

In 2012, Morocco made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government provided specialized training to labor inspectors on child labor; committed funding for projects in several regions, including projects to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in handicrafts and commercial sexual exploitation; implemented programming on trafficking of girls; and conducted research on children working as domestic servants in Casablanca. In addition, the Government began Phase II of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH), a community-based poverty alleviation program designed to enhance the lives of vulnerable families and children, and continued to invest in education in rural areas through the cash assistance program, Tayssir. Despite these efforts, the Government lacks a coordinating mechanism to combat all worst forms of child labor. Children in Morocco continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor, particularly in hazardous activities in agriculture and domestic service.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	10-14 yrs.	4.5 (150,178)
Attending School	6-14 yrs.	82.9
Combining Work and School	10-14 yrs.	0.7
Primary Completion Rate		89.3

Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2011, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from EPSF Survey, 2003-2004.(2)

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Morocco are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, primarily in hazardous agricultural and dangerous activities in domestic service.(3-6) Activities in agriculture may include using dangerous machinery and tools, carrying heavy loads, and applying harmful pesticides.(7, 8) The Moroccan High Commission for Planning's annual labor surveys have indicated a steady decline in the incidence of child labor over the decade.(4, 9-11) However, this data were not analyzed prior to the release of this report and are not included in the data table above.



Young girls in Morocco are sometimes sent to work as live-in domestic servants, often before they reach age 10 and sometimes as young as age 6.(5, 12-15) Intermediaries typically recruit girls upon the request of a potential employer; they sometimes deceive parents into believing their daughters will be treated well.(14) Most often, parents receive payment of wages in exchange for their daughters' service.(6, 14) These *petites bonnes* (little maids) often face conditions of involuntary servitude including long hours without breaks; physical, verbal, and sexual abuse; withheld wages; and even restrictions on their movement.(6, 14, 15) Frequently, they are sent from rural villages to more urban areas. Most *petites bonnes* are denied an education, and illiteracy rates are high among this population.(13)

Children work in construction, and may also work cutting trees and tanning hides.(4, 16-18) Limited evidence suggests that children in Morocco are engaged in fishing.(16) These children may work long hours, perform physically demanding tasks, and face dangers such as drowning.(19, 20) Some boys are subject to involuntary servitude as apprentices for mechanics and artisans and in the construction industry.(6, 15)

Some children are found in commercial sexual exploitation.(10, 15) Limited evidence suggest that child domestic servants are particularly found in these activities, as domestics who flee their employers frequently end up on the streets.(21) Children, primarily boys, are exploited for sex tourism, often in Tangier, Agadir, and Marrakech, which are popular tourist sites that attract customers from the Persian Gulf and Europe.(22, 23) Children are also trafficked to countries in the Middle East and Europe for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation.(15)

Morocco

There are reports of children working on the streets, but specific information on hazards is unknown.(18, 24)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Labor Code of 2004 establishes the minimum age for employment at 15 and prohibits night work for children age 15.(25) However, the Labor Code exempts certain types of agricultural work from this prohibition, potentially exposing any children involved in this exempted agricultural work to hazardous labor. Since children 16-17 are not prohibited from agricultural night work, they may also potentially be exposed to hazardous labor.(25)

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	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	15
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	15
	Free Public Education	Yes

Under the Government's hazardous child labor list, certain activities, such as work in underground mines and tanneries, and agriculture work involving the use of pesticides and sharp blades, are prohibited for children under age 18.(26) The Labor Code's prescribed penalties for employing children under age 18 in hazardous work include fines or jail time between 6 days and three months. According to the ILO Committee of Experts, the fines imposed on companies for employing children are inadequate to act as an effective deterrent.(27) The Government is further refining and expanding this hazardous child labor list, to better protect minors. The revised list is expected to be issued in 2013, but as of the writing of this report had not yet been adopted.(10)

The Labor Code does not apply to those who are self-employed, work in private residences (including domestic workers), or work in traditional artisan or handicraft sectors for businesses with less than five employees.(12, 25, 27)

The Government of Morocco has made progress on the adoption of a law to increase protections for domestic workers. Over the reporting period, the Government strengthened the draft bill on domestic workers originally proposed in 2011, to bring it closer to conforming to ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers.(10, 28) In July 2012, the latest iteration of the draft law was submitted to the General Secretariat for adoption.(10) However, the overhaul of the legislative system since the adoption of the new Constitution in July 2011 has delayed the passage of the law to protect male and female domestic workers until other vital laws are in place.(14, 29, 30) If passed, the law would prohibit the employment of children under 15 years of age as domestic servants and determine the working conditions, terms, and conditions of employment for those between the ages of 15 and 18.(27)

A draft bill to clarify article 4 of the Labor Code regarding child labor in traditional artisan or handicraft activities, submitted to the Secretary General of the Government of Morocco for approval in 2011, remains under review by the recently elected government. (17, 29) The draft bill would apply the minimum age of 15 in the Labor Code to traditional activities and would also regulate apprenticeships in the sector.(10, 17)

