

# Jordan

*The Government of Jordan has strengthened labor inspection efforts on the worst forms of child labor and has coordinated its efforts under a child labor framework. However, there are serious gaps in knowledge on child trafficking. Children are exploited in the worst forms of child labor in the mechanical repair and agriculture sectors.*

## Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable



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

Children in Jordan are engaged in the worst forms of child labor<sup>2985</sup> in mechanical repair and agriculture.<sup>2986</sup> Boys work in auto repair shops in urban areas, where they are exposed to chemical burns and poisoning, noise pollution and physical injury. Children, mostly girls, engage in agriculture work.<sup>2987</sup> There is some indication that children of migrant workers from Egypt, Pakistan and Syria work alongside their families in agriculture.<sup>2988</sup> Children's work in agriculture commonly involves hazardous activities, such as using dangerous machinery and tools, carrying heavy loads and applying harmful pesticides.<sup>2989</sup>

Children, mostly boys, are also engaged in a variety of hazardous occupations in small businesses, including vocational trades and work as electricians. Boys also work in mines, hotels, restaurants and in the transportation and storage sectors.<sup>2990</sup> Children performing this type of work risk injury from carrying heavy loads and using sharp tools and appliances as well as exposure to noise pollution, poor lighting and harmful chemicals.<sup>2991</sup>

Children are also engaged in fishing in Aquaba.<sup>2992</sup> Children's work in fishing may expose children to risks such as drowning.

Some children work in the tourism industry in Petra, Aqaba and the Dead Sea regions as street peddlers and tour guides.<sup>2993</sup> These children are subject to overheating from working in extremely hot temperatures on the streets and exhaustion from working long hours.<sup>2994</sup> Girls work as child domestic servants in third-party homes and are involved in dangerous household chores in their own homes.<sup>2995</sup> There are reports that children are increasingly involved in trash picking and scrap metal collection.<sup>2996</sup>

There are street children in Jordan, some of whom are involved in begging.<sup>2997</sup> Children working on the streets are exposed to a variety of hazards, which may include severe weather, accidents caused by proximity to automobiles and vulnerability to criminal elements.

Given their vulnerable economic status, refugee children are more likely to work in the worst forms of child labor.<sup>2998</sup>

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

The Labor Code establishes the minimum age for work as 16.<sup>2999</sup> Children are prohibited from working more than four hours straight, more than six hours a day and during weekends, holidays or at night.<sup>3000</sup> In 2004, Article No. 74 of Jordan’s Labor Code banned 29 work activities considered hazardous for children under the age of 18.<sup>3001</sup> The Labor Code also prohibits forced labor.<sup>3002</sup> However, the Labor Code protections do not apply to unregistered and family businesses, where many children are employed.<sup>3003</sup>

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	16
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

Jordan’s Penal Code prohibits the procurement or attempt to procure children for prostitution.<sup>3004</sup> It also prohibits the sale, possession, publishing, display and advertisement of pornography. However, the law omits protection for males.<sup>3005</sup>

The Anti-Human Trafficking Law prohibits human trafficking for the purposes of forced labor and sexual exploitation, including prostitution. It specifies imprisonment and other penalties for trafficking violations.<sup>3006</sup>

The Constitution of Jordan ensures access to education for all school-aged children as a fundamental right, compulsory and free of charge for 10 years.<sup>3007</sup> There are significant disparities among governorates in the rates of enrollment.<sup>3008</sup> While education is technically free in Jordan, schools require voluntary donations and payments for books, uniforms and other supplies. The cost of educating children and the fact that some families depend on income from children’s labor often deter children from attending school.<sup>3009</sup>

## Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Child Labor Unit (CLU) is responsible for proposing and drafting new legislation on child labor, monitoring its scope and prevalence, directing labor inspections and ensuring the enforcement of child labor laws.<sup>3010</sup>

The CLU heads the National Committee on Child Labor (NCCL), which coordinates the activities of stakeholder governmental agencies and NGOs.<sup>3011</sup> The NCCL includes MOL, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Health.<sup>3012</sup>

The National Council for Family Affairs coordinates a task force charged with developing the country’s first National Child Labor Framework (NCLF). This NCLF will institutionalize the roles and responsibilities of each child labor governmental and nongovernmental stakeholder as well as provide clear definitions and indicators for each partner to follow and meet.<sup>3013</sup> The delay in the release of the NCLF has prevented better coordination actions on the part of the stakeholders.<sup>3014</sup>

