

In 2017, Senegal made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government drafted regulations for the Law for the Modernization of *Daaras*. However, children in Senegal engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also perform dangerous tasks in gold mining. Criminal and labor law enforcement agencies lack adequate resources to carry out their work, and redundancy among coordinating bodies to combat child labor hinders effective collaboration. Furthermore, the types of hazardous work prohibited for children do not include domestic work and street work, areas where there is evidence of child involvement.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Senegal engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also perform dangerous tasks in gold mining. (1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Senegal.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	22.3 (4,255,365)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	53.0
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	13.9
Primary Completion Rate (%)		58.9

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (11)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Demographic and Health Survey, 2015. (12)

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	Herding cattle (13; 14)
	Fishing, activities unknown (13; 14)
	Farming, including the production of cotton, rice, peanuts, and mangoes (2; 4; 14; 15)
Industry	Washing ore, crushing rocks, using mercury, and carrying heavy loads† while mining gold, iron, and salt, and quarrying rock (16; 14; 15; 17; 18; 19; 20; 8)
	Welding and auto repair (14; 15; 21)
Services	Domestic work (2; 16; 14; 15; 22; 21)
	Street work, including vending (2; 14; 23; 24)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced domestic work, gold mining, fishing, and farming, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (4; 7; 25; 26; 27)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2; 7; 20; 28; 29; 27)
	Forced begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1; 2; 16; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 9; 10; 14; 15; 25; 26; 30; 31; 32; 33)
	Forced labor in garbage collection (34)

† 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.

Children in Senegal are exploited in domestic servitude, forced labor in gold mines, and trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation, particularly internal trafficking. (25; 26; 27) In Senegal, it is a traditional practice to send boys to Koranic schools, called *daaras*. However, instead of receiving an education, many students, known as *talibés*, are forced to beg by their teachers, known as *marabouts*. (5; 9; 26; 35; 36; 37) The *marabouts* take the *talibés'* earnings and often beat those who fail to meet the

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daily quota. (5; 6; 10; 36; 37) This system enriches *marabouts*, bringing in over \$10 million annually in Dakar alone, according to a recent study by UNODC. (38; 39) The *talibés* often live in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions, receive inadequate food and medical care, and are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse. (5; 6; 9; 34; 37; 40) They typically come from rural areas in Senegal and from neighboring countries, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. (5; 6; 35; 37; 41) A 2014 *daara*-mapping study estimated that 30,000 of the estimated 54,800 *talibés* in Dakar are forced to beg, and a 2016 study found that 9,000 of the estimated 14,000 *talibés* in the St. Louis department are also forced to beg. (14; 42; 43; 44; 45; 46; 47; 48; 49; 50)

A variety of factors remain as barriers to education, forcing some students to quit school. These barriers include school-related fees, a lack of birth registration documents, and a lack of both teachers and rural schools. Some girls reportedly quit school due to sexual harassment, including by teachers, and because of early pregnancy. (2; 7; 51; 52; 53; 21)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Senegal 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	✓

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Senegal's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the prohibition of military recruitment by non-state armed groups.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article L. 145 of the Labor Code; Article 6 of the Decree Establishing the Scale of Penalties for Violations of the Labor Code and Associated Rules for Application (54; 55)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 1 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor; Article 1 of the Ministerial Order No. 3750 Determining the Types of Hazardous Work Prohibited for Children and Youth; Article 1 of the Ministerial Order No. 3751 Determining the Categories of Business and Work Prohibited to Children and Youth (56; 57; 58)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor; Ministerial Order No. 3750 Determining the Types of Hazardous Work Prohibited to Children and Youth; Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3751 Determining the Categories of Business and Work Prohibited to Children and Youth (56; 57; 58)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article L. 4 of the Labor Code; Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor; Article 1 of the Law Concerning the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices and the Protection of Victims (54; 58; 59)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 1 of the Law Concerning the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices and the Protection of Victims (59)

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		Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor; Articles 323 and 324 of the Penal Code (60; 58)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor (58)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment			
State Compulsory	N/A*		
State Voluntary	Yes	18	Article 19 of Law No. 2008-28 (61)
Non-state	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 3 of Law No. 2004-37 (62)
Free Public Education	Yes	18	Article 3 of Law No. 2004-37; Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution (62; 63)

* No conscription (14)

