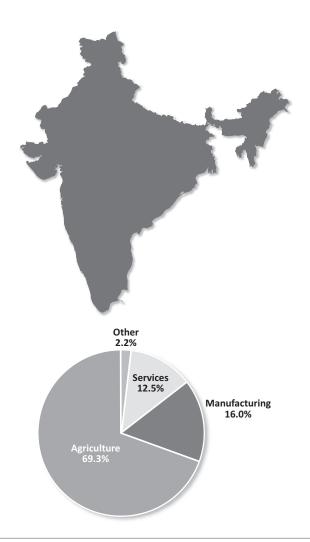
India

The Government of India combats the worst forms of child labor through its National Child Labor Projects. It also operates a Convergence Model strategy, which integrates a range of social protection schemes to help prevent and withdraw children from hazardous child labor. However, India lacks a minimum age for work and sets a low age for hazardous work. In addition, forced child labor is a problem and continues to exist in domestic service, agriculture and manufacturing.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	3.3
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	82.1
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	0.6



Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in India are engaged in the worst forms of child labor. 2736 Most work in agriculture producing crops such as rice and hybrid seeds. 2737 Children who work in agriculture may carry heavy loads and apply harmful pesticides. Children in India also work in dangerous conditions, quarrying sandstone and other materials, breaking stones and polishing gems as well as in manufacturing.

Children in manufacturing make matches, bricks, carpets, locks, glass bangles, fireworks, *bidis* (cigarettes), incense sticks (agarbatti), footwear, garments, hand-loomed silk, leather, brassware and other metal goods.²⁷³⁸ Children embroider (*zari*), sew beads to fabric and stitch soccer

balls for the domestic market.²⁷³⁹ Many children manufacture goods in the informal economy, increasingly in home-based production.²⁷⁴⁰ In addition to working long hours in cramped spaces under poor lighting and inadequate ventilation, children in manufacturing may be exposed to harmful chemicals and dangerous machinery and tools. The risks for these children include joint pain, headaches, hearing loss, skin infections, respiratory problems and finger deformity.²⁷⁴¹

Service industries that employ children include hotels, food service and tourism.²⁷⁴² Children work on the street vending food and other goods, repairing vehicles and tires, scavenging and rag picking.²⁷⁴³ This may expose them to dangers including severe weather and criminal elements, and may lead to their involvement in traffic accidents. Children are also found working in

construction and domestic service. Many work very long hours and suffer abusive treatment.²⁷⁴⁴

Forced child labor occurs in India.²⁷⁴⁵ Children perform forced or indentured labor in domestic service, gemstone cutting and quarrying as well as at brick kilns and rice mills. Children also work under forced conditions producing hybrid seeds, garments and embroidered textiles.²⁷⁴⁶

The federal police stated that an estimated 1.2 million children engage in prostitution.²⁷⁴⁷ Cases of child sex tourism continue to be reported in cities and towns with tourist attractions as well as locations with religious pilgrim centers.²⁷⁴⁸

India remains a source, transit and destination country for minors trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor in domestic service, agriculture and activities such as begging and making bricks.²⁷⁴⁹ The majority of such children are Indians trafficked within the country.²⁷⁵⁰ Nepali and Bangladeshi girls and Indian girls from rural areas are trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation in major urban centers such as Mumbai (Bombay), Kolkata (Calcutta) and New Delhi.²⁷⁵¹

There are reports that children have been recruited to serve as soldiers by armed opposition groups in zones where armed conflict is occurring such as by the Naxalites in Chhattisgarh.²⁷⁵²

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

According to the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act, children of any age may be employed, provided employers adhere to restrictions, including a maximum six hour workday with a one hour rest period, at least one day off per week, and no night work or overtime work.²⁷⁵³ The Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act does bar children under age 14 from 18 hazardous occupations and 65 hazardous processes such as working in factories,

mines, and domestic service, handling pesticides, weaving carpets and breaking stone.²⁷⁵⁴ In 2010, two additional occupations were added to this list barring children from work in circuses and from caring for elephants.²⁷⁵⁵ Employing children under age 14 in a hazardous industry can lead to fines and imprisonment. Victims also receive compensation. Additionally, the Government must either compensate the family of the child or find employment for an adult member of the family.²⁷⁵⁶

(se sell	C138, Minimum Age	No
MIO	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	No
	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	No
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	14
	Compulsory Education Age	14
	Free Public Education	Yes

