

In 2017, Colombia made a significant advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government approved the National Policy to Prevent and Eliminate Child Labor and Protect the Young Worker and a roadmap to prevent and eliminate child labor in mining. The government also updated its list of hazardous occupations for children, piloted the Model for Identification of Child Labor Risks, and devoted additional resources to its Labor Inspectorate. Under the peace accord signed with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the government reintegrated over 130 recovered child soldiers in 2017. In addition, the government raised awareness of commercial sexual exploitation of children among indigenous communities and issued guidance to labor inspectors, including by providing strategies and protocols related to child labor prevention and detection. However, children in Colombia engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation and illicit activities, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Additionally, the government does not employ a sufficient number of labor inspectors.



## I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Colombia engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation and illicit activities, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. (1; 2) The government publishes annual statistics on children's work from its National Household Survey. (3) However, activities and ages are not sufficiently specified in this data to determine child labor rates. (3; 4) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Colombia.

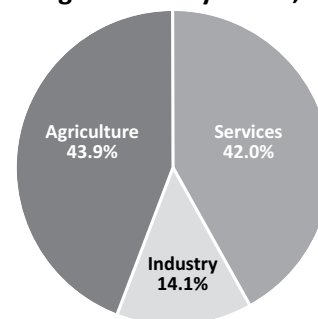
**Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education**

| Children                      | Age     | Percent       |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------------|
| Working (% and population)    | 5 to 14 | 4.2 (356,867) |
| Attending School (%)          | 5 to 14 | 94.4          |
| Combining Work and School (%) | 7 to 14 | 4.5           |
| Primary Completion Rate (%)   |         | 101.4         |

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (5)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares, Módulo de Trabajo Infantil (GEIH-MTI), 2016. (6)

**Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14**



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     | Production of coffee,† sugarcane,† and unrefined brown sugar (panela)† (7; 8; 9)                                    |
|                 | Animal husbandry,† hunting,† and fishing,† activities unknown (10; 11; 9)   |
| Industry        | Mining coal,† emeralds,† gold,† tungsten,† coltan,† and clay† (12; 13; 14; 15; 9)                                   |
|                 | Producing bricks† (15)  |
|                 | Construction,† activities unknown (16)  |
|                 | Cutting and transporting lumber,† and creating artisanal woodwork such as handicrafts and decorative items (17; 11) |

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

| Sector/Industry                         | Activity   |
|---|--|
| Services                                | Street work,† including vending and helping shoppers carry bags in urban markets,† begging,† guarding or washing cars and motorcycles,† and selling massages and hair-braiding to tourists in beach areas (1; 7; 18; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23; 18; 22)   |
|   | Recycling† and garbage scavenging† (1; 24; 21)   |
|   | Domestic work,† including caring for children,† cooking, gardening, and shopping for the home (7; 14; 25; 9)   |
|   | Working in retail establishments, hotels, and restaurants, activities unknown (10; 3; 9)   |
| Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡ | Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (7; 18; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30)   |
|   | Use in the production of pornography (1; 7; 26)  |
|   | Recruitment of children by illegal armed groups for use in armed conflict to perform intelligence and logistical activities, store and transport weapons, and engage in commercial sexual exploitation (7; 31)   |
|   | Use in illicit activities, including in forced begging, by illegal armed groups and criminal organizations to commit homicides and traffic drugs, and in the production of marijuana, poppies, and coca (stimulant plant), sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1; 7; 19; 32; 33; 2; 9) |

† 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.

Commercial sexual exploitation of children occurs more often in private homes rented online than in commercial establishments. (9) In Bucaramanga, child victims of commercial sexual exploitation are allegedly recruited in schools by other students. (34) In mining areas, trafficking of children for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation is widespread. (35) In Cartagena, children are forced by illegal armed groups and criminal organizations to commit homicides. (36)




The government reports that the recruitment and use of children by illegal armed groups has declined by 60 percent since the government and the FARC signed a peace accord in 2016. However, the National Liberation Army, Popular Liberation Army, and non-ideological criminal organizations such as the Gulf Clan continued to recruit children in 2017. (9)

