

In 2012, Guinea made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government created a division within the Ministry of Security responsible for coordinating efforts to combat human trafficking and child labor. However, the division is not fully operational. A lack of coordination among existing government committees and a lack of social programs impede the government's capacity to enforce child labor laws. Children continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in dangerous activities in agriculture and child trafficking, including for labor, domestic service, and commercial sexual exploitation.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate		66.9

Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2011, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis, 2013.(2)

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Guinea are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in dangerous activities in agriculture and as victims of trafficking for labor, domestic service, and commercial sexual exploitation.(3-5) Children in Guinea are engaged in dangerous activities in agriculture, including in the production of cashews, cocoa, and coffee. Although evidence is limited, children also engage in herding and the production of cotton, bananas, and mangos.(6-10) Children working in agriculture may use dangerous tools, carry heavy loads, and apply harmful pesticides.(11, 12) Children herding livestock may suffer injuries such as being bitten, butted, gored, or trampled by animals.

Children also work in gold and diamond mines and quarries.(10, 13, 14) Children in this sector work long hours and lack protective gear. They are vulnerable to accidents, broken bones, and respiratory, skin, and other diseases.(8)



In Guinea, it is traditional practice to send boys, called *talibés*, to Koranic teachers to receive education, which may include vocational training or apprenticeship.(15, 16) While some boys receive lessons, many are forced by their teachers to beg or work in fields and are sometimes beaten or otherwise mistreated if they fail to meet daily quotas.(7, 17) *Talibés* are also sometimes forced to beg in the streets.(4, 11, 18-20) There are reports of other children working on the streets, including in forced begging, but information on specific hazards is unknown.(21)

Child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation also occur.(4, 13) Guinean boys and girls are trafficked within West Africa for mining, domestic work, forced labor, and begging.(22) Children may be trafficked by family members, friends, influential members of the community, or by other persons of economic means who falsely promise a better future for the child.(23) Girls are trafficked internally and to Europe for commercial sexual exploitation and domestic service. Girls from neighboring Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Liberia are trafficked to Guinea for the same purpose.(4, 21) Boys are trafficked within Guinea to work in agriculture and as beggars.

Through the system of *confiage*, children from rural areas are sent to cities to work or to attend school.(3) These children may work in domestic service, in which they may be beaten and sexually exploited.(3, 24-26)

According to a report dated November 2011, an estimated 43 percent of all children ages 5 to 17 are involved in child labor.(27) However, the data was not obtained in time to do a full analysis to be included in the statistics chart.

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Although education is free in Guinea, access is hindered by school fees, the cost of school supplies, and the reported sexual assault of students by teachers.(21, 28) Additionally, a significant number of Guinean children are not registered at birth, which may impede access to education, as the age of the child must be proven before they may access state-sponsored education.(29) Additional barriers to education include a lack of textbooks and other teaching materials, a shortage of teachers, and poor sanitation in schools.(21)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The minimum age for employment, as set by the Labor Code and Child Code, is 16.(13, 30, 31) However, the Child Code allows children under age 16 to work with written parental permission, which is contrary to the provisions of ILO C. 138.(31) Children may work as apprentices from age 14, or from age 12 for apprenticeships involving light work in domestic service and other non-industrial sectors, with the approval of labor inspectors.(31) Because the Labor Code applies only to formal employment relationships, its protections do not apply to children under age 18 who do not have a formal employment contract, including in unpaid or temporary work in agriculture or domestic service.(7, 32) The Child Code includes a list of hazardous occupations from which children are prohibited.(31) Order 2791/MTASE/DNTLS/96 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years excludes children younger than age 18 from working in hazardous conditions, including in mining.(31, 33) The Mining Code prohibits children under age 16 from working in mines or quarries other than as assistants; however, the role of assistant is not defined.(34) It is unclear if the provisions of Order 2791 permit children working as assistants to work inside mines or in other hazardous activities, which would conflict with the minimum age for hazardous work.

By law, education is free and compulsory.(27, 35) Although the age until which education is compulsory is unclear, the government reported to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics that education is compulsory beginning at age 7.(36) Based on this information, the approximate ending age is 13. Children who finish their schooling before reaching the legal working age are particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor. Children not required to be in school may work without gaining permission from parents or labor inspectors and may be vulnerable to exploitation and hazardous work.

