

In 2016, Morocco made a significant advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government passed the Law on Trafficking in Human Beings, improving protections for children vulnerable to trafficking, and the Law on Setting Up Employment Conditions of Domestic Workers, limiting the employment of children between the ages of 16 and 18 for domestic work. The Government also removed children found to be engaged in hazardous work as a result of labor inspections and launched an implementation plan for the Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children in Morocco, which aims to protect children from the worst forms of child labor. In addition, the Government continued to fund the Tayssir Conditional Cash Transfer Program, providing direct cash transfers of between

\$7 and \$16 a month to qualifying families whose children meet school attendance criteria. However, children in Morocco perform dangerous tasks in agriculture. Children also engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation. The number of labor inspectors is insufficient to effectively enforce child labor laws. In addition, although the Government of Morocco has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Morocco perform dangerous tasks in agriculture. Children also engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation.(1-10) Government statistics from 2015 showed 59,010 children ages 7 to 15 working; however, the Government does not make its data on child labor statistics publicly available.(11) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Morocco.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

| Children | Age | Percent |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| Working (% and population) | 10 to 14 | 4.5 (150,178) |
| Attending School (%) | 6 to 14 | 82.9 |
| Combining Work and School (%) | 10 to 14 | 0.7 |
| Primary Completion Rate (%) | | 102.9 |

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2015, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016.(12)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Enquête sur la Population et la Santé Familiale, 2003–2004.(13)

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 | Planting and harvesting argan, grain, olives, vegetables, and fruits (1) |
| | Herding goats, cattle, and sheep and raising them for the production of fertilizer, and cattle for the production of milk and butter (1, 2) |
| | Fishing (4, 14–16) |
| | Forestry, activities unknown (4, 15, 16) |
| Industry | Construction, including in carpentry† (5, 14, 17, 18) |
| | Weaving textiles (2, 14, 19) |

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

| Sector/Industry | Activity |
|---|---|
| Industry | Producing artisanal crafts (4, 5, 17, 20) |
| | Metallurgy, including welding (2, 5, 17, 18) |
| Services | Begging (21-23) |
| | Domestic work (4, 6, 20, 22-26) |
| | Working as salespersons in stores and as tour guides (17) |
| | Tailoring textiles (17, 19) |
| | Working as waiters in cafés or restaurants† (17) |
| | Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles (2, 19, 22) |
| | Street vending (2, 17, 27) |
| Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡ | Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (5-10, 14, 22, 23) |
| | Forced domestic work, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (4-7, 14, 22, 24, 25, 28) |
| | Begging as a result of human trafficking (5-7) |
| | Illegal sand extraction (29) |
| | Forced labor in the production of artisanal crafts and construction (14, 22) |

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

Morocco is a source, destination, and transit country for children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking.(8-10, 22, 23)




Some rural Moroccan girls, sometimes as young as six according to local union observations, as well as girls from Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, and Senegal, are recruited for domestic work in private urban homes. These girls then become victims of forced labor, and some are subjected to physical and verbal abuse, excessive working 100 or more hours per week, without rest or days off, and no access to educational opportunities.(7, 10, 14, 22, 24, 30)

Inadequate transportation, distance from schools, and prohibitive costs, associated with attending school, along with lack of security and inclusiveness, create barriers for children to access education and increase vulnerability to child labor, especially in rural areas.(1, 4, 7, 31-35) In addition, children with disabilities face additional barriers to education.(7, 14, 36) Some migrant children, particularly unaccompanied children from sub-Saharan Africa, as well as rural children, face barriers to accessing education, such as the language of instruction. Furthermore, because birth certificates are required to attend school past the fifth grade, many unregistered children remain out of school and vulnerable to child labor.(14, 21, 37-39) In 2016, the Government announced a second regularization campaign to improve access to education for migrant children.(33)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Morocco 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). However, gaps exist in Morocco's legal framework to adequately protect children from child labor.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

