

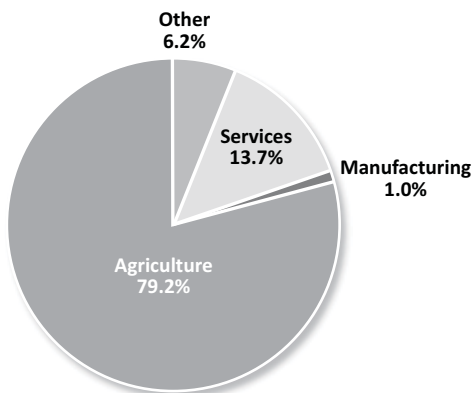
Cape Verde

In 2011, Cape Verde made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government ratified ILO Convention 138 on the minimum age for work and publicly committed to developing a list of hazardous work prohibited to children. Despite these efforts, Cape Verde faces significant legislative gaps, including a low compulsory education age and no protections against child prostitution for older youth. The Government also lacks a coordinating mechanism to combat child labor. Children in Cape Verde continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in street work and prostitution.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	10-14 yrs.	3.2 (2,392)
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	90.1
Combining Work and School	10-14 yrs.	1.7
Primary Completion Rate		98.9

Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2010, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from HHS Survey, 2001-2002.(2)

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Cape Verde are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in street work and prostitution.(3) Children typically engage in street work in Cape Verde's urban centers, begging, washing cars and selling water and food products.(3-6) The majority of children working on the



streets begin to do so when they are under age 15. Violence among gangs of street children is a rising problem.(7) Children working on the streets are vulnerable to severe weather, traffic accidents and crime.(8)

Children in Cape Verde also work in domestic service.(3, 4, 6, 9) Children employed as domestics may work long hours and are isolated in private homes, where they are susceptible to physical and sexual abuse.(10)

In rural areas, children work in dangerous activities in agriculture, fishing and animal husbandry.(3, 4, 6, 11, 12) Limited evidence suggests that children work cutting sugarcane.(3) Children working in agriculture may use dangerous tools, carry heavy loads and apply harmful pesticides. Children cutting sugarcane typically use sharp tools, including knives and machetes.(12) Fishing may expose children to risks such as drowning.(13)

Children also work as trash pickers in dumps and transport garbage and human waste.(3, 4, 6) Some children are known to work as assistants on construction sites and in mechanics and carpentry workshops.(3, 4)

Child prostitution is a problem in Cape Verde.(3, 14) Children have reported engaging in sexual activity with adults in exchange for money and, less frequently, clothing. Some children also work as escorts, receiving monetary compensation for going on dates with adults.(3, 15)

Some Cape Verdean children also work peddling drugs, including marijuana, for adults.(3, 5, 6)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Labor Code sets the minimum age for work at age 15, but allows children to work for artistic and musical purposes at age 14. Such work must not compromise their school attendance, health or development, and their employer must receive approval from the Ministry of Labor.(16) On February 7, the Government ratified ILO Convention 138 on the Minimum Age for Work.(17) The Labor Code prohibits hazardous work for children under age 18.(16) Section 2 of the Labor Code, however, specifies that the Code only applies to employment relationships with private, cooperative and mixed enterprises and, in certain instances, public entities. Therefore, the Labor Code does not provide protection to children who engage in work outside of an employment contract.(7) Further, Cape Verde has not adopted a list of hazardous occupations prohibited to children under age 18.(7, 16)

	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	15
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	12
	Free Public Education	Yes

The Labor Code also prohibits forced or compulsory labor.(16) The compulsory recruitment age for the armed forces begins at age 18; however, children may voluntarily join at age 17 with parental consent.(18, 19) Children age 17 can be recruited into the military during times of conflict.(20) This provision conflicts with ILO Convention 182, which considers compulsory recruitment of children into armed conflict a worst form of child labor.

Both the Penal and Labor Codes prohibit child trafficking.(9, 21) The Penal Code criminalizes the advancing,

supporting or facilitating of minors under age 16 for prostitution. The Penal Code also bans the use of minors under age 14 for pornographic purposes.(22) However, the Penal Code does not protect children ages 16 to 17 from exploitation in prostitution, or children ages 14 through 17 from exploitation in pornography.

Act No. 78/IV/93 of 1993 establishes more severe penalties for the production, trade and trafficking of drugs when the offense was committed using minors.(7)

By law, children are required to attend school until age 12.(6, 19) This standard makes children ages 12 to 15 particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor, as they are not required to be in school and are not legally permitted to work.

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

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

The General Inspector for Labor is the principal agency responsible for enforcing child labor laws. In 2011, 1,447 labor inspections were performed across sectors; no child labor violations were reported.(6, 19) The Labor Inspectorate works closely with the police, Office of the Attorney General and the Cape Verde Institute for the Child and Adolescent (ICCA) on enforcement issues related to child labor.(7)

The Ministry of Justice leads several other agencies, including the Ministry of Internal Administration, the Judicial Police (PJ) and the National Police (PN), in the efforts to combat human trafficking and prosecute criminal violations of child labor laws.(23) The PJ employs approximately 150 officers and the PN about 1,500 officers.(19) However, research has not revealed whether any investigations of child labor violations had occurred during the reporting period.

