

In 2012, Ghana made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government piloted the Ghana Child Labor Monitoring System (GCLMS) in 30 communities. In addition, the Government expanded the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) cash transfer program, which makes monetary grants to households conditional upon the children attending school and not engaging in child labor. The Government also began its first child labor survey since 2001, with results scheduled to be available at the end of 2013. Ghana adopted the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan for the elimination of child labor in West African nations and continued to provide services to children through programs to reduce the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-producing regions and fishing villages.

However, gaps remain in the coverage and enforcement of laws addressing the worst forms of child labor, in part because child labor and law enforcement agencies are severely limited due to a lack of adequate funding. Existing social programs are not sufficient to comprehensively address the worst forms of child labor occurring in the country. Children continue to be engaged in the worst forms of child labor, especially in dangerous activities in the agriculture and fishing sectors.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	43.5 (2,731,596)
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	83.1
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	39.8
Primary Completion Rate		99.1

Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from MICS3 Survey, 2006.(2)

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Ghana are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, many of them in agriculture and fishing. Children working in agriculture may use dangerous tools and carry heavy loads.(3-5) In the cocoa sector alone, of the 924,633 children identified as working in the cocoa sector, 54 percent, or an estimated 538, 287 children ages 5-17 reported injuries from dangerous activities, according to a report by Tulane University



that assessed data collected during the 2008-2009 harvest season.(5, 6)

In Ghana, thousands of children work in the fishing sector, including in deep sea fishing, lagoon fishing, and lake fishing. These children risk injuries and even death while performing tasks such as diving to untangle fishing nets.(4, 7, 8) Children are trafficked to Lake Volta for this purpose and are known to fish for tilapia and other types of fish, which reportedly include mudfish, silverfish, catfish, lates fish, and electric fish.(9-12) The Ada District is one of a number of sending communities for Lake Volta's fishing industry. In Ada and other sending communities, families give their children (typically young boys) to traffickers in exchange for a small sum of money and a promise of employment for the child.(4, 13, 14)

Children, particularly in the Ashanti and Greater Accra regions, work in domestic service. They work long hours at risk of physical and sexual abuse.(15-17) Many of these children have never been to school or have dropped out.(15, 17, 18) Children, mostly girls, work as porters in urban areas, beginning as young as age 6. These children, referred to as *kayayees*, are at risk of injury from transporting heavy loads and from vehicle accidents.(3, 19-21) Children who live on the streets, as well as other children, are also subject to commercial sexual exploitation.(16, 18, 22)

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Children, especially boys, herd cattle, risking injury and even death from snakebites, as well as wasp and scorpion stings. They report being beaten by cattle owners or farmers and being unable to attend school because of their work.(4, 23) Children herding livestock may suffer injuries such as being bitten, butted, gored, or trampled by animals.(24)

Children engage in hazardous activities in quarrying and small-scale mining, including gold mines. Although evidence is limited, there are reports that children also work in diamond mines.(18, 25-27) Children working in quarrying and mining risk injury from falling rocks and lifting heavy loads. Such children also risk illness from exposure to mercury and death from the collapse of pit mines.(28-30) Some of these children may be subject to debt bondage.(18) Although evidence is limited, children are also reportedly engaged in the worst forms of child labor in salt production.(4)

In addition, some children in the Volta region are involved in *Trokosi*, a form of religious servitude that can last from a few months to 3 years. This practice requires children to atone for their family members' sins by assisting with prayers and maintaining religious shrines for priests, elders, or the owners of the shrines.(3, 19)

Ghana is a source, transit, and destination country for the trafficking of children for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor.(27) Within Ghana, children are trafficked to work in fishing, agriculture, portering, begging, street vending, and domestic labor.(12, 27, 31) Girls, and to a lesser extent boys, are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation, particularly in the Volta region and oil-rich Western regions.(31) Ghanaian children are also trafficked to neighboring countries in West Africa for labor exploitation.(27, 32)

