

In 2018, Paraguay made a significant advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Recently elected President Mario Abdo Benitez and the Paraguayan Congress upgraded the Secretariat of Adolescents and Children to a full ministry-level body, which allows greater access to high-level political decisions and its own budget. The Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security also opened a new regional office in Filadelfia (Chaco region), and the Ministry of Women's Affairs conducted training on human trafficking and avoiding victimization for 1,500 individuals in at-risk communities and high-risk industries. In addition, the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate the Exploitation of Children updated its action plan for the 2018–2020 period and the government updated the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents for the 2018–2023 period. However, children in Paraguay are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in debt bondage in cattle raising, as well as domestic servitude, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Limited funding for law enforcement agencies and social programs hampered the government's ability to fully address the worst forms of child labor, particularly in rural areas.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Paraguay engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in cattle raising and domestic servitude, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. (1-3) The 2011 National Survey of Child and Adolescent Activities found that 21 percent of all Paraguayan children were engaged in hazardous work. (4) The 2015 Survey of Activities of Rural Area Children and Adolescents, published in 2016, identified 384,677 children engaged in child labor in agriculture. (1) Table I provides key indicators on children's work and education in Paraguay.

Table I. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	10 to 14	8.2 (56,492)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	94.8
Combining Work and School (%)	10 to 14	7.1
Primary Completion Rate (%)		89.1

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019. (5)

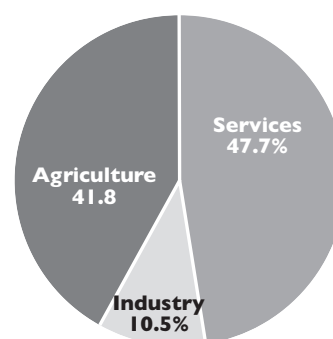
Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Encuesta Permanente de Hogares, 2016. (6)

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	Production of manioc/cassava, corn, beans, peanuts, peppers, sesame, sugarcane, tomatoes, lettuce, melons, sweet potato, onions, carrots, cabbages, yerba mate (stimulant plant), and charcoal (1,7-12)
	Raising poultry, hogs, cattle,† sheep, and goats and producing milk (4,9,10)
	Fishing, including using hooks and harpoons,† preparing bait, and cleaning fish† (1)

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



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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Industry	Construction, activities unknown, and production of bricks (3,4,7,8,10)
	Limestone quarrying† and gold mining† (3,4,7,8,10,13)
Services	Domestic work† (3,4,10,14-20)
	Street work,† including vending, shoe shining, and begging (2-4,7,8,20,21)
	Horse jockeying (7,20)
	Garbage dump scavenging† (4,22,23)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Debt bondage in cattle raising, dairy farms, and charcoal factories (3,7,8,24,25)
	Commercial sexual exploitation and domestic servitude, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2,3,7,15,22,25,26)
	Use in the production of child pornography (3,7,8,27-30)
	Use in illicit activities, including drug smuggling and drug trafficking (3,7,8,22)

† 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.

Criadazgo, a practice in which middle-class and wealthy families informally employ and house child domestic workers from impoverished families, is pervasive in Paraguay; the 2011 National Survey of Child and Adolescent Activities estimated that more than 46,000 children were engaged in *criadazgo*. Many of these children are in situations of domestic servitude, subjected to violence and abuse, and highly vulnerable to sex trafficking. (2,4,11,17,30,31) Children are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation in Ciudad del Este; in the Tri-Border area between Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil; and along commercial shipping routes on the Paraguay River. (3,7,25,31) Children work alongside their parents in debt bondage on cattle ranches, dairy farms, and charcoal factories in the remote Chaco region. (3,7,8,24,25) Children shine shoes on the street and in government buildings, including the Supreme Court building.(8)

Children from rural and indigenous communities face difficulties accessing and completing their education, including language barriers and inadequate facilities and staff. (3,32,33) The 2011 National Survey of Child and Adolescent Activities indicated that children who speak Guaraní exclusively are more likely to be involved in child labor and have higher rates of school absence compared to other working children; poverty is pervasive in rural Paraguay, where Guaraní is the predominant language. (4,34) School buses or other forms of public transportation are limited in rural areas, and school infrastructure is often inadequate in rural and indigenous communities. The government has noted that girls from rural areas leave school at an earlier age than boys, and has estimated that more than 50 percent of children with disabilities could not attend school due to lack of access to public transportation. (7,8) Such challenges may leave these children more vulnerable to child labor. Approximately 13 percent of children engaged in child labor in agriculture do not attend school and 11.8 percent of working children ages 14 to 17 have not completed primary school. (1,35)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Paraguay 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 ✓

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor (Cont.)

