

In 2014, Morocco, which currently controls most of the territory of Western Sahara, made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in Western Sahara. The Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs established a mechanism to coordinate efforts to address child labor. However, the Government of Morocco does not conduct research on the extent or nature of child labor in Western Sahara or provide specific information on actions carried out in the territory to combat child labor. Evidence suggests that children engage in child labor.




I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Although research is limited, there is evidence that children are engaged in child labor in Western Sahara including in the agricultural sector.(1) In general, research has not been conducted on the extent of child labor in Western Sahara, nor has there been research about education levels. Data on key indicators on children’s work and education are not available from the sources used in this report.

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The territory of Western Sahara is currently subject to Moroccan laws.(2-5) The Popular Front for the Liberation of the Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro (Polisario Front), a Sahrawi national liberation movement, controls 15 percent of the territory, and information on the laws applicable in this area is unavailable.(1, 4, 6) Morocco has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor, and those conventions extend to the areas in Western Sahara administered by the Government of Morocco (Table 1).

Table 1. 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 of Morocco has established laws and regulations related to child labor that extend to Western Sahara (Table 2).

Table 2. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 143 of The New Labor Code of 2004 (7)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 147 of The New Labor Code of 2004 (7)
Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children	Yes		Hazardous Child Labor List; Decree no. 2-10-183 (8)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 467 of The New Labor Code of 2004 (7)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	No		
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 503 of the Penal Code (9)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Hazardous Child Labor List; Decree no. 2-10-183 (8)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Royal Decree of 9 June 1996 (10)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15	Law No. 04-00 (11)
Free Public Education	Yes		Law No. 04-00 (11)

* No conscription (10)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Morocco has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 3).

Table 3. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs (MOESA) Child Labor Task Force	Enforce child labor laws and oversee programs on child labor. Employ labor inspectors in 51 sectors across Morocco; one inspector in each sector dedicated to child labor.(12-15)
The Ministry of the Interior (MOI)	Enforce prohibitions on prostitution and other exploitive crimes involving minors as established in the Penal Code. (15)
Ministry of Justice (MOJ)	Prosecute criminal offenses against children, such as commercial sexual exploitation and child trafficking.(15)
MOJ's Child Labor Units	Process cases involving women and children within the court system.(2)

Information available on law enforcement activities carried out during the reporting period does not specify the region in which actions took place. Therefore it cannot be determined which actions took place in Western Sahara.

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 4).

Table 4. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
MOESA, Office for the Fight against Child Labor*	Coordinate policies and efforts to combat child labor.(13, 16) Provide guidance and limited funding to NGOs working against child labor.(2) Provided \$166,000 to NGOs in 2014.(13)
Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family, and Social Development (MSWFSD)	Coordinate the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children (PANE) (2006–2015). Coordinate the Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children.(17) Establish continuity of child protection efforts, increase access to education, and eliminate child labor.(12, 15)
The National Observatory for Children's Rights	Register complaints related to child welfare and refer them to labor inspectorate units and law enforcement officials. Operate a toll-free hotline available to child victims of violence, including commercial sexual exploitation.(2) Operate 84 Child Reception Centers that provide services to child victims of violence, sexual abuse or neglect.(2) Operate 75 Child Reception Centers that provide services to child victims of violence, sexual abuse, or neglect.(15)
Inter-Ministerial Delegation for Human Rights	Establish policies that promote child protection policies.(13)
Ministry for Moroccans Resident Abroad and Migration Affairs	Coordinate efforts to reduce migrant vulnerability to child labor. Promote access to public education facilities for migrant children, decreasing their vulnerability to child labor and human trafficking.(13)

*Mechanism to coordinate efforts to address child labor was created during the reporting period.

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Morocco has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

Table 5. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
MSWFSD's National Plan of Action for Children (PANE) (2006–2015)*	Establishes policies that promote children's health, protection, civic participation, and education. Supported by UNICEF.(12, 13)
MSWFSD's Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children	Promotes an interdisciplinary approach to analyze the scope of services that prohibit, prevent, and respond to abuse, exploitation, and violence against children. Designates MOESA as the coordinating body for the fight against child labor. (13)
National Strategy on Migration*	Establishes policies that promote human rights-based approach to migration. Facilitates integration of legal immigrants. Provides services including expanding access to public education facilities for migrant children, decreasing their vulnerability to child labor and human trafficking.(2, 13)

Table 5. Policies Related to Child Labor (cont)

Policy	Description
UNDAF (2012–2016)*	Promotes education, health, and socioeconomic development in an effort to alleviate poverty. Focuses on equal access to education for vulnerable children.(17, 18)

*Child labor elimination and prevention strategies to not appear to have been integrated into this policy.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2014, the Government of Morocco funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms, that extended to Western Sahara (Table 6).

Table 6. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Social Protection Program*	National Union of Sahrawi Women program that organizes home schools, clinics, and community centers.(5)
Anti-Trafficking in Persons Advocacy†	USDOS-funded, Government of Morocco and United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime initiative that provided support for anti-human trafficking efforts. Led workshops to support anti-trafficking in persons legislation, including the prohibition on trafficking children. (13) Provided training to the MOI and MOJ on legal frameworks, identification and assistance to victims and investigative techniques. (13)
National Initiative for Human Development Support Project Phase II (INDH2)*	\$2 billion World Bank-funded, government program that increases access to basic services, such as schools; provides enhanced income-earning opportunities, such as micro-credit for women; and supports improved civic participation, to assure sustainability.(13, 19, 20) Western Sahara receives more funding per capita under the INHD program than does Morocco proper.(21, 22)
Tayssir Conditional Cash Transfer Program*‡	2014-2015 budget of \$235 million, MONEVT program that provides direct cash transfers, between \$7 and \$16 a month, to qualifying families if the children meet school attendance criteria. Provides transportation and student housing through a program with Entraide Nationale. (13) Aims to increase school enrollment and reduce dropout rates, particularly in rural areas.(15, 23-25)
Social Welfare Program*	UNDAF program that addresses education, including equal access to education, especially for vulnerable children. Also addresses health and socioeconomic development of children.(2)
Rural Social Service Support*	Royal family funded-Mohammed V Foundation for Solidarity program to provide funding to NGOs that improve living conditions for very low income populations.(13)

* The impact of this program on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Morocco.

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 Western Sahara (Table 7).

Table 7. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that laws prohibit child trafficking.	2014
Enforcement	Disaggregate enforcement data for Western Sahara and publish information on the number of investigations and prosecutions and the amount of penalties imposed for violations of child labor and child exploitation laws.	2013 – 2014
Government Policies	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into policies.	2014
Social Programs	Assess the impact that existing programs may have on child labor.	2014
	Conduct a comprehensive study of children's activities to determine whether they are engaged in or at risk for involvement in child labor.	2013 – 2014

Western Sahara

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

NON-INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

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