

In 2019, Cabo Verde made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government increased the number of labor inspectors by 50 percent, and implemented a Child Protection Information and Case Management System, which aims to identify and track victims of the worst forms of child labor, including child victims of commercial sexual exploitation. In addition, the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents, in collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund, drafted a Child Protection Policy. However, children in Cabo Verde engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also perform dangerous tasks in construction. Law enforcement officials lack the necessary resources to follow up on investigations, and communication among enforcement agencies is still limited. In addition, social programs to assist children involved in agriculture and domestic work are not sufficient to address the scope of the problem.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Cabo Verde engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. (1-7) Children also perform dangerous tasks in construction. (4,8) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Cabo Verde.

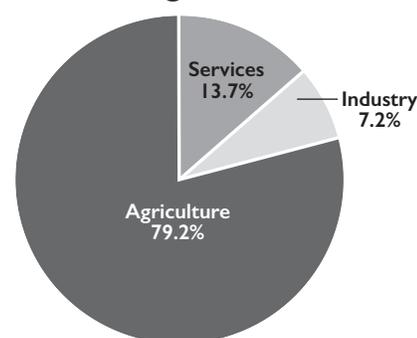
Table 1. Statistics on Children’s Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	10 to 14	3.2 (2,392)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	90.1
Combining Work and School (%)	10 to 14	1.7
Primary Completion Rate (%)		87.3

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2018, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020. (9)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization’s analysis of statistics from *Inquérito as Despesas e Receitas Familiares, 2001–2002*. (10)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 10-14



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, including carrying heavy loads† (1,8,11)
	Raising livestock (11)
	Artisanal fishing in small boats† (11)
Industry	Construction, including extracting sand (12,13)
Services	Domestic work (1,3,4,8)
	Street work, including vending, garbage scavenging,† car washing, and begging (3,4,8,14,15)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1-6)
	Use in illicit activities, including drug trafficking (11,15)

† 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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The commercial sexual exploitation of both boys and girls, including in the tourism industry, occurs in Cabo Verde. (1-3,5) Research indicates that the islands of Sal and Boa Vista register the highest incidences of commercial sexual exploitation of children. (2) Evidence also indicates that children are victims of commercial sexual exploitation on the islands of São Vicente, Fogo, and Maio. (4)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Cabo Verde 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's laws and regulations are in line with relevant international standards (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 261 of the Labor Code (16)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 264 of the Labor Code; Article 133 of the Civil Code (16,18)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		National List of Dangerous Work for Children (19)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 14 of Chapter 3 of the Labor Code; Articles 149, 271, and 271-A of the Penal Code (16,20)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 149 and 271-A of the Penal Code (20)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 144–145, 148–150, and 271-A of the Penal Code (20)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 8 of the Drug Trafficking Law (21)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	17	Article 31 of the Military Service Law (22)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 2 of the Military Service Law (22)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Article 268-C of the Penal Code (20)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15‡	Articles 13 and 20 of the Education Law (23)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 14 of the Education Law (23)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (24)

During the reporting period, the government began drafting a law aimed at addressing the increase in violations of commercial sexual exploitation of children in the country, including increasing the age of consent and ensuring that these violations are given priority within the legal justice system. (2)

The Civil Code includes a list of light work activities that children age 14 are allowed to perform; however, the law does not prescribe the number of hours per week permissible for light work, nor does it specify the conditions under which light work may be performed. (17,18,25)

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 Inspector General for Labor (IGT) that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Inspector General for Labor (IGT)	Monitors and enforces child labor laws, working closely with the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents (ICCA). (26)
Judicial Police and National Police	Judicial Police conduct criminal investigations; National Police make arrests related to the worst forms of child labor, including human trafficking. (3)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2019, labor law enforcement agencies in Cabo Verde took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the IGT that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including financial resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$26,000 (27)	\$26,000 (28)
Number of Labor Inspectors	14 (11)	21 (3)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (11)	Yes (3)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	N/A	Yes (3)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (11)	Yes (3)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	1,131 (11)	1,300 (3)
Number Conducted at Worksite	1,131 (11)	1,300 (3)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown	0 (3)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown	0 (3)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (11)	Yes (3)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (11)	Yes (3)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (11)	Yes (3)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (11)	Yes (3)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (11)	Yes (3)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (11)	Yes (3)