Convention	Ratification
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

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

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	14	Article 1 of Law No. 2332; Article 58 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code (36,37)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 54 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code; Article 3 of Decree No. 4951; Articles 122 and 125 of the Labor Code; Article 15 of the First Employment Law; Article 5 of Law No. 5407 on Domestic Work (36-42)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Article 54 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code; Article 2 of Decree No. 4951; Article 15 of the First Employment Law; Articles 122, 125, and 389 of the Labor Code; Article 5 of Law No. 5407 on Domestic Work (36-42)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 5–7 of the Comprehensive Law Against Trafficking in Persons; Articles 125, 129, 223, and 320 of the Penal Code; Articles 10 and 54 of the Constitution (43-46)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 6 and 7 of the Comprehensive Law Against Trafficking in Persons; Articles 125, 129, and 223 of the Penal Code; Article 54 of the Constitution (43-46)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 135 and 223 of the Penal Code; Article 2.19 of Decree No. 4951; Article 31 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code (36,38,44,46)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 1 of Law No. 1657; Article 32 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code (36,47)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Articles 3 and 5 of the Obligatory Military Service Law (48,49)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Articles 3 and 5 of the Obligatory Military Service Law (48,49)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15	Article 2 of Law No. 4088; Article 32 of the General Education Law No. 1264 (50,51)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 76 of the Constitution; Article 32 of the General Education Law No. 1264 (43,50)

In 2018, President Abdo Benitez and the Paraguayan Congress upgraded the Secretariat of Adolescents and Children (SNNA) to a full ministry-level body, the Ministry of Adolescents and Children (MINNA), giving it greater access to high-level political discussions and its own budget. (3,31,52,53) 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. (36,37)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

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

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Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MTESS)	Enforces laws related to child labor; inspects workplaces for child labor; and fines companies found in violation of labor laws. Refers cases involving criminal violation of child labor to the MINNA. (3,9,10)
National Police	Maintain a special unit of 33 police officers, Anti-TIP Unit of the Paraguayan National Police, who handle complaints regarding trafficking in persons, including children, with offices in 5 cities. (3,9,10)
Public Ministry (Prosecutor's Office)	Enforces criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor by investigating and prosecuting violators and providing support to local prosecutors throughout Paraguay. (3,10) Also maintains the Specialized Unit to Combat Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. (3)
Ministry of Adolescents and Children (MINNA)	Maintains a unit dedicated to fighting child trafficking and a hotline to report cases of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children. Provides social services to victims referred by law enforcement agencies. (3,9,10,24)
Attorney General's Office	Investigates and prosecutes cases of child labor involving human trafficking through the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit. Comprises 3 specialized prosecutors based in Asunción and 35 assistants. (3,9,18)
Ministry of Women's Affairs	Provides social services to female victims of human trafficking, half of whom are estimated to be children. Houses an office staffed with five personnel dedicated to combating trafficking of children. (3,9,10)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2018, labor law enforcement agencies in Paraguay took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the MTESS 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	2017	2018
Labor Inspectorate Funding	1.1 million (7)	1.1 million (3)
Number of Labor Inspectors	35 (7)	26 (3)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (7)	No (3)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (7)	N/A (54)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	667 (7)	684 (3)
Number Conducted at Worksite	275 (7)	234 (3)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	27 (7)	137 (10)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	27 (7)	30 (3)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	27 (7)	6 (3)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (7)	Yes (3)

In 2018, the MTESS, in cooperation with Project Okakuaa, opened a new regional office in Filadelfia, located in the Chaco region and developed a campaign (*Chaco Paraguayo con Trabajo Decente*) to inform the public about its opening and to promote decent working conditions. (3,52) The MTESS' General Directorate for the Protection of Children and Adolescents also created a Complaints and Follow-up Office which is responsible for directing these types of requests to other areas within MTESS or to other relevant public agencies such as the anti-trafficking unit. (3)