The Child Code prohibits the use of children in illicit activities and the recruitment and enlistment of children under age 18 into the armed forces.(31) The Child Code also prohibits sex

tourism, pornography, and forcing children to beg.(31) The Labor Code prohibits forced labor.(13, 30) The Penal Code also prohibits trafficking.(37) The Child Code criminalizes child trafficking and prostitution and addresses key elements related to trafficking that were lacking in the Penal Code, such as procuring or offering a child for trafficking.(31, 38)

International Conventions and Selected Laws on Child Labor and Education

	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	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	16
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	13
	Free Public Education	Yes

Although the Child Code provides protection from the worst forms of child labor, there is confusion surrounding the legal status of the Child Code as it was not accompanied by implementing text from the president of the country.(19, 39) In addition to rendering the Code effective, the implementing text would outline penalties for violations of the Child Code.(40) Though the Ministry of Justice has released an opinion stating that the Child Code is an exception and does not need implementing text. There is no evidence that steps to implement the Child Code have been taken.(18, 19, 23, 41)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

Research found no evidence that the Government of Guinea has established a coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor.

A national committee was created to monitor and protect children's rights and to implement the Child Code. Government and NGO partners are revising the Code and drafting a plan for the protection of children.(20) Information

on whether this committee is responsible for coordinating efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor is not available. A National Human Rights Commission was established in 2011; however, it is unclear if this commission will cover the issue of child labor.(42)

The National Committee Against Trafficking (CNLTP), led by the Ministry of Social Affairs, coordinates anti-trafficking efforts.(19, 23, 39) The Committee comprises secretariat member representatives from the Ministries of Promotion of Women and Children, Justice, and Security.(39, 43, 44) It also includes various members of governmental agencies, including the Ministry of Labor, the police, NGOs, and other stakeholders involved in trafficking issues. The CNLTP is required to meet quarterly; however, no meetings have been held since July 2012.(19, 20, 40, 45) The CNLTP coordinates enforcement actions between various actors, including labor inspectors and criminal investigators.(23)

The Ministry of Labor is the lead agency for the enforcement of child labor laws.(45) Labor inspections typically are limited to large firms in the formal employment sector. The majority of children work outside the formal sector, including in agriculture.(13) Information on the number of labor inspectors was unavailable. Reports indicate there is a lack of trained staff, equipment, transportation, and finances to conduct effective child labor inspections and legal proceedings.(13, 45) No labor inspections were reported in 2012.

The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Security's Office for the Protection of Children and Morals (OPGEM) lead enforcement efforts related to criminal investigations of the worst forms of child labor.(19, 23, 39) OPGEM employs 56 police officers to investigate crimes of child labor, prostitution, and trafficking.(39, 45) Local authorities, police, and border agents in individual prefectures can apprehend child traffickers at the country's borders.(23) The Ministry of Labor refers criminal cases to OPGEM, which may also conduct investigations regarding child labor in the formal labor sector. OPGEM coordinates Guinea's security forces, including the police and the gendarmes (a military body charged with police duties among civilian populations), in their child labor investigations.(39, 44) OPGEM also compiles statistics for crimes against children, including abuse, trafficking, rape, kidnapping, and forced marriage.(20) Trafficking victims must be at least 12 years of age to bring suit against their trafficker, thus limiting a child's ability to take legal action against their trafficker.(23) According to OPGEM, one case concerning child labor violations was brought to court during the reporting period.(20)

In August 2012, a new division within OPGEM was created by decree by the Ministry of Security. The division is responsible for coordinating efforts to combat human trafficking and child labor.(10, 20) Thirty people staff the unit and are deployed throughout the country. The unit had opened five cases between August 2012 and January 2013.(20) While staff was provided training on detecting crime against children and treating victims, the division lacks resources to adequately identify trafficking victims.(20) Reports suggest that the absence of clear coordination between the CNLTP and OPGEM may result in competition over limited resources for anti-trafficking activities.(19)

In October 2012, the government relaunched the Steering Committee for Vulnerable Children and Orphans, initially created in 2006. The committee is responsible for protecting vulnerable and exploited children.(20)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government does not appear to have a comprehensive policy specifically to combat the worst forms of child labor. However, the Ministries of Social Affairs and the Promotion of Women and Children have developed *A World Fit for Children*, a declaration and comprehensive action plan to assist children. It includes general protections and objectives involving child labor, mistreatment, exploitation, and violence. The plan also aims to eliminate trafficking and sexual exploitation.(43) The plan does not specify concrete activities, tangible outcomes, or targets to achieve its goals, and information on the extent to which the plan is being implemented is not available.

