

In 2017, Zambia made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government launched an Education Enhancement Project, which aims to strengthen teacher training and increase access to education in rural areas. However, children in Zambia continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also engage in child labor in agriculture. The government drastically reduced the number of labor inspectors and funding for the Labor Inspectorate during the reporting period. In addition, the Education Act does not specify the school-going or compulsory education age, and human trafficking laws are discordant with international standards because they require threats, the use of force, or coercion to be established for the crime of child trafficking.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Zambia engage in the worst forms of child labor, including commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also engage in child labor in agriculture. (1; 2) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Zambia.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	28.1 (992,722)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	65.2
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	27.6
Primary Completion Rate (%)		78.7

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2013, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (3)

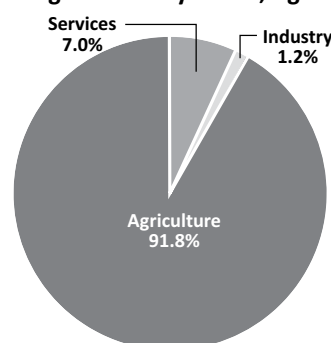
Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's Analysis of Statistics from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2008. (4)

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	Work in the production of cotton,† tobacco,† and other cash crops, including applying fertilizers, grading or ridging fields, harvesting crops, spraying pesticides,† transplanting, watering, and weeding crops (1; 5; 6)
	Raising and herding† cattle (7; 8; 6)
	Fishing,† working on boats, cutting and smoking fish (9; 6)
	Production of charcoal† (6)
Industry	Mining gems, including amethysts and emeralds (10)
	Mining ore, including lead, zinc, iron ore, and copper (10)
	Work in quarries, including carrying heavy loads,† conducting rudimentary mine drilling,† crushing stones, and scavenging mine dump sites (8; 11; 6)
Services	Domestic work (12; 13; 6)
	Street work, including begging and vending (12; 6)

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



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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)
	Forced labor in agriculture, construction, domestic work, mining, and textile production, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2)

† 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 trafficked inside Zambia are primarily trafficked from rural to urban areas for domestic work and forced labor in agriculture. (10; 14; 15) Some children in Zambia are forced by *Jerabo* gangs, which are illegal mining syndicates in the Copperbelt province, to load trucks with stolen copper ore. (16; 2) Along Zambia's borders, the commercial sexual exploitation of children is common. (14) The government has yet to release information on child labor from its 2008, 2012, or 2014 Labour Force Surveys, although the general Labour Force Survey results, which did not include data on child labor, were released in 2011, 2014, and 2016. (17; 18)

Long distances to schools create a barrier to education. (1; 19; 20) Families also face costs for basic education, including fees for school supplies, which prevent some children from attending school. (16; 1; 13) Inadequate educational infrastructure, materials, and a high student-teacher ratio further hinder students. (6; 20)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Zambia 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 Zambia's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including an undefined age range for compulsory education.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 24 of the Constitution; Article 12 of the Employment Act (21; 22; 23)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 17 of the Employment of Young Persons and Children Act; Article 3 of the Prohibition of Employment of Young Persons and Children (Hazardous Labour) Order (24; 25)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children	Yes		Prohibition of Employment of Young Persons and Children (Hazardous Labour) Order (25)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 14 and 24 of the Constitution; Articles 143 and 263 of the Penal Code; Article 3 of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act of 2008 (21; 23; 26; 27)

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

Standard	Meets International Standards: Yes/No	Age	Legislation
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	No		Article 24 of the Constitution; Article 143 of the Penal Code; Articles 2–3 (1 – 4) of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act of 2008 (21; 23; 26; 27)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 144 of the Penal Code; Article 2 of the Employment of Young Persons and Children Act (24; 27)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 2 of the Employment of Young Persons and Children Act (24)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment			
State Compulsory	N/A*		
State Voluntary	Yes	18	Article 14 of the Defence Act (28)
Non-state	Yes	18	Article 3 of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act of 2008 (26)
Compulsory Education Age	No		Article 16 of the Education Act, 2011 (29)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 15 of the Education Act, 2011 (29)

* No conscription (28)

Penalties for child prostitution violations in the Employment of Young Persons and Children Act are different from those in the Penal Code. Although the Penal Code treats child prostitution as a felony, with a minimum 20-year jail sentence, the Employment of Young Persons and Children Act treats it as a civil penalty and imposes a fine of \$35 to \$165 and possible discretionary prison time. In practice, the heavier statute of the Penal Code would be applied; however, research did not uncover any such prosecutions in recent years. (27; 25) In addition, human trafficking provisions remain discordant with international standards because they require threats, the use of force, or coercion to be established for the crime of child trafficking. (26)

The Education Act requires the government to provide free education up to the seventh grade and stipulates that education is compulsory for children of “school-going age.” (10; 29; 30) The Act, however, does not set a specific age or define “school-going age,” which may allow children to leave school before they are legally able to work. (29) The lack of standards in this area may increase the risk of children’s involvement in the worst forms of child labor.