The CLU currently has four full-time staff members who oversee the Government’s child labor investigations at the national level.<sup>3015</sup> In turn, these staff oversee 16 child labor liaison officers who coordinate child labor inspections at the governorate level.<sup>3016</sup> There are 125 inspectors conducting both adult and child labor inspections throughout Jordan.<sup>3017</sup>

Both child labor inspections and inspector trainings gained considerable momentum over this reporting period. With collaboration from USDOL, MOL implemented six training workshops for child labor inspectors and representatives of community-based organizations (CBOs) on Cooperative Mechanisms and Partnership between the Ministry of Labor and CBOs in Addressing Child Labor.<sup>3018</sup> Labor inspectors were trained on the health risks of child labor, recognizing workplace hazards, strategies to identify hidden child labor populations, child labor legislation and child-centered interview techniques. In addition to imparting new skills, the trainings have had the added benefit of improving working relationships between the trainers and the CBO staff.<sup>3019</sup>

MOL undertook two nationwide child labor inspection campaigns in June and August 2010. As part of these campaigns, MOL held lectures at 380 sites on the four articles in the Labor Code that cover child labor.<sup>3020</sup> The campaigns resulted in fines and warnings for employers found using child labor.<sup>3021</sup> Inspections resulted in the discovery of 2,249 cases of child labor during the reporting period. The inspectors issued 596 verbal warnings to businesses, provided recommendations for action to 1,568 businesses and referred 106 children to child labor service provider NGOs.<sup>3022</sup>

Chaired by the Minister of Justice, a National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking coordinates the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.<sup>3023</sup> Trafficking crimes are investigated and prosecuted by the Joint Labor Inspector, police Anti-Trafficking Investigation Unit and the Human Trafficking Office within the Public Security Directorate's Criminal Investigation Unit.<sup>3024</sup>

During the reporting period, the Government investigated 22 trafficking cases.<sup>3025</sup> Two cases were related to the sale of children. Due to increased understanding of the issue and reporting, the number of trafficking cases has increased since the

passage of the Government's anti-trafficking law in 2009.<sup>3026</sup> Despite this increase, victim assistance, public awareness-raising, punishment of traffickers and cooperation with source countries remain limited.<sup>3027</sup>

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

When it is passed, the NCLF will define the Government's strategy to combat the worst forms of child labor.<sup>3028</sup> The National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking was launched in March 2010 and focuses on prevention, protection, prosecution and international and regional cooperation.<sup>3029</sup>

The Jordanian National Plan of Action for Children (2004-2013) includes a goal of the elimination of child labor by 2013. The Plan also covers rehabilitation and reintegration, research, livelihood development plans and awareness-raising.<sup>3030</sup>

The National Agenda (2006-2015) is the Government of Jordan's overall development agenda and may indirectly support the elimination of child labor by calling for strengthening of the labor inspectorate and the provision of vocational training opportunities.<sup>3031</sup> The question of whether this agenda has an impact on child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

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

During 2010, the Government of Jordan continued to participate in a \$4 million project with support from USDOL. This 2008-2012 project aims to withdraw and prevent 8,000 children from the worst forms of child labor through the provision of education and other social services.<sup>3032</sup> The project raises awareness regarding the importance of education and mobilizes community members to improve the public schools' educational services.<sup>3033</sup>

During the reporting period, the Government also collaborated on a \$2 million USDOL-supported

project developing methods and mechanisms needed to implement the imminent NCLF. The 4-year project (2010-2014) is developing a mechanism to coordinate all social and educational services targeting child laborers at the national, district and local levels.<sup>3034</sup>

During 2010, the Government participated in a new 4-year project (2010-2014) with \$4 million in support from USDOL. This project targets 5,000 children for withdrawal from exploitative labor, prevents 2,000 children from such work and provides livelihood support to 3,500 families.<sup>3035</sup> The project provides its beneficiaries with rehabilitation, nonformal education, vocational training and livelihood services in East Amman, Zarqa, Mafraq and Ma'an.<sup>3036</sup>

Jordan has high rates of youth unemployment and underemployment, which coupled with child labor, is linked to the lack of decent work opportunities. To address this problem, Jordan has instituted many youth capacity-building, livelihoods and education programs.<sup>3037</sup> The Second Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy (2009-2015) project and the Jordan Education Reform Support Program include reforms of Jordan's vocational education system to reflect the occupational requirements of the country's economic sectors.<sup>3038</sup> The Vocational Educational and Training project aims to improve labor market information systems.<sup>3039</sup> Japan International Cooperation Agency supports the Government's establishment of a more efficient vocational training center model to better meet the demands of Jordan's labor market.<sup>3040</sup>

