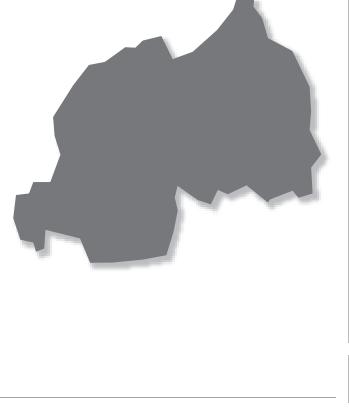
RWANDA

Rwanda

The Government of Rwanda has strengthened its legal framework against the worst forms of child labor by raising the minimum age for hazardous work from 16 to 18 and passing a Ministerial Order listing the prohibited worst forms of child labor. Despite these efforts, Rwanda has not devoted sufficient resources to enforce its child labor laws effectively. This contributes to the large number of children who work in hazardous conditions, especially in agriculture and domestic service.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	6.1%
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	82.9%
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs	6.1%



Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children are exploited in the worst forms of child labor in Rwanda, including in agriculture.⁴²³⁰ Although evidence is limited, there is reason to believe that the worst forms of child labor are used in the production of potatoes, corn, beans, sorghum, bananas, rice, and sugar. Children also produce tea. Such work may involve using tools, carrying heavy loads, and applying harmful pesticides.⁴²³¹ Limited evidence suggests that children herd livestock, sometimes working long hours outside.⁴²³² Children are also found working in domestic service.⁴²³³ Child domestics are vulnerable to sexual and other forms of abuse by their employers and may work long hours.⁴²³⁴

There is reason to believe that children produce charcoal and work as porters.⁴²³⁵ They also engage in heavy manual labor such as brick making, digging, and mining.⁴²³⁶ Children in rural Kigali also mine sand in dirty water, exposing themselves to waterborne diseases.⁴²³⁷ In Nachonga, Gasabo District, Gikongoro, and Rulindo, children working in quarries risk eye and lung damage from stone dust.⁴²³⁸ In Rwanda, an estimated 7,000 children live and work on the streets. Some beg, sell goods, and collect garbage. These children are vulnerable to a variety of dangers, which may include severe weather, accidents caused by proximity to vehicles, and exposure to criminal elements.⁴²³⁹

Prostitution and trafficking also occur in Rwanda. Older women sometimes coerce girls to provide sexual services in exchange for cash, protection, and living quarters.⁴²⁴⁰ Loosely structured prostitution networks recruit children from secondary schools.⁴²⁴¹ Girls are known to be trafficked internally into domestic servitude and prostitution.⁴²⁴² Children are also trafficked to Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya for forced agricultural labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude.⁴²⁴³ In a few isolated cases, children have been trafficked into Rwanda.⁴²⁴⁴

Unlike in past years, there was no indication in 2009 that the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) recruited Congolese boys from Rwanda-based refugee camps, as well as Rwandans from nearby towns, into forced labor and soldiering in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.⁴²⁴⁵

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Rwanda's 2009 Labor Law sets the minimum age for work at 16 and raised the minimum age for hazardous work from 16 to 18. This law prohibits children under age 18 from night work and work which is difficult, unsanitary, or dangerous.⁴²⁴⁶ It also prohibits children from working in the worst forms of child labor, which are defined as in ILO Convention 182 to include: slavery or similar practices, forced or bonded labor, the use or recruitment of children into armed conflict, illicit activities, or prostitution, and any work whose nature is detrimental to the health, security, or morals of a child.⁴²⁴⁷ The 2010 Ministerial Order on the worst forms of child labor prohibits children from working at industrial institutions and in domestic service, mining and quarrying, construction, brick making, and applying fertilizers and pesticides.⁴²⁴⁸ In addition to the national laws, some districts have bylaws against hazardous child labor, sanctioning employers and parents for violations.4249

WIION	C138, Minimum Age	\checkmark
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	\checkmark
٢	CRC	\checkmark
	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	~

Penalties for violations of the Labor Law provisions on worst forms of child labor and hazardous work are stringent, with up to 20 years incarceration and fines.⁴²⁵⁰ While the Labor Law offers some protection to workers in the informal sector, these protections do not extend to child laborers.⁴²⁵¹

The Law Relating to Rights and Protection of the Child against Violence prohibits slavery, child rape, recruiting, using, or profiting from child prostitution, and using children in pornographic publications or for illicit activities.⁴²⁵² The Labor Law and Law Relating to the Rights and Protection of the Children against Violence also prohibit children under age 18 from military service and armed combat.⁴²⁵³

