | Enforce laws relating to human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and conduct inspections. Housed under the Ministry of Internal Security.(15, 16, 50) |
| Judicial Police | Enforce laws relating to the use of children in illicit activities. Housed under the Ministry of Internal Security.(50) |
| Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family | Develop and implement programs to protect vulnerable children and monitor alleged violations of child labor laws, including those related to the worst forms of child labor.(16, 48) |

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2015, labor law enforcement agencies in Mali took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2014 | 2015 |
|--|--------------|---------------|
| Labor Inspectorate Funding | Unknown | \$48,000 (15) |
| Number of Labor Inspectors | 54 (51) | 60 (15) |
| Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties | Yes (15) | Yes (15) |
| Training for Labor Inspectors | | |
| ■ Initial Training for New Employees | No (51) | No (15) |
| ■ Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor | No (51) | Unknown (15) |
| ■ Refresher Courses Provided | No (51) | Yes (15) |
| Number of Labor Inspections | Unknown (16) | Unknown (15) |
| ■ Number Conducted at Worksite | Unknown (16) | Unknown (15) |
| ■ Number Conducted by Desk Reviews | Unknown (16) | Unknown (15) |
| Number of Child Labor Violations Found | Unknown (16) | Unknown (15) |
| Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed | Unknown (16) | Unknown (15) |
| ■ Number of Penalties Imposed That Were Collected | Unknown (16) | Unknown (15) |
| Routine Inspections Conducted | Yes (15) | Yes (15) |
| ■ Routine Inspections Targeted | Yes (15) | Yes (15) |
| Unannounced Inspections Permitted | Yes (15) | Yes (15) |
| Unannounced Inspections Conducted | Yes (15) | Yes (15) |
| Complaint Mechanism Exists | Yes (15) | Yes (15) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services | Yes (15) | Yes (15) |

The Labor Inspectorate 2015 budget was insufficient in infrastructure, transportation, and fuel.(15) Given the prevalence of child labor throughout the country, the number of inspectors employed is insufficient. The National Directorate of Labor employed

60 labor inspectors in 2015. According to the ILO's recommendation of one inspector for every 10,000 workers in industrial market economies, Mali should employ roughly 564 inspectors in order to adequately enforce labor laws throughout the country.(15, 52-54) Some labor inspectors received training during the reporting period on the worst forms of child labor. The National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor indicated that the number of inspectors trained and the number of trainings conducted were insufficient.(15) In addition to inspection duties, inspectors provide dispute settlement and conciliation.(39, 55) One labor inspector in each region is designated as the point of contact for the National Unit for the Fight Against Child Labor.(15) Research shows that, despite decentralization efforts, funds are rarely allocated to inspectorate regional offices.(15) Labor inspections are typically limited to the formal employment sector, including in industry, construction, and hotel services; however, the majority of children work outside the formal sector, including in agriculture.(15) Reports indicate a lack of trained staff, equipment, transportation, and funding to conduct effective child labor inspections and legal proceedings.(15)

Punishment for the worst forms of child labor can range from 5 to 20 years of imprisonment, depending on the severity of the offense. Koranic teachers who have perpetrated forced begging, however, are often released through the intervention of parents or religious authorities because much of the time the parents willingly send their children into the Koranic teacher's care.(15) The Brigade for the Protection of Morals and Children (Morals Brigade) has suggested an alternative dispute resolution mechanism as opposed to prison for Koranic teachers; this policy proposal has yet to be implemented.(15, 56)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2015, criminal law enforcement agencies in Mali took actions to combat the worst forms of child labor (Table 7).

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2014 | 2015 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Training for Investigators | | |
| ■ Initial Training for New Employees | No (16) | Unknown (15) |
| ■ Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor | No (16) | Unknown (15) |
| ■ Refresher Courses Provided | Yes (15) | Yes (15) |
| Number of Investigations | 114 (16) | Unknown (15) |
| Number of Violations Found | Unknown (15) | Unknown (15) |
| Number of Prosecutions Initiated | Unknown (15) | Unknown (15) |
| Number of Convictions | Unknown (15) | Unknown (15) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services | Yes (57) | Yes (15) |

In 2015, the Morals Brigade employed 26 staff, including 2 captains and 8 investigators.(15) Given the prevalence of child labor in the country, the number of criminal law enforcement agents is inadequate.(15) Although the Morals Brigade was created to handle criminal affairs involving children, the main police force has no explicit obligation to turn children's cases over to the Morals Brigade. As a result, many children's issues are handled by members of the general police force who may not have received special training on children's affairs.(58) The Morals Brigade receives 120 liters of fuel every 3 months, but information on its budget is unavailable and its current provisions, such as vehicles, materials, and supplies, are insufficient.(15, 16)