| Standard | Meets International Standards: Yes/No | Age | Legislation |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----|---|
| Minimum Age for Work | No | 15 | Article 143 of the Labor Code (40) |
| Minimum Age for Hazardous Work | Yes | 18 | Article 147 of the Labor Code (40) |
| Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children | Yes | | Hazardous Child Labor List, Decree No. 2-10-183; Article 181 of the Labor Code (40, 41) |
| Prohibition of Forced Labor | Yes | | Article 10 of the Labor Code (40) |
| Prohibition of Child Trafficking | Yes | | Articles 448.1, 448.4, and 448.5 of the Law on Trafficking in Human Beings (42) |
| Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children | Yes | | Article 503 of the Penal Code (43) |
| Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities | No | | |
| Minimum Age for Military Recruitment | | | |
| State Compulsory | N/A* | | |
| State Voluntary | Yes | 18 | Article 4 of Royal Decree of 9 June 1966 (44) |
| Non-state Compulsory | Yes | 18 | Article 448.1 and 448.4 of the Law on Trafficking in Human Beings (42) |
| Compulsory Education Age | Yes | 15 | Article 1 of Law No. 04-00 (45) |
| Free Public Education | Yes | | Article 1 of Law No. 04-00 (45) |

* No conscription (46)

In 2016, Morocco passed the Law on Trafficking in Human Beings, which is consistent with the Palermo Protocol and other international agreements.(42, 47) The Government also passed the Law on Setting Up Employment Conditions of Domestic Workers that provides protections for child domestic workers, setting the minimum age at 16 for domestic work and 18 for hazardous domestic work; permits labor inspectors to mediate disputes between employers and domestic workers; and authorizes the Government to prosecute intermediaries who traffic children for labor exploitation.(47-50)

The Ministry of Justice began drafting supplementary provisions and amendments to the penal code aimed at increasing penalties in cases involving the facilitation of the use of narcotic drugs by a minor and in cases involving providing access to narcotic drugs to minors in schools.(33)

Minimum age protections in the Labor Code do not apply to self-employed children, those who work in the traditional artisan or handicraft sectors for businesses with fewer than five employees, or those who work in private farms and residences, leaving children vulnerable to exploitation.(6, 14, 40, 51, 52) The types of hazardous work prohibited for children do not fully cover sectors in which child labor is known to occur, and sectors in which work may be undertaken in conditions that harm children's health, safety, and morals.(41)

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). However, gaps in labor law enforcement remain and some enforcement information is not available.

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Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

| Organization/Agency | Role |
|---|--|
| Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs | Enforce child labor laws and oversee programs on child labor through its child labor task force. Employ labor inspectors in 51 inspectorates across Morocco; dedicate at least one of the 53 child labor inspectors to each inspectorate.(4, 6, 39) Provide occupational health and safety services, administer social security, and organize labor inspections and employment services through nationwide satellite offices.(4) |
| Ministry of the Interior | Enforce prohibitions on prostitution and other exploitative crimes involving minors as established in the Penal Code.(6, 53) |
| Ministry of Justice and Liberties | Prosecute criminal offenses against children, such as commercial sexual exploitation and child trafficking, and violations of labor laws.(6, 54) The Ministry's Child Labor Units process cases involving women and children within the court system.(2) |

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2016, labor law enforcement agencies in Morocco took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2015 | 2016 |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| Labor Inspectorate Funding | Unknown* (55) | Unknown (33) |
| Number of Labor Inspectors | 409 (6, 55) | 356 (56) |
| Number of Child Labor Dedicated Inspectors | 53† (5, 6, 55) | 53 (33, 56) |
| Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties | No (55) | No (33) |
| Training for Labor Inspectors | | |
| Initial Training for New Employees | Unknown | Yes (33) |
| Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor | N/A | Yes (33) |
| Refresher Courses Provided | Yes (55) | Yes (33) |
| Number of Labor Inspections | 247† (5, 55) | 543 (57) |
| Number Conducted at Worksite | Unknown | Unknown |
| Number Conducted by Desk Reviews | Unknown | Unknown |
| Number of Child Labor Violations Found | 292† (55) | 314 (56) |
| Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed | N/A (55) | N/A (33) |
| Number of Penalties Imposed That Were Collected | N/A (55) | N/A (33) |
| Routine Inspections Conducted | Yes (55) | Yes (33) |
| Routine Inspections Targeted | Unknown | Yes (33) |
| Unannounced Inspections Permitted | Yes (55) | Yes (33) |
| Unannounced Inspections Conducted | Yes (55) | Yes (33) |
| Complaint Mechanism Exists | Yes (55) | Yes (33) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services | Unknown | Yes (33) |

* The Government does not publish this information.

† Data are from January 1, 2015 to June 30, 2015.

