

In 2014, Guinea made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The National Transition Council approved a new Labor Code that defines the worst forms of child labor in accordance to international standards and includes prohibitions against minors performing work that is dangerous or harmful to their physical or moral health. The Government also extended the National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons for an additional year and funded a center to protect victims of child trafficking. However, children in Guinea are engaged in child labor, including in agriculture, and in the worst forms of child labor, including in mining. The Government lacks a coordinating mechanism and national policy to address all relevant worst forms of child labor. In



addition, there are limited resources for the systematic enforcement of child labor laws and social programs to combat child labor are insufficient to adequately address the extent of the problem. During the last half of 2014, the Government had to redirect most of its resources to address an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). Hundreds of children became ill or lost parents during the outbreak and schools were closed from June through December.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Guinea are engaged in child labor, including in agriculture.(1-4) Children are also engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in mining.(3-7) According to the National Survey on Child Labor and Trafficking (2010), more than 40 percent of children ages 5 to 17 were engaged in child labor in Guinea. In addition, more than 76 percent of children ages 5 to 11 and 88 percent of children ages 12 to 15 were performing hazardous work.(3) The survey also revealed that the incidence of child labor was higher in rural areas than in urban areas.(3, 6) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Guinea.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	32.3 (1,152,064)
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	49.6
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	19.2
Primary Completion Rate (%)		61.5

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015.(8)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), 2012.(9)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Farming,* clearing land,* and carrying heavy loads* in the production of cashews, cocoa, and coffee (1, 3, 10-12)
	Harvesting lumber,* peanuts,* coconuts,* and cotton* (7, 11)
	Herding livestock* (3, 11)
Industry	Capturing and processing fish* (3, 4, 6, 13, 14)
	Quarrying† sand* (11)
	Mining† gold and diamonds (3-5, 11, 14, 15)
	Manufacturing,* activities unknown (1, 3, 6)

Table 2. Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity (cont)

Sector/Industry	Activity
Industry	Construction,†*including cement making* and carrying materials* (3, 4, 6, 16, 17)
Services	Street work,* including as market vendors,* beggars,* petty traders,* shoe shiners,* and porters* in the transportation sector* (1, 3, 4, 6, 14, 18-21)
	Working in restaurants* and informal cottage industries,* including as waitresses* (1, 3, 22)
	Domestic work (3, 4, 19, 23-25)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Collecting scrap metal* and waste* (7)
	Forced labor as market vendors* and in domestic work,* mining,* herding,* fishing,* and farming,* each sometimes as a result of human trafficking* (3, 5, 6, 25)
	Commercial sexual exploitation* sometimes as a result of human trafficking* (1, 5)
	Forced begging by Koranic teachers (4, 5, 13, 14, 19, 21)

* Evidence of this activity is limited and/or the extent of the problem is unknown.

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a) – (c) of ILO C. 182.

In Guinea, it is a traditional practice to send children to Koranic teachers to receive an education. However, some Koranic teachers (*marabouts*) force their students (*talibés*) to beg for more than 12 hours a day without adequate food or shelter; the students must then surrender the money they have earned to their teachers.(5, 14, 26, 27) In addition, through the system of *confiage*, parents who are unable to care for their children send them to relatives or strangers who are expected to provide food, shelter, and schooling in exchange for the children performing housework.(4, 19) In practice, some of these children receive care and an education, while many become domestic workers and are victims of labor exploitation and abuse.(3, 4, 19)

Children are sent to the coastal region of Boke for forced labor on farms, and to Senegal for education in Koranic schools, where some may be forced to beg.(5, 13) Some Guinean boys and girls are subjected to forced labor in gold mining, including in Senegal and Mali. Girls may be trafficked into domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation in Nigeria, Côte d’Ivoire, Benin, Senegal, Greece, France, Belgium, and Spain.(3, 5, 13)

Although the Constitution guarantees free compulsory primary education, in practice, this provision is not enforced effectively, as many children do not attend school. The lack of school infrastructure; cost of school fees, uniforms, and supplies; shortage of teachers; and reported school violence impede access to education, which may increase the vulnerability of children to the worst forms of child labor.(3, 11, 13, 26) In addition, many children in Guinea are not registered at birth. Unable to prove their citizenship, unregistered children may have difficulty accessing services such as education.(1, 13, 22, 25)

In 2014, Guinea suffered from an Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak that resulted in more than 1,900 deaths.(14, 28) The Government issued policies to reduce person-to-person contact, especially in work spaces, and to increase the number of health screenings, close schools, and impose travel restrictions.(29, 30) The EVD outbreak may have impacted the Government’s ability to address the worst forms of child labor.(14)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Guinea has ratified most key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. 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	✓

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor (cont)