In 2015, the Government of Mali established a referral mechanism between the National Directorate of Labor and the Ministry for the Promotion of Children and Women. The established referral mechanism is designed to ensure that victims of child labor receive appropriate social services.(15) The Malian military transferred 10 children associated with armed groups to the National Directorate for the Promotion of Children and Women through the Judicial Investigation Office. All 10 children were received, provided medical and psychosocial support, and ultimately reunified with their families.(15)

The Morals Brigade generally conducts inspections based on complaints received; however, investigators also conducted unannounced inspections in bars and brothels. In 2015, the Morals Brigade rescued four children who were victims of forced labor perpetrated by Koranic teachers.(15, 16) Reports also indicate that, because of the political instability hindering law and judicial enforcement in northern Mali, the prevalence of hereditary slavery has worsened since the conflict began.(59) The Trafficking in Persons Law, adopted in 2012, was distributed to judges around the country in November 2015 to ensure their knowledge of the law.(60)

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Mali maintains an informal system through which police officers transfer rescued children to NGOs and keep records of such transfers. However, Mali does not have a formal method for transferring vulnerable children who are detained by the police and the Morals Brigade to NGOs.(3, 61) The Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family participates in a network of NGOs and UN bodies that provide care specifically to human trafficking victims. Organizations in the network provide transportation, food, housing, counseling, training, repatriation, and reintegration services.(57) In conjunction with security operations against armed groups, Malian and international security forces detained individuals suspected of involvement with armed groups, including children.(12) In 2015, the Government of Mali released four children from prison who had been recruited as child soldiers, however, some remained in detention and were not transferred to social services as required by the Inter-Ministerial Circular and the UN-signed Protocol. (12, 15, 62) In addition, evidence does not reveal efforts made by the Government of Mali to prosecute individuals alleged to have recruited and used child soldiers.

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including all its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

| Coordinating Body | Role & Description |
|---|--|
| National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE) | Coordinate Mali's efforts to eliminate child labor, especially its worst forms.(29, 63) The Committee is chaired by the Ministry of Labor and includes representatives from the Ministries of Education; Public Works; Economy and Finances; Employment and Professional Training; and the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family.(63, 64) |
| National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices | Coordinate government efforts to combat human trafficking. Members comprise various government agencies, civil society groups, and NGOs.(3, 50) |
| Inter-Ministerial Committee to Prevent Grave Violations Against Children | Conduct awareness-raising campaigns to prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. Conduct joint missions with international partners to determine the presence of children in armed conflict.(65) |
| Artisanal Gold Mining Summit Committee | Monitor the recommendations of a 2014 summit on artisanal mining, including the ban on child labor in artisanal gold mines. Artisanal gold mining associations and local government officials represented in committee.(56) |

In 2015, the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE), in collaboration with international partners, organized awareness-raising campaigns and trainings on child labor for the World Day Against Child Labor.(48) CNLTE member agencies under the National Plan to Combat Child Labor (NAP) held regular meetings to develop and adopt a Roadmap to Combat Child Labor in Agriculture.(66-68) However, budget constraints hampered the effectiveness of the CNLTE as a whole.(16) Although the CNLTE is the official coordinating body for child labor issues, the number of government structures and lack of coordination among them is complicated, and as a result, so are its efforts to address child labor. The Ministry of Justice; the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family; the Ministry of Internal Security; and the Ministry of Labor share the responsibility of addressing child labor in Mali.(15, 50, 69) The National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices met throughout 2014 to draft the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices, which was formally adopted in February 2015.(3, 70) No evidence was discovered that the Inter-Ministerial Committee to Prevent Grave Violations Against Children conducted meetings, took action to implement awareness-raising campaigns, or conducted joint missions to determine the presence of child labor in self-defense militias during the reporting period.(49, 56)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Mali has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 9).