INJAZ, an NGO led by Queen Rania, operates 158 schools and 32 universities throughout Jordan.<sup>3041</sup> INJAZ implements an education curriculum based on the realities of the work world, provides career counseling and links to jobs, and works with

communities to enhance their support for youth employment.<sup>3042</sup>

The impact of these programs on child labor has not been assessed. There is no evidence of studies evaluating youth employment activities in Jordan.

The Government also implemented several child protection initiatives during the reporting period. Programs (2008-2012) include the Child Protection Program, which aligns policy and legal frameworks with international standards on child rights.<sup>3043</sup> The Child Monitoring of Rights Program ensures that children's issues remain high on the national agenda and monitors the situation of children in Jordan.<sup>3044</sup> Programs targeting Palestinian refugee children include the Adolescent Participation and Empowerment Program (2008-2010), which helped improve girls' accessibility to safe spaces through the establishment of 14 women's centers.<sup>3045</sup> The question of whether these programs have had an impact on child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

The Government implements a project aimed at reducing school violence, which research suggests deters children from going to school. A national survey conducted by UNICEF in 2007 revealed high levels of emotional and physical abuse in schools.<sup>3046</sup> The study found that 57 percent of school children were physically abused by school teachers and administrators. The Ma'an Campaign (2009-2012) aims to reduce violence towards students by promoting new disciplinary techniques.<sup>3047</sup> Research found no evidence of the impact of school violence programs on the reduction of the worst forms of child labor.

Research discovered no programs targeting child trafficking victims in Jordan. There is also little evidence of programming aimed at protecting working children.

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

**IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:**

- Amend the Labor Code to increase the protection of children who work in family businesses and the agriculture sector.
- Amend the Penal Code to ensure that using, procuring or offering males younger than age 18 for prostitution is prohibited.
- Under the new anti-trafficking law, build the capacity of social workers, law enforcement, educators and other stakeholders on victim assistance, increasing punishment for traffickers and educating the public on human trafficking.

**IN THE AREA OF COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT:**

- Release the NCLF to national and international stakeholders to enable coordination of its implementation.
- Develop and implement strategies to effectively increase reporting on trafficking offenses.
- Ensure that laws on compulsory education are enforced.

**IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:**

- Quickly adopt a government strategy that addresses the worst forms of child labor.
- Assess the impact that existing policies may have on addressing child labor.

**IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS:**

- Develop a best practices study on the successes and challenges of youth employment programs and other programs targeted to children that have been implemented to date.
- Assess the impact that existing programs may have on addressing the worst forms of child labor.
- Conduct a study on the impact of violence towards children in schools on child labor.
- Conduct research on child trafficking trends in Jordan and design programs around the findings.
- Increase protection programs for working children in vulnerable sectors, such as domestic servitude and street work.

<sup>2985</sup> Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are not available from the data sources that are used in this report. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. For more information on sources used for these statistics, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” section.

<sup>2986</sup> U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting, January 26, 2011*. See also CHF International, *Baseline Report Jordan: Combating Exploitive Child Labor through Education (CECLE)*, 2009.

<sup>2987</sup> ILO and Department of Statistics of Jordan, *Working Children in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Results of the 2007 Child Labour Survey*, Geneva, March 2009, 4. See also CHF International, *Baseline Report Jordan: CECLE*. See also U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting, January 26, 2011*.

<sup>2988</sup> U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting, January 26, 2011*.

<sup>2989</sup> ILO and Department of Statistics of Jordan, *Working Children in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*. See also J. Seeger, *Independent Midterm Evaluation of Combating Exploitive Child Labor Through Education in Jordan*, 2010.

<sup>2990</sup> ILO and Department of Statistics of Jordan, *Working Children in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*. See also CHF International, *Baseline Report Jordan: CECLE*.

<sup>2991</sup> ILO and Department of Statistics of Jordan, *Working Children in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*.

<sup>2992</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2993</sup> Seeger, *Independent Midterm Evaluation*. See also CHF International, *Baseline Report Jordan: CECLE*.

<sup>2994</sup> Seeger, *Independent Midterm Evaluation*.

