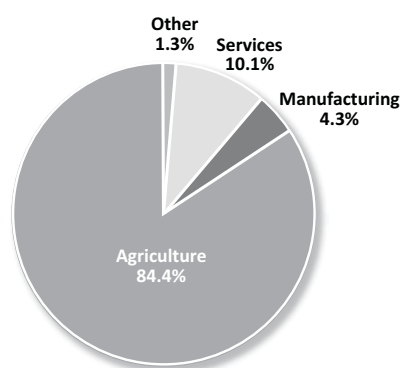


In 2011, Bolivia made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Ministry of Education issued a new directive requiring all public schools to offer an accelerated education curriculum so that primary and secondary students who are behind in school have the opportunity to catch-up. The Government of Bolivia increased its allocation for Bono Juancito Pinto, a cash subsidy program aimed at increasing attendance rates of primary school students, to \$55 million. This allocation expanded on previous expenditures. In addition, the Bolivian Government supported international organizations' and private sector efforts to combat child labor in the sugarcane sector. However, although child labor inspectors conduct unprompted inspections, general inspectors only respond to complaints and do not conduct proactive inspections for child labor violations. The Government's National Plan to Eradicate Child Labor has expired, and hazardous child labor in agriculture and the commercial sexual exploitation of children continue to exist.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	7-14 yrs.	20.2 (388,541)
Attending School	7-14 yrs.	96.2
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	18.7
Primary Completion Rate		99.4

Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2008, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from ECH Survey, 2009.(2)



Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Bolivia are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture and as victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Indigenous children are particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor.(4, 5) Children work in dangerous activities to produce sugarcane and Brazil nuts, especially in the departments of Pando, Beni, Santa Cruz, and Tarija, although recent efforts and other factors have reportedly reduced the prevalence of child labor in these sectors.(5-18) Children's work in these types of agriculture commonly involves using potentially dangerous tools such as machetes, carrying heavy loads, and working long hours.(5, 7, 8, 13) Children often work alongside their families to harvest these crops. Some of these workers become indebted to their employers and are forced to work as long as the debt exists. Some workers may repay these debts quickly, but others cannot.(4, 7, 8, 16, 17, 19) Some indigenous Guaraní families live in debt bondage and work on ranches, including cattle ranches, in the Chaco region. This practice reportedly has been reduced in recent years, which may be partially attributed to increased attention to the region and land tenure reform.(4, 5, 11, 15, 19-23)

Children work in gold, silver, tin and zinc mines, where they spend long hours, often in enclosed spaces, and are exposed to dangerous tools and chemicals.(4, 5, 13, 24-26) Children also work as street vendors, shoe shiners and transportation assistants; they are exposed to multiple dangers, including severe weather, criminal elements and vehicle accidents.(13, 26, 27) Additionally, children

Bolivia

work in construction, which may require working long hours, carrying heavy loads or using dangerous tools and machinery.(13, 28, 29) Children are exposed to dangerous work in the production of corn and bricks. Although we have information that child labor was involved in the production of cotton and peanuts, there does not appear to be information on the size of the problem.(4, 21, 23, 28, 30, 31)

Children are used to transport drugs in the border areas with Chile and Peru.(32) Some Bolivian children from rural areas work as domestic servants in urban third-party homes, under circumstances that often amount to indentured servitude.(4, 11, 13, 19)

The commercial sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, is a problem in Bolivia, particularly in the Chapare region and in urban areas, including Santa Cruz, La Paz, El Alto and Cochabamba.(33-35)

Paraguayan children have been trafficked to Bolivia for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation.(36, 37) The internal trafficking of Bolivian children for the purposes of prostitution, domestic service and mining also occurs.(5, 39, 40) Bolivian children are also trafficked to neighboring countries for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation.(25, 39) Bolivian families reportedly sell or rent their children to work in agriculture and mining in Peru.(38) There have also been reports of Bolivian children forced into the production of garments in Argentina.(4, 39)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Child and Adolescent Code sets the minimum age for employment at 14.(40, 41) The Labor Code permits apprenticeships for children ages 12 to 14, with some restrictions.(41) Children under age 18 must have the permission of their parents or government authorities to work.(26, 41) The Child and Adolescent Code prohibits children under age 18 from taking part in hazardous activities such as carrying excessive loads, working underground, working with pesticides and other chemicals, working at night and working in the harvesting of cotton, Brazil nuts or sugarcane. The Code also requires employers to grant time off to adolescent workers ages 14 through 17 who have not completed their primary or secondary education so that they may attend school during normal school hours.(40)

