

In 2014, Togo made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government of Togo launched a microfinance project that granted loans to 324,000 individuals and implemented a conditional cash transfer project benefitting 214 villages. In addition, 265 primary schools were constructed as part of a World Bank-funded project. However, children in Togo are engaged in child labor in agriculture and in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced domestic work, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. The Government has not devoted sufficient resources to effectively enforce its child labor laws. Togo's social programs to combat the worst forms of child labor do not match the scope of the problem, and rely largely on NGOs and international organizations for implementation.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Togo are engaged in child labor, including in agriculture. Children are also engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced domestic work, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. (1-13) More than 70 percent of all working children in Togo, who are ages 5 to 14, are engaged in agriculture. The majority of children employed as domestic workers are girls ages 5 to 14. (1, 4-6, 9) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Togo.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	35.7 (616,132)
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	85.3
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	35.5
Primary Completion Rate (%)		77.4

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015. (14)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 4, 2010. (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	Harvesting cotton,* cocoa,* and coffee* (2, 4, 7, 11)
	Exposure to pesticides* while producing beans* and corn* (9, 11)
	Raising and herding cattle† (3, 4)
Industry	Excavating, crushing rocks, sifting gravel, and carrying heavy loads in quarries* and sand mining*† (1, 4, 10, 11, 15, 16)
	Work in carpentry* and tailoring* (4, 13, 17)
	Construction,* activities unknown (1, 7)
	Domestic work† (1, 5-13, 18)
Services	Carrying heavy loads and small-scale trading in markets (1-4, 7, 9-11, 13, 18)
	Begging*† (2-4)
	Operating motorcycle taxis,* auto and motorcycle repair* (1, 7, 17)
	Garbage scavenging* (1, 7)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced begging* (2, 4, 11)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1-4, 11, 13, 15)
	Farming,* domestic work, livestock raising,* and work in quarries* and markets, including carrying heavy loads each, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2-4, 11, 15, 19)

* 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.

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Some boys, known as *talibés*, are sent to Koranic schools for education and subsequently forced to beg in the streets by their teachers.(2, 4, 20) Children were also victims of human trafficking to neighboring countries, although the majority of child trafficking victims were exploited within the country.(2, 3, 13) The customary practice of *confiage*, which involves sending a child to a relative or friend to attend school in a larger town or city, may place children at risk of exploitation by internal human trafficking.(2, 4, 9, 13, 18, 19) Parents are often complicit in child trafficking as a result of *confiage*, and many traditional chiefs and leaders do not discourage the practice.(18)

Research found that many children lack access to education and birth registration. Many children in Togo are unable to access education due to a lack of schools and teachers, particularly in rural areas.(9, 12) Although education is free and compulsory by law, parents are responsible for paying associated fees and buying uniforms and school supplies, which makes education prohibitive to many families.(11, 21, 22) Approximately half of all children in Togo are not registered at birth due to the high cost, inaccessibility of registration centers, and the lack of awareness of its importance.(9, 11, 18) Unable to prove their citizenship, nonregistered children are vulnerable to human trafficking and may have difficulty obtaining education.(6, 9, 23) Research also found that children face widespread physical and sexual abuse in school.(9, 12) In addition, a source indicates that some boys perform farm work and some girls perform domestic duties, such as fetching water and laundry, for their schoolteachers.(12)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Togo 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	15	Article 150 of the Labor Code (24)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 151 the Labor Code; Articles 6-12 of Order N° 1464 MTEFP/DGTLS Determining the Work Prohibited to Children (24, 25)
Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations and/or Activities for Children	Yes		Articles 6-12 of Order N° 1464 MTEFP/DGTLS Determining the Work Prohibited to Children (25)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 4 and 151 of the Labor Code; Article 264 of the Children's Code (24, 26)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 151 of the Labor Code; Articles 2-6 of Law N° 2005-009 Suppressing Child Trafficking in Togo; Articles 264 and 411-414 of the Children's Code (24, 26, 27)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 151 of the Labor Code; Articles 264, and 387-390 of the Children's Code; Articles 91-94 of the Penal Code (24, 26, 28)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 151 of the Labor Code; Articles 264 and 405 of the Children's Code (24, 26)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		Article 426 of the Children's Code; Article 42 of Law N° 2007-010 Regarding the General Statue of the Togolese Armed Forces (26, 29)
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Article 426 of the Children's Code; Article 42 of Law N° 2007-010 Regarding the General Statue of the Togolese Armed Forces (26, 29)

