

In 2018, the Philippines made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government commenced a nationwide profiling of child laborers and issued Administrative Order No. 142-18, *Guidelines on the Profiling of Child Laborers and Provision of Service to Remove Them from Child Labor*, to harmonize the process of removing children from child labor and referring them to appropriate services. It permanently closed down a motel that was found to engage children in prostitution and obscene shows, and approved the *Guidelines on the Management of Compensation for Victim-Survivors of Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children*. However, children in the Philippines engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in armed conflict. Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture and gold mining. Although the government made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas during the reporting period, the government did not adequately protect children engaged in drug trafficking from inappropriate incarceration, penalties, or physical harm. In addition, the enforcement of child labor laws remains challenging, especially due to the limited number of inspectors, lack of resources for inspections, and inspectors' inability to assess penalties.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in the Philippines engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in armed conflict. Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture and gold mining. (1-8) The Survey on Children indicated that 3.2 million children ages 5 to 17 years engage in child labor, of which approximately 3 million engage in hazardous work. (9) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in the Philippines.

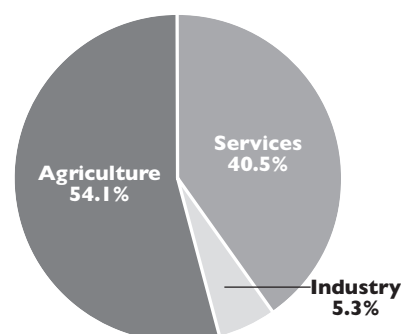
Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	7.5 (1,549,677)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	93.7
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	7.8
Primary Completion Rate (%)		104.0

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019. (10)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Survey on Children (SOC), 2011. (11)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



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

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Production of sugarcane,† including growing, weeding, harvesting,† cutting,† and carrying sugarcane bundles† (1-3,8,12-14)
	Growing bananas, coconuts, corn, rice, rubber, and tobacco (1,8,13-15)
	Hog farming (13,14)
	Production of palm oil, including harvesting,† hauling,† and loading palm oil fruits (1,13)
	Deep-sea fishing† (8,13,16)
Industry	Mining† and quarrying,† including for gold and nickel (1,6,8,12,16-19)
	Manufacturing pyrotechnics† (8,16,20)
	Construction,† activities unknown (8,21,22)
	Production of fashion accessories (8,20)
Services	Domestic work (8,12,14,23,24)
	Street work, including scavenging, selling flowers, and begging (3,8,25-27)
	Scavenging in dumpsites† and in rivers (16,28,29)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, including use in the production of pornography, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (8,23,27,30-33)
	Forced labor, including domestic work, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (4,23)
	Recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict (7,8)
	Forced begging (8,27,34)
	Use in illicit activities, including in the distribution, procurement, and sale of drugs, including methamphetamine (<i>shabu</i>) (8,27,34-36)

† 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.

The use of children in illicit activities, specifically in the distribution, procuring, and selling of drugs, including a cheap methamphetamine known as *shabu*, has become a cause for concern in the Philippines. (7,9,27,34,35,37) The government continued its anti-drug campaign, which began in 2016 and did not adequately protect children engaged in drug trafficking from inappropriate incarceration, penalties, or physical harm. (38-43)

Children, primarily girls, are trafficked domestically from rural communities to urban centers and tourist destinations for the purpose of domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation. (31,33,48) Research indicates that the Philippines is the top global Internet source of online commercial sexual exploitation of children (OSEC). Children are induced to perform sex acts at the direction of paying foreigners and local Filipinos for live Internet broadcasts which usually take place in small Internet cafes, private homes, or windowless dungeon-like buildings commonly known as “cybersex dens.” (8,32,33,49-54) According to data on OSEC victims collected by the International Justice Mission Philippines, the average age of victims was 16 to 18 years, and the median age of the victims at the time of rescue was 12. (8,33,55) Additionally, according to the most recent available data from 2018 the Philippines Department of Justice’s Office of Cybercrimes reviewed over 576,000 reports of online child abuse and cybercrimes from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. (8,54,56)

Child soldiering by non-government militias and terrorist organizations, predominately in the southern island of Mindanao, remains a concern. (7,8,32,57) In Marawi City, many children as young as age 7 were recruited, paid, and trained as fighters by the Maute Group, a terrorist organization linked to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Additionally, research suggests that the Abu Sayyaf Group, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, the Moro National Liberation Front, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, and the New People’s Army continue to recruit children from schools for use as human shields, cooks, and fighters, while offering religious education and material incentives to join. (8,32)







