

In 2016, Egypt made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government participated in a school feeding program that reached 13.3 million students and participated in a new program intended to expand access to education to 36,000 children. Almost all Syrian refugee children were enrolled in formal or non-formal education in 2016. The Government held trainings and awareness-raising events on issues of child trafficking. However, children in Egypt are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in quarrying limestone and in commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking. The Government did not publish data on the enforcement of child labor laws. In addition, programs to combat child labor are insufficient to adequately address the extent of the problem.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Egypt engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in quarrying limestone and in commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking. (1-6) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Egypt.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

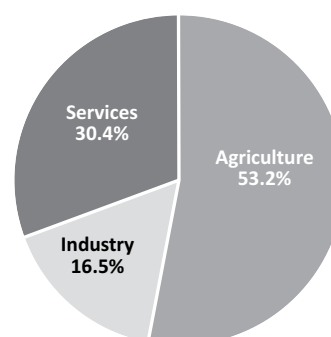
Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	10 to 14.	2.9 (246,179)
Attending School (%)	10 to 14	93.8
Combining Work and School (%)	10 to 14	1.3
Primary Completion Rate (%)		103.8

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2013, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016.(7)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Survey of Young People in Egypt, 2009.(8)

Data on working children, school attendance, and children combining work and school are not comparable with data published in the previous version of this report because of differences between surveys used to collect the data.

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 cotton (3, 9-11)
	Caring for livestock (3, 12)
	Fishing, activities unknown (3, 13)
Industry	Quarrying [†] limestone (1-4)
	Making bricks (3, 14-16)
	Working in carpentry workshops (3, 17)
	Construction, activities unknown (3, 18)
	Working in aluminum factories (3, 19)
Services	Domestic work (3, 12, 20)
	Repairing automobiles (3, 14)
	Street work, including selling goods, collecting garbage, and sweeping (3, 11, 17, 21)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor [‡]	Domestic work as a result of human trafficking (3, 5)
	Commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking (3, 5, 6)
	Forced begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (3, 5, 22)

[†] 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.




Some girls are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation under the pretext of “temporary marriage” to wealthy foreign men, mostly from Persian Gulf countries.(3, 5) Some Egyptian children are trafficked to Italy, where they are used for bonded child labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and illicit activities.(5, 23-27)

According to the Child Law, education is free through the basic level, consisting of 6 years of basic and 3 years of preparatory education.(28, 29) However, in practice, some schools charge fees for attendance, and the costs of books and uniforms are prohibitive for many families. As a result, children drop out of school.(13) In addition, cultural factors prevent some parents from sending their daughters to school.(13)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Egypt 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 laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Egypt’s legal framework to adequately protect children from child labor.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 64 of the Child Law (28)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 1 of Ministry of Manpower’s Decree 118 (30)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 1-2 of Ministry of Manpower’s Decree 118 (30)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 89 of the Constitution; Article 291 of the Penal Code as amended in the Child Law; Articles 2-3 of the Law on Combating Human Trafficking (28, 29, 31)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 89 of the Constitution; Article 291 of the Penal Code as amended in the Child Law; Articles 2-3 of the Law on Combating Human Trafficking (28, 29, 31)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	No		Article 116- <i>bis</i> (a) of the Child Law and Article 291 of the Penal Code as amended in the Child Law; Articles 2-3 of the Law on Combating Human Trafficking (28, 31)

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor (cont)

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 34 of the Law on Narcotics; Article 65 of the Child Law; Article 2.2 of Ministry of Manpower's Decree 118 (28, 30, 32)
Minimum Age for Military Recruitment			
State Compulsory	Yes	18	Article 1 of the Law on Military and National Service (33)
State Voluntary	Yes	15	Ministry of Defense Guidelines on Youth Volunteers in the Armed Forces (34)
Non-State Compulsory	Yes	18	Article 7-bis(b) of the Child Law (28)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15 [‡]	Article 59(1) of the Child Law; Articles 80 and 238 of the Constitution (28, 29)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 54 of the Child Law (28)

[‡] Age calculated based on available information (29)

Laws prohibiting the commercial sexual exploitation of children are not comprehensive enough to criminally prohibit the procuring of a child in all circumstances for pornography or pornographic performances.

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). However, gaps in labor law and criminal law enforcement remain and some enforcement information is not available.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Manpower	Enforce child labor laws and regulations, including receiving and investigating child labor complaints.(35) Inspectors conduct routine labor inspections and refer instances of illegal child labor to the Ministries of the Interior and Justice.(36)
Ministry of the Interior	Enforce laws and regulations prohibiting human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children.(37)
Ministry of Justice, Prosecutor General's Office	Prosecute violation of laws related to the worst forms of child labor and human trafficking.(37)
Ministry of Local Development	Provide administrative and logistical support for the enforcement of child labor laws.(38) Administer the Child Protection Committees.(36)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2016, labor law enforcement agencies in Egypt took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2015	2016
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (35)	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspectors	Unknown (35)	Unknown
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Unknown	Unknown
Training for Labor Inspectors		
Initial Training for New Employees	Unknown	Unknown
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Unknown	Unknown
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown	Yes (39)
Number of Labor Inspections	Unknown (35)	21,735 (39)
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown	21,735 (39)
Number Conducted by Desk Reviews	Unknown	0
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown (35)	1,531 (39)

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2015	2016
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown (35)	56 (39)
Number of Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown (35)	Unknown
Routine Inspections Conducted	Unknown	Unknown
Routine Inspections Targeted	Unknown	Unknown
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Unknown	Unknown
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Unknown (35)	Unknown
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (35)	Yes (35)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (35)	Yes (35)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2016, criminal law enforcement agencies in Egypt took actions to combat the worst forms of child labor (Table 7).

