

In 2014, Jordan made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government adopted a new law that expands protection for child laborers including children engaged in street work and garbage collection; worked with international organizations to improve access to education for Jordanian and Syrian refugee children; increased the number of work inspections, including inspection campaigns in targeted sectors; and finalized a child labor monitoring system in cooperation with the ILO. However, children in Jordan are engaged in child labor, including in agriculture, and in the worst forms of child labor, including in domestic work as a result of human trafficking. Child labor remains prevalent among Syrian refugee children, whose access to education is limited. In addition, programs to combat the worst forms of child labor are insufficient to adequately address the extent of the problem.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Jordan are engaged in child labor, including agriculture. Children are also engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in domestic service as a result of human trafficking. (1, 2) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Jordan.

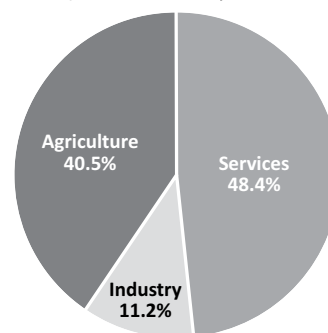
Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	0.8 (11,255)
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	94.9
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	0.7
Primary Completion Rate (%)		92.8

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2011, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015.(3)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from National Child Labor Survey, 2007.(4)

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.

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Farming,* activities unknown (2, 5-10)
	Mining*† (5)
	Painting* (6)
Industry	Construction,† activities unknown (6-12)
	Manufacturing, activities unknown (8, 9, 11)
	Carpentry† (6, 10, 12)
	Blacksmithing*† (6, 12)
	Rock quarrying*† (10)
	Electrical repair*† (10, 13)
Services	Repairing automobiles† (12-14)
	Guiding tours (15-17)
	Street work,† including vending (6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17-19)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Begging (10, 12, 15, 19)
	Scavenging scrap metal* (14, 20)
	Domestic work† (2, 6, 9, 13)
	Food services (10, 11, 13, 14)
	Hotel services*† (2, 14)
	Hairdressing (9, 10, 15)
	Retail (8-10, 14)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced begging sometimes as a result of human trafficking* (1, 19)
	Domestic work as a result of human trafficking* (19, 21)
	Commercial sexual exploitation* sometimes as a result of human trafficking* (22, 23)

* Evidence of this activity is limited and/or the extent of the problem is unknown.

† 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.

According to a Ministry of Labor official, about half of the child laborers identified by the Ministry of Labor during inspections in 2014 were Syrian refugee children.(14) Many of these children are the sole breadwinners of their families.(10, 24) Syrian refugee boys work primarily in retail and services, while some Syrian girls work in domestic service and agriculture.(10) Reports state that Syrian refugee children peddle goods inside and outside the Za’atari refugee camp; there are also increasing numbers of Syrian refugee children begging in Jordanian cities.(19) The influx of refugees has led to economic distress in the country; as a result, more Jordanian families have put their children to work as well.(25)




In places where the refugee population is steadily increasing, such as in the northern regions and in Amman, primary schools are not able to meet the increasing demand and lack sufficient space and teaching staff to accommodate all school-aged children.(26) Syrian children living in host communities are granted access to Jordanian public schools. However, as of January 2015, only 129,000 of the 220,000 school-aged Syrians in Jordan were enrolled in schools, and approximately 90,000 had no access to formal education due to space constraints and other issues.(27) The Ministry of Education has initiated a split school day (two shifts) at almost 100 schools, for Jordanian children to attend in the morning and Syrian children to attend in the afternoon in order to accommodate the large number of students. Yet, more children drop out of school and more children attending double-shifted schools have time to work, even while remaining enrolled in school, because school hours are shorter.(14)