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 and Social Security (MLSS) that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MLSS)	Implement, enforce, and regulate child labor laws. (10; 31; 18) Advise other government agencies on child labor issues and coordinate government efforts to combat child labor. (18; 6)
Zambia Police Service Child Protection Unit	Work with the MLSS, District Street Children Committees, and the Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Child Development to identify and remove vulnerable children from the streets. Place rescued street children with families, in foster care, or in children’s homes. (17) Work with immigration officials to combat child trafficking; with local officials to combat crimes against children; and with schools to educate and sensitize children about abuse. Collaborate with the Ministry of Justice to investigate and prosecute child labor cases. (32)
Zambia Police Service Victim Support Unit	Handle the enforcement of laws against human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, and the use of children in illicit activities. (31; 33)
Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCDMCH)	Provide social services to victims of human trafficking or sexual abuse. Operate one government shelter in Luapula province and oversee two NGO shelters. (2)
Ministry of Justice	Investigate and prosecute child labor cases. (32)

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Labor Law Enforcement

In 2017, labor law enforcement agencies in Zambia took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the MLSS that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including human and financial resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$350,049 (34)	Unknown (35)
Number of Labor Inspectors	110 (2)	Unknown (35)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (6)	No (6)
Training for Labor Inspectors		
Initial Training for New Employees	Yes (34)	N/A (6)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (34)	N/A (6)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (17)	No (6)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	980 (34)	723 (6)
Number Conducted at Worksites	980 (34)	723 (6)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties were Imposed	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that were Collected	Unknown	Unknown
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (34)	Yes (6)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (34)	Yes (6)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (34)	Yes (6)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (34)	Yes (6)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (34)	Yes (6)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (34)	Yes (6)

In 2016, the MLSS employed 110 labor inspectors, but the figure for 2017 was unknown. (6; 34) Without a documented increase, the number of labor inspectors likely remains insufficient for the size of Zambia's workforce, which includes approximately 6.9 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed economies, Zambia would employ about 172 inspectors. (36; 37; 38) The MLSS has stated that an insufficient budget, insufficient office space, inadequate training, and a lack of transportation and fuel have prevented it from adequately conducting inspections countrywide. (6; 39) The MLSS conducts labor inspections in registered private institutions only; it does not conduct investigations, allowed by law, in unregistered institutions, where child labor is more likely to be found. (40) A referral mechanism exists through District Child Labor Committees that allows labor officers to refer cases to NGOs; however, not all districts have a committee due to a lack of government funding. (31) The MLSS has stated that all penalties are administrated by the courts. (6)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2017, criminal law enforcement agencies in Zambia 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 with training for criminal investigators.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Training for Investigators		
Initial Training for New Employees	Yes (2)	N/A (6)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (34)	N/A (6)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (41)	No (6)
Number of Investigations	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Violations Found	14 (2)	Unknown

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2016	2017
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	0 (2)	Unknown
Number of Convictions	0 (2)	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (34)	Yes (6)

Research was unable to determine specific enforcement activities and their results. (6)

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 efficacy in accomplishing mandates.

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

Coordinating Body	Role and Description
MLSS-CLU	Coordinate with District Child Labor Committees (DCLCs) in Zambia's 114 districts to increase local awareness and mobilize communities against child labor, including its worst forms. (10; 31) Research was unable to determine coordination activities performed during the year.
DCLCs	Respond to child labor complaints at the local level and file complaints to the MLSS. Serve as the main referral mechanism for social welfare services. Comprises the Zambia Police Service; the MLSS; the Ministry of Community Development, Mother, and Child Health; and civil society stakeholders. (10) In 2017, the DCLC for the Chipata district was active, convening several meetings to assess current efforts and to plan activities to combat child labor. (42)
National Steering Committee on Child Labor	Advise and oversee on child labor matters, including implementation of the Hazardous Work Statutory Instrument. Comprises government representatives, employers, trade unions, and civil society members. (6; 33)

The Anti-Trafficking Interministerial Committee met during the year and hosted the Malawi anti-trafficking inter-ministerial committee. (43) In addition, due to overlapping responsibilities and communication lapses, individual agency mandates may not be effective in some cases. (43)

