

In 2017, Ghana made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government secured at least five convictions for offenses related to the worst forms of child labor and launched the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana. The government began extending the Ghana School Feeding Program to include schools in refugee camps and ratified the Minamata Convention on Mercury, which obligates signatory countries to incorporate strategies to prevent the exposure of children to mercury in gold mining sites. However, children in Ghana continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in fishing and cocoa harvesting as a result of human trafficking. Although the government made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas during the reporting period, prohibitions related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the use of children for illicit activities do not meet international standards. The government also has not acceded to the UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and resource constraints severely limited government social protection agencies' abilities to fully implement social programs during the reporting period.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Ghana engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced labor in fishing and cocoa harvesting as a result of human trafficking. (1; 2; 3; 4; 5) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Ghana.

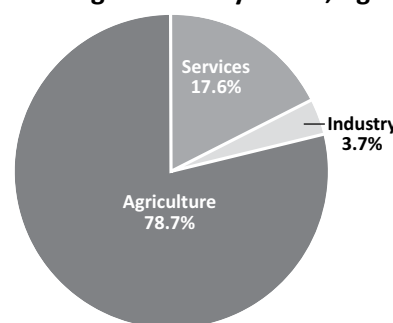
Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	24.7 (1,721,914)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	91.7
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	25.3
Primary Completion Rate (%)		95.2

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2017, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (6)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Living Standard Survey, Round 6, 2012–2013. (7)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



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	Producing cocoa, including land clearing, using machetes and cutlasses for weeding, collecting cocoa pods with a harvesting hook, breaking cocoa pods, working in the vicinity of pesticide spraying, and carrying heavy loads† of water (2; 5; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 13)
	Production of palm oil and cotton, including weeding, harvesting, and acting as scarecrows (10; 13)
	Herding livestock, hunting, and work in slaughterhouses (14; 15; 13)
	Fishing, including for tilapia; preparing bait, nets, and fishing gear; launching, paddling, and draining canoes; diving for fish; casting and pulling fishing nets and untangling them underwater; sorting, picking, cleaning, smoking, transporting, and selling fish; cleaning and repairing nets; and building and repairing boats (1; 2; 3; 9; 16; 17; 18; 11; 13)
Industry	Quarrying† and small-scale mining,† sometimes for gold, including using mercury, digging in deep pits, crushing rocks by hand, carrying heavy loads,† and machine operation† (2; 4; 10; 16; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23; 11)
	Manufacturing and working in sawmills (4; 10)
	Construction and bricklaying or carrying brick (14; 13; 13)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Domestic work (8; 16; 12; 13)
	Transporting heavy loads as <i>kayayes</i> † (3; 16; 24; 25; 13)
	Work in transportation, activities unknown (4)
	Electronic waste and garbage scavenging, including sorting scavenged items and transporting items for sale (26; 27; 28; 29; 30)
	Street work, including begging, small-scale vending, and work at restaurants or bars (4; 10; 31; 13)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (15; 16; 32; 33; 12; 34)
	Forced labor in begging; agriculture, including herding; fishing, including for tilapia; artisanal gold mining; domestic work; and street work, including vending and carrying heavy loads, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1; 3; 15; 17; 18; 35; 36; 37; 13)
	Forced ritual servitude for girls known as <i>trokosi</i> , including in domestic work for priests (3; 16; 25; 32; 38; 34; 11; 37; 13)

† 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.




The majority of children subject to human trafficking are transported within Ghana for labor in cocoa, domestic work, commercial sexual exploitation, and fishing. Children as young as age 4 are subjected to forced labor in fishing in the areas around Lake Volta, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. (15; 18; 25; 32; 36; 37) Children also use sharp tools and are exposed to agro-chemicals while working in the cocoa sector. (5; 10)

According to the Constitution and the Education Act, primary education in Ghana is free and compulsory from kindergarten through junior high school. (39; 40) However, in practice, children must pay for school uniforms, fees, and materials, which may be prohibitive for many families. (1; 3; 8; 22; 26; 41; 42; 43; 34; 11) In addition, factors such as a shortage of classrooms, long distance to schools, absence of sanitation facilities, overcrowding in urban areas, sexual harassment of girls in schools, physical violence, verbal abuse, and poor educational infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, severely limit access to education for many children. (1; 8; 22; 41; 42; 11; 34; 13; 13) In response, the government has made efforts to increase the accessibility of public education, including by building schools to reduce the distance students must travel, provide school uniforms, lift birth registration requirements for enrollment, and extend free education through high school in 2017. (44; 42)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Ghana has ratified most 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	✓
 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	✓

