

In 2017, Chad made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The President promulgated a new Penal Code in May 2017 that brings criminal prohibitions against child trafficking in line with international standards. However, children in Chad engage in the worst forms of child labor, including forced labor in cattle herding and domestic work. The country's legal framework does not contain criminal penalties for the use of children in illicit activities, and austerity measures imposed in 2016 continue to limit government funding for efforts to combat child labor. The Ministry of Justice dissolved the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Trafficking in Persons, and the government has no active policies for relevant sectors of child labor, such as commercial sexual exploitation, and forced labor in domestic work and herding cattle.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Chad engage in the worst forms of child labor, including forced labor in cattle herding and domestic work. (1; 2; 3; 4; 5) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Chad.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

| Children | Age | Percent |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Working (% and population) | 5 to 14 | 48.8 |
| Attending School (%) | 5 to 14 | 49.5 |
| Combining Work and School (%) | 7 to 14 | 28.4 |
| Primary Completion Rate (%) | | 37.9 |

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2013, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (6)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Demographic and Health Survey, 2014–2015. (7)

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 | Cultivating and harvesting crops, including rice and corn (8) |
| | Collecting and chopping wood (3; 4) |
| | Production of charcoal (9) |
| | Herding cattle (10; 9) |
| | Fishing, including catching, smoking, and selling fish (9) |
| Industry | Building walls (4) |
| | Carpentry (9) |
| | Gold mining† (9) |
| | Working in auto repair shops (9) |
| | Making bricks (4) |
| Services | Domestic work (8; 1; 2; 3; 4) |
| | Working in restaurants as barmaids and servers (9) |
| | Street work, including vending, garbage scavenging, and carrying heavy loads† (4; 10; 11; 9) |
| | Begging (1; 9) |
| Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡ | Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2; 3; 4; 5) |
| | Recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict, including as suicide bombers (5; 12) |
| | Forced labor in cattle herding, domestic work, fishing, begging, street vending, and agriculture, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1; 2; 3; 5; 9) |

† 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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Child trafficking occurs primarily within Chad for the purposes of forced labor in cattle herding, domestic work, and commercial sexual exploitation. In isolated incidents, boys may be forced to herd cattle for military or government officials. (2; 5; 9) Domestically, boys known as *mahadjirine* may be sent to Koranic schools to receive an education, but they are forced to beg and then surrender the money they receive to their teachers. (1; 2; 5)




The Constitution and the Law Orienting the Education System mandate free and compulsory education in Chad. (13; 14) However, there is a lack of schools, classrooms, and teachers throughout the country. (15; 9; 16) Some schools do not offer all grade levels, parents are often required to pay for school-related fees, and some schools near Lake Chad were occupied or attacked by *Boko Haram* elements. (15; 16; 9) In addition, the 2016–2017 school year was truncated due to prolonged teacher strikes in 2016, re-entry after the strikes concluded was slow, and the amended school calendar extended into the beginning of rainy season when many children are expected to assist their parents with agricultural duties rather than attend classes. (17) Furthermore, birth certificates are often required for enrollment in school, but only 12 percent of children nationwide are registered at birth, with some areas experiencing birth registration rates as low as 5 percent. (18; 9) Children in refugee camps may have a particularly hard time accessing education due to a lack of qualified teachers, poor infrastructure, and teacher strikes. (19)

Government resources for addressing social issues continued to be limited during the reporting period due to Chad’s continuing economic crisis, large refugee population, and security spending. (20)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Chad 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 (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Chad’s legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the use of children in illicit activities.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

| Standard | Meets International Standards: Yes/No | Age | Legislation |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----|--|
| Minimum Age for Work | Yes | 14 | Article 52 of the Labor Code; Article 1 of the Decree Relating to Child Labor (21; 22) |
| Minimum Age for Hazardous Work | Yes | 18 | Articles 6–7 of the Decree Relating to Child Labor (21) |
| Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children | Yes | | Articles 6 and 10 of the Decree Relating to Child Labor; Articles 5, 19, and 22 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons (21; 23) |
| Prohibition of Forced Labor | Yes | | Article 20 of the Constitution; Article 5 of the Labor Code; Articles 5, 15, and 22 of the President’s Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Article 292 (e) and (c) of the Penal Code (14; 22; 23; 24) |