There is limited evidence of temporary marriage of Syrian refugee girls as a form of commercial sexual exploitation.(9)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Jordan 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 has established laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 73 of Labor Code (29)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 74 of Labor Code (29); Article 2 of Ministerial Order of 2011 (30)
Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children	Yes		Article 2 of Ministerial Order of 2011 (30)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 3(b) of Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking (31)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 3(a) of Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking (31)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 306, 310, 311, 315 and 319 of Penal Code (32); Article 3(b) of Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking (31)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 8 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (33)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 3(a) of the National Service Act (34)
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	N/A		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Articles 7(a.2) and 10(b) of the Education Act (35)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 20 of the Constitution (36)

In November 2014, Jordan adopted a Child Law that expanded the definition of “juveniles in need of protection” to include child laborers, such as street vendors and garbage collectors. The Child Law gave the Ministry of Social Development the responsibility for protecting children in these categories and for establishing a new Child Labor Unit under the law to work in coordination with the Ministry of Labor’s Child Labor Unit.(14)

The Ministry of Labor developed a draft manual to simplify the categorization of hazardous work in the Ministerial Order of 2011.(37)

The Government does not accept volunteers to join the armed forces.(38)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor (MOL)’s Child Labor Unit	Coordinate the Government’s child labor programs, direct child labor inspections, and ensure the enforcement of child labor laws.(2, 17)
MOL’s Directorate of Labor Affairs and Inspection	Carry out labor inspections, including child labor violations.(1, 39) Identify cases of child labor through work site visits and refer to relevant services. Register child labor cases into a National Child Labor Database, which allows ministries to monitor and track children as they are identified and referred to services.(40) Maintains a hotline to receive labor-related complaints, including complaints of child labor.(41)
Minister of Justice’s (MOJ) Public Security Directorate (PSD), Criminal Investigation Unit (CID)	Investigate and prosecute human trafficking crimes and violations of Jordan’s Penal Code, including allegations of the worst forms of child labor.(14)
MOJ’s National Screening Team	Identify victims of human trafficking.(19)
Joint Anti-Trafficking Unit of MOL and PSD	Investigate cases of human trafficking and forced labor, refer cases for prosecution, and coordinate with foreign embassies to identify victims of human trafficking and repatriate workers.(19)
Municipal Business License Inspectorate	Inspect the business licenses of businesses in the municipality.(37)

Law enforcement agencies in Jordan took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms.

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Labor Law Enforcement

In 2014, the Ministry of Labor employed 160 labor inspectors who were responsible for enforcing all aspects of the Labor Code, including child labor. The Ministry of Labor's Child Labor Unit held 11 training sessions, in which 139 labor inspectors were trained on child labor issues.⁽¹⁴⁾ However, due to frequent rotations of Government employees within and among ministries, currently, only 80 of the 160 labor inspectors have been trained on child labor issues. The Child Labor Unit has identified the need for updating the training modules to include information on child labor among Syrian refugees.⁽¹⁴⁾ The lack of resources prevented the Ministry of Labor's Directorate of Labor Affairs and Inspection from inspecting the agricultural sector.⁽¹⁴⁾

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Labor's Child Labor Unit carried out 1,426 inspections, including unannounced visits, as well as inspections in response to complaints, and identified 1,060 child laborers. In 2014, the Child Labor Unit conducted inspection campaigns targeting the auto-repair and mechanical industry, the restaurant industry, and highway coffee shops, which is largely an informal sector.⁽¹⁴⁾ During the inspections, the Ministry of Labor issued 633 warnings and 235 fines.⁽¹⁴⁾ A warning requires the employer to sign a pledge certifying that it will cease employing children within one week. Without a signed pledge, the Ministry can close a business within one week.⁽¹⁴⁾

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2014, the Joint Anti-Trafficking Unit participated in and contributed to almost 30 training sessions offered by international organizations and NGOs.⁽²⁵⁾ These organizations also held training sessions for prosecutors and border guards. As a result of the training sessions, observers noted that the Unit has expanded its definition of human trafficking.⁽²⁵⁾ The Joint Anti-Trafficking Unit published awareness-raising brochures about the indicators of human trafficking, which they distributed in police stations, customs offices, and specific sectors in which human trafficking occurs. The Joint Anti-Trafficking Unit investigated 311 potential cases of human trafficking in 2014.⁽²⁵⁾ Of these, 53 were identified as human trafficking cases and were referred to the Prosecutor General. The 53 cases involved 121 female and 40 male victims, including 11 girls involved in commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking.⁽²⁵⁾ The Unit referred 91 male and 24 female suspects to the Prosecutor General. The Unit received information for potential cases from various sources, including the Ministry of Labor's hotline.⁽²⁵⁾ Research did not find information regarding the number of investigators.