Although Paraguay has ratified ILO C. 81, its labor inspectors are contractors rather than public officials and there are no inspectors dedicated solely to child labor issues. (3) Due to the instability of contract employment, the authority and training of these labor inspectors may be called into question. (55) The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Paraguay's workforce, which includes over 3 million workers. According to the ILO's recommendation of 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in developing economies, Paraguay would employ about 229 inspectors. (53,56,57) Government agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and labor organizations agree that inadequate funding and the insufficient number of labor inspectors hamper the labor inspectorate's capacity to enforce child labor laws, especially in the informal sector, including in agriculture and domestic work. (3,7,23) The inspectorate is particularly limited by the lack of dedicated vehicles or travel funds. (3,7)

An additional constraint to labor law enforcement is the lack of efficient and timely cooperation by judicial authorities in granting workplace inspection search warrants to the Public Ministry and the MTESS when an employer does not permit an inspector to enter a workplace to conduct an inspection. The system is paper-based and orders routinely take more than 3 months to arrive. (3,8-11,58) Research was unable to determine whether the government has implemented a 2016 agreement with judicial and law enforcement authorities that would accelerate the authorization of search warrants.

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2018, criminal law enforcement agencies in Paraguay 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 lack of a referral mechanism between criminal authorities and social services.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (7)	N/A (3)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (7)	Yes (3)
Number of Investigations	15 (7)	376 (3)
Number of Violations Found	15 (55)	107 (3)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	15 (55)	Unknown (3)
Number of Convictions	14 (55)	Unknown (3)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (55)	Yes (59)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	No (7)	No (3)

During the reporting period, the MTESS carried out both proactive and reactive inspections in sectors and geographical areas where children are at high risk of engaging in child labor, although inspections were general and not specifically seeking incidents of child labor. (3) The Attorney General's Office had 5 prosecutors, including a lead prosecutor, and 45 assistants specialized in and dedicated to combating trafficking in persons (TIP) who worked with other prosecutors throughout the country to investigate and prosecute traffickers. (31) In 2018, for the first time ever, the MINNA set aside a small budget specifically for TIP victim assistance, although the exact amount was not known. (31) The Attorney General's Office, in conjunction with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, conducted 4 training sessions on labor trafficking with approximately 800 government participants, including prosecutors, investigators, judges, migration officials, and inspectors. (31) During the reporting period, the MINNA assisted 70 human trafficking victims, of whom 48 received assistance at the MINNA-funded specialized shelter for underage victims of sex trafficking. (31) In May, the MINNA also conducted a nationwide public awareness and prevention campaign against child abuse, including sexual exploitation and human trafficking. (31)

However, government agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and labor organizations have observed a need for more specialized prosecutors to support local prosecutors nationwide and increase the Public Ministry's

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ability to investigate and prosecute cases involving human trafficking. (8,9,11,15) In addition, investigations were limited by insufficient resources, including vehicles, fuel, and logistical support. Overall, Paraguay's criminal law enforcement agencies lack resources, including staff and training, to sufficiently identify, investigate, and prosecute cases of the worst forms of child labor. As a result, the number of convictions of crimes related to the worst forms of child labor is insufficient and existing penalties are inadequate deterrents. (3,7-11,15,60) In 2018, the National Police's Anti-Trafficking Unit also reported that the budget allocated to anti-TIP efforts had decreased, forcing the closure of an office in Encarnación and lowering the staff from 50 to 38. (31)

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 adequate coordination of efforts to address child labor, including a lack of financial and human resources.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate the Exploitation of Children (CONAETI)	Leads government efforts against child labor and includes representatives from MTESS, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the MINNA and other government agencies, and labor union representatives, industry associations, and NGOs. (3,10) In 2018, CONAETI updated its action plan for the 2018–2020 period, with the objective of strengthening the actions of the commission. (52)
Inter-Institutional Working Group on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking	Coordinates inter-agency efforts to combat all forms of trafficking in persons, including child trafficking, and collects and reports statistics on those efforts. Headed by the Ministry of Foreign Relations and mandated to collect and report statistics on trafficking. (3,10,19,61) The group held two plenary sessions and three committee sessions in 2018. (31)
Defense Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CODENIs)	Coordinate efforts to protect children's rights at the municipal level, including by maintaining a registry of adolescent workers and coordinating with vocational training programs for adolescents. (10,36) During the reporting period, CODENIs started a "CODENI in Your Community" series in which counselors began monthly visits to schools targeted by the Okakuaa Project to provide specialized guidance to families to prevent critical situations of child labor, link cases to the judiciary system, and increase awareness of the computer system that is used to register adolescent workers. (52) Also, in coordination with the Regional Office in Guairá and the MTESS, CODENIs led meetings to discuss the <i>Registro del Adolescente Trabajador</i> , a computer system that is used to register adolescent workers, and to inform companies and rural establishments on the legal provisions that must be met to hire adolescents. (52)