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

| Standard | Meets International Standards: Yes/No | Age | Legislation |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----|--|
| Prohibition of Child Trafficking | Yes | | Articles 3, 5, 6.2, and 7.1 of the President's Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Article 10 of the Penal Code (23; 24) |
| Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children | Yes | | Articles 335 and 336.a of the Penal Code; Articles 81–85 of the Law on Cyber Security and Fight Against Cyber Criminality; Articles 5, 16, and 22 of the President's Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 362 and 364 of the Penal Code (24; 25; 23; 24) |
| Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities | No | | |
| Prohibition of Military Recruitment | | | |
| State Compulsory | Yes | 20 | Article 32 of the Law on the Organization of the Armed Forces; Article 22 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; Article 5, 18, and 22 of the President's Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 10, 286 (cc), 288 (g), and 370 of the Penal Code (26; 27; 23; 24) |
| State Voluntary | Yes | 18 | Article 32 of the Law on the Organization of the Armed Forces; Article 1 of the Ordinance Prohibiting the Use of Children in Armed Conflict; Article 52 of Military Statute N° 006/PR/06; Article 5 of the President's Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 10, 286 (cc), 288 (g), and 370 of the Penal Code (26; 28; 29; 23; 24) |
| Non-state | Yes | 18 | Article 1 of the Ordinance Prohibiting the Use of Children in Armed Conflict; Articles 5, 18, and 22 of the President's Ordinance on Trafficking in Persons; Articles 10, 286 (cc), 288 (g), and 370 of the Penal Code (28; 23; 24) |
| Compulsory Education Age | Yes | 16‡ | Articles 21, 23, 25, and 28 of the Law Orienting the Education System; Article 35 of the Constitution (13; 14) |
| Free Public Education | Yes | | Article 9 of the Law Orienting the Education System; Article 35 of the Constitution (13; 14) |

‡ Age calculated based on available information (13)

President Idriss Déby promulgated a new Penal Code in May 2017 and issued a Presidential Ordinance on Combating Trafficking in Persons that brings criminal prohibitions against child trafficking in line with international standards. (30; 31; 32) Several laws are awaiting approval by the National Assembly, including the Child Protection Code, Labor Code, and Family Code, which contain additional provisions criminalizing child trafficking and extending protection to children working in the informal sector. (1; 33; 34; 35; 36; 37; 9)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the authority of the Ministry of Public Service, Employment, and Social Dialogue (MOPS) that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

| Organization/Agency | Role |
|--|--|
| Ministry of Public Service, Employment, and Social Dialogue (MOPS) | Implement and enforce child labor laws. (15) Includes a directorate and specific point of contact to assist in coordinating child protection and human trafficking issues. (9) |
| Ministry of Justice, Human Rights, and Guardian of the Seal (MOJ) | Draft and enforce laws and coordinate efforts to protect human rights. Through its Directorate for Protection and Legal Monitoring of Children, enforce child labor laws. (9) |

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

| Organization/Agency | Role |
|---|--|
| Ministry of Women, Family and National Solidarity (MWFNS) | Protect children's rights, provide temporary shelter to victims, and assist with reintegration when appropriate. Through its Child Protection Directorate, lead government efforts on child protection, including from child labor, and liaise with the Child Protection Directorate at the MOJ. (9) |
| National Police Child Protection Brigade | Enforce and investigate criminal laws against child labor, including child trafficking, and refer them to other ministries as appropriate. (5; 9) Role expanded in 2017 to include the enforcement of laws related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children, use of children in illicit activities, and prevention of the recruitment of children by armed groups. The MWFNS, MOJ, and MOPS maintain detachments at the Child Protection Brigade to facilitate collaboration. (9; 38) |

