

In 2018, Nepal made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government launched the Nepal Labor Force Survey, which will be able to provide valuable information on child labor, including the number of children engaged in hazardous work. It also drafted revisions to the Child Labor Act of 2002, with the aim of raising the minimum age to 18 for entry into hazardous work and ensuring that the list of hazardous work for children is comprehensive. In addition, the government created a new National Child Labor

Elimination Committee to coordinate efforts to address child labor and passed the new National Master Plan to End Child Labor, which prioritizes ending the worst forms of child labor by 2022, and all forms of child labor by 2025. Moreover, the government launched a Decent Work Country Program and the Social Security Fund Program to support workers and their families and combat child labor. However, children in Nepal 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 the production of bricks. The Department of Labor's budget, the number of labor inspectors, and available resources and training are all insufficient for enforcing labor laws, including those related to child labor. Furthermore, children age 17 are excluded from the protections of the country's hazardous work list, leaving them vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Nepal 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 the production of bricks. (1-3) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Nepal.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	37.2 (6,755,852)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	91.7
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	39.1
Primary Completion Rate (%)		112.8

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2017, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019. (4)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 5, 2014. (5)

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 harvesting caterpillar fungus (<i>yarsagumba</i>) (6-8)
	Herding and feeding livestock (6,9,10)
Industry	Producing bricks (1,6,10-18)
	Quarrying, collecting, and breaking stones, and quarrying and collecting sand (6-8,18)
	Construction,† activities unknown (8,10,19,20)
	Weaving carpet† (6,10,18,21-23)
	Producing embellished textiles (<i>zari</i>)† and embroidery (6,7,10,18,20)
	Producing metal crafts (3,7,8,10,18)
Services	Domestic work (6,10,18,24-27)
	Mechanical workshops for cars and motorbikes (18)
	Working in transportation,† portering, and collecting recyclable waste (6,8,10,18,19)
	Working in hotels,† restaurants,† tea shops, and in entertainment,† including as dancers† (6,8,18,19,28)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor†	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2,6,18,28)
	Forced labor in embellishing textiles (<i>zari</i>), weaving carpets, and domestic work (2,3,18,20,22,26,28)
	Forced labor in agriculture, producing bricks, quarrying, and breaking stones (2,3,7,14,18,28,29)
	Use in illicit activities, including the cultivation and trafficking of drugs (3,8)
	Forced begging (28)

† 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 are trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation both within and outside Nepal, including to India, the Middle East, Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. (2,6,20,28,30-32) Many children in Nepal are engaged in the production of bricks, which exposes them to hazardous working conditions, including carrying heaving loads, using dangerous machinery, and working in extreme heat. (1,33) During the reporting period, news outlets announced that an agreement had been met between the government and the Federation of Nepal Brick Industries to end the use of child labor in the brick industry, creating a committee to oversee this process and inspect brick factories to ensure that no children are employed. (34,35)

In addition, traffickers promise families work and education opportunities for the children, but instead bring them to often under-resourced and unregistered orphanages in urban centers, where they exploit them commercially to attract charitable donations from foreigners. There are reports that some orphanages keep children in destitute and unsanitary conditions and force them to beg on the streets. (28)

Due to a lack of reliable data and information at the national level, it is difficult to accurately report on the status of children engaged in hazardous work. During the reporting period, NGOs continued to report that children were working in brick kilns carrying loads, preparing bricks, and performing other tasks for extended periods of time; however, the number of children working in this sector continues to gradually decrease. (18) Carpet factories are considered to be in the formal sector, but many of the subcontractors working in the informal sector use child labor further down the supply chain. (18)

As the government has increased the number of raids in the entertainment sector, the number of children working in this sector is decreasing; and with an increased awareness regarding child labor, NGOs are seeing a decrease in child labor across all sectors. During the reporting period, the ILO, in coordination with the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), launched the Nepal Labor Force Survey, which will be able to provide valuable information on child labor, including data on the number of children engaged in hazardous work. (18) In addition, the CBS included a forced labor module that, for the first time, surveyed adults and children age 5 and older. Funded by the Bridge Project and implemented by the ILO and CBS, this module will provide a clearer picture of the forced labor situation within Nepal. (18)