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor (cont)

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15	Article 35 of the Constitution; Decree 2008-129/PR (21, 30)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 35 of the Constitution of 1992; Decree 2008-129/PR (21, 30)

* No conscription (29)

Although Order N° 1464 MTEFP/DGTLS Determining the Work Prohibited to Children and the Labor Code prohibit hazardous child labor, these laws do not establish penalties for violations.(24, 25) Additionally, Order N° 1464 MTEFP/DGTLS Determining the Work Prohibited to Children sets the minimum age for employment in most hazardous activities at age 18, with two exceptions. Children ages 16 to 17 may operate pulleys and winches, and girls ages 16 to 17 may be employed in stores' external displays, both of which may make children vulnerable to exploitative child labor.(25)

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, Employment and Social Security (MOL)	Enforce all labor laws, including child labor laws.(13) The Unit to Combat Child Labor (CELTE) within the MOL is responsible for withdrawing children from child labor situations, raising awareness, and collecting data.(4)
Ministry of Justice and Government Relations	Enforce criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor.(20)
Ministry of Social Action, Women's Empowerment and Literacy (MASPFA)	Raise awareness and enforce laws against the worst forms of child labor.(11, 15, 31) Provide technical assistance to regional and prefectural offices. The Directorate General for Child Protection within the MASPFA designs, coordinates, and evaluates the Government's child protection efforts.(13) Operates Allo 1011 hotline for reporting child abuse, including child trafficking.(2, 9, 13, 15, 32)
Child Protection Brigades	Investigate crimes with child victims, including child trafficking. Present in all five regions of Togo and operates as part of the National Police.(15, 33)

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

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2014, the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MOL) employed 86 labor inspectors, which was an increase from the 81 inspectors employed the previous year. However, this number is insufficient to adequately enforce child labor laws throughout the country given current resource constraints.(7, 15) The MOL acknowledges that its funding is insufficient, as there is no budget for travel, vehicles, fuel, or equipment.(11, 15, 21, 34) Moreover, inspectors primarily focus on the formal sector in urban areas, which excludes the majority of working children.(7, 11) Article 188 of the Labor Code permits inspectors to conduct unannounced visits, but research did not find information on whether unannounced visits were conducted during the reporting period. Additionally, labor inspectors do not have the authority to determine or assess penalties, and there is no referral mechanism between labor inspectors and social service providers.(7, 24)

Although inspections were carried out in 2014, information is not available on the number, type, or quality of inspections conducted, child labor violations found, or the number of citations and penalties issued. Additionally, it is not known how many child labor-related calls the Allo 1011 hotline received.(7)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2014, the French embassy sponsored two trainings to help national police, law enforcement officials, and prosecutors better identify victims of child labor and prosecute cases.(18) However, inspectors and law enforcement officials still lack the necessary resources and skills to effectively enforce the law; research also indicates that some law enforcement officials in regional offices do not have copies of existing child labor laws.(4, 11, 15, 17) The number of investigators, investigations, prosecutions, convictions, or penalties issued was not publicly available.

Research indicates it is rare for police to make arrests in cases involving child labor infractions, and perpetrators of child trafficking usually receive light sentences or are occasionally released.(7, 9, 18, 28) Additionally, Article 89 of the Penal Code proscribes imprisonment of 6 months to 2 years or a fine of \$40 to \$400 for the commercial sexual exploitation of children; however, those penalties might not be severe enough to deter offenders.(28) When victims of exploitative child labor are identified, the MOL's CELTE is responsible for transferring children to an appropriate shelter.(18)