Research indicates that the Child Protection Brigade within the National Police is not well-known by the public, thus limiting its effectiveness. (9)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2017, labor law enforcement agencies in Chad took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the authority of the MOPS that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the authority to assess penalties.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2016 | 2017 |
|--|-------------|--------------|
| Labor Inspectorate Funding | \$0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number of Labor Inspectors | 30 (8) | 30 (9) |
| Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties | No (22) | No (22) |
| Training for Labor Inspectors | | |
| Initial Training for New Employees | No (39) | No (9) |
| Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor | No (8) | No (9) |
| Refresher Courses Provided | No (8; 40) | No (9) |
| Number of Labor Inspections Conducted | 0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number Conducted at Worksites | 0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number of Child Labor Violations Found | 0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties were Imposed | 0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that were Collected | 0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Routine Inspections Conducted | No (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Routine Inspections Targeted | N/A (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Unannounced Inspections Permitted | Unknown (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Unannounced Inspections Conducted | Unknown (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Complaint Mechanism Exists | Yes (8) | Yes (9) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services | Yes (8) | Yes (9) |

* The government does not publish this information.

In addition to 30 inspectors, the government employs 50 labor controllers who assist labor inspectors. (9) The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Chad's workforce, which includes approximately 5.5 million workers. (41) According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed economies, Chad should employ roughly 136 labor inspectors. (41; 42; 43) Continued austerity measures limited funding and affected inspectors' ability to conduct inspections. (9) Inspectors lack sufficient resources, including transportation, to conduct investigations outside the city where they are based. (15; 9) Research indicates that the informal sector, in which the majority of children work, is largely unmonitored, and some establishments in the formal sector may go years without receiving an inspection. (1; 15; 40)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2017, criminal law enforcement agencies in Chad 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 financial resources.

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 | Unknown (8) | Yes (44; 45) |
| Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor | N/A (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Refresher Courses Provided | No (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number of Investigations | 0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number of Violations Found | 235 (46) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number of Prosecutions Initiated | 0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Number of Convictions | 0 (8) | Unknown* (9) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services | Yes (8) | Yes (9) |

* The government does not publish this information.

Continued austerity measures limited the ability of criminal law enforcement agencies to investigate the worst forms of child labor during the reporting period. The judicial system has experienced prolonged strikes and closures since November 2016. (47) In addition, comprehensive statistics on criminal law enforcement are unavailable as the government maintains hand-written records of criminal cases at local courts and regional tribunals, rather than in a centralized electronic system. (9)

Civil society organizations typically assist with providing temporary shelter, legal assistance, and family reintegration services; they also track prosecutions and convictions. (44; 48) An underdeveloped judicial system, inadequate deterrents, and under-enforcement of existing penalties also pose barriers to prosecution. (15; 48) A police commissioner who was arrested in 2016 following allegations of complicity in a child trafficking network was released in 2017; the investigation remains ongoing but research was unable to determine if it is being actively investigated. (5)

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 funding and efficacy in accomplishing mandates.

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

| Coordinating Body | Role and Description |
|---|---|
| Working Group on the Worst Forms of Child Labor | Coordinate government efforts on child trafficking, including providing training, conducting awareness-raising activities, and strengthening the network of government organizations that address human trafficking. Chaired by the MWFNS Child Protection Directorate and includes representatives from four other ministries, including MOPS. (9) |
| MWFNS's Regional Child Protection Committees | Coordinate regional government efforts to address the worst forms of child labor and refer victims as appropriate. (5; 47) Includes representatives from relevant ministries, police, and civil society. (9; 47) |

In 2017, the government's inability to pay many officials and turnover at the MOJ contributed to the dissolution of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Trafficking in Persons. (38) Furthermore, the Regional Child Protection Committees lacked the resources to investigate every case they received, and the Working Group on the Worst Forms of Child Labor failed to meet during the reporting period. (5; 38)

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 funding and implementation.