Some children, particularly girls, face barriers to accessing education due to lack of sanitation facilities, geographic distance, costs associated with schooling, household chores, and lack of parental support. (3,36) In Nepal, 32.4 percent of schools lack separate toilet facilities for girls, which can deter them from attending school, especially when they are menstruating. (18) Barriers for attending school for school-age boys include pressure to find employment, migration to work outside of Nepal, and issues with drugs and alcohol. Children with disabilities face additional barriers to accessing education, including denial of school admission. (3,18,37)

The government allows Bhutanese refugee students in grades 9–12 to attend local public schools at no cost, but enrollment remains restricted for younger children. UNHCR provides parallel free education at lower grades to refugees in the two remaining refugee camps in the country. (18) During the reporting period, the government allowed NGOs to provide primary- and secondary-level schooling to Tibetans living in the country. Tibetan refugees had no entitlement to higher education in public or private institutions. (18) More than 700 refugees and asylum seekers from Pakistan, Burma, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Somalia, Iran, Iraq, and







the Democratic Republic of the Congo are not recognized as having the status of refugees, but the government allows UNHCR to provide some education, health, and livelihood services to these refugees. These refugees lack legal access to public education and the right to work. (18)

From July 2017 to July 2018, more than 40 school blocks were retrofitted, and the Central Level Project Implementation Unit is currently committed to reconstructing 6,456 of the 7,509 schools that were affected by the 2015 earthquakes. Of these 6,456 schools, 4,089 have been fully reconstructed, 1,990 are under construction, and 377 have been selected for reconstruction. (22)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Nepal 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	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Nepal's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the lack of a minimum age for hazardous work that is consistent with international standards.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Section 3 of the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (1,38)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	No	17	Section 3 of the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (2,38)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Schedule 1 of the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (38)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Section 4 of the Bonded Labor (Prohibition) Act; Section 4 of the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act; Sections 2–4 and 15 of the Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act; Section 4 of the Labor Act (1,2,38–41)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	No		Sections 3–4 and 15 of the Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act (1,2,41)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 66(3)(d) of the amended Children's Act (2018); Sections 3–4 and 15 of the Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act; Sections 16(2) and 16(3) of the Children's Act (1–3,41–43)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		Sections 13 and 16 of the Children's Act (4,42)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Section 7 of the Military Service Regulation 2069(44)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*		

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

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		Article 39 of the Constitution (6,45)
Compulsory Education Age	No	13‡	Article 31 of the Constitution (2,45)
Free Public Education	Yes		Section 16D of the Education Act (45,46)

* No conscription (45,47)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (48)

The government is amending the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 2056 (2000) to better accord with the 2015 constitution, as provincial governments have been given more authority over issues such as child labor. During the reporting period, the Parliament passed the Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2018, which aims to ensure compulsory and free education. (18,43,49) In addition, the Ethnic Discrimination and Untouchability (Crime and Punishment) Act (amendment) 2018 was passed during the reporting period, which will help create a conducive atmosphere for the children of marginalized communities to attend school, thereby reducing forced child labor. (18,50)

The new Labor Act enacted in 2017 covers workers in both the formal and informal sectors, and explicitly prohibits forced and child labor. (18,40) In September 2018, the Children's Act 1990 was amended, changing the definition of a child as below age 18. (18,51)

The minimum age for hazardous work is not consistent with international standards because it does not prohibit children age 17 from engaging in hazardous work. (38,52) The types of hazardous work prohibited for children also do not include brickmaking, a sector in which there is evidence that work involves carrying heavy loads and being exposed to hazardous substances. (11,38) The government is still reviewing and revising the current Child Labor Act of 2002, with the aim of raising the minimum age for entry into hazardous work to age 18, while also ensuring that the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are comprehensive. (18)

Laws related to child trafficking are insufficient because they do not clearly criminalize recruitment, harboring, receipt, or transportation in the absence of force, fraud, or coercion. (41) However, the amended Children's Act prohibits the use of children in pornography. (43) The legal framework also does not explicitly prohibit the use of a child in the production of pornography. (42) In addition, the legal framework prohibiting the use of children in illicit activities is insufficient, because it does not prohibit the use of children in the production of drugs or extend to children who are age 17. (42)