The Constitution sets the compulsory school age through high school, or at about age 17, and establishes the right to free primary education.(15, 42) The 2010 Avelino Siñani-Elizardo

	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	14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	17
	Free Public Education	Yes

Pérez Education Law aims to guarantee equal educational opportunities for all, including those who are behind in school due to work.(43) During the reporting period, a directive in support of the new law was issued by the Ministry of Education that requires all public schools to offer an accelerated education program so that children who have fallen behind in school because of work have the opportunity to catch up.(44, 45)

Bolivia's Constitution prohibits forced or exploitative child labor, compulsory labor and any kind of labor without fair compensation.(26, 44) The minimum age for voluntary military service is 17; and for compulsory military service for males, it is 18.(45, 49) It is not clear if this provision permitting voluntary military service at age 17 meets international standards or whether children age 17 can engage in combat.

The 2010 Law for the Legal Protection of Children and Adolescents penalizes child labor, prostitution of minors, and trafficking offenses.(46, 47) The Law Against Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Crimes specifically prohibits child pornography and trafficking of minors for the purpose of prostitution and exploitation in illegal activities.(48)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Ministry of Labor (MOL) is responsible for developing policies concerning child labor and leads an Inter-Institutional Commission to coordinate the various agencies and other entities involved in child labor issues.(27) The commission

includes several ministries and various NGOs, but coordination among members has been challenging and meetings have been infrequent.(11, 27, 49) The MOL also has a mandate to coordinate and develop policies to eradicate any form of servitude, and its Fundamental Rights Unit has the specific responsibility to protect indigenous people and eradicate forced labor.(50)

The MOL is responsible for enforcing child labor laws and employs 55 inspectors who investigate general labor complaints countrywide, an increase from 36 inspectors in 2010.(15, 47) As a MOL policy, these inspectors only respond to complaints and do not proactively inspect other workplaces.(27, 47, 51) Inspectors had improved access to plantations in the Chaco region.(15, 19, 23) Five inspectors are dedicated to investigating child labor violations in the areas identified by the government to have pervasive child labor, which is an increase from four inspectors in 2010. These child labor inspectors cover the sugarcane regions of Santa Cruz and Tarija-Bermejo, as well as Riberalta and Potosí, and they are able to make child labor inspections without being prompted to do so by a complaint.(3, 14, 22, 26, 50) From August through November 2011, the local child labor inspector in Santa Cruz reported that 44 labor inspections in sugarcane areas uncovered no violations of child labor in the production of sugarcane, although the inspections revealed that children sometimes accompanied their parents to the fields.(16) The MOL has developed a guide and conducted trainings in 2011 on child labor for all labor inspectors throughout the country.(44, 52-54)

The MOL has the authority to fine violators and to send cases to labor courts, which are responsible for enforcing penalties.(27) The MOL may also send cases to 1 of the 194 municipal Defender of Children and Adolescence offices that protect children's rights and interests.(15, 26, 27) Statistics on hazardous child labor—such as the number and nature of offenses, prosecutions, and penalties applied—are limited, and information on 2011 nationwide inspections is not available.(5, 15)

The Government of Bolivia supports the Bolivian Foreign Trade Institute's (IBCE) Triple Seal initiative that certifies production free of child labor, forced labor and discrimination in different sectors in Bolivia on a voluntary basis.(12) In 2011, a Steering Committee for zero child labor in sugarcane production was formed with support from the MOL and the participation of the regional government of Santa Cruz, municipal governments, the IBCE and NGOs.(12) During the 2011 sugarcane harvest season, a commission consisting of representatives from the Steering Committee and the

Ombudsmen's Offices for Children and Adolescents, with support from the MOL, inspected 388 of the approximate 4,000 existing sugarcane production plantations.(12, 16) An ILO-IPEC report indicated that the inspections found that 90 percent of the audited plantations no longer use child labor.(12)

