

Zimbabwe

In 2011, Zimbabwe made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. These efforts focused on expanding social programs targeting vulnerable children. This included the mobilization of \$45 million of donor and some government funds to support the newly launched Phase II of the National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children. Zimbabwe also continued the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) Program aimed at recruiting children and keeping them in school. Despite these efforts, Zimbabwe continues to lack specific social programs targeting sectors in which the worst forms of child labor are most prevalent. Education is not compulsory or free which may increase children's vulnerability. Children in Zimbabwe continue to engage in the worst forms of labor, particularly in hazardous activities in agriculture and mining.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate		Unavailable

Sources:

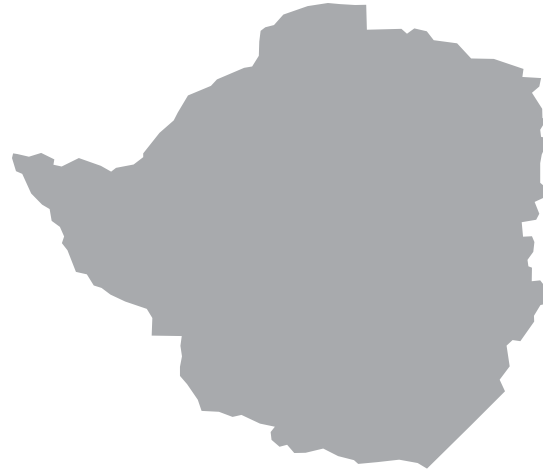
Primary completion rate: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis.(2)

Prevalence and Sector Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Zimbabwe are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, primarily in hazardous activities in agriculture and mining.(3-9) Some children reportedly work in the production of tea, cotton and tobacco. Children working in agriculture may be exposed to toxic chemicals, use dangerous machinery and tools, lack protective gear and carry heavy loads.(3, 4, 6-8, 10, 11) Children also work in cattle herding.(8, 10)

There are reports of children working in gold, chrome, nickel and tin mines and extracting material from underground passages and quarries.(3, 5-7, 10, 12-17) Although the extent of the problem is unknown, children reportedly perform such work in the Marange diamond fields of Eastern Zimbabwe.(13-16) Children in this sector work long hours and use dangerous chemicals such as mercury, cyanide and explosives.(3, 4, 17)



According to UNICEF, approximately 100,000 of Zimbabwe's 1.3 million orphans survive on their own in child-headed households, some working as street vendors and car washers.(4, 7, 8, 10, 18) Children working on the streets may be exposed to many dangers, including severe weather, vehicle accidents and criminal elements.(19) Although information is limited, there are reports that children engage in other illicit activities, such as drug smuggling, gambling and prostitution.(3, 4, 10, 20, 21)

Children are trafficked within Zimbabwe and to border towns and neighboring countries where they suffer forced labor in agriculture, domestic service and commercial sexual exploitation.(20, 21) Children working as domestic servants may work long hours often without a break, and are at risk of harassment and sexual abuse.(4) Girls as young as age 12 are trafficked along the Zambezi River to the Mozambican port of Beira and to Central Mozambique. There are reports of Zimbabwean children being sexually exploited by taxi and truck drivers in exchange for transportation to and across unofficial border crossings with South Africa.(20, 22-24)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Labour Relations Act, 2002 sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years.(10, 25) However, children ages 13 to 15 may work as apprentice or perform work in a school or technical or vocational institution.(4, 25) The Act prohibits employers from hiring a person younger than age 18 to perform hazardous work, which is defined as any work likely to jeopardize that person's health, safety or morals.(10, 26) Hazardous work is also defined in the Children's Protection and Adoption Amendment Act of 2001 as any work that

jeopardizes or interferes with the education of a child. According to the Act, hazardous work involves contact with hazardous substances, underground mining, exposure to extreme heat, cold or noise and night work, and the use of electronically powered hand tools, cutting tools or grinding blades.(27) The National Service Act of 1979 prohibits persons younger than age 18 from compulsory and voluntary military service.(28)

	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	No
	Free Public Education	No