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 for the Reception and Social Reinsertion of Trafficked Children (CNARSEVT)	Serve as the primary focal coordinating agency for child trafficking issues, maintaining a presence in all regions, prefectures, and villages.(13, 15, 18, 21, 35) Compile information and statistics on trafficking, raise awareness of child trafficking issues, and coordinate actions against the worst forms of child labor.(18) Respond to tips from the Allo 1011 hotline in conjunction with law enforcement officials and refer victims to NGOs for social services.(4, 11, 18) CELTE within the MOL functions as the CNARSEVT's secretariat.(13)
National Steering Committee for the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (CDN)	Led by the CELTE, the CDN includes 13 ministries, NGOs, and private-sector organizations combatting child labor. Coordinate and oversee all government efforts to combat child labor, including the approval of all action plans for the abolition of child labor.(13, 36) Raise awareness, promote child labor legislation, and collect data.(4) MOL's CELTE acts as its secretariat.(15, 36)
Local Committees	Child Protection Committees and Local Committees Against Child Trafficking located throughout Togo to raise awareness at the community level. Committees identify child victims or children at risk, and they share information on human trafficking trends and prevention efforts with the MASPFA, which enforces laws regarding child labor.(7, 13, 18, 35, 36)

In 2014, the National Committee for the Reception and Social Reinsertion of Trafficked Children (CNARSEVT) continued to coordinate with other agencies and refer child victims to shelters for assistance, including victims who were returned from abroad. (2, 7, 15) However, an overall lack of funds hindered efforts to reduce the worst forms of child labor.(18) The National Steering Committee for the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor has limited its actions to evaluating and approving NGO action programs to eliminate child labor, which it attributes to a lack of financial resources.(36) Additionally, the CELTE has been unable to fulfill its coordination role or collect data on child labor due to a lack of resources.(17)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

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

Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan on Child Labor (2012-2015)	Serves as the primary government policy instrument to prevent and eliminate child labor in Togo. (15, 37)
National Strategy on Elimination of Child Labor through Education, Training, and Apprenticeship	Aims to reduce child labor through education, training, and apprenticeship.(38)
National Labor Policy	Aims to eliminate child labor, promote education, and provide vocational training beyond the compulsory education age.(39) Seeks to raise awareness among parents, employers, and community leaders on child labor and provides labor inspectors with training on child labor issues. (40)
National Plan of Action on Child Trafficking	Improves services for victims of child trafficking and conducts awareness-raising activities for local communities and border officials.(4) Promotes the education of children and improvement of livelihoods for families, and calls for the establishment of structures to monitor the trafficking of children.(41)
ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on Child Labor (2012-2015)	With 14 other ECOWAS countries, implements a regional action plan on child labor, especially its worst forms. Aims to eliminate worst forms of child labor in West Africa by 2015 and to continue progress toward the total elimination of child labor.(42, 43) In 2014, met to discuss actions taken since Ghana's 2013 Peer Review, progress of the Regional Action Plan's implementation, and the ILO's Study on Child Labor and Marginalization.(44)

Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor (cont)

Policy	Description
Strategy to Increase Growth and Promote Employment (SCAPE) (2013-2017)	Serves as the primary national anti-poverty plan, which includes components on child labor and education.(13, 15, 45)
Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements to Combat Child Trafficking	Quadripartite Agreement between the Governments of Benin, Ghana, Niger, and Togo works to prevent child trafficking along the countries' shared borders and facilitate the repatriation of trafficked children and the extradition of traffickers.(13, 18, 35) Multilateral Accords for West and Central Africa promote cooperation among regional states to combat child trafficking.(13, 18)
Education Sector Plan (2010-2020)*	Aims to achieve universal quality primary education by 2020 through the elimination of school fees, improving educational quality, providing school meals, providing school kits to impoverished families, and offering alternative educational opportunities.(13)