Trafficking for sexual and labor exploitation is addressed by the Government's Special Police Investigative Units (SIU) and prosecutors.(27) Currently, there are 10 SIUs with 51 Bolivian National Police (BNP) investigators, and each city has prosecutors responsible for pursuing trafficking cases.(15, 47, 51) In 2011, two additional SIU offices were opened, one on the border with Argentina and another in the city of Potosí.(15, 47) During the reporting period, 35 BNP investigators, 30 prosecutors and 21 judges received training on trafficking issues.(15, 51) The SIU and BNP maintain telephone hotlines for the public to report child trafficking or the commercial sexual exploitation of children.(27)

In 2011, 250 trafficking cases were investigated. At year's end, 21 cases were in the trial phase and 254 cases were pending. Eight cases of trafficking were closed by pleas or convictions.(15, 47, 51) However, the statistics are not disaggregated to distinguish between children and adults.(15, 55) In June 2011, police and other government officials in Santa Cruz investigated and uncovered a prostitution network that trafficked minors for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation. Eight minors were rescued and four adults were detained by police.(56)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Bolivia's policy framework to address child labor was the National Plan for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor (2000-2010). The Plan identified mining, sugarcane harvesting, commercial sexual exploitation and domestic service as priority areas in combating exploitative child labor.(28, 57) However, a new plan was not established during the reporting period. Bolivia's poverty reduction strategy supported the goals and implementation of the National Plan for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor through the coordination of government agencies and projects.(58) In addition, the strategies outlined in the National Program for Decent Work in Bolivia and the UN Development Assistance Framework (2008-2012) support efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor and to reduce poverty.(59, 60)

The 2008 Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report published by UNESCO indicates that Bolivia will likely attain

the EFA goal of universal primary enrollment by 2015.(55, 61) However, secondary school attendance rates are low and many children are behind in school due to work.(6, 55, 62)

The Government of Bolivia's Transitional Plan for the Guaraní Communities addressed the forced labor of Guaraní families in the Chaco region and supported agrarian land reform and economic alternatives for Guaraní families.(19, 20, 23) However, international experts on indigenous rights issues have reported that bureaucratic challenges hindered implementation. They say that a more decentralized plan with additional resources is needed to adequately assist the families that have been subjected to forced labor.(11, 19, 23) Nonetheless, under the Transitional Plan, the Bolivian Government pursued a birth registration campaign, which provided identity documents for 2,500 Guaraní families.(23) Other recent efforts, including the Government's biometric election registration system, have also reached many previously hard-to-reach populations.(15, 54, 63)

The Government of Bolivia and other MERCOSUR countries are carrying out the Southern Child (*Niño Sur*) initiative to defend the rights of children and adolescents in the region. The initiative includes public campaigns against commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, and child labor. It also seeks to encourage mutual technical assistance in raising domestic legal frameworks to international standards, and to promote the exchange of best practices related to victim protection and assistance.(64, 65) During the reporting period, MERCOSUR member-countries met to discuss violence against children, child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children.(66)

Bolivia's Secretariat of Tourism is a member of the Joint Regional Group for the Americas.(67, 68) The Joint Regional Group, whose members also include Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela, conducts prevention and awareness-raising campaigns to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Latin America.(67) The Joint Group met in April in Quito to discuss efforts and advances in combating child sex tourism.(69) The Government of Bolivia also has a bilateral agreement with Chile to combat the worst forms of child labor, with a particular focus on child trafficking in the border areas.(70, 71)

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

The Government supports efforts to eliminate child labor in mines through awareness-raising, increasing educational opportunities and providing economic alternatives to families.(5, 72) The Government also works in collaboration

with UNICEF to promote an educational strategy targeting more than 3,000 children and their families who work in the sugarcane areas of Santa Cruz.(5) A 2011 UNICEF report highlighted one community in which children of sugarcane workers were attending school and working less.(14)

Bono Juancito Pinto, a government cash subsidy program for all primary school students, reportedly has contributed to increased rates of school attendance.(27) In 2011, the program received approximately \$55 million from the Government, which was an increase from \$50 million in 2009. Almost 2 million students participated in the program.(15, 47) It does not appear that research has been conducted on the impact of this program on child labor.