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2015	2016
Training for Investigators		
Initial Training for New Employees	Unknown (35)	Unknown
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (35)	Unknown
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (40)	Yes (41)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (35)	13 (41)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (35)	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (35)	2 (41)
Number of Convictions	2 (40)	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (35)	Yes (35)

In 2016, the Government held 22 training events, including for prosecutors, law enforcement officials, and judges. The Government also held awareness-raising events on topics such as child trafficking, reaching almost 4,000 individuals.⁽⁴¹⁾ The Government investigated 11 cases of selling children, kidnapping children for the purpose of exploitation, and using children in illicit activities, and charged 2 individuals. However, comprehensive statistics on the number of investigations, violations, and prosecutions were unavailable because the data that the Government provided did not distinguish among several categories of cases, including child trafficking and organ trafficking.⁽⁴¹⁾

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 8).

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM)	Coordinate enforcement of laws related to child labor, including its worst forms. ⁽³⁾ Provide technical support and training for the Ministry of Manpower’s inspectors on child labor. ⁽³⁶⁾ Identify and monitor at-risk children. Manage two 24-hour hotlines, receiving reports of child labor and child trafficking. ⁽³⁶⁾
National Coordinating Committee to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Coordinate the efforts of the Ministries of Manpower, Justice, Social Solidarity, and the Interior; the Council for Human Rights, Childhood, and Motherhood; and the Council for Women to draft a National Strategy to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor. ⁽³⁵⁾
National Coordination Committee on Preventing Illegal Migration and Combating Trafficking in Persons	Coordinate efforts to combat human trafficking. In 2016, merged with the National Coordinating Committee on Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration to improve coordination and accelerate Government efforts to address human trafficking. ^(3, 42) Led by an Ambassador appointed by the Prime Minister, the new committee comprises 18 government entities, including the Ministries of the Interior and Manpower. ⁽³⁹⁾

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Child Protection Committees	Coordinate child protection efforts at the local level. Organized by the Ministry of Local Development and the NCCM, and chaired by the local governors in each governorate, with subcommittees at each police station.(36)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 9).

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
Second National Plan of Action Against the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Aims to provide timelines and identify roles of Government agencies responsible for assisting children engaged in child labor.(35) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.
Third National Plan of Action Against Human Trafficking (2016–2021)†	Aims to maintain referral mechanisms, train law enforcement officials, and combat trafficking of street children.(35, 42)

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2016, the Government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 10).

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor‡

Program	Description
Enhancing Access of Children to Education and Fighting Child Labor (2014–2018)	\$65 million, EU-funded, 4-year project implemented by the WFP provides food security for up to 100,000 children at risk of child labor, and financial assistance to 400,000 family members to compensate for wages that child labor would have otherwise generated, enabling children to attend school. Supports 50,000 households in income-generating activities to help keep their children in school.(43) By the end of 2016, the project reached 13.3 million students in 16 governorates. The Government is working to expand this project to include all students enrolled in public schools.(3)
Expanding Access to Education and Protection for at Risk Children in Egypt (2016–2021)*	\$32 million, EU-funded, project implemented by UNICEF in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and NCCM to expand access to education for 36,000 children, including 6,000 children with disabilities, and to support 15 Child Protection Committees in 15 governorates.(44)
Solidarity and Dignity Initiative of the Cash Transfer Program (2015–2017)†	Provides a monthly income supplement to poor families, conditional on keeping their children at school, or unconditional for the elderly and family members with disabilities. The Initiative aims to reach 1.5 million households by 2017.(45)
Positive Life Alternatives for Egyptian Youth at-Risk of Irregular Migration Program (2015–2017)	\$3.2 million, USAID-funded, 2-year project implemented by the IOM supports activities that include the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labor, specifically through raising awareness among children and youth on the dangers of irregular migration and trafficking in persons, and building technical capacity of service providers for at-risk children.(46, 47) In 2016, the project held a workshop and study tour for 28 Government officials and community leaders in advance of a campaign to raise awareness about the risk of irregular migration and increase prosecutions and convictions of traffickers.(39)
Shelters for Children†	Shelters operated by the Ministry of Social Solidarity for victims of trafficking, and Dar as-Salam, operated by the NCCM and an NGO called Face, for a variety of project participants, including child victims of trafficking and forced labor. Dar as-Salam provides social services, including psychological counselling and health services.(41) In 2016, just under 5,600 children benefited from Dar as-Salam services.(41)

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Egypt.

‡ The Government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms.(3, 48, 49)

As of August 2016, UNHCR announced that almost all Syrian refugee children were enrolled in formal or non-formal education.(50) In 2016, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) held 66 awareness-raising events on human trafficking, reaching approximately 3,000 teachers, students, and residents in areas determined to be at high risk of human trafficking. The NCCM also printed pamphlets on the dangers of child trafficking and raised awareness of existing

social services.⁽⁴¹⁾ Although Egypt has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem.

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

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Egypt (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that the law clearly criminally prohibits the procuring of children for pornography and pornographic performances under all circumstances.	2015 – 2016
Enforcement	Publish information on the labor inspectorate funding; the number of child labor inspectors, their training, and whether they can assess penalties; the number of penalties imposed that were collected; whether routine and targeted inspections were conducted; and whether unannounced inspections were permitted and conducted.	2011 – 2016
	Publish information on the training of criminal investigators, the numbers of violations found, and convictions.	2011 – 2016
Government Policies	Take steps to implement the Second National Plan of Action Against the Worst Forms of Child Labor.	2016
Social Programs	Ensure universal access to free public education, especially for girls, by addressing the cost of school fees, supplies, and other barriers to education.	2010 – 2016
	Expand existing programs to address the scope of the child labor problem.	2010 – 2016

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