In 2017, application decrees were drafted as part of the voluntary *Daara* Modernization Program to improve regulation of *daaras* through the Law on the Modernization of *Daaras* drafted in 2013. (6; 66; 34; 37; 44; 45; 67; 68; 21) Legislation is also pending to establish a Children's Ombudsman and a Children's Code; the law has been drafted and presented to the Ministry of Good Governance and Child Protection for revision. (50; 21)

Furthermore, two distinct laws treat issues related to forced begging in a way that may create ambiguity. Although the Law Concerning the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons broadly prohibits forced begging, a provision of the Penal Code permits the seeking of alms for religious purposes on specific days. (8; 58; 69; 65) Government officials, the UNODC, UNICEF, and local NGOs have stated that penalties for child labor violations may not be severe enough to deter employers from exploiting children, particularly because the penalties are rarely enforced. (70) Further, the types of hazardous work prohibited for children do not include domestic work or street work, areas where there is evidence of potential harm to child workers. (14; 56; 57; 58) The light work provisions are also not specific enough to prevent children from involvement in child labor because they do not limit the number of hours per week for light work, determine the activities in which light work may be permitted, or specify the conditions in which light work may be undertaken. (57; 54)

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, Social Dialogue, Professional Organizations, and Institutional Relations 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, Social Dialogue, Professional Organizations, and Institutional Relations (MOL)	Enforce child labor laws through the Directorate General of Labor and Social Security and by using social security inspectors. (70; 71)
Ministry of Justice (MOJ)	Enforce all laws through judicial role, including those on child trafficking, forced child begging, and forced labor, and prosecute violations. (15) Train police and judiciary on laws related to human trafficking and forced begging. (6) Through its Department of Correctional Education and Social Protection, help develop draft texts in the field of social protection and juvenile delinquency; strengthen the capacity of stakeholders to care for children; and share responsibility with the Ministry of Women, Family, and Children (MWFC) to provide services to vulnerable children. (30; 68; 72; 73)
Ministry of the Interior and Public Security	Oversee all law enforcement agencies, including the local and national police officials who investigate cases of human trafficking and forced child begging, and arrest perpetrators of the worst forms of child labor. (15; 25; 64; 74) House the Children's Unit, located in Dakar, which employs three officers who specialize in child protection, victim identification, and reinsertion. (25; 30; 64) Through its Children's Unit, receive assistance from the Vice Squad in child protection cases. (75)

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Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement (cont)

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Women, Family, and Children (MWFC)	Contribute to the creation and implementation of child protection policies, and provide services to victims of exploitative child labor. (76) Operate the Ginddi Center for vulnerable children and a toll-free child protection hotline through which the public can report child labor abuses. (30; 34)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2017, labor law enforcement agencies in Senegal took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor, Social Dialogue, Professional Organizations, and Institutional Relations that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the lack of a formal and reciprocal referral mechanism between labor law enforcement and criminal law enforcement agencies and social services.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$143,000 (14)	\$143,020 (21)
Number of Labor Inspectors	99 (14)	99 (21)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (14)	Yes (21)
Training for Labor Inspectors		
Initial Training for New Employees	Yes (14)	Yes (21)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A (14)	N/A (21)
Refresher Courses Provided	No (45)	No (21)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	1,931 (45)	Unknown (21)
Number Conducted at Worksite	1,931 (14)	Unknown (21)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown (14)	Unknown (21)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties were Imposed	Unknown (14)	Unknown (21)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that were Collected	0 (14)	Unknown (21)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (14)	Unknown (21)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (14)	Unknown (21)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (14)	Yes (21)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (14)	Yes (21)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	No (45)	No (21)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	No (14)	No (21)

All new labor inspectors are trained at the National Administration School, which provides a module on the worst forms of child labor and a consultation with members of the National Committee Against Child Labor. (15; 25) The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Senegal's workforce, which includes over 6 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed economies, Senegal should employ roughly 174 inspectors. (77; 78) The MOL acknowledged that the current number of labor inspectors is insufficient; it also noted that a high turnover rate and significant reduction in its funding level had further hindered the labor inspectorate's capacity to enforce child labor laws. (14; 15)

Research indicates that there is a lack of child labor law enforcement in the informal sector, where most children are employed. This is especially true in the artisanal gold mining sector as most activities take place in the far southeast of the country in the Kédougou region, far from the capital. (66; 15; 51; 71) The entities responsible for enforcing laws against child labor are primarily concentrated in Dakar and Thiès, so enforcement is limited outside of the capital. (6; 79) Article L. 241 of the Labor Code grants inspectors the authority to assess penalties for all offenses; however, they typically do so only for minor offenses and refer the more serious infractions to the courts for determination of penalties. (15; 54; 65) Courts may require violations to be resolved through conciliation at the labor inspectorate or refer cases to a tribunal for judgment. (15) Although the Ginddi Center's child protection hotline was operational during the reporting period, the total number of calls was unknown. Furthermore, it is not clear how many cases of child labor were identified as a result of these calls. (27)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2017, criminal law enforcement agencies in Senegal took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the authority and operations of the criminal law enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including the lack of knowledge by law enforcement officials and judges on the application of the Law Concerning the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons, and associated penalties including those against forced begging.