A technical subcommittee of the National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking was reviewing the Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking to close loopholes, as well as drafting an official referral mechanism for referring human trafficking victims to an under-construction shelter. Meanwhile, an informal referral network is operating to place human trafficking victims in temporary shelter.⁽²⁵⁾ The Government referred 122 human trafficking victims to three organizations for services and assistance in 2014.⁽²⁵⁾

The Ministry of Justice registered 83 cases under the Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking in 2014. Of these, 20 resulted in convictions, 2 in acquittals, 1 case was dropped by general amnesty, and the rest were pending.⁽²⁵⁾ The sentences for the convictions ranged from 1 to 10 years' hard labor, 3 to 5 months' imprisonment, payment of court fees, a fine, or some combination thereof.⁽²⁵⁾

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Committee on Child Labor	Form new policy, amend legislation as necessary, and oversee the implementation of current child labor policy, including the National Framework to Combat Child Labor. Led by MOL. ⁽²⁷⁾ Includes the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development, the National Council on Family Affairs, as well as international and civil society organizations. ⁽²⁷⁾
The National Center for Family Affairs	Coordinate policy issues involving abused or exploited children. ⁽²⁾

Table 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor (cont)

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Steering Committee of the National Framework to Combat Child Labor	Coordinate referrals between Ministries of Labor, Education, and Social Development to identify child laborers, withdraw them from work, provide them with services, and monitor their progress.(27, 42)
National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking	Coordinate the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.(43) Chaired by MOJ. Other members include representatives from the Ministries of Labor, Foreign Affairs, Interior, Social Development, Health, Trade and Industry, as well as the National Council for Family Affairs, the National Commission on Human Rights, and the Joint Anti-Trafficking Unit of the Ministry of Labor and PSD CID.(25)

In 2014, the Steering Committee of the National Framework to Combat Child Labor usually met on a biweekly basis. The Ministries of Labor, Education, and Social Development, in cooperation with the ILO, finalized a child labor monitoring system (CLMS) that will act as a coordinating and referral mechanism, as well as a Web site for centralized data collection.(14) The Ministry of Labor manages the CLMS in coordination with the other two Ministries. In 2015, the pilot phase, conducted during the reporting period in Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa will be expanded to three additional governorates.(14) Likewise, in 2015, a bilingual (Arabic and English) Web site integrated with the CLMS will be launched for the public to be able to report cases of child labor. The Ministry of Education will track school dropout in efforts to encourage children to re-enter school.(14)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Jordan has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 7).

Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Framework to Combat Child Labor	Outlines the roles and responsibilities of the key government agencies, including the Ministries of Labor, Education, and Social Development; NGOs; and other stakeholders involved in identifying and responding to cases of child labor.(42) The Ministry of Labor's Child Labor Unit held training for 25 Ministry of Labor's inspectors on their role in the implementation of the National Framework to Combat Child Labor.(37)
Jordan Response Plan	Facilitates the country's humanitarian and development response to the needs of incoming Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities, a joint effort of the Government and the UN.(44) Includes elements aimed at reducing refugees' vulnerability to child labor through improved access to education.(45, 46)
The National Agenda (2007–2017)*	Provides a comprehensive reform framework for political, economic, and social policies, including the restructuring of Jordan's social safety net system.(47)