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labor (NPAECL) prioritizes the eradication of worst forms of child labor.(24) The Plan outlines specific objectives, including data collection, institutional capacity building and enhancement of measures to prevent, protect and remove children from involvement in labor. It aims to engage multiple stakeholders, such as government agencies, workers' organizations, and child workers and their families, in the efforts to achieve these goals.(24)

The Government is also implementing the Strategic Education Plan (SEP) for 2003-2013. The SEP and the NPAECL each outline educational priorities to prevent and reduce child labor. Objectives include strengthening mechanism to monitor school dropouts, promoting non-formal and vocational training and increasing financial assistance for low-income families to increase their access to education.(7)

Throughout the reporting period, the Government worked to develop a Strategic Plan for the implementation of the National Policy for Children and Adolescents, which the ICCA released in January 2012.(25, 26) The plan aims to increase coordination among the agencies serving children and youth, including the abandoned and vulnerable. As part of the strategy, the Government plans to establish a standing committee to oversee its implementation and foster collaboration between public bodies.(26)

The National Action Plan for Human and Citizenship Rights targets human rights violations, including those impacting children and adolescents. For example, the policy explicitly proposes the development of mechanisms to identify cases of forced labor involving children under age 14, and programs to remove children from those situations.(4) However, it is unclear whether any existing policies address mechanisms to identify forced labor cases involving children ages 14 through 17.

The Government maintains a policy of free primary education for children ages 6 to 12. In addition, it provides free secondary education for children whose families earn less than \$1,871 annually.(6)

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

The Government continued efforts to raise public awareness about child labor and enhance services to victims. During the reporting period, the Director General of Labor organized a national workshop on child labor issues with various government officials to enhance understanding and develop strategies for implementing NPAECL.(7, 25, 27) The conference resulted in a public commitment to develop a list of hazardous activities legally prohibited to children and set the grounds for the creation of a National Commission on Child Labor.(25, 27) Other awareness-raising initiatives included the release of an Educational Guide on Child Labor targeted at key stakeholders, including parents and educators.(4, 7) The ICCA operates several child emergency centers, as well as a hotline to receive calls about child abuse. The Government has also

established emergency centers to assist child victims of sexual and economic exploitation.(7)

During the reporting period, the Government ran various initiatives that specifically target street children. ICCA operated reception centers that connect street children with educational and training opportunities. It also helps these children access necessary social, psychological and medical services.(7) The ICCA also implements *Nós Kaza-Criança fora da rua, dentro da escola*, a program to reintegrate children who have been living and working on the streets into their families and schools.(7)

Cape Verde is participating in a four-country, regional project focused on the development and implementation of national action plans to combat the worst forms of child labor.(28) The project seeks to enhance sustainable action from national government institutions, private-sector actors and civil society organizations. The 4-year project is funded by a \$5.2 million grant from the Government of Spain and will run through 2012.(29)

The Government continues to engage in three USDOL-funded regional projects. The first aims to combat the worst forms of child labor in five Lusophone countries in Africa. The 2-year, \$500,000 project aims to foster information sharing between Brazil and to target Lusophone countries about the best practices for eliminating the worst forms of child labor. Additionally, the project will provide technical assistance and guidance for countries to develop or refine national action plans on child labor.(30)

The second project is a 3-year, \$7.9 million project to strengthen ECOWAS' Child Policy and Strategic Plan of Action and to develop programs focusing on child trafficking as it pertains to the Strategic Plan.(31) The third, is a \$5 million, 3-year program meant to expand and extend the work of the above ECOWAS Project.(32)

Through the Cape Verde Social and Educational Action Institute, the Government implements various initiatives to increase access to education among the poor. For children who may still be subject to school fees, efforts include the provision of school fees, school materials and free meals to low-income families.(7) The question of whether these educational programs have an impact on child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

Despite these efforts, the Government does not currently have programs specifically targeting children working in domestic service, agriculture or drug peddling.

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Amend the Labor Code to protect all children under age 18, regardless of whether they are working under an employment contract.	2011
	Adopt a list of hazardous occupations prohibited to children.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Raise the minimum age for involvement in armed conflict to age 18.	2011
	Amend the Penal Code to protect all children younger than age 18 from exploitation in prostitution and pornography.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Raise the age of compulsory education to be equal to or higher than the minimum age for employment.	2009, 2010, 2011
Coordination and Enforcement	Establish a coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Ensure investigations of child labor violations are being conducted.	2011
Policies	Assess the impact the National Policy on Children and Adolescents may have on child labor.	2011
	Ensure that relevant policies target all children in forced labor.	2010, 2011
Social Programs	Assess the impact existing education programs may have on child labor.	2011
	Develop new and expand existing programs to reach more children involved in the worst forms of child labor, including those engaged in domestic service, agriculture, and drug peddling.	2010, 2011

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