In 2019, the government increased the number of labor inspectors by 50 percent. (3) Reports indicate that inspectors lack necessary resources to perform inspections in sectors in which child labor is known to occur, including the informal sector. In addition, the IGT's presence is limited to only three of the nine inhabited islands, which hinders inspectors' abilities to enforce child labor laws. (3)

Although the government did not report any child labor violations, the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents (ICCA) recorded 33 cases of child labor violations during the reporting period. When IGT inspectors find a case of child labor, they inform ICCA for referral to social services providers. (3)

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Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2019, criminal law enforcement agencies in Cabo Verde 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 allocating human resources.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (11)	Yes (29)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (11)	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (11)	Yes (29)
Number of Investigations	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Convictions	Unknown	Unknown
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (11)	Yes (3)

In 2018, Judicial Police investigated a labor trafficking case involving two Chinese minors, ages 16 and 17, on the island of Sal. (11,30) During the reporting period, three suspects were officially charged with several counts of human trafficking crimes during the reporting period, and the case is scheduled for trial in 2020. (29) In addition, in November 2019, a suspect was detained in connection to a case of commercial sexual exploitation involving a 14 year old girl. The victim was prevented from attending school, and forced to travel between islands to be exploited in commercial sex. (3) The case is still pending. (3)

Reports also indicate that the Judicial Police and the National Police lack the necessary financial and human resources to follow up on investigations, including cases of child labor. The Judicial Police are present on only three of the islands, hindering their ability to address all child labor investigations. (3,11) Furthermore, the government did not maintain comprehensive anti-trafficking law enforcement and victim protection data among its criminal enforcement agencies. (4) Although law enforcement agencies work well together, limited coordination between agencies, who sometimes struggle to share case information and updates, may hinder enforcement efforts. (11) In addition, reports indicate that the judicial system takes inordinately long to process cases, which can contribute to a lack of protection for child victims of the worst forms of child labor. (2,3)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8).

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Committee for Child Labor Prevention and Eradication in Cabo Verde	Coordinates the execution of the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and provides a functional mechanism for reciprocal referrals between law enforcement and social services. Led by ICCA, with the support of the Ministry of Youth, Labor and Development of Human Resources. (31) In 2019, the Committee led a significant national media campaign aimed at addressing the sexual exploitation of children. (28)
Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents (ICCA)	Coordinates and monitors the implementation of all national programs and activities to prevent and combat child labor. (32) In 2019, drafted a Child Protection Policy in cooperation with UNICEF. (3) As of January 2020, the Policy is under review with the Ministry of Education, Family and Social Inclusion, after which it will be presented to the Council of Ministers for approval. ICCA also trained 30 journalists on how to cover children's rights issues in the media, and trained 40 social workers and psychologists on how to prevent and respond to cases of violence against children, including cases of commercial sexual exploitation. (3)

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Children and Adolescent Committee to Prevent and Combat Sexual Abuse and Exploitation	Contributes to the prevention and elimination of child sexual exploitation by coordinating the activities of member organizations and public and private services. (33) Supervises, monitors, and evaluates the National Plan to Combat Sexual Violence Against Children and Adolescents. (11) Led by ICCA. (34) In 2019, presented the final evaluation of the project, "Strengthening capacities to better prevent and combat the exploitation and sexual abuse of children in Cabo Verde." A Plan of Action for the Coordination of National Networks was also created to address the project's results and the child sexual exploitation problem in the country. (5)
Observatory for Monitoring and Rapid Identification of Situations of Trafficking in Persons	Coordinates and monitors all efforts to combat human trafficking. Comprises law enforcement, NGOs, civil society, and various government agencies. (11,35) Led by the Ministry of Justice and Labor. (11) Active in 2019. (29)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies that are consistent with relevant international standards on child labor (Table 9).