<sup>2995</sup> International Trade Union Confederation, *Internationally Recognized Core Labour Standards in Jordan Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies in Jordan*, 2008, 1. See also ILO and Department of Statistics of Jordan, *Working Children in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*.

<sup>2996</sup> U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting, January 26, 2011*.

<sup>2997</sup> ILO and Department of Statistics of Jordan, *Working Children in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*. See also CHF International, *Baseline Report Jordan: CECLE*.

<sup>2998</sup> CHF International, *Baseline Report Jordan: CECLE*.

<sup>2999</sup> CHF International, *Combating Exploitive Child Labor through Education (CECLE)*, Technical Progress Report, 2009.

<sup>3000</sup> International Trade Union Confederation, *Internationally Recognized Core Labour Standards*, 9. See also ILO NATLEX

National Labor Law Database, *Jordan Labour Code, Law No. 8 of 1996*, April 27, 2011, article 75; available from <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/WEBTEXT/45676/65048/E96JOR01.htm>.

<sup>3001</sup> CHF International, *Baseline Report Jordan: Combating Exploitive Child Labor through Education (CECLE)*, 2009. See also Ministry of Labor- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, *Labour Administration and Compliance in Jordan: A Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration*, First Progress Report, October 2009, 16.

<sup>3002</sup> Ministry of Labor- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, *Labour Administration and Compliance in Jordan: A Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration*, First Progress Report, October 2009, 16.

<sup>3003</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request Concerning Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Jordan (ratification: 2000)*, May 20, 2011; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/iloquery.htm>.

<sup>3004</sup> Government of Jordan, *Penal Code*, (1960), article 310.

<sup>3005</sup> *Ibid.*, article 319.

<sup>3006</sup> Tamkeen for Legal and Human Rights, *Panel Discussion on Protect Migrant Workers from Trafficking in Human Beings: 14/12/2010*, [online] [cited April 12, 2011]; available from [http://tamkeen-jo.org/news/news\\_005.htm](http://tamkeen-jo.org/news/news_005.htm).

<sup>3007</sup> Right to Education, *Right to Education Project, Promoting Mobilization and Legal Accountability* [online] [cited May 15, 2011]; available from <http://www.right-to-education.org/country-node/446/country-minimum>.

<sup>3008</sup> T. Al Noaimi, “Achieving Basic Education for All,” *Jordan Times* (Amman), September 30, 2010; available from <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=30487>.

<sup>3009</sup> CHF International, *Baseline Report Jordan: CECLE*, 30-31.

<sup>3010</sup> Seeger, *Independent Midterm Evaluation*, 15.

<sup>3011</sup> U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting, February 11, 2010*.

<sup>3012</sup> CHF International, *Combating Exploitive Child Labor through Education (CECLE)*, Technical Progress Report, September 2010. See also Seeger, *Independent Midterm Evaluation*, 28.

<sup>3013</sup> CHF International, *CECLE, Technical Progress Report (2010)*.

<sup>3014</sup> 3CHF International, *Combating Exploitive Child Labor through Education (CECLE)*, Technical Progress Report, March 2011.

<sup>3015</sup> Waleed Tarawneh CHF International, Meeting notes USDOL official, March 21, 2011.

<sup>3016</sup> U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting, January 26, 2011*. See also H. Hazaimh, “Ministry Fines 35 Employers for Child

Labour Violations,” *The Jordan Times* (Amman), September 8, 2010; available from <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=29889>.

<sup>3017</sup> CHF International, Meeting notes, March 11, 2011.

<sup>3018</sup> CHF International, *CECLE, Technical Progress Report (2010)*.

<sup>3019</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3020</sup> Hazaimah, “Ministry Fines 35 Employers for Child Labour Violations.” See also H. Hazaimah, “Labour Ministry to Launch Child Labour Crackdown,” *The Jordan Times* (Amman), August 15, 2010; available from <http://jordantimes.com/index.php?news=29185>.

<sup>3021</sup> U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting, January 26, 2011*. See also Hazaimah, “Ministry Fines 35 Employers for Child Labour Violations.”

<sup>3022</sup> CHF International, Meeting notes, March 11, 2011.

<sup>3023</sup> International Office for Migration- Amman, “National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking Launched,” *IOM Quarterly Newsletter* (May 16, 2010); available from <http://www.jordan.iom.int/Doc/May%20news%20letter%20IOM%20.pdf>.

