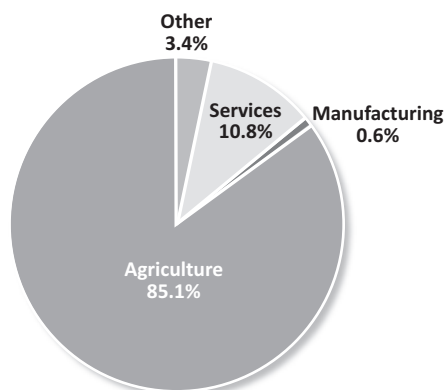


In 2012, Rwanda made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. In March 2013, the Government of Rwanda approved its National Policy for the Elimination of Child Labor and 5-year Action Plan to Combat Child Labor. Rwanda also adopted the Law Relating to the Rights and Protection of the Child, which includes provisions on the worst forms of child labor, and the Organic Law Instituting the Penal Code, which provides penalties for persons who recruit children for armed conflict or do not report offenses committed against children to the authorities. Despite these efforts, in 2012, children were recruited by M23 for armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. M23 is an armed group based in the Democratic Republic of Congo that the Government of Rwanda supports. Rwanda has received an assessment of minimal advancement because the Government's support for M23 in 2012 undermined other advancements made during the year to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Children continue to be engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in dangerous conditions in agriculture and domestic service.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	6.1 (142,523)
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	82.9
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	6.1
Primary Completion Rate		69.6

Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2010, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from ENTE Survey, 2008.(2)



Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Rwanda are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture and domestic service.(3-6) Children are involved in the production of sugarcane, bananas, and tea.(3, 4, 7, 8) Although information is limited, there are reports that children also work in the production of cabbage, coffee, manioc, peas, pineapple, potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, beans, sorghum, pyrethrum, and rice.(3, 4, 8-11) In Rwanda, children working in agriculture carry heavy loads, use dangerous tools such as machetes, and are vulnerable to insect and snakebites. These children may also work close to harmful pesticides and fertilizers.(4, 11) Although the full extent of children's involvement is unknown, children herd cattle and care for sheep, goats, pigs, and chicken. These children may work long hours and carry heavy loads of food and water.(3, 11, 12) In 2011, the latest year for which information is available, a survey conducted by ICF International found that approximately 20 percent of children tending livestock in Rwanda reported having been injured while at work.(8)

In Rwanda, children work as domestic servants.(3, 4, 10) They may be required to work long hours, performing strenuous tasks, without sufficient food or shelter. These children may be isolated in private homes and susceptible to physical and sexual abuse.(13, 14) Children also work on construction sites and reportedly engage in strenuous manual labor such as digging pit latrines. Although evidence is limited, there are reports that children are also found making bricks.(3, 15-18) Although the extent of the problem is unknown, there are reports that children mine coltan.(15, 19, 20) Children who work in mining are at risk of eye and lung damage from stone dust.(15)

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Commercial sexual exploitation of children and trafficking also occur in Rwanda. Older women sometimes coerce girls into commercial sex work in exchange for food and living quarters.(21) Loosely structured prostitution networks recruit children from secondary schools for commercial sexual exploitation.(21) Kigali City and the districts of Ginsuzu, Rusizi, and Musanze are the areas most affected by the commercial sexual exploitation of children.(22) Children are also trafficked to Asia; Europe; and North America; and to eastern, central, and southern Africa for forced agricultural labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and domestic service. Limited reports suggest that children are also trafficked into Rwanda from neighboring countries and from Somalia.(21, 23-27) There is a lack of information on the extent of child trafficking into, transit through, and from Rwanda.(28)

In 2012, children within Rwanda were recruited, some of them forcibly, by the M23 armed group, which is supported by the Government of Rwanda, for armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These children were recruited from refugee camps and from the Nkamira transit center.(10, 18, 29-33) In addition, the UN Group of Experts reported that the director of the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) forcibly recruited a small number of children from the child soldier rehabilitation center in Mutobo.(32, 33) Children associated with armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo may be forced to serve as combatants, porters, spies, domestic servants, and sex slaves.(10, 18)