Zimbabwe's Constitution and Labour Relations Act prohibit forced labor. However, there are exceptions in some cases, including the fulfillment of court orders and armed service requirements.(25, 29)

The Criminal Code prohibits engaging a child in the use or dealing of dangerous drugs and bars sexual relations with children younger than age 16.(10, 30)

Provisions of the Sexual Offences Act, the Children's Act and the Censorship and Entertainment Control Act prohibit sexual offenses against children, such as child pornography, prostitution and other forms of child sexual abuse. The Sexual Offences Act and Children's Act prohibit procurement of an individual for prostitution either inside the country or transporting a person outside of the country with the intention of engaging them in prostitution.(10, 20, 31) Although traffickers can be prosecuted under the aforementioned laws, immigration laws or abduction laws, there is no legislation in Zimbabwe specifically prohibiting trafficking in persons.(10, 32) It appears the current legal framework only covers trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation.(17)

In 2010, a more comprehensive piece of legislation to cover trafficking in persons for both sexual and labor exploitation was introduced to the Cabinet, a necessary step for the bill to be considered by parliament. However, the proposed legislation did not move forward, despite being identified as priority legislation for 2010-2011 by the Prime Minister's Office.(10, 17, 20)

Zimbabwean law does not provide free schooling or establish a compulsory age for education for children.(8, 33) The lack of free and compulsory education may put children at risk for the worst forms of child labor as they are not required to be in school but are also not legally permitted to work. School fees are often prohibitively expensive and limit access to education.(32) Reportedly, children as young as 12 who need help paying for school fees may work for local tea plantations to earn credits towards school fees.(10, 34) In such "earn-and-learn schemes," tuition credits are earned based on a child's ability to meet a production quota.(10, 32) The practice is also in direct violation of the Labour Act and ILO Convention 138.

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare chairs the Government's steering committee to address the worst forms of child labor. The committee includes several government ministries, civil society groups such as worker and employer organizations and international organizations.(32) The Government also has an inter-ministerial task force on trafficking in persons. Research did not find evidence that the committee or task force was active during 2011.

The Department of Social Welfare within the Ministry of Labor (MOL) is responsible for enforcing labor laws. MOL employs approximately 170 labor inspectors for investigating labor-related violations, including child labor laws.(3, 10) However, labor inspectors lack the necessary resources to carry out inspections, such as office facilities, transportation and fuel.(3, 10, 32) In addition, the MOL does not disaggregate labor violations by age. Therefore, the number of investigations or penalties for violations related to child labor is unknown.(10)

The Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs (MOJ) oversees all courts, including labor courts. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) is responsible for enforcing laws against the worst forms of child labor of a criminal nature.(10) In 2011, the ZRP established an anti-trafficking desk at the Interpol National Central Bureau office to conduct transnational trafficking investigations.(10) The MOJ and the ZRP share

responsibility for enforcing criminal laws relating to child labor with the MOL.(3, 10, 20) Victim Friendly Courts also address trafficking and child victim cases.(10) However, during the reporting period it appears the ZRP did not investigate any such cases.(20) The lack of investigations relative to the scope and prevalence of child trafficking in Zimbabwe suggests inadequate enforcement.

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government's steering committee to address child labor has issued a national policy to serve as a guide for the subsequent implementation of action programs.(35) The first phase of implementing the policy included the completion of a child labor study in 2008. The second phase used the results of this study to inform the development of a draft action plan. This plan was completed in 2010.(4, 10, 22, 32, 35) On June 29, 2011, the MOL and the ILO formally launched the findings of the study and the steering committee presented a timebound action plan.(4, 10, 17, 32, 33, 35) The action plan includes activities aimed at strengthening the analysis of child labor issues and the creation of an entity to coordinate responses to the findings of the analysis.(3, 10) Findings indicate that the worst forms of child labor do exist in Zimbabwe particularly in prostitution, mining, agriculture, hazardous domestic work and illicit activities. Further, the most prevalent causes of the worst forms of child labor are poverty, the breakdown of the family unit due to HIV and AIDS, and the inadequacy of the social services delivery system.(4) Resources have not been allocated to implement the plan.(3, 10, 33)