In 2017, Ghana also ratified the Minamata Convention on Mercury, which obligates signatory countries to incorporate strategies to prevent the exposure of children to mercury in gold mining sites. (45; 46) The Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR) also initiated the process to ratify the ILO’s Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention. (47)

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Ghana's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including prohibiting the use of children in commercial sexual exploitation.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Section 89 of the Children's Act (48)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Section 91 of the Children's Act (48)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 28.1d, 28.2, and 28.5 of the Constitution; Article 7 of the Labor Regulations Legislative Instrument; Sections 91 and 92 of the Children's Act; Article 58 of the Labor Act (39; 48; 49; 50)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 16.1 and 16.2 of the Constitution; Articles 116 and 117 of the Labor Act; Sections 1–3 and 42 of the Human Trafficking Act; Sections 1 and 2 of the Human Trafficking Prohibition Legislative Instrument (39; 49; 51; 52)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Sections 1 and 2 of the Human Trafficking Act; Sections 1 and 2 of the Human Trafficking Prohibition Legislative Instrument; Articles 21–25 of the Labor Regulations Legislative Instrument (50; 51; 52)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	No		Sections 101A, 107–108, 110, 111, 274–277, and 279–283 of the Criminal Offenses Act; Article 7(2) of the Labor Regulations Legislative Instrument (50; 53)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		
Prohibition of Military Recruitment			
State Compulsory	Yes*	18	Ghana Armed Forces General Eligibility (Recruits) (54)
State Voluntary	Yes	18	Ghana Armed Forces General Eligibility (Recruits) (54)
Non-state	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15‡	Article 2.2 of the Education Act (40)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 25.1.a of the Constitution; Articles 1.1, 1.2, and 2.2 of the Education Act (39; 40)

* No conscription (55)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (55)

Supplementary implementing regulations to the Labor Act, which were drafted in 2016 and include protections for domestic workers, were not issued in the reporting period. (56) Laws regarding the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are not comprehensive as they do not cover work in agriculture or lake fishing, two areas of work where there is evidence of children engaging in dangerous activities such as the use of sharp tools and working underwater. (57; 58; 12) Ghana has drafted two Hazardous Activities Frameworks which would consider such work hazardous, but neither has been adopted. (59; 56) In addition, Ghana's laws do not criminally prohibit the use of a child in pornographic performances. (60)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the authority of the MELR that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR)	Enforce child labor laws. Through its District Assemblies, labor inspectors investigate child labor violations, educate employers on compliance with child labor laws, and conduct inspections. (1; 42; 44) In 2017, received a \$113,225 earmark for 2018 to combat child labor. (47)

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Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement (cont)

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of the Interior (MOI)	Through its Ghana Police Service (GPS), investigate, arrest, and prosecute cases related to the worst forms of child labor and operate a 24/7 hotline for reporting crimes. (61) Within the GPS, the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit and Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) investigate cases and provide support to victims. (3; 35; 44; 13) Through its Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), combat human trafficking through Anti-Human Smuggling and Trafficking Units. (62; 61; 63) In 2017, GIS spent \$21,570 to support adult victim services, GPS allocated \$1,762 to the Osu Shelter to support victims of child trafficking, and the AHTU expanded from 8 to 10 officers. (61; 63)
Ministry of Justice's Office of the Attorney General	Combat child labor by prosecuting child labor and child trafficking crimes. (44) Within the Economic and Organized Crime Office, the Human Trafficking Unit shares responsibility with the AHTU for combating human trafficking, confiscating proceeds from human trafficking, and providing ongoing training for law enforcement on prevention measures. (64; 65) Although the Human Trafficking Unit was not active in 2017, the Economic and Organized Crime Office continued to collaborate on investigations with GPS on cases of human trafficking. (61)
Minerals Commission	Inspect licensed mining sites and raise awareness of laws that apply to the mining sector with criminal law enforcement agencies. (22)
Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MOGCSPP)	Combat child labor and lead government efforts to combat human trafficking. (61) Through its Department of Social Welfare (DSW), operate shelters for vulnerable children, administer juvenile justice, and implement programs to combat child labor. (64; 66; 67; 13) Through its Human Trafficking Secretariat, oversee the creation, implementation, and review of human trafficking policies and ensure proper monitoring, evaluation, and data collection. (61) In December 2017, MOGCSPP established a new hotline to facilitate access to social services, including victims of human trafficking. The hotline received 30 calls between December 19 and 30 and referred one case of suspected human trafficking to the AHTU. (63)
Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs)/District Child Protection Committees (DCPCs)	Receive complaints of child labor violations at the community and district levels, respectively, and report cases to the GPS, DSW, or traditional authorities, who work with the police to conduct investigations. (22; 68; 69) Participate in the Ghana Child Labor Monitoring System (GCLMS) to monitor, prevent, and withdraw children from the worst forms of child labor in more than 600 communities nationwide as part of the Child and Family Welfare Policy. (14; 31; 43) Many communities either had defunct CCPCs or lacked CCPCs, while some district's DCPCs were inactive. (70)