The Government participates in a 4-year USDOL-funded \$6 million project that works to reduce the worst forms of child labor through improved educational and livelihoods opportunities for families in Chuquisaca, La Paz and Santa Cruz.(73) The project began in 2010, and will assist 3,100 children and 1,300 households in both urban and rural areas. The project is also collaborating with the Ministry of Education to expand an accelerated learning program, Leveling (*Nivelación*), to the national level. The Leveling Program assists children who are behind in school because they work.(73) During the reporting period, the Ministry of Education issued a directive in support of the new education law that requires all public schools to offer an accelerated education "Leveling" curriculum so that children who are behind in school have the opportunity to catch up.(44, 45) The Ministry of Education adapted its national school enrollment form for the 2012 academic year, to capture statistics on the number of children enrolled in a Leveling Program in addition to the number of hours and the type of work children do.(11, 74) However, implementation of the Leveling curriculum requires additional education funding from the Government.(44)

The Government participates in a 4-year USDOL-funded \$6.75 million regional project to promote collaboration across four countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Paraguay) in order to combat the worst forms of child labor among the most socially excluded populations, including children of indigenous and Afro-descent.(10, 75) The project, which began in 2009, aims to rescue 6,600 children from the worst forms of child labor through education interventions in the four countries. The project also aims to build the capacity of government and civil society organizations to combat child labor, raise awareness and conduct research.(10, 75) The project intersects with another 4-year regional project in which the Government of Bolivia participates; it is funded by the Government of Spain and is aimed at eradicating child labor in Latin America.(10)

In 2011, a truck that was carrying children to work on chicken farms in the Chaco region had an accident. This brought much needed attention to the situation of approximately 50 children working in poultry production in eight rural communities.(11) In reaction to the situation, the MOL conducted labor inspections on the chicken farms, the producers signed agreements to eliminate child labor, the Ministry of Education provided an additional teacher to enable adolescents to attend high school and younger children to participate in an afterschool program, and an NGO assisted parents with improved livelihood opportunities.(11, 49)

The Government has made efforts to increase public awareness of trafficking through education campaigns for school children and by working with NGOs and international organizations on prevention activities.(76) The municipal Defender of Children and Adolescents offices assist victims of trafficking, often in cooperation with NGOs.(15, 77)

Despite these efforts, current programs do not appear to be sufficient to address the extent of the worst forms of child labor in Bolivia, particularly in the production of Brazil nuts, forced labor in the Chaco region and in urban work.

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Amend legislation to prohibit children under age 14 from participating in apprenticeships.	2010, 2011
	Clarify whether the minimum age for voluntary military recruitment meets the standards established in ILO Convention 182.	2009, 2010, 2011
Coordination and Enforcement	Develop concrete mechanisms to improve the coordination of the Inter-Institutional Commission on child labor, including the frequency of meetings.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Extend labor inspections to include additional sectors and geographical areas.	2010, 2011
	Enable general labor inspectors to conduct unprompted inspections.	2011
	Regularly report statistics on child labor, including the number of investigations, prosecutions, sentences and penalties applied.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Report statistics on trafficking cases disaggregated by adults and minors.	2011
Policies	Establish and implement a new National Plan for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor.	2010, 2011
	Develop and implement a new Inter-Ministerial Transitional Plan for the Guaraní Communities that promotes local governance and directly assists families that have been subjected to forced labor.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Further develop national policies to support the new Avelino Siñani-Elizardo Pérez Education Law that guarantees equal educational opportunities for all, including for children who are behind in school due to work.	2010, 2011
Social Programs	Assess the impact of the Bono Juancito Pinto Subsidy Program on child labor.	2010, 2011

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Social Programs	Allocate the needed resources for implementation of an accelerated learning program that supports the new Education Law and helps both primary and secondary school children who are behind in school due to work.	2011
	Develop strategies and devote the resources to improve attendance in secondary education.	2011
	Expand social programs to address the worst forms of child labor in areas where hazardous child labor exists, particularly in the production of Brazil nuts, in forced labor in the Chaco region and in urban work.	2009, 2010, 2011

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