

# Morocco

## MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

*In 2013, Morocco made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government established an action plan to address gaps in its migration policy, and to draft and adopt trafficking laws, and expanded access to public education for migrant children. The Government also conducted research on children working as domestic servants in Casablanca. Further, the Government started its Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children, which is a key phase of its National Plan of Action for Children (PANE). However, children in Morocco continue to engage in child labor in agriculture and the worst forms of child labor in forced domestic service. The Government lacks a national coordinating mechanism to combat all worst forms of child labor and continues to delay approving legislation that would protect children employed in domestic service.*



### I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Morocco are engaged in child labor in agriculture and the worst forms of child labor in forced domestic service.<sup>(1)</sup> Child labor is primarily a rural phenomenon in Morocco, although it also occurs in urban areas. The Moroccan High Commission for Planning's recent annual labor surveys indicate a steady decline in the incidence of child labor over the past decade.<sup>(1, 2)</sup> Evidence suggests that child labor exists among Morocco's migrant population.<sup>(1)</sup>

Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Morocco. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

**Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education**

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate (%)		98.9

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.<sup>(3)</sup>

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis, 2014.<sup>(4)</sup>

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	Farming, activities unknown (1, 5, 6)
	Fishing,† activities unknown (1, 5)
	Forestry, activities unknown* (1, 5)
Industry	Construction, activities unknown* (13-15)
	Weaving textiles*† (1, 7)
	Production of artisanal crafts (5, 8)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Domestic service (1, 8-12)
	Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles (1, 13)
	Street peddling (1, 14)
	Metallurgy* (1, 15)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor†	Commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking (1, 2, 7, 12)
	Domestic service as a result of human trafficking (1, 2, 7)
	Forced labor in the production of artisanal crafts and construction (7)
	Forced domestic service (7, 9, 11, 16, 17)

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

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a) – (c) of ILO C. 182.







Limited evidence suggests that abandoned child domestic servants, often forced to live on the streets, become vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation.(18) Children, primarily boys, are engaged in commercial sexual exploitation in Tangier, Agadir, and Marrakech, which are popular tourist sites that attract customers from the Persian Gulf and Europe.(19) Children are trafficked from Morocco to countries in the Middle East and Europe for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation.(2)

Despite strong enrollment rates in the early years of primary school, school dropout rates remain a problem. Recent research shows that causes of the high dropout rate include irrelevant school curricula and transportation barriers to attending school.(20) Violence and a lack of security in the school environment are also factors that cause children to drop out, increasing their vulnerability to child labor.(1, 20)

## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Morocco has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

**Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor**

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
 ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
 UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
 UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The Government has established relevant laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

**Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor**

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 143 of the Labor Code of 2004 (21)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 147 of the Labor Code of 2004 (21)
List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children	Yes		Hazardous Child Labor List; Decree no. 2-10-183 (22)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 10 of Labor Code of 2004 (21)

**Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor (cont)**

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	No		
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 503 of the Penal Code (23)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Hazardous Child Labor List; Decree no. 2-10-183 (22)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Royal Decree of 9 June 1996 (24)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15	Law No. 04-00 (25)
Free Public Education	Yes		Law No. 04-00 (25)

\* No conscription or no standing military.

Children in the informal sector do not have the same legal protections as children working in the formal sector. The Labor Code does not apply to those who are self-employed, work in private residences (including domestic workers), or work in traditional artisan or handicraft sectors for businesses with less than five employees, which leaves children working in these sectors unprotected by the law.(7, 26, 27) A draft bill to clarify Article 4 of the Labor Code regarding child labor in traditional artisan or handicraft activities remains under review.(28, 29) The draft bill stipulates a minimum age of 15 years for such work and regulates apprenticeships in the sector to ensure these are educational opportunities and that youth are not used for menial tasks or other forms of child labor.(28, 30)

The Government continued to refine a draft bill that would increase protections for domestic workers. If passed, the law would prohibit the employment of children under 15 years of age as domestic servants and determine the working conditions, terms, and conditions of employment for those between the ages of 15 and 18.(27) The continued failure to pass this bill puts children in domestic service at risk for exploitive labor conditions.(1, 31)

The Labor Code allows children under the age of 15 to perform certain types of agricultural work and children 16–17 years to perform agricultural work at night, potentially exposing children involved in this exempted agricultural work to hazardous labor.(21) The Labor Code’s prescribed penalties for employing children under age 18 in hazardous work include fines or jail time between 6 days and 3 months. Moreover, the ILO Committee of Experts notes that the fines imposed on companies for employing children in hazardous work are inadequate to act as an effective deterrent.(27)