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Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor†

| Policy | Description |
|--|---|
| Five-Year Plan for Development (2016–2020) | Ministry of Economy and Development Planning policy which aims to conduct a survey on child labor every 3 years, increase the rate of birth registration, increase educational opportunities, and strengthen the human and financial capacity of MOPS's directorate charged with combating the worst forms of child labor. (49) |

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (50; 51)

Since the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Trafficking in Persons was dissolved by the government, the National Action Plan on Human Trafficking was never completed. (9) Research found no evidence of a policy on relevant forms of child labor, such as commercial sexual exploitation, and forced labor in domestic work and herding cattle.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2017, the government funded and participated in programs that may contribute to eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including funding and adequacy of programs to address the full scope of the problem.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor‡

| Program | Description |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Transition Centers† | Run by the Ministry of Defense; provides family reunification and reintegration assistance to former child soldiers. MWFNS, in collaboration with UNICEF, assists in demobilizing and reinserting child soldiers into community life. (33; 52) |
| Reception Centers† | Run by MWFNS with the assistance of UNICEF and local NGOs; centers located throughout the country provide temporary assistance to victims of child trafficking, including food, education, medical and psychological care, and reintegration services. (5; 47) The National Solidarity Fund, maintained by the Prime Minister's Office, funds temporary shelter or reunification assistance for victims. (47) Child Protection Directorates at various ministries work together to provide support and reintegration services to victims of exploitation. (53) In 2017, UNICEF funded the construction of a new reception center just south of the capitol in Koundoul, which includes a shelter for victims of exploitation and abuse as well as office space for social workers. (9; 47) |
| Safety Nets Project (2016–2020)* | \$10 million World Bank-funded project that aims to provide cash transfers and cash-for-work disbursements to 15,000 vulnerable families. (54) |
| UNDAF (2017–2021)* | Aims to provide access to quality education for children who are school age, refugee, and vulnerable, and to improve social protection and promote good governance. (55) |

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of Chad.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (52; 56; 50; 57)

The government's funding to social programs continued to be limited due to austerity measures during the reporting period, hampering the country's capacity to provide adequate care and reintegration support for victims of child labor. (5; 9) Although Chad has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to adequately address the extent of the problem, particularly the use of forced child labor in herding cattle, domestic work, and commercial sexual exploitation. (10)

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 Chad (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

| Area | Suggested Action | Year(s) Suggested |
|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| Legal Framework | Ensure that laws specifically prohibit children from being used, offered, or procured for illicit activities. | 2011 – 2017 |
| Enforcement | Ensure that law enforcement agencies receive sufficient resources to carry out their mandate and that their role is understood by the public. | 2016 – 2017 |
| | Strengthen the Labor Inspectorate by authorizing inspectors to assess penalties, ensuring inspectors are authorized to conduct unannounced inspections, and by providing sufficient resources to conduct inspections in both the formal and informal sectors and prosecute offenders. | 2014 – 2017 |

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

| Area | Suggested Action | Year(s) Suggested |
|---------------------|---|-------------------|
| Enforcement | Institutionalize training for labor inspectors and criminal law investigators, including at the beginning of labor inspectors' employment, and ensure both labor inspectors and criminal investigators receive regular refresher courses, as well as training on new laws related to child labor. | 2014 – 2017 |
| | Systematically collect data on law enforcement efforts and publish information about labor inspectorate funding, the number and type of inspections conducted, whether violations were found, penalties imposed and fees collected, as well as the number of criminal investigations conducted, violations found, prosecutions initiated, and convictions obtained. | 2014 – 2017 |
| | Significantly increase the number of labor inspectors in accordance with the ILO's technical advice. | 2012 – 2017 |
| | Ensure that penalties are severe enough to deter offenders and are enforced according to the law. | 2015 – 2017 |
| Coordination | Ensure that coordinating committees receive adequate resources to meet and carry out their mandates to coordinate efforts and respond to child labor issues. | 2014 – 2017 |
| Government Policies | Adopt a policy to combat all relevant worst forms of child labor in Chad, including commercial sexual exploitation, and forced labor in domestic work and herding cattle. | 2009 – 2017 |
| Social Programs | Ensure access to education for all children by eliminating school-related fees; ensure that schools are safe spaces; make additional efforts to provide all children with birth certificates; and increase the number of schools, classrooms, and teachers throughout the country, including for children in refugee camps. | 2014 – 2017 |
| | Ensure that existing programs receive adequate funding and can support victims of child labor. | 2016 – 2017 |
| | Establish or expand programs to provide services to children engaged in the worst forms of child labor, such as the use of forced child labor in herding cattle, domestic work, and commercial sexual exploitation. | 2009 – 2017 |

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