There are reports of children working on the streets, but specific information on hazards is unknown.(34, 35)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Rwanda's Labor Law sets the minimum age for work at 16 and the minimum age for hazardous work at 18. The Law prohibits children under the age of 18 from night work and work that is difficult, unsanitary, or dangerous. It also prohibits children from working in the worst forms of child labor, including slavery or similar practices, forced or bonded labor, armed conflict, illicit activities or commercial sexual exploitation, and any work whose nature is detrimental to the health, security, or morals of a child.(36)

Ministerial Order 2010-06 sets forth a list of the worst forms of child labor: It prohibits children from working at industrial institutions and in domestic service, mining, quarrying, construction, brickmaking, carrying heavy loads, and applying fertilizers and pesticides.(37) Penalties for violations of the

Labor Law provisions on the worst forms of child labor and hazardous work are stringent, with penalties of up to 20 years of incarceration and fines.(36) However, the Labor Law covers only contractual employment, leaving most of Rwanda's working children unprotected.(36, 38)

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	16
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

In 2012, Mimuri sector authorities in Nyagatare District created guidelines to combat child labor in the sugar and rice sectors, and these guidelines include punitive measures for those found employing children.(39) The districts of Bugesera, Nyamagabe, Gatsibo, Gicumbi, and Nyaruguru have also enacted laws against hazardous child labor that sanction employers and parents for violations.(40)

The Labor Law also prohibits child trafficking, and the Law on Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence prohibits and provides penalties for "gender-based human trafficking".(36, 41) The Law Relating to the Rights and Protection of the Child, which came into effect in June 2012, includes provisions on the worst forms of child labor, protects children from violence and economic exploitation, and provides children with the right to rest and leisure.(10, 42) This Law also commits the Government to establishing a center for children living and working on the streets and ensuring the psychological recovery and social reintegration of children affected by armed conflict.(10, 42) In addition, the Labor Law and Presidential Orders 155/01 and 72/01 prohibit children under age 18 from being recruited for military service.(43, 44)

In 2012, Rwanda adopted the Organic Law Instituting the Penal Code.⁽⁴⁵⁾ This Law prohibits slavery; child trafficking; child rape; violence against children; recruitment, use, or profit from the commercial sexual exploitation of children; and use of children for armed conflict, in pornographic publications, or for illicit activities. The Law also provides penalties, including jail time and a fine, for persons who recruit children for armed conflict or do not report offenses committed against children to the authorities.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Despite this protection, in 2012, children were recruited within Rwanda by M23 for armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.^(10, 29-31, 46)

In April 2012, the Kigali City Security Council drafted guidelines on child labor, including domestic work. These guidelines have been translated into English and French and are awaiting the Prime Minister's approval.^(10, 47)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The National Advisory Committee on Child Labor in Rwanda coordinates government efforts related to the worst forms of child labor and is responsible for reviewing child labor laws. It also advocates for the inclusion of child labor policies in national development plans, oversees the implementation of child labor interventions, and conducts field visits to assess the prevalence of child labor and to raise awareness of child labor.^(10, 24) This Committee meets quarterly and includes representatives from the Ministry of Public Service and Labor (MIFOTRA), the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Sports and Culture, the Rwandan National Police (RNP), the National Human Rights Commission, the RDRC, trade unions, the ILO, UNICEF, the Private Sector Federation, and Winrock International.^(10, 24, 48)

The National Commission for Children (NCC) works to monitor, promote, and advocate for children's rights, as well as to develop action plans to protect children from abuse and exploitation.^(10, 49) The NCC is an independent structure under the MIGEPROF and is supported by a board of directors and an advisory council of 14 institutions.^(10, 50) The NCC met twice during the year and had a budget of approximately \$2.4 million, which includes \$1.5 million for district governments to implement child protection programs. The NCC employed 49 staff members during the reporting period, including a child protection officer who is responsible for child labor issues.^(10, 51)

The Government also has established the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Child Rights, National Commission on Orphans and Vulnerable Children, and Child's Rights Observatory within the National Commission for Human Rights.^(10, 50) The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Children's Rights is mandated to meet at least once a year to coordinate and assess the progress of the National Integrated Child Rights Policy (ICRP) and the Strategic Plan for the ICRP in Rwanda. The National Commission on Orphans and Vulnerable Children and the Child's Rights Observatory monitor and protect the rights of children in Rwanda.^(10, 24, 44)