Although the Constitution prohibits the recruitment of children by non-state armed groups, there is no specific legislation penalizing this practice. (45,47,53) In addition, children in Nepal are required to attend school only up to age 13. This standard makes children age 13 vulnerable to child labor because they are not required to attend school but are not legally permitted to work. (45,48,54)

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, the exceptionally low number of worksite inspections conducted at the national level in Nepal may have impeded the enforcement of child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Department of Labor; Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security (MoLESS)	Enforces labor laws, including those involving child labor. Investigates and holds hearings in 10 District Labor Offices. (55) In March 2018, the Ministry of Labor and Employment was renamed the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security. (28,56)

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

Organization/Agency	Role
Nepal Police, Women and Children Service Directorate	Investigates crimes involving women and children, including human trafficking. Conducts work through the Nepal Police Women and Children Service Centers in all 77 districts. (57,58) The Nepal Police handles complaints received about child labor in districts without a District Labor Office. (55)
Ministry of Land Reform and Management	Enforces laws that prohibit bonded labor in agriculture. (3)
Monitoring Action Committees, Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens (MWCSC)	Investigate reports of commercial sexual exploitation at the district level, including the exploitation of children in the adult entertainment sector. (28,61)

The new Labor Act authorizes the creation of labor offices to carry out regular inspections to find out whether children are employed, rescue children who are illegally employed, and take action against employers responsible for illegally employing children. When requested by the labor offices, the local administration, police, or any other concerned body must provide assistance to carry out these duties. (18)

Despite these new efforts to combat child labor, NGOs have noted that during the reporting period, the government often failed to adequately implement legal provisions against child labor, which led to the failure of the government to take meaningful action against perpetrators. (18,43) This is perpetuated by high turnover rates in government staff, leading to gaps in personnel capacity. (43)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2018, the exceptionally low number of worksite inspections conducted at the national level in Nepal may have impeded the enforcement of child labor laws (Table 6).

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$4,000† (3)	\$4,000‡ (43)
Number of Labor Inspectors	14† (3)	10‡ (43)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (3)	Yes (18)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Unknown (3)	N/A (18)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown (3)	Yes (43)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	1,857† (3)	1,050‡ (18)
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	27 (3)	75 (18)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (3)	Yes (18)
Routine Inspections Targeted	No (47)	Yes (43)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (3)	Yes (18)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (3)	Yes (18)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (3)	Yes (18)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (3)	Yes (18)

† Data are from July, 2016 to July, 2017.

‡ Data are from July, 2017 to July, 2018.

The Department of Labor's (DOL) 2017–2018 fiscal year (July 16, 2017–July 15, 2018) budget for inspections focused specifically on child labor was NRs 100,000 (approximately \$1,000), which was lower than the previous year's budget. The budget for labor inspections was NRs 400,000 (approximately \$4,000), representing a slight decrease from the previous fiscal year. (43) During the reporting period, government child labor inspections led to the rescue of 75 children, and 59 of those children were rehabilitated. Under the new Constitutional provision and updated federal structure, the provincial governments have been given more authority, including the task of overseeing child labor monitoring and inspection. (18,43)

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MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

The government and NGOs agreed that the fines and employer-paid compensation outlined in the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act were not adequate as deterrents to child labor violations. (3,59) The government has also confirmed that it calls on NGOs to assist with official inspections, because it lacks funding and resources and also to increase transparency. (18) The government and NGOs state that most child labor occurs in the informal sector, including in companies with less than 10 employees and those that are not registered with the government. However, the government conducted most of its labor inspections in the formal sector. (18,54) Although the government claims to monitor companies regularly, NGOs report that due to resource limitations, enforcement agencies respond only to child labor complaints. (18)

In addition, the number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Nepal's workforce, which includes more than 16.8 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in developing economies, Nepal should employ about 1,120 inspectors. (62-64) Although labor inspectors periodically receive training on child labor laws and inspection, this training does not necessarily adhere to any formal schedule. (55) In August 2018, DOL hired additional labor officers who are currently undergoing on-the-job training, but DOL noted that the number of inspectors was still inadequate and limited the government's adequateness in dealing with child labor issues. (18,54)