Although access to free education is mandated by law, it is hindered by a shortage of classrooms and by schools without sufficient teachers or materials. For some children, attending school is practically impossible, as their villages are located many miles away from the nearest school, and there is no form of public transportation.(29, 33-36) Not all children have the mandatory uniform, and some children without uniforms may be turned away from school.(18, 37) Some children, especially girls, also reported being sexually assaulted and harassed by teachers.(18)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Children's Act sets the minimum age for employment at 15 and explicitly applies it to both the formal and informal sector. This Act prohibits children younger than age 18 from

engaging in certain activities deemed hazardous, including work in mines or quarries, at sea, or in venues likely to expose children to immoral behavior.(38) In addition, Ghana has issued a Hazardous Child Labor Activity Framework for the Cocoa Sector, which defines certain activities as hazardous and prohibits children younger than age 18 from engaging in them. Such activities in cocoa include felling trees, burning bushes, applying chemicals, carrying overly heavy loads, using machetes for weeding, harvesting with a hook, and working on a farm for more than 3 hours per day or more than 18 hours per week.(6) The Government of Ghana has also developed a list of worst forms of child labor occupations that includes domestic labor, working as *kayayees*, and other urban informal work activities.(39)

International Conventions and Selected Laws on Child Labor and Education

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	No
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	No
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	No
	Minimum Age for Work	15
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	15
	Free Public Education	Yes

Education is free and required for 11 years. Although the law does not make school mandatory until a particular age, the number of required years of education generally means that children have reached the legal age for work by the time they complete their required years of schooling.

The Constitution prohibits forced labor, slavery, and servitude; it also states that children have the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to their health, education, and development.(40)

According to the Criminal Code of 1998, ritual servitude is illegal in Ghana. The Government has interpreted the ritual servitude provision as applying to the practice of *Trokosi*. The

Criminal Code also prohibits persons with custody, charge, or care of a child younger than age 16 from encouraging that child to become involved in prostitution.(41) The Criminal Code stipulates that it is illegal to procure any person younger than age 21 for prostitution, as long as that person is not a prostitute or of known immoral character. This provision, however, makes criminal punishment dependent on a judgment of the child or adult's moral standing, which may leave some child victims of commercial sexual exploitation unprotected.(41) In doing so, it contradicts the Children's Act, which calls for the best interest of the child to be given primary consideration in any child-related matter.(38) The law also fails to criminalize the client who uses children under age 18 for prostitution.(38, 41)

The Criminal Code does not specifically establish offenses related to pornography or pornographic performances by a child under age 18, but it does set out provisions prohibiting the production, distribution, or exhibition of obscene materials or performances in general.(41, 42) Ghana does not have adequate laws to prohibit the use, offering, or procuring of a child for the production and trafficking of drugs.(19)

The Human Trafficking Act prohibits the trafficking of children younger than age 18, including for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitation. The consent of a child or a guardian cannot be used as a defense to prosecution under this Act, which also provides for the rescue and rehabilitation of trafficking victims.(43) The minimum age for military recruitment is 18, and there is no conscription.(44)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The National Steering Committee on Child Labor (NSCCL) is mandated to oversee coordination, implementation, and monitoring of the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor 2009-2015 (NPA) and programs targeting the worst forms of child labor. The Minister of Employment and Social Welfare (MESW) chairs the NSCCL, and the MESW's Child Labor Unit (CLU) serves as its Secretariat.(42, 45) NSCCL members included ministries, labor unions, NGOs, the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), and international organizations. The Steering Committee is comprised of three subcommittees: Policy Advisory, Education, and Skills Training; Advocacy, Social Mobilization, and Child Labor Monitoring; and Cocoa, Fisheries, and Mining and Quarrying.(42, 45, 46) The NSCCL is required to meet at least four times per year, and during the reporting period it met this requirement. The NSCCL actively supported efforts to reduce the worst forms of child labor in many ways, including by coordinating information sharing between government

agencies and social partners, reviewing and endorsing project and program proposals, and supporting the launch of the GCLMS.(20, 42, 45-48)