Although the Attorney General's Department is responsible for prosecuting child trafficking violations, in practice it is often left to the prosecutors of the Ghana Police Service (GPS), who often have minimal formal legal training and whose actions are limited by procedural rules not applicable to state attorneys. (61)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2017, labor law enforcement agencies in Ghana took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the authority of the MELR that hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the authority of labor inspectors to assess penalties.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown* (68)	Unknown* (44)
Number of Labor Inspectors	105 (68)	105 (44)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (68)	No (44)
Training for Labor Inspectors		
Initial Training for New Employees	Yes (68)	Yes (44)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A (68)	N/A (44)
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown* (68)	No (44)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	200† (68)	312 (44)
Number Conducted at Worksites	200† (68)	312 (44)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown	0 (44)
Number Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties were Imposed	Unknown	N/A
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that were Collected	Unknown	N/A
Routine Inspections Conducted	Unknown	Yes (44)
Routine Inspections Targeted	N/A (68)	No (44)

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (68)	Yes (44)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Unknown* (68)	Unknown* (44)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (68)	Yes (44)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (68)	Yes (44)

* The government does not publish this information.

† Data are from January 1, 2016, to September 30, 2016.

The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Ghana's workforce, which includes almost 12 million workers. (71) According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in industrializing economies, Ghana should employ roughly 833 inspectors. (71; 72; 73) Inadequate resources, including funding, transportation, office space, and office supplies, hamper the labor inspectorate's capacity to enforce child labor laws, particularly in the informal sector in which child labor is most common. (22; 42; 44) In addition, the government did not provide data on the number of child labor violations identified as a result of calls made to the GPS's 24/7 hotline. Formal referral mechanisms continued to be hindered by lack of shelter space and transportation for victims. (44)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2017, criminal law enforcement agencies in Ghana took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including financial resource allocation and training for criminal investigators.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Training for Investigators		
Initial Training for New Employees	Yes (64)	Yes (37; 61)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (68; 64)	Yes (74; 61)
Number of Investigations	Unknown	196 (63)
Number of Violations Found	84 (75)	217 (63)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	6 (68; 76)	14 (77; 78; 79)
Number of Convictions	1 (80)	5 (44; 77; 78)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (68)	Yes (44)

In 2017, two adults were convicted of child trafficking and sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment; another two adults were sentenced to 1 year's imprisonment for child trafficking, and a fifth adult was fined \$122 for the suspected use of exploitative child labor in violation of the Immigration Act. (44; 77; 78) Members of parliament have attempted to discourage investigations or prosecutions and high staff turnover is a challenge, limiting the government's ability to investigate and prosecute these offenses. (81; 37; 44; 42; 61; 63)

Furthermore, criminal enforcement agencies continued to note that poor interagency coordination, and insufficient resources for transportation and victim support resulted in under-reporting of cases and hampered enforcement efforts. (35; 11; 37; 32; 61; 63) In addition, coordination among government officials on human trafficking issues was uneven in different parts of the country. The government relies heavily on NGOs to identify cases of child trafficking, and cooperation improved during the year. (81; 61; 70) The GPS hired 313 police recruits and trained an additional 54 cadet officers on human trafficking issues. (63)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including interagency coordination and cooperation with NGOs.

Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role and Description
National Steering Committee on Child Labor (NSCCL)	Coordinate government efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor and oversee implementation of the National Plan of Action Phase II on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (NPA2), which includes implementation of the GCLMS—a monitoring, data collection, and referral mechanism. (82; 44; 83; 61) Led by the MELR’s Child Labor Unit (CLU) and includes representatives from other ministries, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and civil society. (1; 82; 84; 44; 47) In 2017, conducted monitoring exercises in seven districts, including three cocoa-growing areas, to evaluate the effectiveness of child labor interventions. (83; 63)
Inter-Ministerial Committee to Combat Human Trafficking*	Aims to prevent Ghanaian migrants from becoming victims of human trafficking. Met twice in 2017, including with Ambassadors to destination countries in the Middle East, and MELR subsequently prohibited labor migration to these countries for domestic work to combat human trafficking. (63)
MELR’s Child Labor Unit (CLU)	Facilitate the development of policies and laws to combat child labor, coordinate interventions to combat child labor, and oversee child protection committees at the district level. (2; 3; 22; 42; 82; 69) Provide technical support to ministries, departments and agencies, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and international agencies such as the ILO, IOM, and UNICEF. (1; 44) In 2017, organized a National Day Against Child Labor event, continued developing the NPA2, and contributed to the development of the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana (NPA). (70)

* Mechanism to coordinate efforts to address child labor was created during the reporting period.

The Human Trafficking Management Board, which coordinates government policy on human trafficking, was dissolved before the inauguration of President Nana Akufo-Addo in January 2017, and was not reconstituted during the reporting period. (44) Although the CLU was active during the reporting period, it was underfunded and therefore unable to implement all activities as planned. (70)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including mainstreaming child labor issues into relevant policies.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Plan of Action Phase II on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Against Child Labor (NPA2) (2017–2020)†	Aims to address gaps identified in the first NPA (2009–2015), improve coordination, and reduce the worst forms of child labor to 10 percent by 2020, with a focus on the fishing, mining, and cocoa sectors. (10; 83; 47) In 2017, signed MOUs with relevant ministries and requested cabinet approval for the Hazardous Child Labor Activity Frameworks drafted in 2008 and 2012. (44; 85; 47; 70)
National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana (NPA) (2017–2021)†	Aims to improve data collection, enhance victim protection, increase accountability for perpetrators, and emphasize prevention and outreach, including an expansion of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) Program. (86) In 2017, disseminated NPA through a workshop with stakeholders and requested all relevant ministries incorporate the NPA in their 2018 budgets. (87; 44)
Hazardous Child Labor Activity Frameworks	Includes the Hazardous Child Labor Activity Framework and the Hazardous Child Labor Activity Framework for the Cocoa Sector. Both frameworks were developed in consultation with workers’ and employers’ organizations and identify hazardous activities that should be prohibited for children and are awaiting cabinet approval before implementation. (88; 89; 90)
2010 Declaration of Joint Action to Support the Implementation of the Harkin-Engel Protocol (2010 Declaration) and Its Accompanying Framework of Action	Joint declaration by the Governments of Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire, and the United States, and the International Cocoa and Chocolate Industry. (91; 92; 93) Provides resources and coordinates with key stakeholders on efforts to reduce the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-producing areas. (91; 92) Ensures that all project efforts implemented under the Declaration and Framework align with Ghana’s national action plans to promote coherence and sustainability. (91; 92; 93) USDOL-funded projects and some industry-funded projects carried out activities in support of this policy during the reporting period. (93)
Bi-Lateral Commitments to Combat Cross-Border Trafficking	Joint declaration signed by the First Ladies of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana to combat the worst forms of child labor and advocate for sub-regional cooperation with other First Ladies. (94) A subsequent cooperative agreement between the two governments further operationalizes the declaration, which targets high-risk sectors, provides protection to victims, improves coordination, and prosecutes offenders. (95; 96) An MOU with the Government of Jordan formalizes labor recruitment practices and provides for support and repatriation of Ghanaian victims of human trafficking in Jordan. (64)
Minerals and Mining Policy of Ghana	Prohibits child labor in mining and stipulates children who visit mining sites must be supervised. (97)

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor (cont)

Policy	Description
Strategy on Anti-Child Labor and Trafficking in Fisheries	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development policy that aims to significantly reduce the incidence of child labor in fisheries by improving child protection systems and increasing prosecution of offenders. (98)

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (99; 35)