Guinea has a National Policy on Birth Registration, with a goal of registering 100 percent of children under age 8 by 2015.(46) The Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research has outlined a 7-year (2008-2015) program to address the education sector, which aims to improve access to education, minimize disparities and avoid exclusion from educational opportunities. The results of the program's implementation are unknown.(47) The impact of this program on the worst forms of child labor has not been assessed.

Although Guinea has a National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons, the updated version of the plan is still awaiting adoption.(8, 23, 48) It is not clear whether the plan is being implemented or if it has been assessed since 2009.

During the reporting period, the Government released the results of the 2010 child labor survey.(27) The survey includes current estimates of the number of working children in

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Guinea, including by sector of work. However, the survey did not collect in-depth information about child labor-related health, occupational safety, or other risks.

In 2012, the Government worked with NGOs to develop a plan to address the welfare of children, which includes initiatives regarding education, health, legal protection, access to clean water, as well as protection from the worst forms of child labor, and trafficking.(20) Information on whether the plan was formally adopted and is being fully implemented was unavailable.

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

The Government of Guinea does not provide social services to trafficking victims.(19) Although there is no formal system to assist trafficking victims, the Government sometimes refers them to NGO service providers. With support from UNICEF, UNDP, and the Government of Germany, the Government is establishing a transition center for the treatment and protection

of women and children who are victims of crimes, including the worst forms of child labor, forced labor, and trafficking.(20)

In June 2012, Guinea hosted a joint National Forum on Children with Mali as part of their bilateral accord of cooperation in the fight against child trafficking.(20)

The Government participated in two regional USDOL-funded projects, including a 4-year, \$7.95 million regional project and a 3-year, \$5 million regional project, both of which assisted ECOWAS member countries in strengthening regional efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor. In 2012, with the assistance of the projects, ECOWAS developed a draft Regional Plan of Action for the elimination of child labor.(49-53) No information was available on the implementation of this plan.

Current social programs do not provide adequate services to victims of child trafficking or the most prevalent worst forms of child labor, particularly in agriculture, mining, and domestic service.

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Increase the minimum age for compulsory education to correspond with the minimum age for work.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Ensure full implementation of the Child Code.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Eliminate inconsistencies in the laws relating to the worst forms of child labor, including the Labor and Mining Codes and the Penal, Labor, and Child Codes.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Extend protections to children in unpaid, temporary or non-contract work.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Ensure that all children are prohibited from participating in hazardous mining.	2010, 2011, 2012
Coordination and Enforcement	Establish a coordinating mechanism for the worst forms of child labor.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Ensure labor inspections are conducted in all sectors, including those with a high prevalence of child labor.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Ensure adequate transportation, equipment, finances, and trained staff to conduct child labor inspections.	2012
	Assess budgetary priorities with a view toward providing resources to conduct effective labor inspections and legal proceedings concerning the worst forms of child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Coordination and Enforcement	Ensure all cases of child labor are appropriately investigated and prosecuted.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Clarify the roles and responsibilities of various committees charged with addressing the worst forms of child labor, including child trafficking, with coordination between CNLTP and OPGEM to avoid competition over limited resources for trafficking activities.	2011, 2012
	Ensure that the National Committee Against Trafficking holds required quarterly meetings.	2011, 2012
	Compile and publish information related to child labor-related investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and criminal punishments.	2011, 2012
Policies	Adopt the 2009-2013 National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Set targets and establish concrete outcomes for A World Fit for Children, and other policies related to child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Take measures to ensure children have access to quality education and to ensure children's safety in schools.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Assess the impact that existing policies may have on addressing the worst forms of child labor in Guinea.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Scale up efforts to implement the birth registration policy.	2011, 2012
	Provide more in-depth research on child labor-related health, occupational safety, or other risks.	2012
Social Programs	Expand social programs to provide services to children engaged in or at risk of entering into the worst forms of child labor, particularly in agriculture, trafficking, mining, and domestic service.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Ensure the appropriate systems are in place to transfer children from Government authorities to social service protection programs.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Assess the impact of the Government's efforts to provide education for all, including through the efforts of the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research 7-year program, on the worst forms of child labor.	2011, 2012

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