<sup>3024</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Jordan,” in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010*, Washington, DC, June 14, 2010; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2010/142760.htm>. See also N. Fahmy, *Assessment of the Trafficking Situation and Anti-Human Trafficking Legislation in MENA*, conference presentation.

<sup>3025</sup> Tamkeen for Legal and Human Rights, *Panel Discussion on Protect Migrant Workers from Trafficking in Human Beings: 14/12/2010*.

<sup>3026</sup> Ibid.].

<sup>3027</sup> Ibid.].

<sup>3028</sup> CHF International, *CECLE, Technical Progress Report (2010)*.

<sup>3029</sup> International Office for Migration- Amman, “National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking Launched.” See also Tamkeen for Legal and Human Rights, *Panel Discussion on Protect Migrant Workers from Trafficking in Human Beings: 14/12/2010*.

<sup>3030</sup> UNICEF, *The Jordanian National Action Plan for Children (2004-2013)*, January 6, 2010 2010; available from [www.unicef.org/jordan/resources\\_2025.html](http://www.unicef.org/jordan/resources_2025.html). See also UNICEF, *Technical and Policy Documents*, January 6, 2010 2010; available from [www.unicef.org/jordan/resources\\_458.html](http://www.unicef.org/jordan/resources_458.html).

<sup>3031</sup> U.S. Embassy- Amman, *reporting, February 11, 2010*.

<sup>3032</sup> Seeger, *Independent Midterm Evaluation*, 1.

<sup>3033</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3034</sup> U.S. Department of Labor- International Affairs Bureau, *Moving Towards a Child Labor-Free Jordan*, Technical Cooperation Project Summary, Washington, DC, 2011.

<sup>3035</sup> International Affairs Bureau U.S. Department of Labor, *Promising Futures: Reducing Child Labor in Jordan through Education and Sustainable Livelihoods*, Technical Cooperation Project Summary, Washington, DC, 2011.

<sup>3036</sup> International Affairs Bureau U.S. Department of Labor, *Promising Futures: Reducing Child Labor in Jordan through Education and Sustainable Livelihoods*, Technical Cooperation Project Summary, Washington, DC, 2011.

<sup>3037</sup> UNICEF, *MENA Adolescent Operational Strategy and Regional Programme- Towards Broader Alliances and Enhanced Interagency Collaboration*, November 2008.

<sup>3038</sup> Aid Data, *Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy II*, 2011. See also Creative Associates International, *Jordan/ Education Reform Support Program (ERSP)*, March 22, 2011 2011; available from [www.creativeassociatesinternational.com](http://www.creativeassociatesinternational.com).

<sup>3039</sup> O. Obeidat, “Technical, Vocational Education Project to be Upgraded “ *The Jordan Times* (Amman), March 14, 2011 2011; available from <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=35441>.

<sup>3040</sup> Japan International Cooperation Agency, *Activities in Jordan*, [online] 2011 [cited March 22, 2011 2011]; available from [www.jica.go.jp/jordan/english/activities/activity02.html](http://www.jica.go.jp/jordan/english/activities/activity02.html). See also M. Ghazai, “JICA Volunteers give Vocational Training a Boost,” *The Jordan Times* (Amman), March 16, 2011 available from <http://jordantimes.com/index.php?news=35510>.

<sup>3041</sup> INJAZ, *Courses Provided in School*, [online] [cited April 28, 2011]; available from <http://www.injaz.org.jo/SubDefault.aspx?PageID=153||Node=182&LangID=2>.

<sup>3042</sup> Ibid.].

<sup>3043</sup> Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, *United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)*, [online] 2011 [cited April 27, 2011]; available from [http://www.mop.gov.jo/pages.php?menu\\_id=298&local\\_type=0&local\\_id=0&local\\_details=0&local\\_details1=0](http://www.mop.gov.jo/pages.php?menu_id=298&local_type=0&local_id=0&local_details=0&local_details1=0).

<sup>3044</sup> Ibid.].

<sup>3045</sup> UNICEF, *Palestinian Children and Women in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, Draft Country Program Document, April 6, 2010.

<sup>3046</sup> UNICEF, *Ma’An Campaign to Reduce Violence in Schools*, [online] 2011 [cited April 28, 2011]; available from [http://www.unicef.org/jordan/protection\\_6079.html](http://www.unicef.org/jordan/protection_6079.html).

<sup>3047</sup> Ibid.].