In Colombia, impassable routes, long distances between children’s homes and schools in rural areas, and continued violence and insecurity in parts of the country hinder access to education. (9) Indigenous and Afro-Colombian children in particular face difficulties in accessing education and experience higher school dropout rates. (7; 37; 38) In several communities, classes were interrupted, sometimes for weeks at a time, because of illegal armed group activity in those areas. (38) Between April and June of 2017, at least 1,900 children were affected by violent attacks on schools. (39) The government’s National Education Policy provides for access to the education system for all children residing in Colombia; however, some children of Venezuelan migrants faced challenges accessing education, although the extent of the problem was unknown. (4) In 2017, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ agency for migration jointly issued a circular to facilitate these children’s enrollment in school, regardless of their residency or citizenship status. (9; 40) However, it is unknown whether this circular is being properly carried out in practice. (9)

## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Colombia 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's laws and regulations are in line with relevant international standards (Table 4).

**Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor**

| Standard  | Meets International Standards: Yes/No | Age | Legislation  |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----|--|
| Minimum Age for Work  | Yes                                   | 15  | Article 35 of the Code on Childhood and Adolescence (41)   |
| Minimum Age for Hazardous Work  | Yes                                   | 18  | Article 117 of the Code on Childhood and Adolescence (41)  |
| Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children | Yes                                   |     | Article 3, Resolution 1796 (42)  |
| Prohibition of Forced Labor   | Yes                                   |     | Article 17 of the Constitution; Articles 141 and 188A of the Penal Code; Article 5 of Resolution 3597 (43; 44; 45) |
| Prohibition of Child Trafficking  | Yes                                   |     | Article 17 of the Constitution; Articles 188A–188C of the Penal Code; Article 5 of Resolution 3597 (43; 44; 45)    |
| Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children                     | Yes                                   |     | Articles 213–219B of the Penal Code (45)   |
| Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities                           | Yes                                   |     | Articles 162, 188D, and 384 of the Penal Code; Article 2 of Resolution 3597 (43; 45)                               |
| Prohibition of Military Recruitment   |                                       |     |  |
| State Compulsory  | Yes                                   | 18  | Article 13 of Law 418; Article 2 of Law 548 (46; 47)   |
| State Voluntary   | Yes                                   | 18  | Article 13 of Law 418; Article 2 of Law 548 (46; 47)   |
| Non-state   | Yes                                   | 18  | Article 162 of Law 599; Article 20 of Law 1098; Article 14 of Law 418 (41; 45; 46)                                 |
| Compulsory Education Age  | Yes                                   | 18  | Decision C-376/10 of the Colombian Constitutional Court (48)   |
| Free Public Education   | Yes                                   |     | Article 1 of Decree 4807 (49)  |

In 2018, the Ministry of Labor (MOL) issued a Resolution updating its list of hazardous occupations prohibited for children, including by capping domestic work by children in the child's own home at 15 hours a week. (42) Colombian law also provides that children ages 15 to 17 may work if they have official authorization. The Resolution states that authorization for these children to work may be revoked if minimum guarantees protecting health, social security, education, and acceptable work conditions are not met. (42)

### III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

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

| Organization/Agency  | Role   |
|--|--|
| Ministry of Labor's (MOL) Inspection, Monitoring, Control, and Territorial Management Department | Receive complaints of labor law violations and conduct labor inspections, including inspections to verify labor conditions for adolescent workers and compliance with other child labor provisions. Oversee the Internal Working Group on Child Labor Eradication. (50) Operate the Integrated Registration and Information System for Child Labor (SIRITI), a child labor monitoring system that identifies children engaged in or at risk of child labor. (1; 51) In 2017, the government provided training on SIRITI, reaching 10 departments, 122 municipalities, and 342 trainees. (52) |
| National Police  | Investigate cases of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking. (51)  |
| Attorney General's Office  | Investigate and prosecute cases of child recruitment for armed conflict, commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, and human trafficking. (1; 41) Oversee the Articulation Group for Combating Trafficking in Persons, which includes four prosecutors that focus on investigating and prosecuting cross-border human trafficking and other related crimes. (53)   |
| National Training Service (SENA)   | Collect fines imposed by the MOL for labor law violations. (54)  |

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### *Labor Law Enforcement*

In 2017, labor law enforcement agencies in Colombia took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the MOL that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including human resource allocation and labor inspector training.

**Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement  | 2016          | 2017            |
|--|---------------|-----------------|
| Labor Inspectorate Funding   | \$426,165 (4) | \$1,016,989 (4) |
| Number of Labor Inspectors   | 836† (7)      | 868 (55)        |
| Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties  | Yes (7)       | Yes (9)         |
| Training for Labor Inspectors  |               |                 |
| Initial Training for New Employees   | Unknown       | Yes (56)        |
| Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor  | N/A           | N/A             |
| Refresher Courses Provided   | Yes           | Yes (9)         |
| Number of Labor Inspections Conducted  | Unknown       | Unknown         |
| Number Conducted at Worksites  | Unknown       | Unknown         |
| Number of Child Labor Violations Found   | 6† (7)        | 247‡ (9)        |
| Number of Child Labor Violations for which Penalties were Imposed                  | 6† (7)        | 15 (9)          |
| Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that were Collected                        | Unknown       | Unknown         |
| Routine Inspections Conducted  | Yes (7)       | Yes (9)         |
| Routine Inspections Targeted   | Yes (7)       | Yes (9)         |
| Unannounced Inspections Permitted  | Yes (7)       | Yes (9)         |
| Unannounced Inspections Conducted  | Yes (7)       | Yes (9)         |
| Complaint Mechanism Exists   | Yes (7)       | Yes (7; 9)      |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services | Yes (7)       | Yes (7; 9)      |

† Data are from January 2016 to October 2016.

‡ Data are from January 2017 to October 2017.

In 2018, the Governments of the United States and Colombia signed an agreement to each contribute \$2 million or its equivalent to strengthen the capacity of the Colombian MOL to address labor informality and enforce labor laws. (57) In 2017, the MOL increased its training budget for labor inspectors and implemented an electronic case management system in all its 35 offices, including 33 regional offices and 2 special administrative offices. (56) The MOL also issued a proposed inspection plan that focuses on sectors in which children are vulnerable to child labor and includes child labor prevention strategies. (9)

While the government reported it had sufficient resources and supplies to conduct its work, reports indicate that resource allocation for labor law enforcement in rural areas such as Amazonas and Vichada was insufficient. (7; 55) In some cases, inspectors carried out inspections in only a small geographic area of the department due to a lack of transportation to reach areas that may be accessible only by boats or small planes. (1) Because certain legal restrictions are placed on conducting unannounced inspections, this type of inspection may be conducted infrequently in practice. (9) Because inspectors must obtain prior approval from the Attorney General's Office and be accompanied by judicial police officers to inspect certain kinds of private property, conducting inspections in private homes, farms, and brothels is sometimes difficult. (55) Out of the 247 child labor violations found in 2017, it is unknown how many resulted from labor inspections and how many children received social services. (9)

According to the ILO technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in industrializing economies, Colombia should employ about 1,645 inspectors. (7; 58) In 2017, high turnover of labor inspectors continued to be a problem due, in part, to the provisional nature of the appointments by which many labor inspectors hold their positions. In Colombia, labor inspectors are not considered full civil servants until they are hired through a state-provided civil service exam, which occurs infrequently. (9) In early 2018, the government administered the civil service exam with the aim of converting non-career labor inspector positions to career civil servant positions. (56)

Despite the requirement that children between the ages of 15 and 17 obtain official authorization to work, many adolescents work without such authorization. (59) In 2017, as a result of 2,111 inspections of worksites where children had been legally authorized to work, the government revoked 121 such authorizations, resulting in the removal of 121 children from the worksites. (9)

### *Criminal Law Enforcement*

In 2017, criminal law enforcement agencies in Colombia took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including resource allocation.

**Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

| Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement  | 2016      | 2017     |
|---|-----------|----------|
| Training for Investigators  |           |          |
| Initial Training for New Employees  | Unknown   | Unknown  |
| Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor                        | N/A       | Yes (9)  |
| Refresher Courses Provided  | Yes (7)   | Yes (9)  |
| Number of Investigations  | 2,240 (7) | Unknown  |
| Number of Violations Found  | Unknown   | Unknown  |
| Number of Prosecutions Initiated  | 374 (7)   | 359 (9)  |
| Number of Convictions   | 258 (7)   | 206 (55) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services | Yes (7)   | Yes (9)  |