The CLU is responsible for overseeing activities to combat child labor.(36, 42) During the reporting period, the Government provided limited support for CLU operations, allocating resources only to cover personnel, office space, and support for technical meetings.(42) Combating child labor in the cocoa sector falls under the specific direction of the National Program for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Cocoa (NPECLC). The NPECLC, located within the MESW, operates in collaboration with COCOBOD and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.(20, 36) NPECLC convenes the National Partners Forum (NPF), a body comprised of district assemblies, NGOs, trade unions, and civil society organizations that meets to discuss interventions to address the worst forms of child labor in the cocoa sector. NPECLC held the NPF twice during the reporting period to discuss concerns, best practices, and plans for 2013.(42)

NPECLC launched the GCLMS on March 14, 2012, and pilot tested the system in 30 communities.(42, 48) The system enables communities to monitor, report on, and coordinate services for children in exploitative labor.(5, 47, 49, 50) The GCLMS operates through Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs) that are active in over 600 communities.(20, 42, 47)

Labor inspectors from MESW are responsible for the enforcement of labor laws and can enter any type of workplace.(20, 51) Ghana had 130 labor inspectors in 2012, an increase from the prior year. The Government does not currently have a centralized system for tracking the number of child labor violations, children removed or assisted as a result of inspections, or penalties and citations issued. The CLU reported that during the reporting period, the Inspectorate Divisions of the MESW did not receive funding for operations, and inspectors do not have sufficient facilities and transportation to conduct inspections.(20, 42) In the informal sector, the District Assembly and the District Social Welfare Officer have the authority to investigate and report findings to the police.(36)

In early 2013, the government realigned the former Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) and the MESW, subsuming the MOWAC and MESW's Department of Social Welfare into the newly created Ministry of Women, Gender, and Social Protection (MGSP). The former MESW is now the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR) and still houses the CLU.(31, 42) The Human Trafficking

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Secretariat under the MOWAC coordinated all anti-trafficking activities during the reporting period. The Secretariat was responsible for organizing quarterly meetings of the Human Trafficking Management Board (HTMB), but it met only twice during the reporting period.(42) The HTMB is an intersectoral group chaired by MOWAC with participation from the police, immigration officers, health and education ministry officials, a member of Parliament, and NGOs. The duties of the Board include advising the Minister on trafficking policy and advancing anti-trafficking strategies.(31, 42) The HTMB also oversees the Human Trafficking Fund to support victims of trafficking, but the Fund is under-resourced.(42)

The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Criminal Investigation Division of the Ghana Police Service (GPS) has a leading role in the enforcement of anti-trafficking laws. The Government maintains regional AHTUs in nine regions as part of its anti-trafficking enforcement efforts.(23, 27, 36, 42) The Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) refers cases of trafficking to the AHTU. In 2012, the AHTU had 54 investigators and reported 262 trafficking victims and five trafficking prosecutions. However, the evidence reviewed does not indicate whether any of these cases involved children.(31, 42) The AHTU received some funds from international organizations but did not receive any government support in 2012.(42) In 2012, the ILO and the CLU partnered to deliver anti-child labor training to AHTU and DOVVSU.

Ghana worked with Nigeria's National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP) to rescue several Nigerian girls trafficked for commercial sex work. Seven Nigerian girls were rescued from this work in Cote d'Ivoire and 40 were rescued in Ghana; all of the victims were returned to Nigeria.(31) The AHTU has not made any formal arrests in connection with these cases.(31) Ghana has been working on developing a trafficking database but at this time, no comprehensive statistics are maintained about prosecutions or sentencing for convicted violators of the Trafficking Act. In addition, NGO and Government officials assert that the agencies responsible for enforcing child labor laws are weakly coordinated and that CLU inspections and ATHU investigations are not sufficiently funded.(20, 42, 52, 53)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Ghana's National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, adopted in 2010 and launched in 2011, provides a comprehensive framework to significantly reduce the worst forms of child labor by 2015.(20, 36, 42) The plan aims to coordinate the

various interventions that are implemented to address child labor. To give effect to this aim, MOUs were signed with 23 government agencies to establish the role of each agency in the fight to reduce the worst forms of child labor.(54)