Convention	Ratification
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The Government has established laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 137.5 of the Labor Code; Article 412 of the Child Code (31, 32)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles 2-4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 137.4 of the Labor Code (16, 32)
Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children	Yes	Yes	Articles 415-418 of the Child Code; Articles 2 and 4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 135 of the Mining Code; Article 137.6 of the Labor Code (16, 31-33)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes	Yes	Article 337 of the Penal Code; Article 4 of the Labor Code; Article 397 of the Child Code (31, 32, 34)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes	Yes	Article 337 of the Penal Code; Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Article 385 of the Child Code (31, 32, 34)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes	Yes	Articles 329 and 331 of the Penal Code; Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Articles 356-360 of the Child Code (31, 32, 34)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes	Yes	Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Article 383 of the Child Code (31, 32)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Article 429 of the Child Code (31)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	13	Legislation Unknown (23)
Free Public Education	Yes		Articles 23 of the Constitution (35)

* No conscription (36)

In January 2014, the National Transition Council approved a new Labor Code that defines the worst forms of child labor in accordance to international standards.(7, 32) The Labor Code also contains prohibitions against minors performing work that is dangerous or harmful to their physical or moral health.(7, 32) However, the law does not prohibit hazardous occupations and activities in all relevant child labor sectors, including agriculture. A more specific list of hazardous child labor activities in all relevant sectors has been developed but was not approved during the reporting period.(14)

Guinean law is not completely consistent with international standards regarding child labor. The minimum age provisions in the Labor Code do not extend to children under age 18 who engage in unpaid or temporary work, particularly in agriculture or domestic work.(23, 25, 32) In addition, although article 2.6 of Order 2791 prohibits children under 18 to work in mines and quarries, article 135 of the Mining Code allows children between 16 and 18 years of age to work in mines and quarries as assistants, leaving the possibility for children to work in hazardous activities.(33)

In Guinea, children are only required to attend 6 years of primary school, through age 13. Since the minimum age for work is 16, children ages 14 and 15 are particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor as they may have completed primary school but are not yet legally permitted to work.(13, 23)

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

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor's (MOL) Labor Inspection Service	Enforce labor laws and investigates Labor Code infractions, including those regarding child labor, in the formal sector. The Ministry also provides advice to workers and employers, and conducts studies and research on social issues upon the request of MOL.(6, 37) MOL also chairs the Child Labor Monitoring and Surveillance System, which includes the National Coordination Unit in the National Directorate of Employment and various prefectural committees.(6)
Office for the Protection of Gender, Children and Morals (OPROGEM) Special Police Unit	Enforce laws related to the protection of minors, including the worst forms of child labor. Also a member of the National Committee to Fight Against Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP).(1, 5, 7)
Ministry for Social Action, Promotion of Women and Children (MASPFE)	Provide protection and social services for victims of child labor and human trafficking.(13)

Criminal law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms. However, research found no evidence that labor law enforcement agencies took such actions during the reporting period.

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2014, the Ministry of Labor's (MOL) Labor Inspection Service employed 53 inspectors, with 33 located in regional offices and 20 in Conakry.(7, 14) Given the prevalence of child labor in the country, the number of labor inspectors is inadequate. Research did not reveal information about whether inspectors were trained on child labor issues in 2014 or the notification system for inspections. Information on the number, type, and quality of inspections; and child labor law violations found is also unavailable. Labor inspections typically are limited to large firms in the formal employment sector. The majority of children work outside the formal sector, including in agriculture and street work.(7) The Labor Inspection Service does not have authority to determine or assess penalties.(14) Reports indicate there is a lack of trained staff, equipment, transportation, and funding to conduct effective child labor inspections and legal proceedings.(4, 5, 14)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2014, the Office for the Protection of Gender, Children and Morals (OPROGEM) employed a total of 56 agents, 33 located in regional offices and 23 in Conakry.(14) Information about whether agents received training on child labor in 2014 is unavailable. Given the prevalence of child labor in the country, the number of criminal law enforcement agents is inadequate. During the reporting period, OPROGEM handled 400 criminal cases related to child abuse, although it is unclear how many involved child labor.(14) Most of these cases were referred for prosecution; however, the Ministry of Justice has brought very few of these cases to trial. While a referral mechanism exists between criminal law enforcement agencies and social welfare services, the social services available to victims of the worst forms of child are not adequate to meet current needs.(14) OPROGEM remained understaffed, underfunded, and without adequate office supplies, transportation, and fuel to enforce laws related to the worst forms of child labor effectively and provide immediate victim assistance.(4, 5, 14)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Although the Government has established a coordination mechanism on human trafficking, research found no evidence of mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including all its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Committee to Fight Against Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP)	Coordinate anti-human trafficking efforts, including for children. Led by the Ministry for Social Action, Promotion of Women and Children (MASPFE) and includes representatives from the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Security's OPROGEM; as well as various members of governmental agencies, including the MOL, the police, NGOs, and other stakeholders involved in human trafficking issues.(5, 7, 38)
Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child	Implement, coordinate, and monitor government efforts on child protection.(13, 14, 22)

Although the National Committee to Fight Against Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP) and the Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child met irregularly throughout the year to implement activities, the effectiveness of such committees were hampered by budget constraints.(5, 14, 26)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Guinea has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 7).

Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Plan of Action to Fight Against Trafficking in Persons (2009-2014)	Provides the strategy to combat human trafficking in Guinea, including for children. The Government extended the initial National Plan (2009-2011) through 2014.(4, 5, 7)
A World Fit for Children (2002-2015)	Sets mandatory procedures for governmental institutions to assist children by increasing their access to quality education; protecting children against child labor, exploitation, and violence; and combating HIV/AIDS.(39)
Education Sector Program (2015-2017)*†	Addresses the welfare of children, which includes initiatives regarding health, education, legal protection, and access to clean water. Overseen by the Ministry of Education and implemented in partnership with UNICEF and the World Bank.(40, 41)
PRSP (2013-2015)*	Provides a framework for Guinea's growth and poverty reduction agenda. Aims to improve access to and the quality of education and increase food security; employment opportunities for youth; and protection for and programs to assist women, children, and vulnerable groups.(42)
National Policy on Birth Registration*	Aims to register the birth of all children under age 8 by 2015.(43)

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

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

Although the Government has a National Plan of Action to Fight Against Trafficking in Persons, research found no evidence of a policy on other worst forms of child labor.(7, 23)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2014, the Government of Guinea participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms. The Government has other programs that may have an impact on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in West Africa and Strengthening Sub-Regional Cooperation through ECOWAS I and II	USDOL-funded regional projects that supported ECOWAS to strengthen its role in combating the worst forms of child labor in the West Africa subregion by providing policy and capacity-building support to all ECOWAS states.(44, 45)
Plan Guinea-Conakry Program*	Program that changes the attitudes and behaviors that are preventing children from realizing their rights. Strengthens the capacity of key actors to respect children's rights in the areas of education, survival, and protection.(19)
Country Program-Guinea*	WFP-funded, 4-year program to improve elementary school attendance through the provision of 100,000 meals to students and the promotion of girls' education.(46) Provides school meals to 735 government-run, rural schools nationwide—this represents 21 percent of all rural schools in Guinea.(26, 46, 47)
Center in Ratoma, Conakry*‡	Government program that helps vulnerable children reintegrate into society.(7)

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

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Guinea.

Although Guinea has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem, particularly in agriculture, domestic work, mining, and street work.

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 Guinea (Table 9).

Table 9. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Increase the minimum age for compulsory education to correspond with the minimum age for work.	2009 – 2014
	Ensure that the law prohibits hazardous occupations and activities in all relevant child labor sectors, including agriculture.	2014
	Ensure that the law's minimum age provisions apply to children who do unpaid or temporary work, particularly in agriculture or domestic work.	2009 – 2014
	Ensure that all children are prohibited from participating in hazardous mining.	2010 – 2014
Enforcement	Increase the resources, training, and number of criminal law agents and labor inspectors responsible for enforcing laws related to child labor in order to provide adequate coverage of the workforce.	2009 – 2014
	Collect and make publicly available information on the number, type, and quality of labor inspections; number of labor law violations and convictions related to the worst forms of child labor.	2011 – 2014
	Ensure the labor inspectorate has authority to determine and assess penalties.	2014
	Ensure that labor inspections are conducted in all sectors, including those with a high prevalence of child labor.	2010 – 2014
	Ensure that all cases of child labor are investigated and prosecuted appropriately.	2010 – 2014
Coordination	Establish coordinating mechanisms to address child labor, including in all its worst forms.	2010 – 2014
	Ensure that the CNLTP and the Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child meet regularly and receive adequate funding to fulfill their mission.	2010 – 2014
Government Policies	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into existing policies.	2010 – 2014
	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor.	2014
Social Programs	Institute programs to address the worst forms of child labor in agriculture, domestic work, mining, and street work.	2009 – 2014
	Ensure that social protection systems are properly funded and adequate to meet the needs of victims of the worst forms of child labor.	2010 – 2014
	Assess the impact that existing social programs may have on addressing child labor.	2011 – 2014
	Ensure that all children have access to education by registering children at birth, taking measures to guarantee children's safety in schools, and establishing and implementing a program to address barriers to education, such as the lack of teachers, textbooks, instructional materials, and poor school infrastructure.	2010 – 2014
	Conduct research to determine the activities carried out by children in manufacturing to inform policies and programs.	2013 – 2014

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