

In 2017, Guinea made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government ratified ILO C. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers and adopted a new National Development Plan that includes activities to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children, human trafficking, and child labor. The government also implemented nationwide awareness-raising campaigns on child trafficking. However, children in Guinea engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in mining and forced begging. Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture. The government lacks a coordinating mechanism and national policy to address all relevant worst forms of child labor. In addition, the government does not adequately enforce child labor laws or implement sufficient social programs to address the extent of the child labor problem.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Guinea engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in mining and forced begging. (1; 2; 3; 4; 5) Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture. (6; 7; 8) 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 to 14	32.3 (1,152,064)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	49.6
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	19.2
Primary Completion Rate (%)		63.8

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2014, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018 (9).

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's Analysis of Statistics from Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), 2012. (10)

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 and carrying heavy loads [†] in the production of cashews, cocoa, and coffee (3; 4; 11; 12; 13)
	Herding livestock (3)
	Capturing and processing fish (7; 3; 4; 14)
Industry	Mining [†] granite, gold, and diamonds (2; 3; 4; 5; 12; 8)
	Manufacturing, activities unknown (1; 3)
	Construction, [†] including carrying materials (1; 3; 15)
Services	Street work, including as market vendors, beggars, petty traders, shoe shiners, and porters in the transportation sector (3; 4; 16; 17; 18; 19; 14; 20; 8)
	Working in restaurants and informal cottage industries, including as waitresses (3; 21)
	Domestic work (7; 4; 12; 22; 8)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor [‡]	Forced labor as market vendors and in domestic work, mining, herding, fishing, and farming, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1; 3; 4; 5)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (18; 19; 5)
	Forced begging by Koranic teachers (4; 18; 5)

[†] 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.

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Children in Guinea are trafficked domestically and abroad for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. Some Guinean boys are subjected to forced labor in gold and diamond mining, including in Senegal and Mali, while girls are exploited in domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation in various West African and Middle Eastern countries. (3; 4; 19; 23; 24; 5)




Boys placed in the care of Koranic schools in Guinea are sometimes forced by their teachers to beg on the street or to work in fields, and must then surrender the money they have earned to their teachers. (4; 11; 18; 24; 5) 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 to the children in exchange for housework. In practice, some of these children receive care and an education, while many become domestic workers and are victims of labor exploitation and abuse. (25; 4; 23; 14; 25)

The Constitution guarantees free compulsory primary education, but many children do not attend school. Birth registration is required to attend school in Guinea, and some Guinean children lack identity documents, which may affect their access to education. (25) In addition, the lack of school infrastructure, cost of school fees 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. (4; 18; 26; 14; 5; 8)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Guinea has ratified all 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	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

In 2017, the Government of Guinea ratified ILO C. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. (22)

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Guinea's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including with the minimum age for work.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	No	16	Article 137.5 of the Labor Code; Article 412 of the Child Code (27; 28)
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 (15; 28)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	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 (15; 27; 28; 29)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 194–195 and 323 of the Penal Code; Articles 4 and 137.6 of the Labor Code; Articles 356–360, 385, and 397–399 of the Child Code (27; 28; 30)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 195 and 323–324 of the Penal Code; Articles 356–360 and 385 of the Child Code (27; 30)

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor (cont)

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 346–348 and 355 of the Penal Code; Articles 356–360 of the Child Code (27; 30)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Article 383 of the Child Code, Article 344 of the Penal Code (27; 28; 30)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment			
State Compulsory	N/A*		
State Voluntary	Yes	18	Article 429 of the Child Code (27)
Non-state	Yes	18	Article 792.7 of the Penal Code; Article 429 of the Child Code (27; 30)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 6, Title 1 of Education Decree 97/196-/PRG/SGG (31)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 23 of the Constitution (32)

* No conscription (33)

Guinean law prohibits hazardous occupations and activities for children; however these prohibitions do not cover agriculture. Children working in this sector may be exposed to unhealthy environments, including hazardous substances and dangerous equipment. (25; 3; 4; 15; 28) A revised Child Code that contains a more specific list of hazardous child labor activities in all relevant sectors was developed, but it was not approved during the reporting period. (18; 14; 34) Article 2.6 of Order 2791 prohibits children under age 18 from working in the extraction of minerals and materials from mines and quarries, but Article 135 of the Mining Code permits children below the age of 16 to work in mines and quarries as assistants. This exemption allows an opportunity for children to perform hazardous activities legally. (15; 29)