There are 149 local child labor committees nationwide that monitor incidents of child labor.^(10, 40) Gender-based violence committees operate at the district level, and child protection committees are active at the district, sector, and cell levels to identify and report cases of child rights violations.^(47, 52) In addition, the Kigali City Council operates a task force to combat child labor in the districts of Kicukiro, Gasabo, and Nyarugenge.^(19, 47, 53)

To enforce labor laws, including laws on child labor, the MIFOTRA employs 30 labor inspectors (one per district) who are supervised by the district authorities and work with the RNP.^(10, 54-56) At the national level, there is also supposed to be one labor inspector supervised by the Directorate General in charge of labor. However, this position remained vacant for most of 2012.^(54, 57) According to the MIFOTRA, one labor inspector per district is not enough to conduct all of the necessary inspections.⁽⁴⁸⁾ In 2012, the MIFOTRA provided labor inspectors with laptops and funds for Internet service. In addition, half of all labor inspectors received motorcycles and funds for fuel and maintenance.⁽¹⁰⁾ Despite this improvement, the MIFOTRA reports that many labor inspectors still lack transportation to carry out inspections.^(48, 57) During the reporting period, the ILO Committee of Experts was concerned that vulnerable workers, including children, may not be adequately protected, as the budget allocated to labor inspection depended on district authorities and the availability of resources.⁽⁵⁶⁾ To address this concern, in 2012, the MIFOTRA instituted an auditing mechanism to ensure that funds disbursed for labor inspectors were not reprogrammed by district officials.⁽¹⁰⁾

The MIFOTRA assesses the performance of its labor inspectors every 6 months and provides them with training twice a year on identifying and investigating child labor violations.⁽¹⁰⁾ In 2012, labor inspectors held quarterly trainings for employers and local authorities in their district on child labor issues.^(10, 48) The MIFOTRA's training budget for labor inspectors was \$180,000 in 2012.⁽¹⁰⁾

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In Rwanda, inspections may be conducted without prior notice, and labor inspectors may issue warnings, which must be corrected by the offender within 7 days. If the violation is not corrected within 7 days, the labor inspector may ask the authorities to temporarily close the institution under investigation.(54) However, Law No. 13/2009 permits labor inspectors to enter workplaces only during normal business hours, even though ILO Convention 81 notes that inspectors should be able to enter workplaces at all times. This practice may exclude protection for children who work irregular hours.(58) Labor inspection reports do not contain information on inspections related to the worst forms of child labor.(59) Data regarding child labor inspections, prosecutions, and penalties are not publicly available.(10, 48)

Within villages, citizens can report instances of child labor to the police or to a local volunteer officer in charge of social affairs. If the officer cannot resolve the problem, it may be referred to the village leader, who may contact the police.(57) The district authorities' personal performance contracts include targets for reducing child labor and increasing school enrollment.(10)

The RNP enforces criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor. Within the Commission for Criminal Investigations of the RNP, there is a Child Protection Unit with a network of investigators throughout the country who are responsible for cases of child abuse, including the use of children in commercial sexual exploitation.(10, 60, 61) The RNP also operates a free hotline to report incidences of gender-based violence; this hotline is also used for reporting child abuse, including child labor.(57, 62) Some MIGEPROF and RNP employees do not always follow government-approved procedures for screening children and referring them to services, which may impact the quality and timeliness of services provided to children.(10, 24) During the reporting period, the RNP referred some child domestics and children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation to the Isange Center within the Kacyiru Police Hospital for police assistance, legal aid, shelter, medical exams, and counseling. In 2012, five similar centers at public hospitals were open in other districts.(10) During the reporting period, police in Kigali arrested two suspects for trafficking girls to Asia and investigated one case of forced commercial sexual exploitation of a child.(18, 63)

Trafficking cases are referred to the RNP and to the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration.(57) The Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration retains an anti-trafficking specialist, and the RNP operates an anti-trafficking unit staffed with 15 full-time officers, an increase of 12 officers

from 2011.(10, 21) Despite this increase, RNP officials report that the number of officers in this unit is still insufficient to address the problem.(10) The RNP is trained on several issues, including crimes against children, and 112 police officers were trained in 2012 on transnational child trafficking. However, some officials lack awareness about the laws pertaining to internal trafficking, as they have not been trained.(10, 21) In addition, there have been indications that some members of the RNP are not sensitized to the needs of child trafficking victims, and that some children found engaged in commercial sexual exploitation were detained in transit centers for months before being released.(10, 64) There is no information on the number of trafficking investigations or prosecutions.(10)