However, gaps remain. The lack of a minimum age for employment increases the likelihood that very young children may engage in activities hazardous to their health. The minimum age for hazardous work is not consistent with international standards and may likewise, jeopardize the health and safety of young persons ages 14 to 17. Additionally, the labor law does not cover large swaths of the economy, including family farms and other family businesses.²⁷⁵⁷

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act prohibits exploiting juvenile

employees under age 18 by such practices as keeping youth in bonded conditions or garnishing their wages.²⁷⁵⁸ Violators may be fined or imprisoned.²⁷⁵⁹

The Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act outlaws bonded labor in India and provides for district-level vigilance committees to investigate allegations of bonded labor and release anyone found in bondage. 2760 The Act also provides for rehabilitation assistance payments for released laborers. Persons found using bonded labor may be fined and face imprisonment.²⁷⁶¹ The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act prohibits commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of boys and girls. Penalties include imprisonment up to a life sentence if the victim is under age 16.2762 The Information Technology (Amendment) Act of 2008 includes penalties of fines and imprisonment for any person who publishes, collects, seeks or downloads child pornography in electronic form.²⁷⁶³The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Act, No. 61 makes it illegal to cause any person to produce or deal in narcotic or psychotropic substances; punishment consists of fines and imprisonment.2764

There is no compulsory military service. The voluntary military recruitment age is 17 years and 6 months. However, the minimum age to serve in combat is 18.²⁷⁶⁵

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The National Authority for Elimination of Child Labor is a high-level government body, chaired by the Ministry of Labor and Employment (MOLE), which reviews, monitors and coordinates policies and programs on child labor. The National Steering Committee on Child Labor is a tripartite committee with members representing government agencies, employers and workers, which guides and monitors child labor policy. The Secretary of Labor and Employment chairs the Central Monitoring Committee, which is responsible for reviewing the prevalence of child

labor as well as monitoring actions taken to eliminate child labor.²⁷⁶⁸ In 2010, the Government created a Core Group on Child Labour composed of eight ministries and chaired by MOLE to coordinate the convergence of social protection schemes to reduce child labor.²⁷⁶⁹

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is charged with monitoring implementation of the Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act. The NHRC monitors state level action against bonded labor through its review of quarterly reports by state governments on bonded labor and through exploratory and investigative missions.²⁷⁷⁰ The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) is charged with coordinating antitrafficking policies and programs.²⁷⁷¹ The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Anti-Human Trafficking Cell is responsible for implementing the Government's \$12 million nationwide plan to combat human trafficking over 3 years by coordinating with states to establish anti-human trafficking units (AHTUs) and training thousands of officials on human trafficking.²⁷⁷²

While MOLE provides oversight and coordination, state governments enforce labor laws and employ labor inspectors.²⁷⁷³ The national government does not regularly receive comprehensive or timely data from the states on the number of labor inspectors, inspections, child labor violations found and penalties assessed throughout the country.²⁷⁷⁴ Information that is available indicates that during the reporting period, children were rescued from hazardous work during raids in several states, including Delhi, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Delhi.²⁷⁷⁵ In 2010, Tamil Nadu state carried out 187,101 inspections on forced child labor, resulting in 56 convictions of child labor traffickers and \$14,000 in fines.²⁷⁷⁶ According to MOLE, 14,778 child labor prosecutions were reported in states that had data available from 2007 to 2010.2777 Despite prosecutions being launched, it may take years before a case is resolved in the judiciary system.²⁷⁷⁸ In the state of Gujarat of the 1,642 court cases

filed between 2006 and 2010, only 45 cases were resolved resulting in fines of \$6,500.²⁷⁷⁹ The enforcement of labor laws pertaining to child domestics has been particularly challenging, as work in private homes is outside the jurisdiction of labor inspectors.²⁷⁸⁰ MOLE earmarked \$1.1 million for advocacy campaigns against child labor, including the worst forms of child labor. However, research found no evidence of other mechanisms to enforce prohibitions against employing children under 14 as domestics or to protect older children involved in such work.