In 2016, labor inspectors issued 79 formal notices, 15 fines, and 3 official reports in the course of 543 child labor inspections.(57) They removed 80 children under age 15 from work, and 166 children between ages 15 and 17 from hazardous work.(57) The sectors most frequently inspected included trade, agriculture, and metal and wood work, with 22 inspectors dedicated to agriculture and 23 engineers and 18 physicians in charge of health and safety labor inspections.(39, 56) Inadequate resources, including an insufficient number of inspectors, hamper the labor inspectorate's capacity to enforce child labor laws.(6, 33, 55, 58) The number of labor inspectors is insufficient for the size of Morocco's workforce, which includes over 12 million workers. According to the ILO's recommendation of 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in industrializing economies, Morocco should employ roughly 815 inspectors.(55, 59, 60) The official procedures involved with processing child labor violations require the participation of several agencies per case, which places considerable administrative burdens on labor inspectors.(2) Lastly, government officials, local stakeholders, and the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations report that the penalties against companies that employ children in hazardous work, set forth in the Labor Code, are ineffective deterrents.(51, 55)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2016, criminal law enforcement agencies in Morocco took actions to combat the worst forms of child labor (Table 7).

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor

| Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement | 2015 | 2016 |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| Training for Investigators | | |
| Initial Training for New Employees | Unknown | Unknown (33) |
| Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor | N/A | Yes(39) |
| Refresher Courses Provided | Yes (5, 6, 55) | Yes (33) |
| Number of Investigations | Unknown (5) | 7 (39) |
| Number of Violations Found | Unknown (5) | 3 (39) |
| Number of Prosecutions Initiated | Unknown (5) | 3 (39) |
| Number of Convictions | Unknown (5, 6) | 3 (39) |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services | Yes (6, 61) | Yes (33) |

In 2016, the Government, in partnership with international organizations, provided regular anti-trafficking trainings to judicial and law enforcement officials on trafficking in persons, noting the distinctions among trafficking, smuggling, and irregular migration.(22, 23, 33) Criminal authorities refer victims to appropriate social services through coordination with the 53 Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs dedicated child labor inspectors and other government entities and civil society actors.(33)

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 8).

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

| Coordinating Body | Role & Description |
|---|---|
| Technical Committee Under the Special Ministerial Commission for Children for the Protection and Improvement of Childhood | Ensure inter-sectoral coordination and monitoring of the implementation of international conventions on the issue of children through a committee of 25 government bodies, chaired by the President of the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco. Establish strategies and mechanisms to implement national policies and plans in the area of child protection and in coordination efforts managed primarily at the local and regional levels.(39) |
| Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs | Coordinate policies and efforts to combat child labor, providing guidance and limited funding to NGOs working against child labor through its Office for the Fight Against Child Labor.(2, 4, 62) |
| Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family, and Social Development (MSWFSD) | Establish continuity of child protection and child labor elimination efforts to expand children's access to education.(53, 63) Responsible for implementing the Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children.(5, 6) Support 142 Child Reception Centers that provide services to child victims of violence.(39) |
| Ministry in Charge of Residents and Migration Affairs | Coordinate efforts to reduce migrant vulnerability to child labor. Promote migrant children's access to public education facilities in addition to other social services and assistance.(4, 57) |
| Ministry of National Educational and Vocational Training (MONEVT) | Provide education and job training to former child workers, including former child domestic workers and migrant youth.(22, 39) |

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 9).

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

| Policy | Description |
|---|--|
| MSWFSD's Integrated Public Policy on the Protection of Children in Morocco (PPIPEM) | Promotes an interdisciplinary approach to respond to child exploitation, among other issues.(4-6) In 2016, MSWFSD launched a National Implementation Program that defines the necessary measures to reach the five strategic objectives of the PPIPEM and the responsibilities of each Government of Morocco entity including deadlines, and monitoring and evaluation indicators.(33, 56, 64, 65) |

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The Government has not included child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the National Migration Strategy and UNDAF.(2, 4, 66-68)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2016, the Government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 10).