The most recent Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey, published in 2015 with 2013 data, indicated that 10.6 percent of all school-aged children did not attend school. The highest percentage of children not in school was in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, where the total was 14.4 percent. (8,58) In an effort to facilitate Muslim youth school attendance, the government conducted outreach activities to

help facilitate a welcome environment in public schools for Muslim students, including a provision to include instructional materials and modules for the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education program. (8)
Additionally, the Department of Education increased the budget for schools in Mindanao. (59)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

The Philippines 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 137 of the Labor Code as renumbered; Section 12 of the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act; Section 16 of the Act Instituting Policies for the Protection and Welfare of Domestic Workers (60-62)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 137 of the Labor Code as renumbered; Section 12-D of the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act (61-63)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Department Order 149 on Guidelines in Assessing and Determining Hazardous Work in the Employment of Persons Below 18 Years of Age; Department Order 149A on Guidelines in Assessing and Determining Hazardous Work in the Employment of Persons Below 18 Years of Age; Sections 12-D and 14 of the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act (8,63-65)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Sections 4-5 of the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act; Sections 12-D and 16 of the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act (63,66)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Sections 4-5 of the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act; Sections 12-D and 16 of the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act (63,66)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Section 11 of the Free Internet Access in Public Places Act; Sections 12-D and 16 of the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act; Section 4 of the Anti-Child Pornography Act; Section 4 of the Cybercrime Prevention Act (63,67,68)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Sections 12-D and 16 of the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act; Sections 5 and 8 of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act (63,69)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Section 12 in the Providing for the Development, Administration, Organization, Training and Maintenance and Utilization of the Citizen Armed Forces of the Philippines, and for Other Purposes Act (70)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes*		Section 14 in the Providing for the Development, Administration, Organization, Training and Maintenance and Utilization of the Citizen Armed Forces of the Philippines, and for Other Purposes Act (70)

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

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Sections 12-D and 16 in the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act (63)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	18‡	Section 4 of the Enhanced Basic Education Act (71)
Free Public Education	Yes		Section 2 of the Philippine Constitution (72)

* No conscription (70)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (71)

As the minimum age for work is lower than the compulsory education age, children may be encouraged to leave school before the completion of compulsory education.

During the reporting period, the Institute of Government and Law Reform at the University of the Philippines Law Center established a Labor Code Revision Committee tasked with formulating proposed amendments to the existing Labor Code, and invited Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to discuss the minimum age for work. In December 2018, proposed amendments to Republic Act No. 9231 commenced with support from the ILO. (8) Additionally, the Bureau of Working Conditions met with the ILO to discuss hazardous forms of child work. (74) The initial stages of development on proposed amendments to Republic Act No. 9231 began in December 2018, with support from the ILO, and will continue with a roundtable discussion with stakeholders in early 2019. (8)

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 authority of the DOLE that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) - Bureau of Working Conditions	Enforces child labor and child trafficking laws. (33) Regularly trains inspectors and regional personnel. (8,79) Inspects establishments and monitors compliance with labor laws in the formal sector. (79) Registers DOLE enforcement activities using the Labor Law Compliance System, a management information system. (80) During the reporting period, hired 36 additional labor inspectors and is expected to hire an additional 100 labor inspectors by the end of 2019. (8,74) Additionally, in 2018, reported having removed 58 children from hazardous work situations and referred some families for livelihood assistance during the reporting period. (32)
Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) - Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns (BWSC)	Oversees the profiling of child laborers. (74) Mandated to develop policies, programs, and systems. Provides advisory and technical assistance to the Labor Secretary and Regional Offices. (81)
Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)	Rehabilitates and reintegrates child laborers. Coordinates regional Special Action Units, with at least one dedicated staff member per region to conduct rescue operations for child laborers, and cooperates with social workers to manage ongoing cases. Maintains 16 Crisis Intervention Units, operates 44 temporary or residential care facilities nationwide, and maintains social media accounts to address cases of child abuse and support child abuse victims, including children exploited in hazardous labor. (16,33,34) As of November 2018, DSWD provided assistance to 446 child laborers. (8)
Philippine National Police (PNP)	Investigates and prosecutes cases related to the worst forms of child labor. (8,12) In the case of the Women and Children's Protection Center (WCPC), enforces laws on child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children. (12) Oversees the Internet Crimes Against Children Center, within the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division of the PNP. (82)