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The National Advisory Committee on Child Labor coordinates government efforts relating to the worst forms of child labor and is responsible for reviewing child labor laws, advocating for the inclusion of child labor policies in national development plans, overseeing the implementation of child labor interventions, and conducting field visits to assess child labor and raise awareness.⁴²⁵⁴ This group meets quarterly and includes representatives from the Ministry of Public Service and Labor (MIFOTRA), the Rwandan National Police (RNP), the National Human Rights Commission, the Ministry of Youth (MINIYOUTH), the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), the Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Social Affairs (MINALOC), the Ministry of Sports and Culture (MINISPOC), the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC), Rwandan trade unions, the International Labor Organization (ILO), UNICEF, the Private Sector Federation (PSF), and Winrock International.⁴²⁵⁵ At the village level, 149 Local Child Labor Committees (LCLCs) monitor incidents of child labor.4256

To enforce child labor laws, MIFOTRA also employs 30 labor inspectors, one per district; however, some are constrained by a lack of transportation and resources. They are supervised by the district authorities and work with the RNP.⁴²⁵⁷ There is also one labor inspector at the national level supervised by the Directorate General in charge of labor. MIFOTRA trains labor inspectors at least twice a year to identify and investigate child labor violations.⁴²⁵⁸ MIFOTRA employees also visit labor inspectors to assess their

performance at least every six months.⁴²⁵⁹ Several times a year, labor inspectors train employers and local authorities on child labor issues.⁴²⁶⁰ Even though the Labor Law does not cover children working in the informal sector, the Government reports that the criteria for conducting inspections is based on whether the type of work may harm the child's health, physical and mental development, morals, and education.⁴²⁶¹ Inspections can be conducted without prior notice and labor inspectors may issue warnings, which must be corrected by the offender within seven days. Otherwise, the labor inspector may ask the authorities to close the institution under investigation temporarily.⁴²⁶² In 2009, labor inspectors issued warnings to people illegally employing children; however, information is not yet available on the number of inspections conducted or whether child labor cases were managed efficiently and appropriate penalties applied.4263

Within villages, citizens can report instances of child labor to the local volunteer officer in charge of social affairs.⁴²⁶⁴ If the officer cannot resolve the problem, it may be referred to the village leader, who in turn may contact the police. In Rwanda, the district authorities' personal performance contracts include targets for increasing school enrollment, thereby reducing child labor.4265 District authorities in Gakenke, using local bylaws, detained 350 children working in a market and advised the parents to send their children to school.⁴²⁶⁶ The RNP enforces criminal laws relating to the worst forms of child labor. Within the Criminal Investigation and Scientific Police of the RNP, there is a Child Protection Unit with a network of investigators throughout the country responsible for cases of child abuse, including the use of children in commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking.4267 In collaboration with MIGEPROF, the RNP established a gender desk at its headquarters to respond to complaints of genderbased violence. The RNP also operates a free hotline to report incidences of gender-based violence, which is also used for reporting child abuse, including child labor.4268

Some trafficking cases are referred to the RNP by the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration.⁴²⁶⁹ The Government trains the RNP specifically in sex crimes, crimes against children, and preventing transnational child trafficking; however some officials lack awareness and training on how to handle internal trafficking cases.⁴²⁷⁰ 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 Kigali's Gikondo transit center for several months without being charged for a crime.4271 At the time of reporting, the Government was investigating two possible cases of transnational child trafficking.4272 Immigration and customs officers assist with the enforcement of child trafficking laws. These officials collaborate with their counterparts in the neighboring countries of Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁴²⁷³ Standard procedure requires these officials to question all adults seeking to cross the border with children and to show written proof that they have permission from the children's parents or guardian.4274

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government has developed a National Policy for the Elimination of Child Labor and a 5-year Action Plan, which it plans to finalize after the publication of the national child labor survey.⁴²⁷⁵

The 2003 National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children includes strategies to address the worst forms of child labor by improving working conditions, providing support to needy families, and strengthening the education system.4276 In 2007, the Government adopted the National Strategic Plan of Action for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Rwanda (NSP) which provides a more detailed framework to achieve the objectives of the National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children.⁴²⁷⁷ The services offered to orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) include health care, shelter, education, psychological support, and livelihood enhancement. However, due to the sheer magnitude of the problem, three-fourths of OVCs have not received government assistance.4278

Rwanda has also made policy commitments to combat the worst forms of child labor in its National Employment Policy and Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (2008-2012) (EDPRS).⁴²⁷⁹ The Government of Rwanda also adopted the Nine Years Basic Education (9YBE) policy, mandating that the first nine years of basic education are free and compulsory.⁴²⁸⁰ It is too early to determine the impact this policy may have on child labor.