Forced or compulsory child labor is prohibited in the Labor Code and Penal Code.(25, 31) The commercial sexual exploitation of children, including pornography and prostitution, is also prohibited under the Penal Code.(10, 31) The Penal Code specifically forbids sex tourism.(31) Morocco does not have a specific trafficking in persons law, but child trafficking is prosecuted using articles from the Penal Code and the Immigration Law.(10, 31, 32) During the reporting period, the Government drafted a revised Penal Code to include further anti-trafficking provisions.(10, 33)

Morocco does not prohibit the use, procurement, or offering of a child for the production and trafficking of drugs.(34)

The minimum age for voluntary military recruitment is 18, and there is no military conscription.(35)

Education is free and compulsory for children aged 6 through 15.(30, 36) Secondary school and rural-based enrollment rates remain low, particularly among girls.(10, 29, 36, 37)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

Research found no evidence that the Government of Morocco has established a coordinating mechanism to combat the worst forms of child labor.

The Ministry of Social Development, Family, and Solidarity (MOSDFS) coordinate the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children (PANE) (2006-2015).(10) The Plan, which includes activities to combat child labor in domestic work and on the streets, is administered through a technical committee in cooperation with other ministries.(3, 10, 17) Over the reporting period, the PANE technical committee analyzed the results of the project's first phase, which ended in 2011, and began to draft an action plan for phase 2, which should be available later in 2013.(10)

The Child Labor Task Force, headed by the Director of Work under the Ministry of Employment and Professional Training (MOEPT), enforces child labor laws.(3, 10) The MOEPT has 51 labor inspector focal points nationwide to carry out the implementation of labor legislation, particularly the provisions regulating the worst forms of child labor. These inspectors received child labor training of up to 14 weeks from ILO-IPEC and further child labor training through an international agreement with Spain.(6, 10) During the reporting period labor inspectors found and removed 2,089 children under 15 years old from child labor.(38) Information is not available regarding the specific penalties imposed on these employers found to be in violation of child labor laws. Stakeholders, including the Government, indicate that inspectors lack adequate finances and manpower to adequately monitor and enforce the labor code.(6, 10)

The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) is responsible for enforcing the Penal Code's prohibitions on prostitution and trafficking, including minors.(3) Morocco has a specialized group of 3,171 judicial police officers dedicated to children's issues and child units within the courts designed to help child victims.(10) In addition, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) prosecutes criminal offenses against children, such as commercial sexual exploitation of children and child trafficking. Over the reporting period, the MOJ organized training roundtables on trafficking and victim identification for judges, judicial police officers, and representatives of civil society.(10, 33) The MOJ held sessions at its children's units to review procedures and protocols for dealing with trafficking cases. In addition, the National Observatory for Children's Rights continued to operate a toll-free telephone number available to children who have been victims of violence, including sexual exploitation.(10)

Information on the number of cases involving sexual exploitation and trafficking investigated or prosecutions carried out was not available. However, over the reporting period, the courts handed down some of the toughest sentences to date, including a 10-year prison sentence for a Moroccan woman charged with the assault of a child domestic worker, which resulted in the child's death.(14) A Spanish retiree living in Morocco was convicted on charges of commercial sexual exploitation and child pornography, for which he received a 30-year sentence.(10, 33)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

MOSDFS continues to implement activities as prescribed in the first phase of PANE (2006-2015). PANE calls for efforts to promote children's health, protection, civic participation, and education.(3, 10, 17, 18)

Over the reporting period, MOSDFS developed a new child protection strategy (2012-2016) that pools together child protection mechanisms from different organizations and government agencies. Before finalizing the new strategy, government representatives from different ministries are analyzing information from the first phase of PANE to determine best practices and what further mechanisms are needed to alert authorities to violence against children, including those involved in child labor.(10, 30, 39)

The Government has initiated several education policy initiatives in order to increase enrollment rates in its schools, most recently through the \$3 billion Educational Emergency Plan (EEP) (2009-2012).(10, 40) The program successfully increased the enrollment rates of children into primary schools, even in rural areas; however, the number of children dropping out of school after primary education remains high, and the system still struggles with the provision of quality education to meet all of the needs of the school-going population.(10, 29, 36) Despite increasing enrollment and completion rates, access barriers remain at the secondary level, especially for girls, including long distances to schools and the lack of reliable transportation.(3, 41) Under a United Nations Development Assistance Framework involving several UN agencies, the Government began implementing a new anti-poverty action plan (2012-2016) that addresses education, health, and socio-economic development. Budgeted at \$32 million, the plan includes a focus on equal access to education for vulnerable children.(42)

Morocco

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

In 2012, Morocco participated in the USDOL-funded, 4-year Global Action Program on the Child Labor Issues Project, which is active in approximately 40 countries. In Morocco, the project aims to improve the evidence base on child labor and forced labor through data collection and research.(43)