The Government of Zimbabwe continued to address child labor in its broader poverty reduction, education and social policy efforts. This occurred in part through Zimbabwe's ongoing United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2007-2011.(3, 10) In the framework, the level of child labor is used as a specific indicator to measure improvement in retention rates at all levels of the education system.(3, 10)

In 2011, the Government launched Phase II of the National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2011-2015) (NAP OVC II). Phase II includes a focus on equity and access to quality education for children.(36-38) It aims to assist 80,000 people, including providing protection services to 25,000 children.(37, 38) The policy prescribes a three-pronged approach to assisting at-risk children, including providing child protection and health services, delivering conditional cash transfers and continuing the Basic Education Assistance

Module (BEAM) Program.(7, 10, 39) The BEAM Program provides basic financial assistance to its enrollees for things such as tuition, levy and examination fees.(40)

During the reporting period, the Governments of Zimbabwe and South Africa signed a Memorandum of Understanding committing to work together on social issues, including the cross-border movement of children, who are sometimes unaccompanied and could be vulnerable to exploitation.(41)

Social Programs to Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Research found no evidence that the Government of Zimbabwe implemented programs that specifically address the worst forms of child labor. However, the Government launched and extended several social programs to address vulnerable children and increase educational access that could potentially have an impact on reducing the worst forms of child labor.

The newly launched NAP OVC II provides a cash transfer program that encourages families to keep children in school. The Government of Zimbabwe, with funding from the European Commission and the Governments of the Netherlands, Sweden and Britain, provided immediate food and health services to high-risk families, including child-headed households.(37, 38) The NAP OVC II also provides protection services for child victims of abuse, violence and exploitation.(38, 39) The BEAM Program, aimed at keeping children in school and recruiting children who lack access to school as a result of economic hardship, was also continued through NAP OVC II.(17, 38) In 2010, the Government of Zimbabwe allocated just over US\$15 million for secondary education through the BEAM Project in order to match the US\$15 million in contributions made by development partners, almost doubling what the Government allocated in 2009.(40) It is unclear how much of a financial contribution the Government made to the BEAM Project in 2011. During the reporting period, \$45 million of the targeted \$75 million had been mobilized to support the NAP OVC II.(38, 42)

In addition to the BEAM component of NAP OVC II, a second phase of the Education Initiative Fund was launched in 2011 to increase the supply of learning materials in Zimbabwean schools.(42, 43) Through the Fund, the Government committed to provide 7 million textbooks in addition to the 15 million that have already been distributed since 2009. The second phase will focus on expanding support to secondary schools, including a revised curriculum.(43) The overall impact of these programs on the elimination of the worst forms of child labor is unknown.

With funding from USAID, the Government of Zimbabwe launched a new project in 2011, Building National Response Capacity to Combat Human Trafficking in Zimbabwe. The project will support awareness-raising efforts, and work to strengthen the national referral system for protection and victim reintegration services, with a special focus on children. (44)

Despite these efforts, Zimbabwe's social programs do not provide direct assistance specifically targeted to assist children working in the worst forms of child labor, particularly in agriculture and mining.

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Enact the current anti-trafficking legislative proposal to cover all children trafficked for both sexual and labor exploitation.	2009, 2011
	Establish a minimum age or specified length of study for compulsory education that meets international standards.	2009, 2010, 2011
Coordination and Enforcement	Ensure coordination takes place among participating agencies in the Steering Committee and the inter-ministerial task force on trafficking in persons to address the Worst Forms of Child Labor.	2011
	Collect, analyze and disseminate information on the level and type of inspection activities to combat child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Provide adequate resources for child labor inspections.	2010, 2011
	Dedicate additional personnel and resources to combat child trafficking and implement enforcement efforts.	2009, 2010, 2011
Policies	Provide free education through the minimum age to work.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Allocate appropriate resources to implement the Action Plan to Combat Child Labor.	2010, 2011
Social Programs	Assess the overall impact that existing programs may have on the worst forms of child labor.	2011
	Create programs that address the worst forms of child labor particularly in mining and agriculture.	2010, 2011

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