In addition, Rwanda has adopted the Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the Joint Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central African Regions.⁴²⁸¹ As part of this agreement, the Government of Rwanda has committed to investigate and prosecute trafficking offenders; to rehabilitate and reintegrate trafficking victims; and to assist fellow signatory countries to implement these measures under the Agreement. As indicated above, Rwanda has protocols for addressing cross border trafficking in persons, but further information was not identified on the extent to which the Government has implemented these protocols.⁴²⁸²

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

The majority of past government interventions to combat the worst forms of child labor were limited to children involved in armed conflict.⁴²⁸³ In 2009, the Rwandan Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) continued to support these efforts by operating a rehabilitation center in Muhazi for former child combatants.⁴²⁸⁴ The RDRC also raised public awareness of child soldier issues in an effort to make communities more welcoming to children returning from involvement in armed conflict.⁴²⁸⁵

The Government also continued to operate a rehabilitation center, which offers psychosocial counseling, education, and reintegration services to over 200 street boys. The Government also partnered with private organizations to support 35 childcare institutions across the country that provided shelter, basic needs, and rehabilitation for approximately 2,600 street children.⁴²⁸⁶

During the reporting period, the Government of Rwanda, with partners, initiated a high-profile public campaign to discourage intergenerational sex and sexual procurement. The Government also built over 3,000 classrooms to accommodate additional students.⁴²⁸⁷ It is too early to determine whether the additional classrooms will have an impact on the worst forms of child labor.

The Government also participated in the 4-year Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together (KURET) project, which withdrew or prevented 32,823 children (7,372 in Rwanda) from exploitive labor in HIV/AIDSaffected areas of these four countries through the provision of educational services.⁴²⁸⁸

In 2009, the Government began participating in the project Rwanda Education Alternatives for Children (REACH), which was funded by USDOL at \$4.5 million from September 2009 to March 2013.⁴²⁸⁹ 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.⁴²⁹⁰

During the reporting period, the Government, in partnership with the RNP, UN Children's Fund, UN Development Fund for Women, and UN Population Fund, established a center to provide gender-based violence victims, including child domestics, with free medical, psychosocial support, and police assistance.⁴²⁹¹ In addition, the MIFOTRA raised public awareness of the worst forms of child labor through radio shows, television announcements, and skits.⁴²⁹² Despite these initiatives, Rwanda's social programs are not sufficient to tackle the scope of the problem.

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

IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

Amend the Labor Law to cover children working in the informal sector.

IN THE AREA OF COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT:

- Improve measures to investigate, prosecute, and convict individuals involved in the worst forms of child labor, including by:
 - Increasing resources and the capacity of labor inspectors.
 - Increasing training among enforcement officials on internal child trafficking.
 - Providing training to RNP employees on the rights of trafficking victims, specifically underage girls engaged in prostitution.
 - Making information publicly available on child labor investigations and prosecutions.

IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:

 Finalize, ratify, and implement the National Policy for the Elimination of Child Labor and 5-year Action Plan on child labor.

IN THE AREA OF PROGRAMS:

 Develop additional social protection programs to assist vulnerable and orphaned children and children working on the streets.

⁴²³⁰ Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are based on UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, Child Economic Activity, School Attendance, and Combined Working and Studying Rates, 2005-2010. Data provided are from 2008. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. As a result, statistics and information on children's work in general are reported in this section, which may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information on sources used, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" section of this report. See also World Vision, KURET (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together) Final Report: Baseline study and situational analysis of child labor and education in HIV/ AIDS affected Communities in Rwanda, Project Document, November, 2005, 12. See also Winrock International, Rwanda Education Alternatives for Children (REACH), Project Document, 2010, 17.

⁴²³¹ Winrock International, Rwanda Education Alternatives for Children (REACH), 17. See also U.S. Embassy-Kigali, reporting, February 16, 2010, 1a. See also U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2009 Rwanda, Washington, DC, March 11, 2010, 7d; available from http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135971.htm.