The Moroccan High Commission for Planning conducts annual labor surveys, which includes the collection of data on the number of children under age 15 who work.(11, 30, 44) The most recent data, from 2011, shows a steady decline in child labor over the decade.(9, 44) Nonetheless, the survey does not take into account child labor in the informal sector or domestic work. Furthermore, the survey lacks a breakdown or further analysis of the number of children between the ages of 15 and 18 working in the worst forms of child labor.(3, 4, 9)

The MOSDFS launched a survey on the domestic work of girls in Casablanca during the reporting period. The results and publication are due for release in early 2013.(29)

In December 2012, the Minister of Employment and Professional Development (MEPD) signed an agreement with eight Moroccan NGOs to continue providing services to children engaged in the worst forms of child labor in the country. The MEPD committed \$180,000 for 2013.(11, 45) In addition, the Ministry of Handicrafts launched a child labor project in Fes (2012-2013) and in Marrakech on child labor in the handicraft sector. The \$46,000 Ministry of Handicrafts project in Marrakesh aims to remove children under 15 from child labor and reintegrate them into school and to improve the conditions of working children between the ages of 15 and 18.(11, 46)

Over the reporting period the MOSDFS put out a solicitation to grant \$1 million for programs that served child victims of sexual exploitation, street children, and other child workers in the regions of Agadir, Oujda, and Tangier.(47) MOEPT provided alternative certificates of completion to former street children who enrolled in and finished a course on animal husbandry and farming techniques, and also ran awareness campaigns on the dangers associated with child domestic labor in Oujda, Tangier, and Fez.(10, 30, 48)

The King's INDH is Morocco's first program that allocates significant resources directly to communities based on poverty and social exclusion criteria, which includes child workers and those vulnerable to work. Building on the first phase (2005-2010), the Government is investing nearly twice as many resources to phase two (2012-2015) of INDH.(49, 50)

The program reaches out to the most vulnerable, including those in far reaching rural areas, through better access to basic services, such as schools; enhanced income-earning opportunities, such as micro-credit for women; and improved participation at the local level, to assure sustainability. During phase one, the project succeeded in reducing the school dropout rate for the 6-15 year old cohort by about 6 percent.(10, 49, 50)

The *Taysir* program, managed by the Ministry of National Education (MONE) aims to increase school enrollment and reduce dropout rates, particularly in the rural areas, by awarding stipends amounting to between \$7 and \$16 a month to qualifying families provided the children meet school attendance criteria.(10, 17, 51) Over the 2011-2012 school year, 406,000 families received monthly financial allowances that enabled them to keep their children enrolled in school.(10, 52) During the reporting period the program succeeded in reducing public school dropout rates among its beneficiaries by 68 percent and in increasing school enrollment by 10 percent.(10, 52)

MONE manages additional education activities, such as the "one million school bags" program, which reached more than 4 million children during the 2011-2012 school year.(10, 30) A MONE subsidy gives girls from isolated areas of Morocco who were previously unable to attend school due to the cost of schooling and safety issues the opportunity to attend schools while residing in school dormitories.(53) During the 2011-2012 school year, the program reached 119,868 children.(10) The Government also continues to run an alternative education program to allow school dropouts the opportunity to reenroll in school. The program has enrolled a number of working children, including child domestics.(10)

The Government oversees numerous child protection centers for victims of violence, neglect, and sexual exploitation. Child Protection Units (CPUs), managed through the PANE project and based in Casablanca, Marrakesh, Tangier, Meknès, and Essaouira, provide temporary shelter for these children and offer medical, legal, and psychological services and service referrals.(10, 36) The CPUs have also served children employed in domestic work.(14) Additionally, over the reporting period the Government's National Observatory for the Rights of the Child operated 75 Child Reception Centers that provided services to child victims of violence, sexual abuse, or neglect.(10)

The Childhood Division of the Ministry of Youth and Sport manages Child Protection Centers (CSC) that provide social and educational services to minors referred by the

courts.(54, 55) The minors served at the centers are victims of abuse or legal offenders, which include child domestics and street children. The goal of the program is to strengthen the children's ties with their families and with society.(54, 55)

The Government cooperates with the UN on a \$32 million program (2012-2016) that aims to create a more protective and

fair environment for vulnerable children in Morocco through improved access to equitable and quality education and health services; an enhanced protection mechanism for vulnerable children exposed to abuse, exploitation, and violence; and a coordinated programmatic response at the local policy level to issues related to the rights of children and adolescents.(42, 56)

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Ensure that children 15-18 are protected from involvement in dangerous agricultural work at night.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Approve legislation to protect domestic workers from dangerous work and to prevent children under the legal working age from working in domestic service. Also approve legislation to prohibit children under the legal working age from employment in the handicraft sector and to regulate apprenticeships in traditional sectors.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Amend legislation to increase the penalties for those who employ children under age 18 in hazardous work.	2012
Coordination and Enforcement	Establish a coordinating mechanism to specifically and comprehensively combat the worst forms of child labor.	2012
	Publish information on the number of investigations and prosecutions and the amount of penalties imposed for violations of child labor and child trafficking laws.	2012
	Increase funding and number of inspectors employed under the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training.	2012

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