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor	Prioritizes the eradication of child labor. Outlines specific objectives, including data collection, institutional capacity building, and enhancement of measures to prevent, protect, and remove children from involvement in child labor. (31) Implemented in 2019. (3)
National Plan to Combat Sexual Violence Against Children and Adolescents (2017–2019)	Aimed to prevent and combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The plan incorporated five principal themes: participation of children and adolescents; prevention of situations of vulnerability; mobilizing material and social resources; treatment for both victims and perpetrators; and accountability. (11,36) In 2019, ICCA and the Ministry of Education, Family and Social Inclusion implemented the Child Protection Information and Case Management System aimed at identifying and tracking victims of the worst forms of child labor, including victims of commercial sexual exploitation. (3)
Code of Ethics Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children	Guides and governs agencies involved in the tourism sector to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. (37) Active in 2019. (3)
National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2018–2021)	Prioritizes five strategic areas: prevention, awareness, protection, investigation, and coordination. (38) Establishes the Observatory for Monitoring and Rapid Identification of Situations of Trafficking in Persons. (11,35) In 2019, the government ran an anti-trafficking campaign, including billboards, radio and television announcements. (3)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2019, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating and preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the adequacy of efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Child Labor Awareness Campaigns†	Government program implemented by ICCA and the National Committee for Child Labor Prevention and Eradication that conducts national awareness-raising campaigns on the worst forms of child labor. (39) In October 2019, conducted an event to raise awareness of child sexual abuse, including child victims of commercial sexual exploitation, in coordination with the City of Praia. (3)
Help for At-Risk Children†	ICCA-implemented program that provides education, health services, and professional training to vulnerable children and their families. Operates eight day centers on Boa Vista, Fogo, Sal, Santiago, Santo Antão, and São Vicente islands for street children vulnerable to sexual and labor exploitation. (39) Active in 2019. (3)
Child Emergency Centers and Social Protection and Reintegration Centers†	ICCA-implemented program that operates emergency centers for child victims of abuse and sexual exploitation on Santiago, Santo Antão, and São Vicente islands. (31,39) The government also operates five social protection and reintegration centers that provide support and educational integration services to children who have experienced long-term trauma. (4,40) Active in 2019. (3)
Government Efforts to Increase Access to Education	Donor-funded programs implemented by the government that ensure access to education for disadvantaged children by paying for school fees, materials, and meals. (41) Active in 2019. (3)

† Program is funded by the Government of Cabo Verde.

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In 2019, the government continued working on the development of a social registry to identify families most in need of targeted social programs, and used the data acquired from the registry to provide aid to 40,000 families. The government also allocated funds in its 2020 budget to provide free tuition through the 12th grade for poor children. (3)

Although some awareness-raising activities were conducted during the reporting period, research indicates that awareness-raising efforts on human trafficking, including child sex tourism, remained insufficient on some islands. (4) Research also found that programs to assist children involved in agriculture and domestic work are not sufficient to address the scope of the problem.

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 Cabo Verde (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Prescribe by law the number of hours per week and conditions under which light work may be undertaken.	2015 – 2019
Enforcement	Ensure that labor inspectors and criminal investigators receive sufficient financial and human resources to enforce child labor laws on all islands, including in the informal sector, and that all inhabited islands benefit from the presence of the Inspector General for Labor and the Judicial Police.	2014 – 2019
	Make labor and criminal enforcement data publicly available, including information on the number of violations, investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and imposed penalties related to the worst forms of child labor.	2011 – 2019
	Develop a system to compile and share comprehensive anti-trafficking law enforcement and victim identification data among agencies.	2018 – 2019
	Ensure that the judiciary has sufficient resources and personnel to allow cases to be prosecuted in a timely manner.	2019
Government Policies	Conduct awareness-raising activities on human trafficking, including child sex tourism, on all nine inhabited islands.	2018 – 2019
Social Programs	Institute programs to address child labor in agriculture and domestic work.	2010 – 2019

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