On September 13, 2018, following changes in government leadership, the new Minister of Labor Carla Bacigalupo and the new Minister of Adolescents and Children (MINNA) Teresa Martinez signed an agreement to work actively to combat the worst forms of child labor. (52) At this same meeting, representatives from the General Direction of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses also reported that they are working on the inclusion of a child labor module in their annual survey, the *Encuesta Permanente de Hogares* (EPH) for 2019. (52)

While the Inter-Institutional Working Group for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons was effective in fostering dialogue and coordination among government agencies on anti-TIP efforts, it faced challenges in collecting and reporting statistics and a lack of participation from all relevant government agencies. (31) Government agencies responsible for addressing child labor share information and coordinate efforts informally, but coordination between the MTESS and the Ministries of Education and Health remains insufficient to combat the worst forms of child labor. In addition, the Defense Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CODENIs) require additional financial and human resources to fulfill their mission to address child labor. (3,8-10,18,62)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established relevant policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including implementation.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents (2018–2023)†	Aims to raise awareness and strengthen enforcement of child labor laws. Provides child laborers with access to free quality education and offers livelihood alternatives for their families. (3,8,10) The government continued to support this strategy and updated it in 2018. (3,63)
National Strategy to Prevent Forced Labor	Aims to prevent and eradicate forced labor and care for victims. (62) The government did not provide information on actions taken under this strategy in 2018 for inclusion in this report.
National Plan for Development (2014–2030)	Aims to reduce social exclusion and poverty, including by preventing and eliminating child labor. (64) The government continued to implement this plan during the reporting period. The Technical Secretariat for Planning worked with UN agencies and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on implementation. (59)
National Plan on Human Rights	Promotes human rights, including the prevention and elimination of child labor and forced labor. (65) The government did not provide information on actions taken under this plan in 2018 for inclusion in this report.
Inter-Institutional Agreement on Government Procurement	Prohibits government procurement of goods or services involving child labor. Established between the MINNA and the National Bureau for Public Contracts. (66) The government did not provide information on actions taken under this agreement in 2018 for inclusion in this report.

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

In 2018, the government updated the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents for the 2018–2023 period. (3,67) The plan includes goals of institutional strengthening of the MINNA, CODENIs and the MTESS, increased training and awareness campaigns on the worst forms of child labor, and improving education throughout the country. (67) The Government of Paraguay used the United Nations Millennium Goals as a guideline for the creation of the updated plan. (67)

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 coverage and funding to fully address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
USDOL-Funded Projects	USDOL projects that aim to eliminate child labor, including its worst forms, through research, improved monitoring and enforcement, policy development, and awareness-raising. These projects include Attaining Lasting Change (ATLAS), a \$7.5 million project which aims to build the capacity of host governments to more adequately combat child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking; Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor (CLEAR), implemented by the ILO in 11 countries; and Paraguay Okakuaa (Paraguay Progresses), a \$6 million project implemented by Partners of the Americas. (68,69) For additional information about USDOL's work, please visit our website.
Immediate Assistance Fund†	Provides immediate, temporary assistance to victims of child labor and human trafficking. Established by the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Attorney General's office with support from International Organization for Migration. (3) In 2018, assistance included psychological examinations, hotel stays, assisted returns home, and food and furniture donations. (59)
Embrace Program (Programa Abrazo)†	MINNA program to assist children engaged in exploitative work by providing them and their families with health and education services, food deliveries, and cash transfers conditioned on children's school attendance and withdrawal from work. (3,70) Works closely with the NGO Fortalecer in the implementation of ILO-IPEC programs and with the Sugarcane Growers' Association, Ministry of Education and Culture, and CONAETI to set up programs tailored to at-risk children who work during the sugarcane harvesting season. (10) From January to June 2018, the program attended to 10,858 children. (71)
Combating Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents in Trips and Tourism†	National campaign of the National Secretariat for Tourism and the Association of Female Tourism Executives to raise awareness on protecting children from commercial sexual exploitation. (18) Launched campaign in the Department of Itapúa in November 2018. (72)