Ghana's education framework includes a specific focus on increasing the number of trained teachers and improving vocational training in order to better retain students.(36) The Government approved a policy for the provision of special incentives, including 20 percent salary allowances, for teachers who elect to teach in hard-to-reach areas.(55)

The Government of Ghana has also mainstreamed child labor concerns into the following national development agendas and key documents: Ghana's Medium-Term National Development Framework, the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (2010-2013), the National Social Protection Strategy, the Education Strategic Plan (2003-2015), the National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking: Trafficking in Persons Must End, the Savannah Accelerated Development Program, and Ghana's UN Development Assistance Framework (2012-2016).(35, 36, 53, 56-59) In 2012, the labor ministers of the 15 ECOWAS countries, including Ghana, adopted a regional action plan on child labor, especially in its worst forms. The objective of the plan is to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in West Africa by 2015 and to continue to progress toward the total elimination of child labor.(60)

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

The Government of Ghana continues to support and participate in social programs with various partners. In July 2012, Ghana expanded its cash transfer program, LEAP, which makes monetary grants to households conditioned upon the children attending school and not engaging in child labor. The program increased the monetary amount of the grant by 200 percent.(19, 20, 57, 61) The program reached 68,000 households in 100 districts in 2012 and aims to reach 250,000 households by 2015.(42)

During the reporting period, the Government of Ghana also implemented its National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in the Cocoa Sector, which aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in cocoa production by 2020.(47) This was in line with Ghana's continued efforts to implement its commitment under the 2010 Declaration of Joint Action to Support the Implementation of the Harkin-Engel Protocol (2010 Declaration) and its accompanying Framework of Action.(47, 62, 63) Under the 2010 Declaration, Ghana

agreed to provide appropriate resources and coordinate with key stakeholders (including USDOL and the International Chocolate and Cocoa Industry) on efforts to reduce the worst forms of child labor in growing areas.(47, 62)

Since signing the 2010 Declaration, Ghana has committed approximately \$2.2 million for related activities under the NPECLC.(64) In 2012, Ghana expended about \$1 million on these efforts. NPECLC pretested the GCLMS in Kwaebibirem, and the Government provided 75 children with basic school materials.(47) As part of its commitments to this 2010 Declaration, Ghana is also monitoring all project efforts implemented under the Framework to ensure alignment with its national action plans and to promote coherence and sustainability.(62, 63) However, as of 2010 more than two-thirds of the cocoa-growing communities (or 3,463) remained without any remediation activities, meaning many children still in need of service.(65) According to a 2009 USDOL-funded survey conducted by Tulane University, only 3.2 percent of children working in Ghana's cocoa sector reported receiving project interventions.(5)

Under the 2010 Declaration, USDOL committed \$10 million to a 4-year regional project to reduce the worst forms of child labor in cocoa growing areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana by providing direct services to communities.(29, 62, 63) In Ghana, the project aims to rescue more than 2,500 children and provide livelihood assistance to at least 1,000 households.(23, 29) In 2012, this project worked with the Government on strengthening the GCLMS by engaging with the NSCCL Sub-Committee on Advocacy, Social Mobilization, and the GCLMS, as well as through meetings with the four target Districts' Assemblies to form or reconstitute District Child Protection Committees. The project also worked with the Government to develop training manuals on child labor inspection, with a focus on agriculture, and to conduct training of labor inspectors.(55)

The International Chocolate and Cocoa Industry committed \$2 million under the 2010 Declaration for a 4-year regional project in cocoa-producing areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. This project is helping the two governments expand their respective child labor monitoring systems and build the capacity of relevant stakeholders. In support of the 2010 Declaration's Framework of Action, Ferrero Trading Lux S.A. launched a \$1.1 million project in Ghana to improve family livelihoods and increase children's access to education.(64) Framework projects supported by The Hershey Company and Mondelez International, Inc. continued to be implemented during the reporting period. The Hershey project uses mobile technology to deliver agricultural and social information to

rural cocoa farmers, while the Mondelez project works to improve the livelihoods of cocoa farmers and reduce child labor in farming families.(64)