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	Yes (14)	Yes (21)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A (14)	N/A (21)
Refresher Courses Provided	No (14)	No (21)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (14)	Unknown (21)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (14)	Unknown (21)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (14)	Unknown (21)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (14)	Unknown (21)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	No (14)	No (21)

UNODC delivered a training workshop on techniques to investigate human trafficking in March that was attended by 30 judiciary police officers of the criminal investigations division. (29)

The government reported that existing laws are sufficient to prosecute and punish individuals who use *talibés* for personal profit. (1; 6; 25; 34) However, the courts have had limited success in prosecuting cases related to forced begging, partly due to a perceived lack of political support, cultural norms, and pressure from influential Koranic teachers who support this practice, particularly in rural areas, along with a lack of coordination and resource constraints. (25; 65; 69; 80; 81; 82) In addition, police rarely investigated cases of forced begging or brought them to the courts for prosecution. (45) Finally, although police stations in Senegal are expected to report cases involving children to the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security's Children's Unit, research found no evidence that this occurs regularly. (75; 79)

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 regard to clarity of institutional mandates.

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

Coordinating Body	Role and Description
National Committee Against Child Labor	Coordinate initiatives, policies, and partnerships with civil society organizations to address child labor. Chaired by the MOL and includes representatives from three ministries, the police, and elected officials. (25; 83; 84)
National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP)	Report on human trafficking in Senegal, with a focus on women and children; coordinate the implementation of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and other efforts to prevent human trafficking; prosecute perpetrators; and protect victims. (64; 68; 85; 86; 87) Chaired by the MOJ and employs five staff members. (6; 25; 68)
Inter-Ministerial Commission	Coordinate implementation of the National Strategy on Child Protection and its related action plan. (70)
Office of the President's Childhood Protection Unit	Coordinate government efforts related to child protection, including through the implementation of the National Strategy on Child Protection. (68; 88) Reports directly to the President of Senegal. (75; 88) Contribute to the creation and implementation of child protection policies, and develop a national system for collecting and disseminating data about vulnerable children. Advocate on behalf of all entities working on issues related to child begging, violence against children, and child labor. (88)

The National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons remains underfunded and research was unable to determine whether any coordinating bodies were active during the reporting period. Redundancy among the activities of the coordinating bodies also creates confusion and obstructs effective collaboration and implementation of efforts. (25; 26; 45; 64; 74; 84)

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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 lack of policy implementation.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor[‡]

Policy	Description
National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings (2018–2020)	Aimed to strengthen the legal framework to prevent human trafficking, build capacity by training enforcement officials and working with religious leaders, provide protection and judicial remediation for victims. (25; 89) Implemented by the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP) and merged with the Partnership for the Rescue and Rehabilitation of Street Children and the National Framework Plan for the Eradication of Child Begging. (1; 13; 30; 34; 45; 87; 28) In 2017, the government provided \$142,265 in funding to CNLTP, an increase from last year's budget of \$88,915, and adopted a new action plan extending until 2020 with wide input from civil society and religious leaders. As part of the policy, trainings of magistrates and police on trafficking issues were also conducted.
National Strategy on Child Protection	Aims to establish an integrated national social protection system and specifically identifies the issue of child begging through an action plan with a recommended budget of \$18 million. (13; 34) Implemented through Child Protection Committees (CDPEs), currently established in 24 prefectures, which refer victims to social services and assist law enforcement with reintegrating child trafficking victims. (13; 25; 30) In 2017, as part of the policy, trainings of magistrates and police on trafficking issues were conducted.