* Child labor elimination and prevention strategies do not appear to have been integrated into this policy.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2014, the Government of Jordan funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms. The Government has other programs that may have an impact on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Nonformal Education Centers‡	Consisting of 51 centers under the Ministry of Education throughout the country that seek to bring school dropouts, including those engaged in or at risk of child labor, back into the educational system. Children attend classes 3 hours a day in a flexible learning environment.(14) Target children aged 13 and older. Specially trained teachers work with small classes of about 20, and at the end of the curriculum, students earn a certificate equivalent to a 10th-grade education.(14)
Social Center in Marka‡	Funded by the Ministry of Labor and operated by the Ministry in cooperation with the ILO. Its activities include identifying child laborers, providing services, including nonformal education, training, and rehabilitation for school dropouts and child laborers, assisting families in finding alternate forms of supplemental income, and conducting awareness-raising sessions in the community. Served 165 children in 2014.(14)

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor (cont)

Program	Description
Nonformal Education Center in Petra‡	Part of a trilateral project between UNESCO, the ILO, and the Petra Authority that operates a nonformal education center and provides services to children at risk of child labor in the local tourism industry in the Um Sayhoun community and in Petra.(41, 48)
Moving Towards a Child-Labor Free Jordan (2010–2016)	\$4.04 million USDOL-funded, 6-year project implemented by ILO-IPEC to facilitate the Government of Jordan's implementation of the National Framework to Combat Child Labor, including conducting a national child labor survey.(49) During the reporting period, an online child labor monitoring database was launched and piloted for key government and nongovernment stakeholders to document cases of child labor and refer victims to services, including cases involving Syrian refugee children.(37)
Promising Futures: Reducing Child Labor in Jordan through Education and Sustainable Livelihoods (2010–2014)	\$4 million USDOL-funded, 4-year project implemented by Save the Children to reduce the number of children working in construction, manufacturing, informal services and the storage industry, as well as in domestic service. Serves beneficiaries in poverty-stricken areas with high numbers of child refugees, including East Amman, Mafraq, and Zarqa.(50)
Child Begging Assistance Campaign‡	Ministry of Social Development's program that implements an identification and services referral system for child beggars. Links children with shelter and education services. Returns children to their parents who must then pledge in writing that their children will not return to the street.(51)
Sustaining Quality Education and Promoting Skills Development Opportunities for Young Syrian Refugees in Jordan (2013–2015)*	\$5.6 million EU-funded, 2-year project implemented by UNESCO in cooperation with the Ministry of Education to offer informal and nonformal education for Syrian and Jordanian youth in Jordan.(52)
The National Aid Fund*‡	Ministry of Social Development's conditional cash transfer program that pays families approximately \$50 per month for withdrawing a child from the labor market and reenrolling the child in school.(41)

* The impact of this program on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Jordan.

As the Ministry of Social Development does not have a mandate regarding protection of Syrian refugee children, Government officials refer Syrian children identified through the child labor monitoring system to international and NGOs. The Ministry of Labor's Child Labor Unit has a process to refer Syrian child laborers to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.(14)

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Labor's Child Labor Unit broadcast 20 radio and TV spots and supported 3 public awareness sessions. In February 2014, in coordination with Save the Children, the Child Labor Unit hosted a conference entitled "My Dream is My Right" on child labor.(14)

Although Jordan has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs does not address the extent of the problem, including in human trafficking, domestic work, commercial sexual exploitation, begging, and other forms of street work.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Jordan (Table 9).

Table 9. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Ensure that the Ministry of Labor's inspectors have the resources to carry out inspection in the agricultural sector.	2014
	Collect and make publicly available data on the number of investigators responsible for criminal enforcement of child labor laws.	2013 – 2014
Government Policies	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention into the National Agenda.	2014
Social Programs	Expand programs to ensure equal access to education for all refugee children.	2013 – 2014
	Assess the impact that existing programs may have on child labor.	2010 – 2014
	Institute programs to address the worst form of child labor in domestic service as a result of human trafficking, domestic work, commercial sexual exploitation, begging and other forms of street work.	2013 – 2014

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