Six state governments have drafted state action plans for elimination of child labor, which may lead to stepped up enforcement. For example, the Gujarat Action Plan calls for two raids every month in all 24 districts. Complaints about hazardous child labor can be made through a toll-free helpline, Child Line, which operates in 83 cities across India. 2782

Between January 2010 and September 2010, police freed and rehabilitated 763 bonded laborers in Chhattisgarh, Utter Pradesh and West Bengal, and the Government provided financial assistance of approximately \$171,000 to former bonded laborers, a two-fold increase from last year. ²⁷⁸³ It was also reported that hundreds of bonded laborers were rescued in Tamil-Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Bihar. The number of cases involving children is unknown as the Government does not disaggregate this data. In a series of four workshops from April 2009 to February 2010, the NHRC trained 400 government officials on bonded labor issues. ²⁷⁸⁴

Under India's federal structure, state and local police are responsible for enforcing all laws, including those pertaining to human trafficking. Between April 2010 and February 2011, the Government invested \$1.9 million in anti-human trafficking units (AHTUs) to facilitate their expansion.²⁷⁸⁵ In 2010, the number of AHTUs doubled with at least 125 AHTUs established in 17 of India's 28 states.²⁷⁸⁶ The Government

has also invested more than \$440 million to establish the Crime and Criminal Tracking and Networking System to connect all of India's 14,000 linguistically diverse police stations. This system allows police to better monitor trends in serious crimes including trafficking. ²⁷⁸⁷ Data from 2009 indicates that 2,438 traffickers were convicted of sex trafficking and an additional 8,307 prosecutions were launched. ²⁷⁸⁸ The number of cases involving children is unknown as the Government does not disaggregate this data. In partnership with the United Office on Drugs and Crime, several state governments trained 13,670 police officials on trafficking issues. ²⁷⁸⁹

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

During 2010, the Government continued to implement the National Policy on Child Labor, which lays out concrete actions for combating hazardous child labor, including legislative reforms and direct assistance to children.²⁷⁹⁰ As noted above, six states adopted Action Plans to eliminate child labor from hazardous industries, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat and Orissa. Additionally, a seventh state, Bihar, is preparing its Action Plan.²⁷⁹¹ These action plans have resulted in the creation of task forces at the state, district and village level. These plans also call for the coordination of social protection programs and services provided by government and civil society organizations to support the livelihood of households vulnerable to relying on child labor.²⁷⁹² MOLE's National Skills Development Policy includes provisions for child laborers, including short-term skills training for children removed from the worst forms of child labor.2793

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) lays out the country's commitments to protect children from hazardous child labor and to provide universal access to primary education with a focus on children from disadvantaged social groups.²⁷⁹⁴ The RTE provides for free and compulsory education to all

children ages 6 to 14. The act prohibits denying admission to children who lack a birth certificate, allows children to transfer schools, requires local authorities to identify out-of-school children, forbids discrimination against disadvantaged groups, and prescribes quality education standards.²⁷⁹⁵

The Government also has a National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children, which aims to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims of trafficking into society.²⁷⁹⁶

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

The Government of India's National Policy on Child Labor includes direct assistance projects, which are collectively known as the National Child Labor Projects (NCLPs). MOLE coordinates the NCLPs, which operate at the district level to identify working children, withdraw them from hazardous work and provide them with education and vocational training. The projects set up NCLP schools, mainstream children into formal education and provide them with stipends, meals and health checkups.²⁷⁹⁷ As of July 2010, approximately 339,000 former child laborer were enrolled in the NCLP schools and there were more than 8,000 schools in 21 of India's 28 states.²⁷⁹⁸ The process of forming NCLP schools and identifying their students begins with a survey conducted at the district level.²⁷⁹⁹ While the scheme serves many former child laborers, it excludes children working in agriculture, family enterprises and other informal sectors, as Indian law does not recognize those children as "working in hazardous conditions."

The NCLP scheme is linked to the Ministry of Human Resource Development's (MHRD) *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (Education for All) program to ensure children's smooth transition from NCLP schools into the formal education system.²⁸⁰⁰ During 2010, the MHRD continued to extend

its mid-day meal program to NLCP students.²⁸⁰¹ With support from UNICEF, MOLE is developing a national communication strategy on child labor and also pilots a national tracking system to monitor children in NCLP schools in the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.²⁸⁰² In 2010, the National Labor Institute completed an evaluation of the NCLP project that spanned 70 NCLP districts located in 15 different states. The evaluation highlights practices, gaps, challenges and impediments of the project and provides a set of specific recommendations to improve the program and implementation.²⁸⁰³