In 2017, the First Lady of Ghana traveled to Côte d'Ivoire to attend a Conference of First Ladies where attendees signed the Declaration of First Ladies of West Africa and the Sahel pledging to support their governments' efforts to prevent child labor, support victims, enhance regional cooperation, and mobilize resources. (100; 101) However, the National Migration Policy and Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (F-CUBE) do not include child labor elimination and prevention strategies. (36; 102)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2017, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including funding and adequacy of programs to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor‡

Program	Description
USDOL-Funded Projects	USDOL projects that aim to eliminate child labor. These projects include: Combating Forced Labor and Labor Trafficking of Adults and Children in Ghana (2017–2021),* a \$2 million project implemented by Verité; Assessing Progress in Reducing Child Labor in Cocoa-Growing Areas of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana (2015–2019), \$3 million project implemented by NORC at the University of Chicago; Mobilizing Community Action and Promoting Opportunities for Youth in Ghana's Cocoa-Growing Communities (MOCA) (2015–2019), \$4.5 million project implemented by Winrock International; CARING Gold Mining Project (ASGM), \$5 million project implemented by the ILO in Ghana and the Philippines; and the Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues (GAP), a research project implemented by the ILO in 10 countries. Some projects may be in support of the 2010 Declaration to combat child labor in the cocoa sector. (103; 104; 105; 106) Additional information is available on the USDOL website.
U.S. Government-Funded Projects	USG-funded projects aim to improve child protection measures in partnership with the host government. Includes Child Protection Compact Partnership (CPC) (2015–2020), \$5 million USDOS-funded project implemented by IOM and local NGO Free the Slaves; Accelerating Care Reform (2016–2020), \$8 million USAID- project implemented by the DSW and UNICEF to strengthen the social welfare system; LEAP 1000 (2014–2019), \$12 million USAID-project implemented by UNICEF to strengthen the existing LEAP program and fund cash transfers to 6,200 poor households; Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (2014–2019), \$24 million USAID-funded project implemented by CRC/URI which includes activities aimed at reducing child labor in the fishing sector; the Complementary Basic Education Program, a \$40 million joint contribution between USAID and the UK's Department for International Development to support Ghana's Ministry of Education' efforts to educate and re-integrate out-of-school children into the basic school system; and the USAID-UNICEF \$37 million jointly funded Learning Support program, which helps increase inclusive education services for special needs children in primary schools. (107; 108; 109; 110; 111; 112) In 2017, the CPC collaborated with IOM to develop a database on human trafficking (TIPIS), finalized and disseminated Standard Operating Procedures to Combat Human Trafficking in Ghana with an Emphasis on Child Trafficking, and provided the AHTU with six vehicles and operational equipment to facilitate its ability to combat child trafficking. (113; 114; 61; 63) The CPC also trained 13 judges and 541 law enforcement officials and social workers on identifying victims of human trafficking, data collection, using TIPIS, and victim care. (63)
Industry-Funded Projects	Industry-funded projects aim to increase sustainability in the cocoa sector, improve farmer livelihoods, improve access to education, and combat the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-growing areas. Some projects may be in support of the World Cocoa Foundation's CocoaAction (2014–2020) initiative and the spirit of the 2010 Declaration. (93; 115; 116)
Awareness Raising Activities†	Large-scale events by MOGCSP, AHTU, MOI, and MELR to raise awareness of child trafficking issues through radio and television broadcasts, public events, and community activities. (117; 63) In 2017, in support of the NPA, activities included implementing a nationwide awareness campaign, commemorating World Day Against Trafficking in Persons with events in the capital and six regions, providing training to over 100 journalists on human trafficking and investigative journalism, and partnering with a local NGO to raise awareness about human trafficking among traditional leaders. (61; 63)
Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP)†	MOGCSP-administered conditional cash transfer program that provides monetary support to poor households with orphans and vulnerable children on the condition that these children attend school, receive vaccinations, and regularly visit health care facilities. (22; 118; 119; 120) Serves over 213,000 households throughout the country. (120)