Guinean law allows children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform light work in the domestic work and agriculture sectors. (15; 27) However, the law does not prescribe the number of hours per week permitted for light work, nor does it specify the conditions under which light work may be done as defined by international standards on child labor. (35) The Labor Code only imposes a minimum age for employment for children employed by employers but does not address situations in which children work on their own account, which does not conform to international standards that require all children to be protected under the law establishing a minimum age for work. (25; 28; 36; 37)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor (MOL)	Enforce all labor laws, including those related to child labor. (25; 38; 14) Chair the Child Labor Monitoring and Surveillance System, which aims to identify and remove children from exploitative labor conditions. (1; 18)
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. (19; 14; 5; 34)
Ministry for Social Action, Promotion of Women and Children (MASPFE)	Provide protection and social services for victims of child labor and human trafficking. (4; 14) In 2017, conducted a national media campaign to raise awareness of child trafficking. (24)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2017, labor law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor (MOL) that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including with financial and human resource allocation.

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Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspectors	53 (39)	Unknown (40)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (41)	Yes (14)
Training for Labor Inspectors		
Initial Training for New Employees	No (41)	No (40)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	No (41)	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	No (41)	Yes (37)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	678 (14)	250 (24)
Number Conducted at Worksites	678 (14)	250 (24)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	0 (41)	Unknown (14)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties were Imposed	0 (41)	Unknown (14)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that were Collected	No (41)	Unknown (14)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (41)	Yes (14)
Routine Inspections Targeted	No (39)	No (14)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (41)	Yes (14)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (41)	Yes (14)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (41)	Yes (14)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	No (41)	No (40)

In 2017, the MOL had 53 inspectors in Conakry, although the total number of labor inspectors employed nationwide is unknown. (39; 41; 40) The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Guinea's workforce, which includes approximately 5.5 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed economies, Guinea would employ about 139 inspectors. (39; 42; 43; 44) Reports indicate the MOL lacks the trained staff, equipment, transportation, and funding to conduct child labor inspections and hold legal proceedings. (25; 45; 14)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2017, criminal law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including with allocating financial and human resources.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Training for Investigators		
Initial Training for New Employees	Unknown	Yes (14)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown	Yes (14)
Number of Investigations	7 (46)	19 (24)
Number of Violations Found	7 (41)	Unknown (24)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	1 (41)	8 (24)
Number of Convictions	0 (41)	4 (24)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (41)	Yes (14)

During the reporting period, the Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals (OPROGEM) had 23 agents in Conakry and one in each of the country's 33 regional offices. (14) OPROGEM remained understaffed, underfunded, and without sufficient office supplies, transportation, or fuel to adequately enforce laws related to the worst forms of child labor. (14; 5; 34; 47) In addition, corruption in law enforcement agencies and the judiciary impeded efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor. (24; 5)

In 2017, the Ministry for Social Action, Promotion of Women and Children (MASPFE), provided reintegration services to 16 child victims of human trafficking. (24) Despite these efforts, reports indicate that social services available are not adequate to meet the needs of the victims. As a result, the government relied on NGOs to provide shelter and other basic services to victims. (14; 24; 5; 34; 47)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including with efforts to address all forms of child labor.

Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role and Description
National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices (CNLTPPA)	Coordinate anti-human trafficking efforts, including for children. Led by the Ministry for Social Action, Promotion of Women and Children (MASPFE), includes representatives from OPROGEM, MOL, and other ministries. (4; 19; 24; 5) In 2017, CNLTPPA organized a nationwide media campaign in observance of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, as well as events in the main border crossing with Sierra Leone. (24; 5)
Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child (CGSDE)	Implement, coordinate, and monitor government efforts on child protection. Led by MASPFE. (41; 19; 34) In August 2017, published a report that outlines the government's efforts and priorities on child protection. (48)

Limited budgets for these committees during the reporting period affected their ability to operate and coordinate efforts to address child labor, including all its worst forms. (14; 5; 34; 47) Although the government has established a coordination mechanism on human trafficking, research found no evidence of mechanisms to coordinate the government's efforts to address child labor.