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 implementation.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Child Labor Policy	Created an action plan and designates responsible agencies to address child labor issues. (10; 30; 44) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the policy during the reporting period.
National Employment and Labor Market Policy	Aims to eliminate child labor. Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the policy during the reporting period.
UN's Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (2016–2021)	\$806 million framework that builds upon the previous UNDAF but with a stronger emphasis on partnership. (45) Aims to prevent the worst forms of child labor and protect children. (46)

In 2017, the government was in the process of revising the National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labor. (6) Research found no evidence of implementation of the National Child Labor Policy and National Employment and Labor Market Policy during the reporting period. The Seventh National Development Plan outlines some activities that indirectly aim at reducing child labor. (6) In addition, the government has not included child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the Education Policy and the National Youth Policy. (10; 17)

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At the 2017 Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor, the government made pledges concerning the ratification and domestication of international labor standards related to eliminating child labor; amending legislation to effectively address child labor; reviewing the Action Plan on Child Labor to take into account outside advice; adopting a strategy and action plan for youth employment, school to work transition and empowerment; and developing a social protection policy to better protect child labor and forced labor victims and their families. (47)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

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

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor†

Program	Description
USDOL-funded Projects	USDOL projects which aim to combat child labor. Includes: EMPOWER: Increasing Economic and Social Empowerment for Adolescent Girls and Vulnerable Women in Zambia, \$5 million, 4-year project implemented by Winrock International and the Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues Project, implemented by the ILO in approximately 40 countries. (48; 49) Additional information is available on the USDOL website.
ARISE: Achieving Reduction of Child Labor in Support of Education	Joint initiative between Japan Tobacco International, Winrock International, and the ILO - that provides strategies to reduce the worst forms of child labor in tobacco-growing communities in Brazil, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zambia. (50; 51; 19)
Social Cash Transfer Program‡	Provides funds to families and increases school enrollment. (17; 31; 52; 53) Participants reached through the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare increased to 590,000 households from 242,000 in 2016. (43)
Zambia National Service Skills Training Camps†	Provides life-skills training camps for at-risk youth, including for victims of the worst forms of child labor. (30) In 2017 the government established youth skills training centers within the Zambia National Service Skills Training Camps. (43)
World Bank-Funded Projects	Projects to improve access to education, particularly for girls. Includes: Education Enhancement Project (2017 – 2022)*, a \$60 million project to improve math and science instruction in primary and secondary schools and Girls' Education and Women's Empowerment and Livelihood Project (GEWEL) (2015-2020), a \$64 million project to provide livelihoods support to extremely poor households and increase secondary school enrollment for girls. (54; 55) By the end of 2017, the GEWEL Project supported 8,669 girls in secondary school. (56)

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Zambia.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (10; 57)

Although Zambia has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem in all relevant sectors because no programs target child labor in agriculture, domestic work, or commercial sexual exploitation. In addition, shelter space is insufficient, resulting in some victims being temporarily housed in jail. (58; 2)

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 Zambia (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Accede to the CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.	2013 – 2017
	Determine through statutory instrument the “school-going age” for compulsory education, consistent with international law.	2012 – 2017
	Harmonize legislation to ensure that penalties for child commercial sexual exploitation are consistent.	2009 – 2017
	Ensure that laws prohibiting child trafficking do not require threats, the use of force, or coercion to be considered child trafficking.	2017

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Institutionalize training for labor inspectors, investigators, and law enforcement, including through periodic refresher courses.	2010 – 2017
	Authorize the Labor Inspectorate to assess penalties.	2017
	Publish complete information on Labor Inspectorate funding, number of labor inspectors, number of violations found, penalties imposed and collected, investigations conducted, prosecutions initiated, and convictions achieved.	2014 – 2017
	Ensure the number of labor inspectors is sufficient to meet the ILO's technical advice.	2012 – 2017
	Ensure that labor inspectors receive adequate resources to enforce labor laws throughout the country and that inspections cover all areas in which children work, including registered and unregistered businesses.	2010 – 2017
	Establish District Child Labor Committees in remaining districts.	2011 – 2017
Coordination	Improve lines of communication and clarify responsibilities among agencies to improve effectiveness and referrals to social services.	2011 – 2017
Government Policies	Provide sufficient funding to implement existing policies.	2012 – 2017
	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the Education Policy and National Youth Policy.	2013 – 2017
Social Programs	Publish the data on child labor from the 2008, 2012, and 2014 Labor Force Surveys.	2011 – 2017
	Provide free education to all children as required by law, improve school infrastructure, decrease the distance students must travel to access education, and increase the number of qualified teachers.	2012 – 2017
	Expand existing programs to address the full scope of the child labor problem in all relevant sectors, including agriculture, domestic work, and commercial sexual exploitation.	2011 – 2017

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