Immigration and customs officers assist with the enforcement of child trafficking laws and receive training on document verification and passenger profiling. Standard procedure requires these officers to verify that all children transported across the border are traveling with the permission of their parents or guardians.(10, 24) During the reporting period, the RNP opened Interpol offices at 13 border crossings and at the Kigali International Airport to combat trafficking in persons.(10) The Government also created a special court for international crimes, including human trafficking, during the reporting period.(21) Research found no information about the number of children prevented from crossing the border in 2012.

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

In March 2013, the Government of Rwanda approved its National Policy for the Elimination of Child Labor and 5-year Action Plan to Combat Child Labor.(65, 66) The National Policy for the Elimination of Child Labor and 5-year Action Plan to Combat Child Labor aim to prevent at-risk children from entering exploitative child labor; withdraw children engaged in exploitative labor through the provision of education; rehabilitate former child laborers through counseling, life skills training, and medical care; raise community awareness on child labor; establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms on child labor; and carry out other initiatives.(10, 38, 66, 67)

In 2012, the MIGEPROF continued to implement its ICRP and Strategic Plan (2011-2016) to address all children's issues, including child labor.(24, 44, 50) The ICRP and Strategic Plan are guided by the principles that abuse, exploitation, and violence against children are intolerable and that the Government and caretakers are accountable for the well-being of children.(44, 68) The ICRP prohibits child labor,

and the Strategic Plan provides \$9,000 to develop timebound programs to eliminate child labor.(44, 68) When the ICRP and Strategic Plan were adopted in 2011, all other national policies specific to children's issues were subsumed, including the National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children, National Strategic Plan of Action for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children, National Strategic Plan on Street Children, and National Policy for Family Promotion. However, it is unclear how the ICRP and Strategic Plan will complement the National Policy for the Elimination of Child Labor and 5-year Action Plan to Combat Child Labor.(10, 69-72) Rwanda also made policy commitments to combat child labor in its National Employment Policy and Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy II (EDPRS II) (2008-2012).(48, 73-75)

The Government's National Youth Policy and Vision 2020 include child protection issues.(57, 76-78) In addition, Rwanda's National Social Protection Strategy defines social protection and outlines social development activities to assist poor households, such as providing vulnerable children with grants and free education.(79) However, it appears that no research has been conducted on whether these policies have an impact on preventing or reducing the worst forms of child labor.

In 2012, Rwanda began implementing its Twelve Years Basic Education (12YBE) policy, which provides free education for 12 years, by hiring new teachers and building schools.(10) Education is compulsory, beginning at the age of 7, until the age of 16. However, in practice, the costs of uniforms, school supplies, and unofficial school fees prohibit many families from sending their children to school.(57, 77, 80-82) Although the Strategic Plan for the ICRP in Rwanda calls for registration of the births of all children 16 years of age and younger by 2015, approximately 20.0 percent of children in Rwanda remain without birth certificates, which may make it difficult for them to access education.(44, 83)

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

In 2012, the RDRC relocated the child rehabilitation center for former child combatants returning from the Democratic Republic of the Congo from the Muhazi District in the Eastern Province to the Musanze District in the Northern Province. The new center raises awareness of child soldier issues and provides a 3-month course to former child soldiers, including counseling, education, recreational activities, and vocational training.(10, 18, 21, 44) During the reporting period, the RDRC rehabilitated 66 former child combatants and reunited

53 with their families.(10, 18) The RDRC receives funding from UNICEF, the World Bank, and the Governments of Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan, and Germany.(21) In addition, Rwanda is working with the UN High Commission for Refugees to improve protection measures and provide access to education for children in Rwanda's four refugee camps who may be impacted by the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.(84)