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

Program	Description
Educational Programs†	The Ghana Cocoa Board's Child Education Support Program rehabilitates and builds schools in cocoa-growing areas. (121; 122) Ministry of Education-funded programs under the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (F-CUBE) aim to increase school attendance and enrollment. (102; 123) Includes the MOGCSP's Ghana School Feeding Program, which aims to reduce malnutrition and improve attendance among students; the Capitation Grant Scheme, which helps defray the cost of basic education for students in public primary schools; and the Ghana Education Service—Girls' Education Unit, which places girls' education officers at the regional and district levels, and mobilizes communities to enroll more girls in school. (1; 119; 124; 123; 120) Includes the distribution of 400,000–500,000 free school uniforms and exercise books to districts with poor enrollment rates. (125; 119; 124) In 2017, the Ghana School Feeding Program began including schools in refugee camps, and the government extended free education to senior high schools with plans to extend the policy to other grades in the future. (34; 123)
MOGCSP Programs†	Includes programs to support vulnerable children. Its Program to Assist Kayayes provides rehabilitation and reintegration support; the Off the Street Project aims to remove children from the street and reintegrate them into family and educational settings; the Human Trafficking Fund provides financial support to victims. (67; 63) In 2017, assigned two government officials to a privately-run shelter for victim support, allocated \$5,112 for shelter operations and victim care at three privately run shelters, allocated \$1,176 for the state-run shelter, and allocated additional limited support to rehabilitate parts of a state-run shelter for child trafficking victims through an MOU with the Ministry of Finance. (126; 114; 61; 63) MOGCSP received \$110,132 for the Human Trafficking Fund. (61)
mBirths	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development program, supported by UNICEF and Tigo, to transition from a manual birth registration process to automated birth registration. (127; 128)

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Ghana.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (129; 130; 123; 61)

Although the MELR continues to hold high-level discussions to re-establish the National Program for the Elimination of Child Labor in Cocoa (NPECLC), no funds have been allocated to NPECLC for implementation. (44) The CLU, the GPS's Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU), Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP), and local NGOs cite the lack of funding as one of the primary obstacles in implementing programs to address child labor. (44; 85; 63) In addition, government-run shelters for child victims are poorly managed and did not receive sufficient funding during the reporting period. Furthermore, a Department of Social Welfare (DSW)-operated shelter for child trafficking victims and victims of other forms of abuse in Accra shares its space with a detention center for juvenile offenders, which presents safety concerns for victims. (3; 37; 85; 61)

Although the government has worked closely with industry, NGOs, and international organizations to implement child labor programs in cocoa, fishing, and mining, the magnitude of these programs remains insufficient to address the scope of the problem. (55)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Ghana (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Accede to the UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.	2013 – 2017
	Ensure that laws criminally prohibit all forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children, including by prohibiting the use of a child in pornographic performances.	2009 – 2017
	Ensure that laws criminally prohibit the use of children in all illicit activities, including for the production and trafficking of drugs.	2016 – 2017
Legal Framework	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2015 – 2017
	Ensure that the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are comprehensive.	2014 – 2017

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor (cont)

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Ensure prosecutors who have received sufficient legal training oversee and lead the prosecution of cases of the worst forms of child labor, that government officials do not intervene in criminal investigations, and that these cases are prosecuted according to the law.	2015 – 2017
	Publish information on the amount of funding allocated to the Labor Inspectorate and ensure inspectorates have adequate resources, including office space, transportation, and supplies to effectively carry out their mandate throughout the country.	2009 – 2017
	Strengthen the Labor Inspectorate by ensuring inspectors conduct targeted routine and unannounced inspections, and are authorized to assess penalties for labor violations.	2014 – 2017
	Ensure that labor inspectors receive periodic refresher training.	2013 – 2017
	Significantly increase the number of labor inspectors and investigators responsible for enforcing labor laws in accordance with the ILO's technical advice.	2010 – 2017
	Establish a mechanism to log all calls to the GPS hotline and track cases of child labor for referral to law enforcement or social services providers.	2014 – 2017
	Ensure that criminal enforcement agencies coordinate effectively and receive adequate resources for transportation and victim support.	2015 – 2017
Coordination	Ensure that all coordinating bodies are fully funded and able to fulfill their respective coordinating roles.	2013 – 2017
Government Policies	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into existing policies.	2013 – 2017
Social Programs	Improve access to education by eliminating school-related fees, increasing the number of classrooms, improving access to schools, providing sanitation facilities, and prohibiting sexual harassment in schools.	2010 – 2017
	Ensure that social programs receive sufficient funding to carry out their objectives.	2014 – 2017
	Expand the availability of government-supported shelter services for child victims and ensure victims are not housed in the same facilities as juvenile offenders.	2016 – 2017
	Create, replicate, and expand effective models for addressing exploitative child labor.	2009 – 2017

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