[‡] The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (25)

In 2017, the First Lady of Senegal, along with other leading figures, made a declaration in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on child protection, including child trafficking, exploitation, child labor, and all other forms of violence against children. (90; 91)

In 2017, research was unable to determine whether any actions were undertaken to renew the National Action Plan on the Prevention and Abolition of Child Labor in Senegal, which expired in 2016. (1; 13; 23; 92; 93; 94; 45)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

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

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor[‡]

Program	Description
Project to Fight Against Trafficking and the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2013–2019) [†]	MWFC program that aims to raise awareness about forced begging and assist victims of child labor. (30) In 2017, research was unable to determine whether any actions were undertaken.
National Program of Family Assistance Bursaries (2013–2017) [†]	Social safety net program that provides conditional cash transfers to vulnerable families who keep their children in school. (15; 23; 87; 95; 96; 97; 98) In 2017, program activities continued.
<i>Daara</i> Modernization Program [†]	\$18.5 million government-funded voluntary program implemented by Tostan and <i>La Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits d'Homme</i> (RADDHO) that aims to regulate, inspect, and fund <i>daaras</i> and eliminate forced begging. (45; 99; 100; 8) The Ministry of Education signed an accord with the Senegalese Association of Koranic Schools to rehabilitate and equip 90 <i>daaras</i> ; its Funds for Koranic Schools program also developed a secular curriculum and works with religious institutions to remove children from street begging and exploitative situations. (30; 71) In 2017, research was unable to determine whether any actions were undertaken.
Ginddi Center [†]	The MWFC-run shelter serves abused and vulnerable children, including runaway <i>talibés</i> , street children, and child trafficking victims. (3; 30; 34; 71; 72; 74) Provides food, education, vocational training, family mediation, and medical and psychological care. (3; 25; 72; 74) (101) In 2017, research was unable to determine whether any actions were undertaken.
Centers to address child trafficking [†]	The MOJ runs transit houses in Dakar, Pikine, and Saint-Louis that provide monitoring, education, and rehabilitation and reintegration services for victims of child trafficking. (25) In 2017, research was unable to determine whether any actions were undertaken.

[†] Program is funded by the Government of Senegal.

[‡] The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (14; 102; 103)

Although the Government of Senegal has implemented programs to address child trafficking and forced begging, research found no evidence that the government has carried out programs to assist children in domestic work, agriculture, or mining. (7; 15; 34; 74; 93)

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 Senegal (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that penalties for child labor violations, including the worst forms, are stringent enough to serve as a deterrent.	2014 – 2017
	Ensure that the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are comprehensive.	2016 – 2017
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2017
	Clarify ambiguity in forced begging provisions in the Penal Code and the Law Concerning the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons to explicitly guarantee that no exceptions can enable a child to be forced to beg.	2017
	Ensure that the law's light work provisions are specific enough to prevent children from involvement in child labor.	2017
Enforcement	Publish information on labor law enforcement efforts related to child labor, including the number of labor inspections conducted, including those at worksites, the number of violations found, penalties imposed and collected, and whether routine inspections are conducted and targeted.	2013 – 2017
	Increase the number of labor inspectors responsible for enforcing labor laws, including laws related to child labor to meet the ILO's technical advice, and ensure adequate labor inspectorate funding.	2010 – 2017
	Ensure that labor law enforcement and inspections are carried out in the informal sector and areas outside of the capital region.	2014 – 2017
	Establish a mechanism to receive child labor complaints, log all calls to the MWFC child protection hotline, and track cases of child labor for referral to law enforcement or social services providers.	2014 – 2017
	Ensure that criminal law investigators and labor inspectors receive refresher training on laws related to the worst forms of child labor.	2016 – 2017
	Establish a formal and reciprocal referral mechanism between labor law enforcement and criminal law enforcement agencies and social services.	2016 – 2017
	Publish information on the criminal enforcement of child labor laws, including the number of investigations, violations found, prosecutions initiated, and convictions.	2016 – 2017
Coordination	Ensure the effectiveness of coordinating mechanisms on child labor by providing adequate resources, support, and distinct scopes of responsibility so that all coordinating bodies are able to carry out their intended mandates.	2010 – 2017
Government Policies	Adopt a national policy to address child labor.	2016 – 2017
Social Programs	Ensure that all children have access to education by eliminating school-related fees, building schools in rural areas, training additional teachers, ensuring that all children have access to birth registration, and ensuring that schools are free from sexual abuse.	2011 – 2017
	Institute programs to address child labor in domestic work, agriculture, and mining, and ensure that adequate funding is available to support existing programs targeting the worst forms of child labor, including forced begging.	2010 – 2017
	Undertake activities to support the Project to Fight Against Trafficking and the Worst Forms of Child Labor, Daara Modernization Program, the Ginddi Center, and Centers to address child trafficking.	2017

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