The Government is currently participating in a USDOL-funded, \$6.85 million Convergence Model Project, begun in 2008 and scheduled to conclude in 2013, which targets 9,700 children for withdrawal and 9,300 children for prevention from work in hazardous labor in 10 districts in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. The project is designed to strengthen the Government's efforts to combat hazardous child labor by combining its various social protection and welfare programs, including the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), National Child Labor Project, Swablamby Swasthya Yojana Health Insurance Scheme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Skills Development Initiative Scheme.²⁸⁰⁴ In 2010, the Government funded a research study on the impact of the NREGS scheme on child labor. 2805 Results of the study are not yet available. The question of whether other social protection schemes have an impact on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

In 2010, the National Sample Survey Organization completed a survey on the child labor situation across the country as part of their survey on "Employment and Unemployment and Household Consumer Expenditure." A copy of the survey could not be obtained prior to completion of this report.

MOLE's Grants-in-Aid scheme funds over 117 NGOs to provide rehabilitation services to working children. MOLE's Skill Development Initiative Scheme offers vocational training programs and gives priority to children withdrawn from child labor and to the parents of child laborers. MOLE's Grant Scheme funds of the parents of child laborers.

The Government of India and state governments are collaborating on a program to rescue and rehabilitate child and adult bonded laborers. This includes conducting surveys to identify bonded laborers including a survey in 23 districts of Madhya Pradesh and providing each of them with stipends, training and education and organizing awareness-raising activities.²⁸⁰⁹ Overall, India lacks reliable figures on the prevalence of bonded labor.

In 2010, MOLE expanded on its \$400,000 pilot project in Tamil Nadu to reduce bonded labor in brick kilns and rice mills.²⁸¹⁰ Based on this pilot project, MOLE launched its holistic, convergence-based approach to address bonded labor in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Orissa which integrates existing government social and welfare programs to target vulnerable workers.²⁸¹¹ The Government also provided \$78,000 between April 2009 and March 2010 to rehabilitate bonded laborers in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.²⁸¹²

The Ministry of Women Child Development (MWCD) provides a package of services for vulnerable children, including those most likely to be exploited in the worst forms of child labor. MWCD seeks to protect children, including working children, through its Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS). Its aims to improve access to protection services, create public awareness, increase accountability on child protection, enhance service delivery and set up a monitoring and evaluation system.²⁸¹³ In 2009 and 2010, the Government allocated more than \$13 million and signed MOUs with 13 states to implement ICPS.²⁸¹⁴ MWCD has another scheme, the Welfare of Working Children in Need of Care, which provides nonformal education and vocational training to street children and working children living in urban areas not covered by other MOLE schemes.²⁸¹⁵ From 2009 to 2010, this scheme received \$2 million in funding.²⁸¹⁶

MWCD coordinates a wide range of antitrafficking activities, in collaboration with NGOs and state governments, including raising awareness, maintaining helplines, rescuing victims and providing shelter homes, counseling, legal aid, medical care, repatriation and rehabilitative services.²⁸¹⁷ These efforts include MWCD's *Ujjawala* scheme, which funds 134 projects to help reintegrate, rehabilitate and repatriate trafficking victims.²⁸¹⁸

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

IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

- Amend the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986 to:
 - Establish a minimum age for employment in nonhazardous occupations consistent with international standards.
 - Increase the minimum age for employment in hazardous occupations to meet international standards.
 - Expand the scope of the act to cover children working in family enterprises.

IN THE AREAS OF COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT:

- Create a database of labor inspections to better consolidate and inform policy at the national level and make data publicly available.
- Disaggregate the data in the Ministry of Home Affairs Crime and Criminal Tracking and Networking System to include child trafficking violations.
- Disaggregate data on the number of children who are victims of forced labor.
- Encourage state AHTUs to address labor trafficking, including instances of forced child labor.
- Expedite the adjudication of child labor cases.
- Establish effective mechanisms to protect child domestic workers.

IN THE AREA OF PROGRAMS:

- Conduct both a qualitative and quantitative national survey of bonded labor (disaggregating data on children).
- Expand the ability for all children in the worst forms of child labor to enroll in NCLP schools.
- Conduct an assessment of the impact that India's major social protection schemes, besides NREGS, have had on reducing child labor, as proposed in MOLE's Draft FiveYear Strategic Plan.

²⁷³⁶ Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are based on UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, Child Economic Activity, School Attendance, and Combined Working and Studying Rates, 2005-2010. Data on working children and children combining schooling and working are from 2005. Data on school attendance is from 2006. 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. As a result, statistics on children's work are reported here, which may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. 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.

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