The Government participated in two workshops during the reporting period to draft additional trafficking provisions in the Penal Code that would add further protections for victims of human trafficking.(1)

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

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

**Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement**

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs’ (MOESA) Child Labor Task Force	Enforce child labor laws and oversee programs on child labor. Employ labor inspectors in 51 sectors nationwide; one inspector in each sector dedicated to child labor.(7, 30, 32, 33)
Ministry of the Interior	Enforce prohibitions on prostitution and other exploitive crimes involving minors as established in the Penal Code.(33)
Ministry of Justice and Liberties (MOJ)	Prosecute criminal offenses against children, such as commercial sexual exploitation and child trafficking.(32)
MOJ’s Child Labor Units	Process cases involving women and children once in the court system.(1)

Law enforcement agencies in Morocco took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms. However, research found no evidence that criminal law enforcement agencies took such actions.

**Labor Law Enforcement**

No information was available on the number of child labor cases that were investigated or prosecuted. Reports from 2013 indicate that enforcement of child labor laws remains weak.(1, 13, 30) MOESA employs 492 labor inspectors; but, this number is insufficient to effectively enforce child labor laws.(7) Official procedures to process child labor violations require the participation of several agencies per case, placing an additional coordination burden on labor inspectors. Labor inspectors would have greater capacity to carry out their work if procedures could be streamlined.(1)

In 2013, child labor focal-point inspectors received additional training on child labor.(7)

A limited number of sources show that child labor laws were violated in small private farms and private urban residences that employ domestic servants as young as 6 years old. However, current law prohibits labor enforcement officials from entering these spaces.(7)

**Criminal Law Enforcement**

No information was available on the number of commercial sexual exploitation of children or child trafficking cases that were investigated or prosecuted.(1)

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

The Government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

**Table 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor**

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development (MSWFSD)	Coordinate the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children (PANE) (2006–2015). Establish continuity of child protection efforts, increase access to education, and eliminate child labor.(30, 33)
The National Observatory for Children's Rights	Register complaints related to child welfare and refer them to the labor inspectorate units and to the general law enforcement officials. Operate a toll-free telephone number available to child victims of violence, including commercial sexual exploitation. Operate specific units in hospitals for women and children who are victims of violence.(1) Operate 75 Child Reception Centers that provide services to child victims of violence, sexual abuse, or neglect.(30)
MOESA, Office for the Fight Against Child Labor	Provide some guidance and limited funding to NGOs working against child labor.(1)

Although the Government has a mechanism to coordinate its anti-trafficking efforts, it does not have a body to coordinate nationwide efforts to combat other forms of child labor.

**V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR**

The Government of Morocco has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 7).

**Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor**

Policy	Description
MSWFSD's National Plan of Action for Children (PANE)*†	Establishes policies that promote children's health, protection, civic participation, and education. Supported by UNICEF.(30, 33) Promotes the Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children, an interdisciplinary approach to analyze the scope of services that prohibit, prevent, and respond to abuse, exploitation, and violence against children, and to define responsibilities by coordinating mechanisms to improve access, regional coverage, and impact of services.(1)
Migration Policy Reform†	Expands access to public education facilities for migrant children, decreasing their vulnerability to child labor.(1)
United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)*	Addresses education, health, and socio-economic development in an effort to alleviate poverty. Focuses on equal access to education for vulnerable children.(34)

\* The impact of this policy on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

† Policy was launched during the reporting period.

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During the reporting period, progress on the legislative and institutional front was slowed due to the breakup of the governing coalition and related ministry restructuring.(1)

### VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

In 2013, the Government of Morocco funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

**Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor**

Program	Description
Survey on Girls in Domestic Service†‡	MSWFSD program that carried out a survey on the domestic work of girls in Casablanca during the reporting period. Released publication in early 2014.(1)
Regional Child at Risk Program‡	MSWFSD program that serves child victims of sexual exploitation, street children, and other child workers in the regions of Agadir, Oujda, and Tangier.(35)
National Vocational Programs‡	Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MONEVT) program that provides education and training to at-risk youth; specific programs address factors that contribute to reduction of child labor.(1)
Ending Child Labor in Handicrafts‡	Government program in Fes and Marrakesh to reduce child labor in the handicraft sector. Aims to remove children under age 15 from child labor, reintegrate them into school, and improve the working conditions for children between the ages of 15 and 18. The budget is \$46,000.(6, 36)
“Tayssir,” Conditional Cash Transfer Program‡*	MONEVT program that provides direct cash transfers, between \$7 and \$16 a month, to qualifying families if the children meet school attendance criteria. Aims to increase school enrollment and reduce dropout rates, particularly in rural areas.(28, 30, 37, 38) Succeeded in reducing public school dropout rates among its beneficiaries by 68 percent and increasing school enrollment by 10 percent during the reporting period.(1, 39, 40)
Non-formal education programs‡*	MONEVT program that offers vocational training and alternative education programs to assist school dropouts to re-enroll in school. Has enrolled a number of working children, including child domestics. During the 2012–2013 school year, enrolled 63,488 children, of whom 30,282 were girls.(30, 41)
Child Protection Centers (CSC)‡	Childhood Division of the Ministry of Youth and Sport program that provides social and educational services to minors referred by the courts.(42, 43) Serves victims of abuse, child laborers, and street children, among others. Aims to strengthen children’s ties with their families and with society.(42, 43)
Child Protection Units(CPUs)‡	Government program that provides temporary shelter for street children, including former child domestic workers. Offers medical, legal, and psychological services and service referrals to targeted children. Managed through the PANE project, and based in Casablanca, Marrakesh, Tangier, Meknès, and Essaouira.(12, 30, 44)
Social Welfare Program*	Part of the UNDAF, addresses education, including equal access to education, especially for vulnerable children. Also addresses health and socio-economic development of children.(1)
Study on the Situation of Women and Children	A joint program by UNICEF and the Government that analyzes the vulnerabilities of women and children in Morocco. Data sets include child labor.(1)
National Initiative for Human Development Support Project Phase II (INDH2)*	\$100 million World Bank-funded, government program that increases access to basic services, such as schools; provides enhanced income-earning opportunities, such as micro-credit for women; and supports improved participation at the local level, to assure sustainability.(44-46)
High Commission for Planning	A division of the Ministry of Planning and Development of the National Territory that conducts annual labor surveys, which include collecting data on the number of children under age 15 who work.(6, 47, 48)

\* The impact of this program on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

† Program was launched during the reporting period.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Morocco.

Some NGOs that work with child laborers and at-risk children receive only a small portion of their funding from the Government. They stressed that government support is not sufficient to carry out their activities, and most needed to rely on private and international donations.(1)

The High Commission for Planning’s most recent national child labor survey, conducted in 2011, does not fully take into account child labor in the informal sector or in domestic work. Furthermore, the survey lacks a breakdown or further analysis of the number of children between the ages of 15 and 18 working in the worst forms of child labor.(1, 5)

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

The reporting above suggests actions that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Morocco (Table 9).

**Table 9. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms**

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Laws	Approve legislation to protect child domestic workers and to prevent children under the legal working age from working in domestic service.	2009 – 2013
	Approve legislation to prohibit children under the legal working age from employment in the handicraft sector and to regulate apprenticeships in traditional sectors.	2009 – 2013
	Ensure that relevant child labor laws and regulations apply equally to children working in the formal and informal sectors.	2013
	Amend legislation to increase the penalties for those who employ children under age 18 in hazardous work.	2012 – 2013
	Ensure that children 15 to 18 are protected from involvement in dangerous agricultural work, including at night.	2009 – 2012
Enforcement	Increase number of labor inspectors.	2012 – 2013
	Publish information on the number of investigations and prosecutions and the amount of penalties imposed for violations of child labor and child exploitation laws.	2012 – 2013
	Streamline child labor enforcement procedures among Government agencies.	2013
Coordination	Establish a national coordinating mechanism to combat child labor, including its worst forms.	2012 – 2013
Government Policies	Take measures to ensure children's safety in schools and remove barriers to children's access to education.	2013
Social Programs	Conduct study to measure the impact of previous education plans and the impact of PANE.	2013
	Conduct research to determine the types of activities carried out by children working in farming, construction, and forestry to inform policies and programs.	2013
	Assess the impact that existing programs may have on child labor.	2013
	Ensure Government staff who conduct work related to child labor are qualified.	2013
	Institute programs to address the worst forms of child labor in domestic service.	2013
	Conduct a child labor survey that incorporates informal labor and domestic labor and gathers data on children ages 15 to 18 working in the worst forms of child labor.	2013

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