In 2017, the Attorney General's Office received 2,697 complaints concerning the worst forms of child labor, mostly related to commercial sexual exploitation and illicit activities, although it is unknown how many of them were investigated or resulted in violations. (9) The National Police and the Colombian Institute for Family Well-Being (ICBF) conducted an awareness-raising campaign in indigenous communities, including in Mocagua, Amazonas, to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children. (60) Between January and November, ICBF provided social services to 281 child victims of commercial sexual exploitation and sexual violence through its Administrative Process for Reestablishing Rights (PARD). (9)

ICBF removed 60 children from situations of commercial sexual exploitation in the course of four criminal law enforcement operations in designated areas where prostitution is legal in La Guajira, Atlantico, and Bogota. (9) Despite these efforts, the government noted that insufficient resources hampered its capacity to enforce criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor. (7)

## **IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR**

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including the activities of the Inter-sectorial Commission for the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Children by Illegal Armed Groups and the Work Group to Assess Acceptable Activities for Adolescent Work in Coffee, Cotton, Sugar, and Rice.

**Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor**

| Coordinating Body   | Role and Description   |
|---|--|
| Interagency Committee for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (CIETI) | Coordinate efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor. Chaired by the MOL, includes 13 government agencies and representatives from trade unions, business associations, and civil society organizations. (7) Oversee 32 department-level CIETIs throughout the country, each comprising municipal-level committees. (61) In 2017, the government took actions to reform the CIETI's structure by updating the entities and sectors that should be represented in the committees, detailing their roles and responsibilities, and defining the guidelines for operation at national and local levels. (62) |

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**Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor (cont)**

| Coordinating Body  | Role and Description   |
|--|--|
| Colombian Institute for Family Well-Being (ICBF)   | Operate 40 mobile units to coordinate government actions to protect children's rights, including child labor. Support demobilized child soldiers by strengthening family networks and increasing access to health services, food, education, and shelter. (17) Serve as Administrator of the Fund Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. (63) Process child labor complaints, operate hotlines to report child labor cases, and provide social services to children engaged in or at risk of child labor. (1; 64; 65) Between January and August 2017, provided services to 209 children registered as victims of commercial sexual exploitation. (66) |
| ICBF's National System of Family Well-Being  | Promote interagency coordination to protect children's rights, including rights related to child labor. (7) Design, implement, monitor, and evaluate policies that affect children from early childhood to adolescence. Comprises the offices of the President and Vice President, 15 government ministries, and other government agencies. In 2017, reviewed the first draft of the Childhood and Adolescence Policy and provided capacity-building activities to 531 government officials. (62; 9)   |
| National Interagency Committee for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Commercial Sexual Exploitation                        | Coordinate and implement efforts to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Led by the MOL, comprises 15 government agencies. (7) In 2017, met to discuss the formulation of the Public Policy for the Prevention and Eradication of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. (55)   |
| Interagency Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons ( <i>Comité Interinstitucional de Lucha Contra la Trata de Personas</i> ) | Lead and coordinate efforts among government agencies to combat human trafficking. Created by Law 985 and chaired by the Ministry of the Interior, comprises 16 government entities and 6 permanent invitees, including private sector and international organizations. (1) In 2017, conducted 45 technical advisory meetings with departmental, municipal, and district committees to improve coordination, make recommendations to prepare territorial action plans, and follow up on any reported cases of human trafficking. (4)   |
| Inter-sectorial Commission for the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Children by Illegal Armed Groups (CIPRUNA)           | Coordinate efforts to prevent child recruitment by illegal armed groups, including for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. Created by Law 552 and led by the High Commissioner for Post-Conflict, Human Rights and Security, comprises 23 entities, with the Attorney General's Office and the MOL as permanent members. (67; 68) Whether this Committee met in 2017 is unknown.   |
| Work Group to Assess Acceptable Activities for Adolescent Work in Coffee, Cotton, Sugar, and Rice                                | Coordinate with universities to research and assess the types of activities that adolescents may be authorized to perform in the coffee, cotton, sugar, and rice sectors. Created in 2014, comprises the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the ILO, Department of National Planning, National Department of Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, and the MOL. (61) Whether this Work Group met in 2017 is unknown.   |
| National Reintegration Council   | Supervise the reintegration of FARC members, including children, and the preparation of a socioeconomic survey of former FARC combatants. (69) Established on December 20, 2016, pursuant to the Peace Accord. (70) In 2017, met almost weekly and established working groups on gender, health, land, and productive projects. (69)   |

To address child labor in the mining sector, the Ministry of Mines and ICBF signed a cooperative agreement and the government developed a Roadmap for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in Mining. (71; 72) Under this agreement, the government assisted 106 families, including 210 children at risk of child labor. (9) In addition, under the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labor, the MOL Municipality of Cali and Government of Valle del Cauca Department held an event convening 120 participants from universities, the private sector, civil society, and labor unions to discuss the role of the private sector in preventing child labor. (9)

## V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies that are consistent with relevant international standards on child labor (Table 9).

**Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor‡**

| Policy   | Description   |
|--|---|
| National Policy to Prevent and Eliminate Child Labor and Protect the Young Worker (2017–2027)† | Aims to focus agricultural policy on child labor eradication, develop child labor prevention strategies, improve the quality and coverage of social mobility and child protection services for vulnerable children, protect adolescent workers from hazardous work, create strategies to address child labor in domestic work, strengthen institutions to improve attention on children at risk for child labor, and establish evaluation and monitoring mechanisms to assess progress of public policies. (73) |



**Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor‡ (cont)**

| Policy  | Description   |
|---|---|
| Child Labor Pact (2014–2018)  | Aims to revise policies on the prevention and eradication of child labor and include them in national strategies; improve coordination among the MOL and other government agencies, the ILO, and industry associations; raise awareness of child labor issues in capital cities and tourist destinations; and train department-level officials on laws related to child labor and services available to victims. (61) In 2017, carried out a national campaign against child labor in mining. (74)  |
| National Strategy for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons (2016–2018)  | Aims to prevent human trafficking by raising awareness to detect potential victims, provide immediate assistance to victims, promote inter-institutional collaboration, strengthen and develop international cooperation mechanisms, and develop a data-gathering mechanism. (75) Established by Decree No. 1036 in 2016 and led by the Interagency Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons. (76) In 2017, in partnership with the UNODC, conducted nine regional workshops to strengthen the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking crimes, training 125 prosecutors and judicial police officers. (9) Prosecutors and delegates related to the departmental or municipal Committees to Combat Trafficking in Persons received training on human trafficking in Arauca, Bogota, Caldas, and Barranquilla. (9) |
| Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace  | Establishes the National Reincorporation Council to oversee the demobilization and release of minors from the FARC's ranks. The government and FARC agreed to conduct a child labor eradication campaign, take immediate measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, strengthen on-site labor inspections, create a mobile inspection unit to reach rural areas, and increase access to education. (7; 76). In 2017, reintegrated 130 former child soldiers and the mobile inspection unit conducted six outreach fairs in rural areas. (4)   |
| Roadmap for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in Mining†  | Aims to reduce and eliminate child labor in mining through the following activities: (1) create municipal diagnostics, (2) define criteria to determine risks of child labor, (3) create mechanisms to focus municipal governments on addressing child labor, (4) create protocols and questionnaires to report child labor cases, (5) design strategies to strengthen coordination of child labor monitoring at the municipal level, and (6) design strategies to prevent and remove children from child labor. (72)   |
| National Policy to Prevent the Recruitment of Children and Adolescents by Illegal Armed Groups                              | Directs actions to prevent the recruitment and use of children by illegal armed groups. Aims to address violence against children, including the worst forms of child labor, and improve interagency coordination. (77)   |
| National Development Plan ( <i>Todos por un Nuevo País</i> ) (2014–2018)  | Outlines Colombia's strategy to promote inclusive economic growth and national development. Seeks to improve access to quality education, lengthen the school day to 7 hours, and provide preschool for children under age 5. (78)  |
| Cooperative Agreement Between the Ministry of Mining and Energy and the ICBF to Prevent Child Labor in Mining†              | Aims to strengthen and implement policies and directives to prevent and eradicate child labor in mining. (71; 79)   |
| Roadmap for the Restoration of Rights, Assistance, and Reparation for Children and Adolescent Victims of the Armed Conflict | Establishes the protocols for assisting child victims of the armed conflict. Approved in 2016 and implemented through inter-institutional mechanisms and technical assistance in various departments in 2017. (9; 80)   |

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (7; 61; 81; 82; 83)

In 2017, the ICBF presented a draft of the National Policy for Children and Adolescents to relevant government entities working on child protection issues and established nine working groups to gather information to develop the Public Policy for the Prevention and Eradication of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. (62; 55) At the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the government pledged to develop local-level strategies to address the needs of children vulnerable to child labor within the framework of the National Policy to Prevent and Eliminate Child Labor and Protect the Young Worker. (84)

## VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2017, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, which cover the main sectors where child labor has been identified in the country (Table 10).