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

Organization/Agency	Role
Rescue the Child Laborers Quick Action Teams (<i>Sagip Batang Manggagawa</i> – SBM QAT)	Leads the regional mechanism for rescuing children who work in exploitative situations. (83) Detects, monitors, and responds to incidents of child labor using a cooperative and inter-agency approach. (8,34,83) Chaired by DOLE. (83) During the reporting period, rescued 25 child laborers with 20 children removed from 3 establishments engaged in prostitution or obscene shows, and 5 children engaged in hazardous work. (8,33) To date SBM QAT has rescued 3,656 child laborers. (8)
National Bureau of Investigation (NBI)	Investigates and prosecutes child labor cases. (8,84,85) Operates a national Trafficking in Persons Task Force and a Task Force on the Protection of Children from Exploitation and Abuse. (84,85) During the reporting period, developed a NBI Manual and Standard Operating Procedures for trafficking in persons and OSEC cases. (33)
Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA)	Enforces the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act. (8,12) Maintains a national hotline for reporting cases of children used in illicit activities. Coordinates with the DSWD to assist during rescue operations. (12)
National Telecommunications Commission	Enforces the Anti-Child Pornography Law. Coordinates with Internet Service Providers to block websites containing child pornographic material. (67,75)
Department of Justice - Office of Cybercrime	Receives CyberTips reports from the U.S.-based National Center for Missing and Exploited Children regarding potential OSEC cases, conducts initial investigation into CyberTips, prioritizes cases, then sends cases to the PNP's Internet Crime Against Children Center for follow-up. (86) Launched in 2015. Comprised of legal and investigative divisions. (86)
Philippine Internet Crimes Against Children Center (PIACC) - WCPC, PNP*	Aims to combat the online sexual exploitation of children. Comprises the PNP WCPC and NBI Anti-Human Trafficking Division. Coordinates international investigations with the United Kingdom's National Crimes Agency (UK NCA) and the Australian Federal Police (AFP). (54,87,88) Receives funding from the UK NCA, AFP, and the U.S. Government. (54,87) Established in 2019. Function of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division within the PNP WCPC. (87)
Department of Information and Communication Technology - Cybersecurity Bureau	Provides preventative technological assistance to law enforcement and protects cybersecurity of Filipino citizens. (78) Oversees an anti-OSEC program comprised of awareness-raising programs, computer software, website monitoring, cybersecurity, and Visible Internet application. In October 2018, created an anti-OSEC video for communities, in collaboration with the Philippines Online Corporation. (78) Coordinated efforts with the Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography, and consulted with telecommunications companies and civil society organizations to produce the National Cybersecurity Strategy. (76,77,78) Launching an online hotline to report OSEC cases in collaboration with the National Computer Emergency Response Team in 2019. (78)

* Agency responsible for child labor enforcement was created during the reporting period.

Steps have been taken by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to continuously monitor children involved in drug trafficking, making efforts to turn them over to juvenile detention centers, or “houses of hope” (*Bahay ng Pag-asa*), within 8 hours of the conclusion of their court proceedings. DSWD maintains that child victims of the anti-drug campaign are not placed in jail with adult criminals. (8,42) It has been reported that children in these detention centers are subjected to physical and emotional abuse, deprived of liberty, and forced into overcrowded and unhygienic cells. (42-46)

According to the PDEA, between January and October 2018, they rescued 793 minors during anti-drug operations nationwide. (8) The Presidential Communications Operations Office attested that, between July 2016 and November 2018, law enforcement arrested 1,861 minors for drug-related crimes. (8) There was a report that some children arrested for drug-related offenses claimed to have been beaten and abused by police, and forced to be photographed with drugs planted by police. (43,47) According to the Children's Legal Rights and Development Center, Inc., from January through July 2018, 18 children were victims of extrajudicial killings, bringing the total to 110 children killed since the beginning of the anti-drug campaign in 2016. (8,43)