The Government continued to participate in the Rwanda Education Alternatives for Children (REACH) project, which is funded by USDOL at \$4.5 million from September 2009 to March 2013. The project aims to withdraw 4,800 children and prevent 3,500 children from exploitive child labor, particularly in the agricultural sector, by providing educational services, strengthening child labor and education policies, and ensuring the sustainability of these efforts.(12)

Rwanda also continued to participate in the USDOL-funded, 4-year Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues project, which is active in approximately 40 countries. In Rwanda, the project aims to build the capacity of the national government and develop strategic policies to address the elimination of child labor and forced labor.(85, 86)

In 2012, the National Agricultural Export Board participated in discussions on child labor in the agriculture sector with companies and NGOs.(39, 47) The MIFOTRA and district authorities also raised public awareness on the importance of education and on children's involvement in the worst forms of child labor through radio shows, television announcements, and skits.(10)

Rwanda continued to collaborate with the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization in order to strengthen its ability to combat human trafficking. This organization consists of 11 East African countries and works to strengthen regional cooperation and capacities among East African law enforcement authorities.(87-89) The Government also initiated a campaign against child abuse, sexual exploitation, and human trafficking.(10)

In 2012, Rwanda continued to implement its Vision 2020 Umurenge Program, which provides direct support through cash and in-kind transfers to child-headed households and street children. By March 2012, this Program assisted 1,074 children in 25 centers across the country.(10, 79, 90, 91) The Government also continued to operate the Gitagata center for former street children; this center was located in the Bugesera District during the reporting period. The center provided education support and recreational activities to more than

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700 boys, ages 7 to 19.(10, 67) In addition, the Government sustained its partnership with private organizations to support 33 orphanages that provided shelter, basic needs, and rehabilitation for 3,153 street children, orphans, and vulnerable children.(10) However, in August 2012, the MIGEPROF announced that it would begin phasing out Rwanda's orphanages and integrating children with families across the country. The MIGEPROF closed three orphanages by the end of 2012.(10, 68, 78, 92) It is too early to determine the impact that the Vision 2020 Umurenge Program and the closing of childcare institutions will have on child labor.

The WFP continued to provide meals to 350,000 children in 300 primary schools. Rwanda, in collaboration with the

Government of Brazil, also began developing a home-grown school feeding program in 2012.(93, 94) In addition, Rwanda implemented the One Cup of Milk per Child program, funded by the EU, to provide milk to children in nursery and primary schools. As of January 2012, 30 schools benefited from the program.(95, 96) The question of whether the school feeding programs have an impact on the prevention or reduction of the worst forms of child labor does not appear to have been studied.

Despite the many programs detailed in this section, Rwanda's social programs are not sufficient to assist the numerous children working in domestic service.(35)

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended	
Laws and Regulations	Ensure protection for children working in exploitative noncontractual labor activities.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012	
	Revising Law No. 13/2009 to allow labor inspectors to enter workplaces outside of normal business hours.	2012	
Coordination and Enforcement	Improve measures to investigate, prosecute, and convict individuals involved in the worst forms of child labor by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the MIFOTRA and the RNP have sufficient human and financial resources to carry out their mandates. Making information publicly available on investigations and prosecutions related to the worst forms of child labor. Ensuring that the MIGEPROF and RNP provide training to staff on government-approved procedures for screening children and referring them to services. Increasing training among enforcement officials on internal child trafficking and the rights of trafficking victims and children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation. 	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 2012 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012	
	Ensure that Government of Rwanda officials enforce the law with regard to the recruitment of children for armed conflict.	2012	
	Policies	Assess the impact that policies such as the National Youth Policy, Vision 2020, and National Social Protection Strategy may have on addressing the worst forms of child labor.	2011, 2012
		Ensure that school costs, such as uniforms, school supplies, and unofficial school fees, do not diminish the impact of the 12YBE policy.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Implement the Strategic Plan for the ICRP in Rwanda, which requires the birth registration of all children 16 years and below by 2015.	2012	
	Undertake an assessment on the extent of child trafficking in Rwanda.	2012	

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Social Programs	Take steps to ensure that children in Rwanda are not recruited by armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.	2012
	Conduct an assessment of the impact that the Vision 2020 Umurenge Program, closing of child care institutions, birth registration programs, and school feeding programs may have on the worst forms of child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Develop additional social protection programs to assist child domestic servants.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012

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