In 2018 the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security organized a training of trainers on child labor inspection curriculum, developed by Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor II, for capacity building of child labor inspection staff. A follow-up training was delivered to the Panauti Municipality stakeholders to raise awareness of child labor. (18)

The government did not provide information on its labor law enforcement efforts, including training on new laws related to child labor, the number of labor inspections conducted at worksites, the number of imposed penalties for child labor violations, and the number of imposed penalties that were collected for inclusion in this report.

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2018, criminal law enforcement agencies in Nepal 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 the enforcement of laws that prohibit bonded labor in agriculture.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A	N/A (18)
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (3)	Unknown (18)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	Unknown (43)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (3)	Yes (18)

Once fully operational, the newly formed Anti-Trafficking in Persons Bureau within the Nepal Police, headed by a Senior Superintendent of Police, will assist in children's rescue, rehabilitation, and coordination for arrest of perpetrators. (18,28) The establishment of this bureau will allow the Government of Nepal to meet some of the obligations arising out the process of acceding to the Palermo Protocol. (28) In addition, the Nepal Police's Crime Investigation School conducts trainings for all levels of police personnel in juvenile justice, child rights, and laws relating to child labor issues. (18)

From July 2017 to July 2018, the Nepal Police identified 180 children who were victims of trafficking; from July 2018 to November 2018, the police identified 53 children who were victims of trafficking, 49 of whom were

female. (18) Data on the purpose of trafficking, the community of origin, or destination were not provided. According to the data received from the Office of the Attorney General, from July 2017 to July 2018, cases with 68 child victims of trafficking from different parts of the country were filed in courts. (18)

The government lacks both the human resource and financial capacity to enforce laws prohibiting crimes related to the worst forms of child labor, and it lacks the resources to maintain a centralized database of cases involving the worst forms of child labor, including child trafficking. (8,18,62)

The government did not provide information on its criminal law enforcement efforts, including information on whether there were initial trainings for new employees or refresher courses offered. The government also did not provide disaggregated data on child labor, including the number of violations found, the number of initiated prosecutions, the number of convictions, as well as the number of penalties imposed for violations related to the worst forms of child labor for inclusion in this report.

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
Labor Relations, Child Labor Prevention, and Information Section	Coordinates policymaking on child labor inspection guidelines and monitors implementation of guidelines. (63,64) Consists of a senior factory inspector, two labor officers, and a senior assistant in MoLESS. Confers with MWCSC, Central Child Welfare Board (CCWB), Department of Labor, and District Labor Offices. (63) During the reporting period, held two meetings to discuss the provisions of the new constitution and programs aimed at combating child labor. (43)
National Network Against Child Labor	Coordinates the referral of children who are found in child labor to social services. (65) Consists of District Labor Officers, District Women and Children Officers, officers from the Nepal Police Women and Children Service Centers, Chief District Officers, NGOs, and thousands of youth clubs. (57) This body was active during the reporting period. (43)
National Coordination Committee on Human Trafficking	Coordinates the implementation of anti-human trafficking laws, policies, and programs at the central, district, and local levels of government. Led by MWCSC and consists of government officials and NGO representatives. (57,61) This body was active during the reporting period. (43)
National Human Rights Commission	Monitors and receives complaints on child rights violations. (60) Reports on the status of human trafficking victims and coordinates with civil society organizations through the Office of the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking. (57,60) In September 2018, released the ninth edition of its trafficking report. During the reporting period, concluded a qualitative study on the situation of women and children in the entertainment sector. (28)
Central Child Welfare Board, MWCSC	Coordinates with MoLESS and civil society to formulate and implement child protection and child labor-related policies. (55,60) Receives and documents complaints through the national hotline, in coordination with NGOs. Maintains Central Emergency Fund intended for use in humanitarian support for children. (18,66) Supports 12 Child Helplines in 12 districts. (18) This body was active during the reporting period. (43)
District Child Welfare Boards	Reports on child welfare activities, monitors child care homes, mobilizes resources for children at risk, receives and responds to child protection cases, and establishes mechanisms to refer children to social services. Consists of social workers, medical practitioners, and government officials. (60,67) This body was active during the reporting period. (43)
National Child Labor Elimination Committee*	Provisioned by the Nepal Master Plan. Chaired by the Secretary of MoLESS. (18) This body was active during the reporting period. (43)
National Planning Commission	Chaired by the Prime Minister. Formulates a national vision, periodic plans, and policies for development. (18) Assesses resource needs, identifies sources of funding, and allocates budget for socioeconomic development. (18) During the reporting period, carried out 11 monitoring activities in coordination with other government agencies, NGOs, and human rights organizations. (43)