In 2018, the DOLE issued two Administrative Orders related to child labor. (8) In March, DOLE issued Administrative Order No. 142–18, Guidelines on the Profiling of Child Laborers and Provision of Service to Remove Them from Child Labor, to harmonize the process of removing children from child labor, referring them to the appropriate agency, and assisting them with all necessary service(s) and intervention. (8,73) In October, DOLE issued Administrative Order No. 551, creating the Task Force Against Illegal Recruitment, Recruitment of Minor Workers, and Trafficking in Persons. This DOLE-led task force will allow the agency to have a more focused, concerted, coordinated, and effective program of action to help eliminate illegal recruitment, recruitment of minor workers, and trafficking in persons. (8)

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Labor Law Enforcement

In 2018, labor law enforcement agencies in the Philippines took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the authority of the DOLE that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including penalty assessment authority.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$3,450,260 (7)	\$3,017,240 (8)
Number of Labor Inspectors	574 (7)	610 (8)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (7)	No (8)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (7)	Yes (8)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (7)	Yes (8)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (7)	Yes (8)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	60,732 (89)	58,091 (8)
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown	Unknown (8)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	52 (7)	Unknown (8)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown	Unknown (8)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown	Unknown (8)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (7)	Yes (8)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (7)	Yes (8)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (7)	Yes (8)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (7)	Yes (8)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (7)	Yes (8)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (7)	Yes (8)

DOLE's Bureau of Working Conditions exceeded its initial target of 54,530 labor inspections, but enforcement of child labor laws remains challenging due to the lack of resources for inspections and the limited number of inspectors, especially in rural areas where many vendors are unregistered and highly mobile. (8,16,34,80) The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of the Philippines's workforce, which includes approximately 42 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in developing economies, the Philippines would employ about 2,852 labor inspectors. (8,90,91)

Scheduling routine inspections is based on the national target set by the DOLE Central Office, with regional offices implementing their inspections based on factors such as prevailing industries and geographical areas. (8,74) Despite this, enforcement of child labor protections is not sufficient for children employed in the informal sector and in small and medium-size enterprises, particularly in agriculture, due to DOLE's lack of capacity and resources. (8,53,92) While the Rescue the Child Laborers Quick Action Teams (SBM QATs) are permitted to conduct unannounced compliance visits in video karaoke bars, massage parlors, sauna and bath houses, and farms, they are not authorized to conduct visits in private homes to search for underage child domestic workers. (8,80) In March 2018, DOLE permanently closed down a motel that was found to engage children in prostitution or obscene shows.

The government did not provide information on its labor law enforcement efforts relating to the number of worksite inspections conducted, and the number of child labor violations found, penalties imposed, and penalties collected.

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2018, criminal law enforcement agencies in the Philippines took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of criminal law enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including training of investigators. In addition, the government continued its anti-drug

campaign, which began in 2016, and did not ensure that children in the worst forms of child labor were protected from inappropriate incarceration, penalties, or physical harm. (38,40,53,93,94)

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Unknown	Unknown (8)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	No (7)	No (8)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (95)	Unknown (8)
Number of Investigations	75 (7)	124 (8)
Number of Violations Found	25 (7)	Unknown (8)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	25 (7)	Unknown (8)
Number of Convictions	3 (7)	Unknown (8)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	Yes (54)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (7)	Yes (8)

Police and armed persons killed children suspected of being involved in drug dealing. (7,47,96,97) In addition, there were collateral deaths of children caught in the crossfire during police operations connected to the drug war. (47,94,97,98) Some high-level government officials have suggested that killing suspected drug traffickers and users was necessary to wipe out drug-related crime, increasing the vulnerability of children being used in the drug trade. (39,47,94,99-101) Three police officers implicated in the drug war-related killing of a minor were charged with murder and later convicted. (38,46,54,93-95,102) The Philippine National Police (PNP) refer children involved in drug trafficking to the DSWD to receive shelter or rehabilitation programs. (8,36)

The government did not provide information on its criminal law enforcement efforts including whether initial training was provided for new employees, if refresher courses were offered, the number of violations found, prosecutions initiated, and convictions.