Ghana maintained its engagement with the Empowering Cocoa Households with Opportunities and Education Solutions Project (ECHOES) (2007-2015), funded by the World Cocoa Foundation, USAID, and the International Chocolate and Cocoa Industry. This project works to strengthen cocoa-growing communities by providing education for youth and young adult education, strengthening community based organizations, and improving household livelihoods. By the end of 2012, ECHOES had awarded 1,176 scholarships that cover 3 years of school-related expenses.(66)

The Government of Ghana also participated in a 4-year, \$7.95 million regional project funded by USDOL in 2009, which is reducing the worst forms of child labor in fishing, mining, and commercial agriculture (cocoa and coffee), and is supporting efforts to develop an updated national action plan on child labor. Set to end in January 2014, the project has provided education services to 5,308 children working in agriculture, fishing, and mining in Ghana, in order to withdraw or prevent them from entering the worst forms of child labor.(30, 67) In 2010, USDOL funded a \$5 million second phase for this regional project, offering livelihood services for the families of children rescued from the worst forms of child labor. In Ghana, this second phase aims to provide education services to 1,000 children working in agriculture (cocoa) and livelihood services to 1,000 families by the project's end in April 2014.(68) As of October 2012, the project had provided education services to 446 children and livelihoods services to 415 families.(69)

In 2012, USDOL funded a \$1.5 million study, to be conducted by the Payson Center at Tulane University, to support the collection of nationally representative survey data on child labor in cocoa growing areas of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. As called for in the 2010 Declaration, the study will develop a baseline estimate of the number of children working in the worst forms of child labor in cocoa growing areas and help assess the prevalence of the worst forms of child labor in cocoa growing areas.(64)

In 2012, the CLU began its first child labor survey since 2001, with results scheduled to be available at the end of 2013.(42) Ghana continued to participate in anti-trafficking efforts with IOM to remove and rehabilitate child trafficking victims from exploitative labor in fishing villages on Lake Volta.(70) Ghana also has short-term shelters to assist trafficking victims, including children.(31)

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In 2012, the Government also increased awareness about child labor, especially in hazardous work, by continuing public service messaging on the topic and supporting Community Child Protection Committees that raised awareness about the worst forms of child labor at the community level.(42, 61)

The Government of Ghana continued a program to provide uniforms and books to children in public basic schools in some deprived communities; it also worked with NGOs to provide school supplies. Ghana relaunched its school feeding program

in May 2012.(42, 71) No assessment of the impact of these programs on reducing the worst forms of child labor has been identified.

The Government of Ghana acknowledges that the efforts to provide services to children exploited in domestic service and in the fishing sector are insufficient. In addition, research suggests that Government efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor in the mining sector and among *kayayes* are not sufficient to address the magnitude of the problem.(16, 30, 72)

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Amend the Criminal Code to provide protections from the use, offering, or procuring of a child for the production and trafficking of drugs, and expand protections from sexual exploitation for all children, including those who have been exploited as prostitutes.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
Coordination and Enforcement	Increase the number of labor inspectors and inspections; allocate adequate funding to support enforcement efforts; and collect appropriate statistics on investigation, prosecution, and convictions under child labor and trafficking laws.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Allocate adequate funding to the MELR's Child Labor Unit so that it can fully carry out its mandate.	2011, 2012
Social Programs	Expand and improve programs to prevent children's involvement in exploitative child labor, including scaling up and fully funding the GCLMS to allow for national coverage.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Link children engaging in or at risk of engaging in the worst forms of child labor with the appropriate social programs, such as the LEAP and the National School Feeding Program.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Throughout cocoa-growing regions, replicate and expand successful project interventions to address exploitative child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Expand efforts to address the worst forms of child labor, including in the fishing and mining sectors, as well as in domestic service and among the <i>kayayes</i> .	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Increase access to education by expanding efforts that provide adequate teachers, materials, and classrooms, and assess the impact that these efforts may have on reducing the worst forms of child labor.	2010, 2011, 2012

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