* 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 Togo funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues (2011-2016)	\$15 million USDOL-funded 6-year project implemented by the ILO in approximately 40 countries to support the priorities of the Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor by 2016 established by the Hague Global Child Labor Conference in 2010. Aims to build the capacity of the national government and develop strategic policies to eliminate child labor, improve the evidence base on child labor through data collection and research, and strengthen legal protections and social service delivery for child domestic workers. (46) In 2014, held two workshops in Togo that resulted in an agreement to create a framework for a public-private partnership between the MOL and employment agencies, and the creation of a standard contract for domestic workers to contribute to the elimination of child labor in the domestic sector.(34, 47)
Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in West Africa and Strengthening Sub-Regional Cooperation through ECOWAS I & II	USDOL-funded regional projects that support ECOWAS to strengthen its role in combating the worst forms of child labor in the West Africa subregion by providing policy and capacity building support for all ECOWAS states. (48, 49)
Decent Work Program (2010-2015)	Promotes decent work conditions with a focus on creating job opportunities for youth and extending social protection for all.(50)
Shelters for Vulnerable Children‡	MASPFA-funded centers that provide shelter and services for victims referred by the Allo 1011 hotline.(2, 18, 31) Tokoin Community Center temporarily shelters children until they are transferred to NGO-managed centers, while the Oasis Center provides legal, medical, and social services for children up to age 14.(11, 18)
National Fund for Inclusive Finance†‡	Government program that provides loans of up to approximately \$60 to small groups of men and women for income-generating activities.(51) Loans target villages in rural Northern Togo, with a secondary effect of reducing child labor. In 2014, granted loans to 324,000 individuals.(7)
Cash Transfer Program for Vulnerable Children in Northern Togo (2013-2017)*‡	\$2.55 million World Bank-funded, 5-year program that aims to prevent child labor and child trafficking by providing conditional cash transfers to high-risk families with young children.(7, 52, 53) World Bank disbursed \$2 million in the first wave of transfers in 121 villages in 2014 and the Government funded transfers in another 93 villages. Families will receive monthly payments of approximately \$10 for the next 24 months.(7, 53)
Togo Community Development and Safety Nets Project (2012-2016)*	\$14 million World Bank-funded, 5-year program that aims to improve access to socioeconomic infrastructure and provide social safety nets for vulnerable populations.(54) In 2014, constructed 265 primary schools and completed 149 income-generating activities.(55)
Free School Lunch Program*‡	World Bank and government-funded program that provides free school lunches. Benefited 73,185 students in 2014.(55)
National Plan for Registering Births in Togo (2013-2017)*	Aims to increase documentation of births by simplifying the process, educating families on the importance of birth registration, and increasing accessibility to birth registration in rural areas.(35, 56)
Forum of Traditional and Religious Chiefs of Togo on the Harmful Social and Cultural Practices that Affect Children*‡	MASPFA-funded program that educates local leaders on child labor issues and the importance of education through training workshops at the community level.(7, 18)

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

† Program was launched during the reporting period.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Togo.

Although Togo has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem.(9, 21) Many programs rely largely on NGOs and international organizations for implementation. As a result, many of these interventions may not be sustainable over the long term.

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 Togo (Table 9).

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Establish penalties for violations of the laws governing hazardous child labor, and ensure all children under age 18 are prohibited from engaging in hazardous occupations or activities.	2009 – 2014
Enforcement	Strengthen enforcement of child labor laws by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing the number of labor inspectors responsible for enforcing laws related to child labor in order to provide adequate coverage of the workforce; ■ Providing additional training on child labor issues; ■ Ensuring that law enforcement officials throughout the country have copies of existing child labor laws; ■ Providing adequate resources and transportation for inspectors to conduct investigations; ■ Conducting inspections in both rural and urban areas, including unannounced visits; ■ Ensuring all law enforcement personnel have access to child labor law reference materials; ■ Authorizing inspectorates to determine and/or assess penalties; and ■ Enforcing penalties for labor violations according to the law. 	2009 – 2014
	Make statistics regarding the enforcement of child labor laws publicly available, including the number of inspections, prosecutions, violations, and citations/penalties assessed; disaggregate the number of complaints related to child labor that are made to the Allo 1011 hotline.	2010 – 2014
	Establish a referral mechanism between labor enforcement and social welfare services.	2014
Coordination	Provide coordinating bodies with sufficient financial and human resources to implement their mandates to combat child labor, including its worst forms.	2009 – 2014
Government Policies	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the Education Sector Plan.	2013 – 2014
Social Programs	Conduct research to determine the activities carried out by children working in construction to inform policies and programs.	2013 – 2014
	Improve access to education by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing educational opportunities in rural areas by building additional schools and training additional teachers; ■ Eliminating school expenses, including the costs of uniforms and books; ■ Ensuring that schools are free from sexual or physical abuse; and ■ Penalizing teachers who force students to engage in domestic or agricultural work. 	2010 – 2014
	Expand access to birth registration by eliminating the cost of birth registration, establishing additional registration centers in rural areas, and educating families on the importance of birth registration.	2011 – 2014
	Assess the impact that existing social programs may have on child labor.	2013 – 2014
	Ensure social protection programs to combat the worst forms of child labor are sufficient to address the scope of the problem and promote the long-term sustainability of project initiatives.	2009 – 2014

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