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor[†]

| Program | Description |
|---|--|
| USDOL-Funded Projects to Address Child Labor | USDOL projects in Morocco aim to reduce child labor by increasing access to education, by providing livelihood and other social services, and by improving the evidence base on child labor and forced labor through data collection and research in Morocco. These projects include Promise Pathways: Reducing Child Labor Through Viable Paths in Education and Decent Work (2014–2017), \$5 million project implemented by Creative Associates; Wad3éyati (My Situation: Promoting Gender Equality in the Workplace) , \$1.25 million project implemented by Management Systems International; and Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues , implemented in approximately 40 countries by the ILO.(4, 56, 69, 70) For additional information about USDOL's work, please visit our website . |
| Tayssir Conditional Cash Transfer Program [†] | MONEVT program that provides direct cash transfers of between \$7 and \$16 a month to qualifying families whose children meet school attendance criteria and that aims to increase school enrollment and reduce dropout rates, particularly in rural areas, with 832,500 beneficiaries in 2015–2016 and an estimated 2016–2017 budget of \$77.7 million.(4, 18, 27, 53, 57, 71) |
| Entraide Nationale [†] | Program to prevent child labor by improving school retention rates, in particular for girls in rural areas. Coordinates with MSWFSD and provides social services and manages education and literacy programs in MSWFSD's social protection centers, <i>Dar al Atfal</i> , <i>Dar Talib</i> , and <i>Dar Taliba</i> , and two education, training, and integration programs for vulnerable children—Education and Training Centers and Apprenticeship Training Programs.(33, 56) In 2016, the Government of Morocco reported that there were 22 Child Protection Centers managed by <i>Entraide Nationale</i> , with 2,161 beneficiaries, providing the following services: preventive intervention; personal, social, and educational support for minors; prevention of situations of child vulnerability; emergency response; and prevention and early intervention in situations of violence perpetrated against minors.(33, 56) |
| Government-Funded Shelters [†] | Government-operated shelters that include Child Protection Centers, operated by the Ministry of Youth and Sport, which provide social and educational services to minors referred by the courts, along with victims of abuse, child laborers, and street children, and 96 Child Reception Centers, operated by the National Observatory for Children's Rights and staffed by nurses and social workers, which operate at major hospitals to provide medical services to victims of violence and trafficking in persons.(55, 72, 73) In 2016, research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken.(39) |
| After-School Program for a Second Chance (E2C) [†] | Program that provides students with afterschool educational assistance as part of non-formal education program engagement. During the 2015–2016 school year, 70,000 students benefited from enrollment in E2C programs, and these programs included an education integration component for 721 migrant children.(5, 55) |
| USAID-Funded Projects to Address Child Labor | USAID projects in Morocco that aim to increase the social and economic inclusion of at-risk youth (10–24-year-olds) living in marginalized neighborhoods of Tangier and Tetouan. These projects include Favorable Opportunities to Reinforce Self-Advancement for Today's Youth (FORSATY) (2012–2017), \$8.7 million project implemented by Search for Common Ground.(55) |

[†] Program is funded by the Government of Morocco.

[‡] The Government had other programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms.(2, 4-6, 55, 56)

Although the Government has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem.(4, 33, 74)

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

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the continued elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Morocco (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

| Area | Suggested Action | Year(s) Suggested |
|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| Legal Framework | Ensure that laws prohibit children from being used, procured, or offered for the production and trafficking of illicit drugs. | 2015 – 2016 |
| | Ensure that all children are protected by law, including children who are self-employed, work for artisan businesses with fewer than five employees, or work in private farms and residences. | 2009 – 2016 |
| | Ensure that the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are comprehensive. | 2016 |
| Enforcement | Publish information on the funding of the labor inspectorate and the number of inspections conducted at worksites and by desk review. | 2015 – 2016 |
| | Increase the number of labor inspectors responsible for enforcing laws related to child labor to meet the ILO recommendation, and ensure adequate labor inspectorate resources. | 2012 – 2016 |
| | Streamline child labor enforcement procedures among government agencies. | 2013 – 2016 |
| | Publish information on the training system for criminal law enforcement investigators. | 2012 – 2016 |
| | Increase penalties for those who employ children in hazardous work. | 2012 – 2016 |
| | Release publicly government data on child labor statistics. | 2016 |
| | | |
| Policies | Continue integration of child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the National Migration Strategy and UNDAF policies. | 2014 – 2016 |
| Social Programs | Take measures to ensure children's safety in schools and remove barriers to education, especially for children with disabilities and rural children, and increase birth registration rates. | 2013 – 2016 |
| | Expand existing programs to address the scope of the child labor problem. | 2013 – 2016 |
| | Undertake activities in support of government-funded shelters. | 2016 |

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