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 the structure, functions, and funding of the National Child Labor Committee.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Child Labor Committee (NCLC)	Coordinates national efforts to combat child labor. Chaired by DOLE. (8,103) Promotes information-sharing at the national, regional, and provincial levels. Comprises 16 government agencies, workers' organizations, 1 employers' group, and 1 umbrella NGO. (103) During the reporting period, conducted three regular meetings, and two special meetings. (54)
Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT)	Oversees the 1343 Actionline emergency hotline for trafficking in person victims. (33) Coordinates, monitors, and oversees efforts to combat human trafficking, including child trafficking. Co-chaired by the Department of Justice and the DSWD. (8,12,33,85) Comprises 24 anti-human trafficking task forces established in 8 regions and 7 interagency task forces in major seaports and airports. (12,16,80) In 2018, created eight new positions, expanding to 127 personnel with 13 additional staff assigned to Regional Task Forces in support of anti-TIP operations. During the reporting period, started its first year of implementation of the Prosecutor's Trafficking in Persons Case Management System (PTCMS). (33)
Inter-Agency Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC)	Operates a monitoring and response system to assist children engaged in armed conflict. (12) Initiates, promotes, and advocates policies and measures protecting children's rights. (8) In 2018, developed web-based system for reporting incidents of children in armed conflict, in order to implement the Monitoring, Reporting and Response System (MRRS). (33)
Inter-Agency Committee on Children Involved in Armed Conflict (IAC-CIAC)	Advocates for protecting children and preventing the involvement of children in armed conflict. Chaired by the CWC. (80) Coordinates and monitors the implementation of the Children in Armed Conflict Program Framework. (12) In 2018, developed an Advocacy and Communication Plan for children in armed conflict. (33)

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography (IACACP)	Serves as the primary government coordinating mechanism to address child pornography. (8) Monitors and implements the Anti-Child Pornography Act. (104) Comprises 12 government agencies and 3 NGOs. (103) Chaired by the DSWD. (105) During the reporting period, approved the Guidelines on the Management of Compensation for Victim-Survivors of Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children. (33)
Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council	Leads community outreach and education efforts, through offices located throughout the country, to prevent the use of children in illicit activities, including drug trafficking. Manages livelihood, rehabilitation, food, and scholarship programming. (36) Overseen by DSWD. (106) During the reporting period, delivered on its targets and programs toward the achievement of its strategic outcomes, as well as the completion of three research studies. (54)
Task Force Against Illegal Recruitment, Recruitment of Minor Workers, and Trafficking in Persons*	Addresses illegal recruitment, recruitment of minor workers, and trafficking in persons. Coordinates all DOLE programs and initiatives (8) Chaired by the DOLE. (8)

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

The draft executive order submitted by DOLE's Secretary to the Acting Head of the Presidential Management Staff that aims to reorganize the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC), redefine its functions, and allocate funds to support its projects and activities, thus accelerating the elimination of child labor in the Philippines, has not yet been signed by President Duterte. (7,8,74,103,107)

Additionally, during the reporting period, the Government of the Philippines revived formal coordination meetings with the UN regarding incidents of grave violation against children. These meetings sought to further understanding on how to respond appropriately to such cases. (8)

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
Philippine Program Against Child Labor (2017–2022)	Aims to remove at least 630,000 children from child labor by the year 2022. (108,109) Implementation led by DOLE's BWSC. (110) This policy was active during the reporting period. (54)
National Strategic Action Plan Against Trafficking in Persons (2017–2021)	Aims to address labor trafficking and sex trafficking, including the online sexual exploitation of children. (111) This policy was active during the reporting period. (54)
Philippine Development Plan (2017–2022)	Aims to build the socio-economic resilience of individuals and families by reducing their vulnerability to various risks and disasters; this includes the goal of universal social protection for all Filipinos. (7) Aims to reduce the number of children engaged in child labor by 30 percent or roughly 630,000 children. (103) This policy was active during the reporting period. (54)
National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children (Child 21) (2000–2025)	Sets out broad goals for national government agencies, local governments, and NGOs to achieve improved quality of life for Filipino children by 2025. (85,113) Addresses concerns related to the worst forms of child labor under the section on children in need of special protection. (16) Chaired by the Council for the Welfare of Children. (8) This policy was active during the reporting period. (54)
Child Protection Compact Partnership (2017–2021)	Seeks to increase prevention efforts and protections for child victims of OSEC and labor trafficking, while holding perpetrators accountable. (114) Aims to improve the response to child trafficking, including live-streaming online of child sexual exploitation and child trafficking for labor purposes, by (1) increasing criminal investigations, prosecutions, and convictions; (2) strengthening the government's and civil society's capacities to identify and provide comprehensive services for victims; and (3) strengthening existing community-based mechanisms that identify and protect victims of child trafficking. (115,116) The government committing approximately \$800,000 for its implementation. (89,114) This policy was active during the reporting period. (54)

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor (Cont.)