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including covering all worst forms of child labor.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Plan of Action to Fight Against Trafficking in Persons	Aims to enhance the legal framework to raise awareness, provide protection and care for human trafficking victims, and prevent human trafficking. Led by the CNLTPPA. (18; 49; 5) In 2017, received \$5,600 for victim assistance services. (24)
Education Sector Program (2015–2017)	Aimed to increase access to primary, secondary, and technical and vocational education, particularly for vulnerable populations. Under the Ministry of Education, supported by international donors. (50; 51) In 2017, obtained \$12 million from the Government of Germany to support implementation of the program. (52)
National Development Plan (2016–2020) [†]	Seeks to promote sustainable development and social equality. Overseen by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and supported by the World Bank. (53; 54) Includes activities to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children, human trafficking, and child labor. (53)

[†] Policy was approved during the reporting period.

Although the Government of Guinea has adopted a policy on trafficking in persons, research found no evidence of a generalized child labor policy. (37)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2017, the government participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including with adequacy of efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Decent Work Country Program (2016–2019)	Seeks to develop a National Action Plan for the elimination of child labor, including all its worst forms. Overseen by the MOL and supported by the ILO. (55) In 2017, developed methodological guidelines to improve labor law enforcement, including child labor laws. (37)

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Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor (cont)

Program	Description
Plan Guinea-Conakry Program	Aims to strengthen the capacity of key actors to improve children's rights in the areas of education, survival, and protection. (16) In 2017, improved classroom facilities for 650 primary schools in Guinea. (56)
UNICEF Country Program (2013–2017)	UNICEF-funded program that supported the Government's efforts to enhance education, birth registration rates, and social inclusion, and to strengthen the child protection response to the Ebola virus disease outbreak. (57) In 2017, conducted awareness-raising campaigns on child labor and expanded child protection programs in the Faranah region. (58)
World Bank Country Program	World Bank projects in Guinea that aim to increase access to quality basic education and youth employment, improve school infrastructure, and strengthen safety nets for vulnerable populations, especially those affected by the Ebola virus disease outbreak. (59; 60; 61; 62) In 2017, provided cash transfers to an estimated 5,000 vulnerable households. (62)

Although the Government of Guinea has implemented programs on children's rights and education, research found no evidence that it has carried out programs specifically designed to assist children engaged in agriculture, domestic work, mining, or street work.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Guinea (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that children under age 18 are prohibited from performing hazardous work that fall into an R.190 category, such as agriculture.	2014 – 2017
	Ensure that all children are prohibited from participating in hazardous mining.	2010 – 2017
	Ensure that light work provisions of the law are specific enough to prevent children from involvement in child labor.	2015 – 2017
	Ensure that all children are protected by law, including children working outside of a formal employment relationship and children who are self-employed.	2009 – 2017
Enforcement	Increase the resources, training, and number of criminal law enforcement officials and labor inspectors to adequately enforce child labor laws.	2009 – 2017
	Publish complete information on Labor Inspectorate funding, number of labor inspectors employed nationwide, number of child labor and criminal law violations, as well as the number of penalties imposed and collected.	2011 – 2017
	Strengthen labor law enforcement by authorizing the Inspectorate to initiate targeted inspections based on analysis of data related to risk-prone sectors and patterns of serious incidents.	2015 – 2017
	Establish a referral mechanism between the MOL and the MASPFE to protect and rehabilitate children involved in child labor, including its worst forms.	2016 – 2017
	Address corruption in law enforcement agencies and the judiciary that impedes efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor.	2015 – 2017
Coordination	Establish coordinating mechanisms to combat child labor, including all its worst forms.	2010 – 2017
	Ensure that the CNLTPPA and the CGSDE receive adequate funding to fulfill their missions.	2010 – 2017
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor.	2014 – 2017
Social Programs	Enhance efforts to eliminate barriers and make education accessible for all children by assisting unregistered children to obtain birth and identity documentation that entitles them to access school; increase school infrastructure and teacher availability; remove school-related fees; and ensure the safety of children in schools.	2010 – 2017
	Conduct research to determine the activities carried out by children in manufacturing, to inform policies and programs.	2013 – 2017
	Ensure that social services are properly funded and adequate to meet the needs of victims of the worst forms of child labor.	2010 – 2017
	Institute programs to address the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture, domestic work, mining, and street work.	2010 – 2017

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