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57. See also Winrock International, Rwanda Education Alternatives for Children (REACH), 4, 17.

⁴²³³ U.S. Department of State, Country Reports- 2009:Rwanda. See also World Vision, KURET, Study of Child Labor in Rwanda.

⁴²³⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Rwanda," in Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2009, Washington, DC, March 11, 2010; available from http://www.state.gov/g/drl/ rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135971.htm. See also Kisambira, Child Labor is a Threat to Rwanda's Vision 2020. See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali, reporting, February 18, 2009.

⁴²³⁵ J. Buyinza, "Rwanda: Child Labor to Be Stamped Out," *New Times* (Kigali), February 3 2008; available from http:// allafrica.com/stories/200802030013.html. See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, February 16, 2010*, 2a.1. See also Hilarie Ntawulishira, "Rwanda: School or Work: Do the Poor Have a Choice?," *Africa Files/ Syfia Great Lakes*, November 7, 2007; available from http://www.africafiles. org/article.asp?ID=16388. See also Karen Tietjen, *Combating Exploitive Child Labor through Education in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia Together Project: Rwanda Country Report*, Independent Midterm Evaluation, March, 2007, 5; available from http://www.dol.gov/ilab/ programs/ocft/tcp/KURET-report2.pdf.

⁴²³⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2009: Rwanda," section 7. See also Kisambira, *Child Labor is a Threat to Rwanda's Vision 2020*.

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⁴²³⁸ Kisambira, *Child Labor is a Threat to Rwanda's Vision* 2020. See also Buyinza, "Rwanda: Child Labor to Be Stamped Out."

⁴²³⁹ Human Rights Watch, Swept Away: Street Children Illegally Detained in Kigali, Rwanda, New York, May 14, 2006, 3; available from http://www.hrw.org/en/ reports/2006/05/14/swept-away. See also UN General Assembly, UN General Assembly Protection of the rights of the child, New York, November 24, 2009; available from http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/ N09/566/79/PDF/N0956679.pdf?OpenElement. See also Government of Rwanda, A Situation Analysis of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Rwanda, 2008, 22; available from www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/20090602/ rwanda08.pdf. See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali, reporting, February 16, 2010, para 2a.1.

⁴²⁴⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2009: Rwanda," section 7d. See also U.S. Department of State, "Rwanda (Tier 2) " in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010*, Washington, DC, June 2010, 282-283; available from http:// www.state.gov/documents/organization/143188.pdf. See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, February 18, 2009*, 23a, c.

⁴²⁴¹ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Rwanda," 282-283.

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also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2009: Rwanda," section 6c. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Rwanda," 282-283.

⁴²⁴⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Rwanda," 282-283.

⁴²⁴⁵ Ibid. See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting (TIP)*, February 16, 2010, para 30b.

⁴²⁴⁶ Government of Rwanda, *Law regulating Labour in Rwanda*, Law No. 51/2001 of 30/12/2001 (December 30, 2001), article 4, 6, 72; available from http://www.rwandainvest.gov.rw/lawlab.htm.

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⁴²⁵⁴ U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, February 16, 2010*, 2c.2.

4255 Ibid., 2c.2

⁴²⁵⁶ Martina Nicolls and Lou Witherite, *Independent Final Evaluation of the Combating Exploitive Child Labor Through Education in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together (KURET) Project,* 24-25. ⁴²⁵⁷ Government of Rwanda, *Ministerial Order determining the modalities of functioning of the labour inspector*,
No. 7, (July 13,), article 2-3. See also Ministry of Public Service and Labour, *Strategies Issues Paper: Structure*, *Programmes and Budget for the Ministry of Public Service and Labour 2009-2012*, Kigali, June 2008, 5, 10; available from http://www.mifotra.gov.rw/lang/en/about.pdf. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report-2010: Rwanda," 282-283. See also U.S. Embassy-Kigali, *reporting, February 16, 2010*, para 2c.1-2, 14.

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⁴²⁶⁵ Ibid., 2e. See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, October 21, 2010.

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⁴²⁷² U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, February 16, 2010*, 2d.1.

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⁴²⁷⁷ Government of Rwanda, *A Situation Analysis of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Rwanda*, 4, 5, 6.

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⁴²⁹¹ U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting (TIP), February 16, 2010*, para 26c.

⁴²⁹² U.S. Embassy- Kigali, reporting, February 16, 2010.