Policy	Description
Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence Against Children (2017–2022)	Aims to gradually reduce violence against children through consultations with government institutions, local and international NGOs, civil society organizations, faith-based groups, professional associations, academe, private sector, parents, and children. (8,117) Consistent with Child 21 and the National Plan of Action for Children. Launched in November 2018 during the National Children's Month celebration. (8) During the reporting period, government held a nationwide celebration of the 2018 World Day Against Child Labor; held a training on child labor for the Speakers Bureau and Writers Bureau, commenced profiling child laborers, and conducted four regular meetings of the NCLC. (8,54)
3rd National Plan of Action for Children (2017–2022)	Solidifies strategies, policies, and programs for children to achieve Child 21's vision for Filipino children by 2025. Third and penultimate multi-sector, medium-term, rights-based, and results-oriented action plan. (8,113,118) This policy was active during the reporting period. (54)

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (65,119,120)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2018, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the provision of adequate services for victims of child pornography.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Child Labor Prevention and Elimination Program†	DOLE anti-child labor program that implements local awareness-raising campaigns; institutes child labor-monitoring mechanisms; and requires neighborhoods to develop child labor elimination plans. (8,121,122) Includes a provision of livelihood assistance to parents of child laborers, <i>Sagip Batang Manggagawa</i> , and Project Angel Tree. (8) Project Angel Tree is a social service with local government agency benefactors, known as “angels,” who provide educational supplies to communities. (74) In July 2018, DOLE commenced a nationwide profiling of child laborers, with the aim of identifying and establishing a master list of child victims and offering them the necessary and appropriate services to help them withdraw from child labor. (8,123) As of the end of 2018, regional offices had profiled 85,528 child laborers, 57 percent of its goal to profile 150,000 child laborers. (8,74) Additionally, during the reporting period, Project Angel Tree provided school supplies, hygiene kits, food packs, and medical assistance to 3,625 children. (8)
<i>Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino</i> Program (Conditional Cash Transfer Program)†	DSWD program that provides conditional grants to poor families with children to improve their access to health care, adequate nutrition, and education using local awareness-raising campaigns and child labor-monitoring mechanisms. (8,121,122) ILO supported the inclusion of a child labor module to the Family Development sessions for program participants. (8,34,124) Covers 1,627 cities and municipalities in 79 provinces in all 17 regions. (8,80) During the reporting period, the ILO supported the inclusion of a child labor module to the Family Development sessions for program beneficiaries. (8)
Livelihood for Parents of Child Laborers (<i>Kabuhayan para sa Magulang ng Batang Manggagawa</i>)†	DOLE program that provides livelihood assistance to parents, guardians, or other family members of child laborers. Seeks to prevent and eliminate child labor by providing necessary materials to start a livelihood undertaking. During the reporting period, 4,054 parents of child laborers were provided with livelihood assistance. (54)
Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons (RRPTP)†	DSWD and IACAT program that provides recovery and reintegration services to victims of human trafficking and raises awareness in vulnerable communities. Includes the National Referral System, which strengthens coordination among agencies providing services to human trafficking victims through the use of standard referral and reporting forms. (126) There are 149 referral networks established in 16 regions. (34) The RRPTP program assisted 2,318 victim survivors during the reporting period. (54)
Alternative Learning System Program†	Department of Education program that offers non-formal education to out-of-school children, including child laborers and children displaced from military conflict, and opportunities to attain a certificate of education equivalency. Received between \$7–15 million and has assisted 500,000 children as of 2015. (127) This program was active during the reporting period. (54)