Table 9. Policies Related to Child Labor

| Policy | Description |
|---|---|
| National Plan to Combat Child Labor (PANETEM) (2011–2020) | Aims to eradicate the worst forms of child labor by 2015 and all exploitative child labor by 2020.(17, 29, 71) Calls for improving the judicial framework, increasing awareness of child labor, withdrawing children from the worst forms of child labor, providing children with appropriate remediation services, and improving the livelihoods of families.(17) Falls under the direction of the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor and is implemented in partnership with 15 other ministries, including the Ministries of Education; Agriculture; Mining; Justice; and the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family.(17) |

Table 9. Policies Related to Child Labor (cont)

| Policy | Description |
|--|---|
| Roadmap to Combat Child Labor in Agriculture (2015–2020)† | Seeks to enhance the legal framework and build the capacity of the Government to prevent child labor in agriculture. Includes activities to strengthen social and educational initiatives for vulnerable children and families.(67, 68) Chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture, includes representatives from the Ministries of Youth; Education; Labor; Employment and Professional Training; and the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family. Also includes non-governmental stakeholders, such as NGOs, labor unions, international organizations, and social partners.(66, 67) |
| National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices (2015–2017)† | Includes goals of enhancing the legal framework to prevent human trafficking, effectively implementing the laws, providing effective protection and care for victims, and strengthening social and educational initiatives for vulnerable children. Led by the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices.(3, 70) |
| National Policy for Child Promotion and Protection (2015–2019) | Aims to enhance the legal framework to protect children from violence, human trafficking, and exploitative work.(72, 73) Overseen by the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family.(72, 74) |
| Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2012–2017)* | Provides a framework for Mali's growth and poverty reduction agenda.(75) Aims to improve access to education and its quality, increase food security, increase employment opportunities for youth, and increase protection for and programs to assist women, children, and vulnerable groups. Contains specific plans to develop an emergency plan for children involved in armed conflict.(75) |
| Inter-Ministerial Circular | Provides a framework for the Government of Mali on the prevention, protection, and reintegration of children involved in armed conflict.(47, 65, 76) |
| Protocol on the Release and Transfer of Children Associated with Armed Groups and Armed Forces | A UN-signed protocol agreement that highlights the responsibility of the Government of Mali to transfer children associated with armed groups to either social services or UNICEF.(12, 50, 77) |

* Child labor elimination and prevention strategies do not appear to have been integrated into this policy.

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

Although the National Plan to Combat Child Labor was launched in 2011, the Plan has not yet been implemented due to budgetary constraints.(16, 68) The Circular calls on families, local authorities, and child protection agencies to work together to ensure that children withdrawn from armed forces are disarmed, demobilized, and reintegrated or placed in another location of their choosing.(47) However, these efforts are insufficient to fully address the scope of the problem.(3, 10)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2015, the Government of Mali funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms. The Government has other programs that may have an impact on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 10).

Table 10. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

| Program | Description |
|--|---|
| Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues (2011–2016) | USDOL-funded project implemented by the ILO in approximately 40 countries to support the priorities of the Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor by 2016, established by the Hague Global Child Labor Conference in 2010. Aims to build the capacity of the national government and develop strategic policies to address the elimination of child labor and forced labor in Mali.(78) During 2015, the program contributed to the development of the Roadmap to Combat Child Labor in Agriculture and held a workshop to train agricultural extension services on child labor.(66) |
| Combating Child Labor through Skills Training for Older Children (2014–2015) | \$2.6 million, Government of Netherlands-funded 1-year project, combats child labor by improving access to education. Includes a component on design of skills and livelihoods training programs for out-of-school youth.(68, 79) Ended in September 2015, and 225 attendees received certification from the National Direction of Professional Training.(15) |
| Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in West Africa (2009–2014) | \$5.4 million, Government of Spain-funded 5-year project to combat child labor by strengthening national public and private sector institutions, as well as civil society organizations.(79) |

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Table 10. Social Programs to Address Child Labor (cont)

| Program | Description |
|--|--|
| Back to School Campaign | \$3 million, UNICEF-implemented project, returns children and teachers to school following the violence that occurred in 2012 and 2013. Supports 500,000 students and 9,000 teachers with school kits and teacher training as they return to school.(80-82) |
| Out-of-School Youth Program-PAJE-Nièta (2010–2015) | \$30 million, USAID-funded, 5-year project implemented by the Education Development Center.(83) Provides education and technical and work readiness training to approximately 10,000 out-of-school youth between the ages of 14 and 25. Aims to improve youth employment prospects in Kayes, Sikasso, and Timbuktu regions. Implemented in partnership with the private sector and the Ministries of Youth, Education, and Employment.(80, 84) The Out-of-School Youth Program ended in November 2015.(15) |
| Every Child Counts Campaign (2015–2017)* | UNICEF-implemented project, provides alternative and accelerated learning programs for out-of-school children in Gao, Kidal, Mopti, Segou, and Timbuktu regions. Supports 100,000 students and 2,000 teachers with school kits and teacher training as they return to school.(34) |
| Reopening Schools† | Government initiative in northern Mali, made progress in providing access to education by reopening 89 percent of schools for the 2014/15 academic year.(33) |

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Mali.