* Mechanism to coordinate efforts to address child labor was created during the reporting period.

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 updating the National Plan of Action on Combatting Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children to better align with the constitutional transition to federalism.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Master Plan (NMP-II) to End Child Labor (July 2018–July 2028) [†]	Prioritizes ending the worst forms of child labor by 2022, and all forms of child labor by 2025. Uses five strategies to achieve goals. Established annual monitoring evaluation and reporting system through which information will be made publicly available. (18,68) During the reporting period, MoLESS formed a subcommittee Interagency Working Group (IAWG) composed of nine NGOs and UN agencies to help advance the implementation of the NMP-II. IAWG is currently drafting the action plan for the implementation of the NMP-II in coordination with MoLESS. (18) This policy was active during the reporting period. (43)
School Sector Development Plan (2016/17–2022/23)	Aims to expand access to education and provide alternative schooling and non-formal education to vulnerable populations, including children who are out of school and at risk of entering the worst forms of child labor. Overseen by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. (3,18) This policy was active during the reporting period. (43)
National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2011–2022)	Promotes and protects the rights of human trafficking victims and survivors, and outlines policies for providing justice and punishing perpetrators. (69) This policy was active during the reporting period. (43)

[†] Policy was approved during the reporting period.

[‡] The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (3)

There is a need to update the National Plan of Action so that it better aligns Nepal's anti-trafficking programming with the constitutional transition to federalism, as well as to better address forced labor. (2,28)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2018, 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 to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Social Security Fund Program*	Launched in 2018. MoLESS program aimed to help support workers and their families through a tripartite contribution policy, an important initiative to help combat and prevent child labor. (18,71)
Child Helpline—1098 [†]	MWCSC- and Child Workers in Nepal-funded helpline operated by the Nepal Telecommunications Authority. (18,59) Responds to calls about missing children, child abuse, child labor, child trafficking, and child sexual abuse in 13 districts and municipalities in Nepal, as well as in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. (55,59,72) Provides rescue services, medical treatment, counseling, legal support, skills training, and shelter services. (28) This program was active during the reporting period. (43)
Decent Work Country Program, Nepal (2018–2022)*	ILO, MoLESS, Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and Joint Trade Union Coordination Center-implemented program. Enables decent work for all through sustainable, inclusive, and gender-responsive economic growth. (18) Strengthens institutional capacities, enhances social dialogue, and applies fundamental conventions and other international labor standards. Serves as a guiding document for ILO and social partners in organizing interventions to promote decent work in Nepal. (18)
Support for Schools [‡]	MoLESS program that supports schools for children ages 5–16 who are at risk of working in the worst forms of child labor. Provides scholarships to cover associated schooling costs for children outside the Kathmandu Valley to attend a local public school, and works with local NGOs to verify that children are attending class. (8) This program was active during the reporting period. (43)
Hamro Samman (“Our Respect”) (2017–2022)	USAID-funded project, implemented by Winrock International, to strengthen national and local efforts to counter trafficking in persons, improve civil society advocacy and engagement, and increase private sector partnerships to empower survivors and prevent trafficking of at-risk populations. (3,18,77) This program was active during the reporting period. (43)
“Hello Sarkar”	Initiative established by the Office of the Prime Minister. Receives child labor complaints from the public through a hotline, Facebook, and Twitter. (18) During the reporting period, received 9,790 complaints through the hotline and social media, including cases related to child labor. (43)
National Center for Children at Risk—Hotline No. 104 [†]	CCWB and Nepal Police jointly run hotline operated from Bhrikutimandap, Kathmandu. (18,28) Per the Nepal Police, about four to five children on average are rescued from child labor every month from informal sectors, such as transportation, domestic help, tea shops, and restaurants, through the complaints received through the hotline. (43)