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

Program	Description
Strategic Helpdesks for Information, Education, Livelihood and Other Developmental Interventions (SHIELD) for Child Laborers	DSWD-led project implemented in 13 barangays in Catanduanes, Labo, Jose Panganiban, Paracale, Kananga, and Ormoc City, with support from the ILO CARING Gold Mining Project. Currently in a two year pilot, with official program launch in 2020. (74) Comprising three components including: (1) Child Labor Local Registry (CLLR); (2) Helpdesk and Convergence of Services; and (3) Advocacy, Organizing, and Capacity Building. (8,124) Focuses on areas with a high child labor incidence rate, with interventions based on data from the Child Labor Local Registry. (124) Utilizes three-pronged approach and multi-layered strategies to help eliminate the worst forms of child labor, particularly in the small-scale gold mining, deep sea fishing, and sugarcane industries. (8,128) During the reporting period, profiled 508 children through the CLLR, with 270 children found to be engaged in hazardous work, and 200 withdrawn from their situation. A total of 291 child laborers were removed from situations of the worst forms of child labor, falling short of the government's goal to remove 300 child laborers by the end of the calendar year. (8) Additionally, provided 446 child laborers with various services and interventions including, educational and livelihood assistance, medical assistance, birth registration, counselling, and other services. (8)
USDOL-Funded Projects	USDOL projects in the Philippines that aim to eliminate child labor in its worst forms, by improving the capacity of the national government, implementing the National Action Plan Against Child Labor, conducting research and data collection, developing strategic policies, drafting legislation, and supporting social services delivery for child domestic workers. These projects include "BuildCA2P: Building Capacity, Awareness, Advocacy and Programs Project" implemented by ChildFund International; "SAFE Seas", implemented by Plan International USA; "RICHES", implemented by the Grameen Foundation with the Philippines; "CARING Gold Mining Project", implemented by the ILO; "Building the Capacity of the Philippines Labor Inspectorate" implemented by the ILO; "Building a Generation of Safe and Healthy Workers: SafeYouth@Work" implemented by the ILO; "Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor (CLEAR)" implemented by the ILO; and "Closing the Child Labor and Forced Labor Evidence Gap: Impact Evaluations" implemented by Innovations for Poverty Action. (8,129-131,128) Additional information is available on the USDOL website.

† Program is funded by the Government of the Philippines.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (132,133)

Although programs exist to assist victims of human trafficking, the Philippines lacked sufficient programs to care for and rehabilitate children who have been victims of online commercial sexual exploitation, in large part because this is an emerging issue within the country. (34) In addition, there are not adequate programs to provide awareness of this crime and its impact on child victims. (49,51,52)

Although the government has implemented programs in small-scale mining, research found no evidence that it has carried out programs specifically designed to assist children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation, most notably, child pornography. (7,103) In addition, although the DSWD works in consultation with parents and community leaders to determine how best to assist children suspected of being involved in the drug trade, the DSWD does not have programs specifically designed to increase protections for or assistance to children engaged in drug trafficking to address their heightened vulnerability. (8)

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 the Philippines (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Raise the minimum age for work to the age up to which education is compulsory.	2018
Enforcement	Authorize the labor inspectorate to assess penalties.	2015 – 2018
	Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice, and increase resources available to provide sufficient coverage of the workforce, particularly in rural areas where child labor is prevalent.	2014 – 2018
	Build enforcement capacity to address child labor protections for children employed in the informal sector, including agricultural work.	2017 – 2018

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Publish labor and criminal law enforcement information, including the number of labor inspections conducted at worksites, the number of child labor violations, the number of child labor violations for which penalties were imposed, the number of child labor penalties imposed that were collected; whether initial trainings or refresher trainings were conducted for new criminal investigators; and the number of violations, prosecutions, and convictions.	2015 – 2018
	Enhance efforts to prevent the inappropriate incarceration of, and violence against, children suspected to be engaged in the production and trafficking of drugs.	2017 – 2018
	Continue to prosecute law enforcement officials and civilians responsible for the killing of children engaged in the drug trade.	2017 – 2018
	Allow SBM-QAT to conduct unannounced compliance visits in private homes.	2018
Coordination	Issue the proposed executive order to restructure the National Child Labor Committee and ensure it has the legal mandate and resources necessary to effectively coordinate national efforts to combat child labor.	2015 – 2018
Social Programs	Institute a program to address and combat the sexual abuse and exploitation of children in the production of child pornography, including live streaming.	2017 – 2018
	Provide specialized care and rehabilitative services for children who have been victimized through sexual abuse and exploitation via live streaming and in the production of child pornography by their families.	2017 – 2018
	Develop programs to increase protections for and provide assistance to children engaged in drug trafficking to address their heightened vulnerability.	2017 – 2018
	Ensure that <i>Bahay ng Pag-asa</i> child detention centers in the Philippines do not subject children to physical or emotional abuse, and that centers are provided with adequate resources to remedy overcrowding and unhygienic conditions.	2017 – 2018

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