Although Mali participates in some programs to reduce the worst forms of child labor, these programs are insufficient to fully address the scope of the problem, especially in artisanal gold mining. In addition, Mali does not fund or participate in programs to address child labor in domestic work, fishing, forced begging, commercial sexual exploitation, slavery, or debt bondage.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Mali (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

| Area | Suggested Action | Year(s) Suggested |
|--|--|---|
| Legal Framework | Ensure that the Labor Code light work provisions are specific enough to prevent children from involvement in child labor. | 2015 |
| | Ensure that the law's minimum age provisions and protections apply to children in unpaid, temporary, or non-contract work. | 2010 – 2015 |
| | Ensure that the Decree 96-178 aligns with the Hazardous Occupations List. | 2009 – 2015 |
| | Enact laws to provide penalties for violations of the worst forms of child labor, including for use of children under age 18 in armed conflict. | 2009 – 2015 |
| | Ensure that laws prohibit children from being used, procured, or offered for the production and trafficking of drugs. | 2009 – 2015 |
| | Define the age of children protected by the Inter-Ministerial Circular on the Prevention, Protection, and Reintegration of Children in Armed Conflict and ensure that the defined age range complies with international standards. | 2013 – 2015 |
| | Enforcement | Ensure that law enforcement agencies, including regional offices, have adequate training and resources to conduct inspections and investigations into child labor, including its worst forms. |
| Increase the number of labor inspectors and Morals Brigade officers responsible for enforcing laws related to child labor to provide adequate coverage of the workforce. | | 2012 – 2015 |
| Take measures to enforce laws relating to child labor effectively, particularly in northern Mali. | | 2013 – 2015 |
| Collect and publicize information on the number, type, and quality of labor inspections; law violations and penalties assessed; and criminal prosecutions and convictions related to the worst forms of child labor. | | 2010 – 2015 |
| Ensure the punishments of convicted perpetrators of the worst forms of child labor are carried out in accordance with the law. | | 2015 |
| Ensure that a formal mechanism is established to transfer vulnerable children who are detained by the police and the Morals Brigade to appropriate services. | | 2011 – 2015 |

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms (cont)

| Area | Suggested Action | Year(s) Suggested |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|
| Enforcement | Implement the provisions of the Inter-Ministerial Circular and the UN-signed Protocol, which requires that children in detention for their association with armed groups be handed over to social services or to UN child protection actors for appropriate reintegration and social protection services. | 2013 – 2015 |
| | Enforce laws relating to child soldiers, including the prosecution of offenders, and enforce laws relating to slavery, including hereditary slavery. | 2012 – 2015 |
| Coordination | Streamline coordination across government agencies, including by ensuring coordination among the CNLTE and other overlapping agencies. | 2010 – 2015 |
| | Ensure that CNLTE has appropriate funding to implement the National Plan to Combat Child Labor. | 2012 – 2015 |
| | Ensure that the Inter-Ministerial Committee to Prevent Grave Violations Against Children meets regularly and takes action to fulfill its mission. | 2013 – 2015 |
| Government Policies | Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the PRSP. | 2013 – 2015 |
| | Ensure that appropriate funding exists to effectively implement the National Plan to Combat Child Labor. | 2012 – 2015 |
| Social Programs | Increase access to education by taking the following actions: Eliminating school-related fees in public schools. Increase school infrastructure, teacher availability, and school supplies. Ensure that school administrators and teachers allow children without birth certificates to attend school. Take measures to ensure the safety of children and teachers in schools. Make sure all children, no matter their ethnicity, have access to education. | 2010 – 2015 |
| | Expand existing programs to fully address child labor, especially in artisanal gold mining. | 2014 – 2015 |
| | Institute programs to address child labor in domestic work, the informal sector, fishing, forced begging, commercial sexual exploitation, slavery, and debt bondage. | 2009 – 2015 |
| | Expand and improve programs targeting children in armed conflict, including programs targeting the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of child soldiers. | 2012 – 2015 |

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