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

Program	Description
Promotion of Decent Work in the Cotton Supply Chain (2016–2018)	Government of Brazil-funded project implemented by the ILO to promote decent work in cotton through exchanges on combating poverty and discrimination, preventing and eradicating child labor and forced labor, formalizing employment, and promoting youth employment and equality. (73,74) Due to implementation delays, this project remained ongoing in 2018. (59)
Well-Being Conditional Cash Transfer Program (Tekoporã)†	Government-administered program through the Secretariat for Social Action. Provides conditional cash transfers to families in rural communities. (9) Incorporates aspects of the Embrace Program, such as the family monitoring methodology, to ensure participant children do not engage in child labor. (10) In 2018, the program included an additional 118 families in the Department of Guairá. World Bank officials noted that their research shows it is the most successful social program in Paraguay in combating poverty and child labor. (75,76)

† Program is funded by the Government of Paraguay.

The 2012 Law Against Trafficking in Persons requires the Ministry of Women's Affairs to provide compensation and financial assistance to victims of sexual and labor trafficking, including minors. In 2018, in contrast to previous reporting periods, the Ministry of Women's Affairs did allocate a small amount of funding specifically for victim compensation and financial assistance, although NGO and government officials reported that compensation took too long to be helpful and in some cases drew unwanted attention to the victim. (9,11,15,31,45,77) The Ministry of Women's Affairs also conducted training for 1,500 individuals in 2018 in at-risk communities and high-risk industries, including hospitality, on the nature of TIP and avoiding victimization. (31) Although Paraguay has programs that target child labor, the coverage and funding of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem, and programs are limited by the absence of government education and health services in rural areas. Additional programs are needed to reach the large numbers of working children, especially in agriculture, including cattle herding and domestic work. (7,9,11,15)

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 Paraguay (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2018
	Raise the minimum age for work to the age of completion of compulsory education.	2018
Enforcement	Ensure that the National Police's Anti-Trafficking Unit is properly funded.	2018
	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by permitting inspectors to determine and assess penalties for child labor violations.	2016 – 2018
	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by making labor inspectors public officials rather than contractors.	2017 – 2018
	Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice and increase the funding and resources available to the labor inspectorate, including dedicated vehicles and travel funds, to build enforcement capacity to address child labor in the informal sector.	2009 – 2018
	Implement the agreement to accelerate authorization of workplace inspection search warrants to improve the cooperation mechanisms among judicial authorities and labor enforcement officials.	2013 – 2018
	Publish information on the number of prosecutions initiated and the number of convictions on cases related to the worst forms of child labor.	2018
	Establish a referral mechanism between criminal authorities and social services to ensure that victims of the worst forms of child labor receive appropriate services.	2016 – 2018
	Increase efforts to prosecute crimes related to the exploitation of children in the worst forms of child labor, including by hiring and training more specialized prosecutors; providing resources, such as vehicles and fuel, to enable investigations in remote areas; and increasing penalties for crimes.	2012 – 2018
	Discontinue the practice of allowing children to shine shoes in government buildings, including the Supreme Court building.	2017 – 2018

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Coordination	Strengthen interagency coordinating mechanisms, with particular focus on the communication between the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security and the Ministries of Education and Health, to combat child labor, including its worst forms.	2013 – 2018
	Ensure that the Inter-Institutional Working Group for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons fulfills its mandates, including in collecting and reporting statistics.	2018
	Provide additional financial and human resources to the Defense Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents to strengthen their ability to address child labor at the municipal level.	2017 – 2018
Government Policies	Publish information on activities taken under key policies that address child labor, including its worst forms.	2018
Social Programs	Further expand government programs to assist more families and children affected by child labor, including in agriculture and domestic work.	2010 – 2018
	Increase access to education for children vulnerable to child labor, particularly children with disabilities and children living in rural and indigenous communities where language barriers and lack of teachers is prevalent.	2014 – 2018
	Ensure that financial assistance programs for child trafficking and forced labor victims are properly funded.	2018

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