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**Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor†**

| Program  | Description   |
|--|---|
| Child Labor in Mining Prevention Program ( <i>Prevenir es Mejor</i> )† | Secretariat of Mining and Office of Infancy, Adolescence, and Youth program in Antioquia that provided 438 children with life skills training, legal and psychological support, and recreational activities to prevent and eradicate child labor in the mining sector. (85)   |
| Projects Addressing Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children†        | Eyes Everywhere ( <i>Ojos en Todas Partes</i> ), a public awareness campaign, aims to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the tourism sector. Led by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism, and implemented in coordination with the ICBF and the National Tourism Fund. (1; 86) Sexual Violence – The Importance of the First 72 Hours campaign to train psychosocial teams and other service providers on how to conduct investigations into the commercial sexual exploitation of children and provide assistance to victims. In 2017, the government launched “We Protect,” a web-based tool to collect, monitor, and address complaints of commercial sexual exploitation of children. (87) The government, private sector, and civil society also organized an event to promote the treatment of “child pornography” as “sexual exploitation of children.” (88; 87; 89) In 2017, the project I Am the Wall! ( <i>La Muralla Soy Yo!</i> ) created an award to recognize efforts in combatting the commercial sexual exploitation of children in tourism. (90; 91) |
| Model for Identification of Child Labor Risks*                         | Pilot project led by the ILO’s Regional Initiative: Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labor. Aims to design a system that classifies territories according to their probability of risk for child labor and identifies the principal factors associated with this risk based on existing databases in participating countries. (92) Participating countries include Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, and Peru. (92)  |
| Projects Addressing Trafficking in Persons                             | Eye on Trafficking† aims to increase awareness of human trafficking among high school students; School Environments in Coexistence and Peace† focuses on identifying potential trafficking victims; and The Butterflies, a comic book released by Women’s Link Worldwide, Renacer Foundation, and UNODC, aims to raise awareness about human trafficking among children and adolescents. (7) In 2017, the city of Bogota launched a campaign to raise awareness of trafficking. (93) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs implemented the campaign Do not Ignore Trafficking ( <i>#AnteLaTrataNoSeHaga</i> ), directed at border populations with limited access to digital platforms. (94)  |
| Development for Social Prosperity Programs†                            | More Families in Action ( <i>Más Familias en Acción</i> ) uses a conditional cash transfer program seeking to combat poverty and build human capital; United Network (Red Unidos), coordinates actions to reduce inequality and end extreme poverty; Healthy Generations ( <i>Generaciones con Bienestar</i> ) operates a children’s rights program offering cultural and recreational activities for children ages 6 to 17 identified as vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor; and Youth in Action ( <i>Jóvenes en Acción</i> ) provides technical job training and conditional cash transfer for vulnerable urban youth ages 16 to 24. (95; 96; 97; 98; 99; 100; 101)   |
| Mobile Teams for Comprehensive Protection – Child Labor (EMPI)†        | Led by ICBF, assists families with children vulnerable to child labor by linking them to the National System of Family Well-Being. (7) Under this program, ICBF has 21 operators offering specialized attention and 39 mobile teams that include 114 psychosocial professional staff to promote the restitution of rights to vulnerable children. (102) In 2017, provided specialized care to 3,444 children engaged in or at risk of child labor through 117 professionals. (9)  |
| Public-Private Partnerships†   | Colombia Network Against Child Labor ( <i>Red Colombia Contra el Trabajo Infantil</i> ), a public-private partnership that builds on the UN Global Pact Initiative to create collaboration between Colombian businesses and the MOL to eliminate child labor. (103; 104; 105) In 2017, taught a seminar to create awareness of child labor to 216 participants. (52) Collaborative Agreements ( <i>Acuerdos de Colaboración</i> ), an agreement between the Governments of Colombia and Guatemala to share initiatives and set a common agenda to eradicate child labor. In 2017, produced a virtual training on SIRITI to train Guatemalan delegates. (52)   |
| INGRUMA Indigenous Training Center                                     | Funded by USAID to provide specialized services to indigenous youth who have been victims of child soldiering. (106; 107)   |
| Differential Path to Life Program                                      | Office of Presidential Counselor for Human Rights and the ICBF managed program, with support from USAID and other international organizations, that establishes a reintegration process for disengaged FARC minors. Successfully reintegrated over 130 former child soldiers in 2017. (108; 69)   |
| I Stay at School, Protecting My Dreams†                                | Ministry of Education led program, provides strategies for teachers to prevent school desertion due to the worst forms of child labor, including forced recruitment, the use of children to conduct illicit activities, and other forms of child exploitation by illegal non-state armed groups. In 2017, trained more than 200 teachers. (9)   |



**Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor‡ (cont)**

| Program   | Description   |
|---|---|
| USDOL-Funded projects   | Measurement, Awareness-Raising, and Policy Engagement (MAP 16) Project on Child Labor and Forced Labor addresses knowledge gaps on child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking through research and development of survey methodologies, improving awareness of these issues by using data-driven techniques, strengthening policies and capacities of governments and other stakeholders to combat these issues, and supporting coordinated action to eradicate child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking; Promoting Compliance with International Labor Standards strengthens the institutional capacity of the MOL to adequately enforce Colombian labor laws and promote social dialogue among organizations and their stakeholders; and We Are a Treasure (Somos Tesoro), \$9 million USDOL-funded, 4 year project to combat child labor and promote safe work in the mining sector. Implemented by PACT, Inc., in partnership with the Alliance for Responsible Mining, Mi Sangre Foundation, and the Fund for Environmental Action and Childhood. (109; 110; 111) In 2017, in partnership with the government piloted the Comprehensive Route of Territorial Management for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in Mining in eight municipalities. (112) (62; 113) Additional information is available on the USDOL website. |
| Campaigns Against Child Labor†                                | ICBF-led campaigns to implement protocols to increase coordination among the ICBF, Child Protection Police, the MOL, and municipal authorities on child labor issues, and promote education about the risks of hazardous work. (55) In 2017, implemented 249 campaigns in capital cities nationwide, reaching 1,403 children and 1,285 families. (9; 55)  |
| Campaigns to Address Child Labor in Street Work and Recycling | Government-led campaigns that during the first three months of 2017 served 1,371 children who were engaged in street work and recycling in Kennedy, Ciudad, Bolivar, Suba, Bosa and Engativa. (21; 7) In 2017, the Secretariat of Social Inclusion, National Police, and ICBF removed children working on the streets of Medellin. (114)  |
| Anti-trafficking hotline                                      | Ministry of Interior-led hotline that reports and tracks cases of human trafficking and facilitates access to social services for victims. (115)  |

\* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Colombia.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (116; 117; 118; 119; 120; 121; 9)

## VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Colombia (Table 11).

**Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor**

| Area            | Suggested Action   | Year(s) Suggested |
|-----------------|--|-------------------|
| Enforcement     | Ensure that all labor inspectors have sufficient resources to perform inspections.   | 2009 – 2017       |
|                 | Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice.  | 2009 – 2017       |
|                 | Publish information on labor law enforcement efforts, including the total number of labor inspectors and penalties imposed that were collected for child labor violations.   | 2009 – 2017       |
|                 | Ensure that all adolescents who work in allowed sectors have received official authorization.  | 2015 – 2017       |
|                 | Publish information on the number of violations found related to the worst forms of child labor and initial training for new labor inspectors and criminal investigators.  | 2014 – 2017       |
|                 | Provide sufficient resources to criminal law enforcement officials to enforce criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor.   | 2014 – 2017       |
| Coordination    | Ensure that information is exchanged among coordinating bodies at the national and regional levels.  | 2012 – 2017       |
| Social Programs | Ensure that children are protected from armed conflict while at school.  | 2013 – 2017       |
|                 | Expand efforts to improve access to education for all children, particularly for indigenous and Afro-Colombian children, including by improving transportation infrastructure, and building more schools in rural areas. | 2013 – 2017       |
|                 | Collect data on work activities and ages of workers as part of National Household Survey questionnaires to allow for a determination of child labor rates.   | 2017              |

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