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

Program	Description
USDOL-Funded Projects	USDOL projects in Nepal focus on both forced labor and child labor, including eliminating child labor in its worst forms. These projects include Sakriya, implemented by World Education, Inc.; From Protocol to Practice: A Bridge to Global Action on Forced Labor (The Bridge Project), implemented by the ILO; Closing the Child Labor and Forced Labor Evidence Gap: Impact Evaluations, implemented by Vanderbilt University; Closing the Child Labor and Forced Labor Evidence Gap: Impact Evaluations, implemented by the University of Notre Dame; and Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor II (CLEAR II), implemented by Winrock International. (73,74) Additional information is available on the USDOL website.

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Nepal.

During the reporting period, DOL spent nearly NRs 950,000 (approximately \$9,500) for various child labor awareness-raising activities. DOL proposed NRs 3.6 million (approximately \$31,500) to help organize an anti-child labor public outreach campaign in all seven provinces, including preparing audiovisual material for fiscal year 2018–2019. Due to a limited budget, DOL will reach out to potential partners outside the government to raise funds. (18,28)

However, gaps exist in these social programs, including with regard to barriers to education, as well as programs that support child victims of commercial sexual exploitation and children working in the production of bricks.

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 Nepal (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Accede to the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons.	2013 – 2018
	Ensure that laws are in line with ILO C. 182 by raising the minimum age to age 18 for entry into hazardous work.	2009 – 2018
	Ensure that the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are comprehensive and include sectors in which there is evidence of child labor, including brickmaking.	2015 – 2018
	Ensure that the legal framework comprehensively and criminally prohibits the trafficking of children in accordance with international standards.	2015 – 2018
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the use of children through age 17 in the production and trafficking of drugs.	2015 – 2018
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2018
	Ensure that the age up to which education is compulsory is the same as the minimum age for work.	2009 – 2018
Enforcement	Provide sufficient resources for the collection, storage, and publication of data on labor and criminal law enforcement actions, including the number of violations, prosecutions, convictions, and the number of penalties imposed for violations related to the worst forms of child labor.	2009 – 2018
	Provide sufficient resources to create a centralized database to track and monitor cases of the worst forms of child labor.	2009 – 2018
	Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice.	2010 – 2018
	Ensure that legal provisions against child labor are implemented and enforced against perpetrators.	2018
	Provide data on criminal law enforcement efforts, including information on initial trainings for new employees or refresher courses offered.	2018
	Ensure the Department of Labor's budget is sufficient to adequately enforce child labor laws.	2016 – 2018
	Provide information on labor law enforcement efforts, including training on new laws related to child labor; the number of labor inspections conducted at worksites; the number of imposed penalties for child labor violations; and the number of imposed penalties that were collected.	2018
	Increase penalties to ensure sufficient deterrence of child labor law violations.	2015 – 2018

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor (Cont.)

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Provide additional resources to criminal law enforcement agencies so they are able to enforce laws prohibiting crimes related to the worst forms of child labor.	2011 – 2018
	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by initiating routine targeted inspections rather than performing inspections solely based on complaints received.	2017 – 2018
	Improve human resource capacity, including increasing the number of child labor inspections especially in the informal sector.	2018
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor, such as forced labor of children, and use of children in illicit activities.	2016 – 2018
	Update the National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children to better address forced labor and align it with anti-trafficking programming.	2018
Social Programs	Eliminate barriers to education, especially for girls and children with disabilities, including the lack of sanitation facilities at schools, long distances to schools, fees associated with schooling, pressure to find employment, migration to work outside of Nepal, and issues with drugs and alcohol.	2013 – 2018
	Collect and publish data on child labor and its worst forms, particularly in regards to hazardous work.	2018
	Create social programs that support child victims of commercial sexual exploitation, as well as children working in the brick industry.	2018

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