

In 2013, Senegal made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government approved the National Strategy on Child Protection and the National Strategy for Economic and Social Development (2013–2017), launched a new conditional cash transfer program that requires beneficiaries to keep their children in school, and began establishing regional branches of the Ministry of Labor to raise awareness of child labor policies and address child labor issues at the local level. However, children in Senegal continue to engage in child labor in agriculture and in the worst forms of child labor in forced begging. Senegal's laws do not fully protect children from child labor. In addition, enforcement agencies lack adequate resources to effectively carry out their work. Furthermore, redundancy among government agencies and interagency bodies tasked with combating child labor impedes effective coordination and implementation of efforts.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Senegal are engaged in child labor in agriculture and in the worst forms of child labor in forced begging. (1-4) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Senegal.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	14.9 (510,420)
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	53.6
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	8.3
Primary Completion Rate (%)		60.5

Source for primary completion rate: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.(5)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from DHS Survey, 2010–2011.(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	Herding cattle* (2, 3)
	Fishing,* activities unknown (1-3, 7)
	Production of millet,* corn,* and peanuts* (2)
Industry	Gold mining, salt mining,* and work in rock quarries* (2, 3, 8-11)
Services	Domestic service (1-3, 8, 10, 12)
	Street vending (4, 7, 13)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor†	Domestic service as a result of human trafficking (1-3, 8, 10, 12)
	Commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking (1, 10, 14)
	Forced labor in begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2, 3, 8, 10, 15-19)
	Forced labor in garbage collection‡ (2, 19, 20)

* 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.

Senegal

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

In Senegal, it is traditional practice to send boys to Koranic teachers called *marabouts* to receive education, which may include vocational training and apprenticeship. Some *marabouts* force their students, called *talibés*, to beg on the streets for money and food, then to surrender their earnings.(2, 8, 15-17, 21) *Marabouts* who force their *talibés* to beg typically set a daily quota that *talibés* must meet or otherwise face beatings.(15, 16, 21) Some *talibés* who fail to meet quotas are forced to spend the night on the street.(16) There are tens of thousands of *talibés*, mostly under age 12, estimated to be in situations of forced begging. These boys often live in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions; receive inadequate food and medical care; and are vulnerable to sexual exploitation.(16) The problem of forced begging appears to be increasing in Senegal. A 2013 census of *daaras* (Koranic schools) in the Dakar Region found that almost 30,000 of the nearly 55,000 *talibés* in the area are forced to beg.(22, 23)

In the Casamance Region, *talibés* working in the fields are exposed to leftover landmines from a 29-year conflict in the region.(24) *Talibés* typically come from rural areas within Senegal and from neighboring countries, sometimes as a result of human trafficking.(8, 16, 25, 26)




Some girls reportedly leave school after being sexually harassed by school staff or as a result of early pregnancy.(2) Access to education is also limited by the availability of schools and the use of volunteer and temporary teachers who are often absent.(27, 28)

In 2013, the Government collected data on child labor in the mining region of Kedougou.(3)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Senegal 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 relevant laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article L. 145 of the Labor Code (13)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Arrêtes ministériels n° 3750 and 3751 (29, 30)
List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children	Yes		Arrêtes ministériels n° 3749, 3750, and 3751 (29-31)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Arrête ministériel n° 3749 (31)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Loi n° 2005-06 (32)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Arrête ministériel n° 3749 ; Penal Code (31, 33)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Arrête ministériel n°3751 (3, 30, 34)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	Yes	20	Article 70 of the Constitution (35, 36)
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Loi n° 2008-28 (35-37)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Loi n° 2004-2037 (25, 38)
Free Public Education	Yes		Constitution (39)

Section L.145 of the Labor Code grants the Minister of Labor authority to waive the minimum age for work based on local needs.(13) An exception within *Arrêtés ministériels n° 3750* and *3751* allows boys under age 16 to work in underground mines and quarries if they are doing “light work,” such as sorting and loading ore, handling and hauling trucks within specified weight limits, or handling ventilation equipment.(3, 13, 17, 25, 29, 30, 40) However, allowing children under age 18 to perform any work in underground mines and quarries is inconsistent with ILO C. 138.(41, 42) While the use of children for drug trafficking is prohibited, it is unclear whether prohibitions exist on the use of children in the production of illegal drugs.(3, 34)

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)	Enforce child labor laws through the Labor Inspections Office and the use of social security inspectors. Child Labor Unit responsible for maintaining a database of child labor violations and for monitoring and evaluating child labor activities.(3, 20, 25, 43, 44) Labor inspectors responsible for enforcement in the formal sector, which covers state-owned corporations, private enterprises, and cooperatives.(20, 26)
Local Tribunals	Adjudicate child labor trials.(20)
Ministry of Justice	Enforce laws on child trafficking, begging, commercial sexual exploitation, and the use of children for illicit activities.(3, 25, 45)
Children’s Unit of the Senegalese Police	Specialize in child protection.(1)
Police Vice Squad	Combat the commercial sexual exploitation of adults and children, particularly related to tourism, by patrolling tourist areas, including beaches, hotels, bars, nightclubs, and massage parlors.(1)
Local Police and Gendarmes	Intervene in cases in which children face physical abuse in forced labor situations, and report cases involving children to the Children’s Unit.(1, 25)

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

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2013, the Ministry of Labor (MOL) began establishing regional branches to raise awareness of child labor policies and address child labor issues at the local level. Labor inspectors receive training on child labor issues, which ILO officials have indicated is adequate.(3) If an incident of child labor is found during an inspection, the inspector informs the business owner that the child should be removed from work. If the child is not removed within the specified timeframe, the case is turned over to a local tribunal for adjudication.(20) Since this process does not penalize violators for their first offense, it may not deter employers from exploiting children in the workplace. The Child Labor Unit has no full-time staff. MOL staff, whose primary responsibilities pertain to other units, work part-time for the Child Labor Unit.(3, 43, 44) Research did not identify any information on the number of inspectors, inspections conducted, or amount of funding for labor law enforcement.

Criminal Law Enforcement

With few exceptions, *daaras* are not subject to government regulation or inspection.(16) In 2013, in response to a fire in a *daara* that killed nine *talibés* who were locked in by a *marabout*, the President of Senegal promised that the Government would create a plan to regulate *daaras* better in order to stop the exploitation of children.(46) Research did not identify whether the Government had begun to do so. Criminal laws related to child labor are rarely enforced in practice, especially those against forced begging.(3, 18, 25, 45) The territorial jurisdiction of the Children’s Unit is limited to Dakar, and the office employs only two agents.(1, 3, 25) Although other police stations in Senegal are expected to report cases involving children to the Unit, research found no evidence that this occurs regularly.(1) No information was found on the number of investigators employed, cases investigated, citations issued, or prosecutions made.

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
Interagency Committee Against Child Labor	Coordinate initiatives to address child labor, including the National Action Plan on the Prevention and Abolition of Child Labor in Senegal; chaired by MOL and comprising employers' organizations, 20 government ministries, religious leaders, international agencies, and governors from various regions.(25, 44, 45, 47, 48)
Inter-ministerial Commission	Coordinate implementation of the National Strategy on Child Protection and its related action plan.(3)
MOL's National Committee Against Child Labor	Eliminate child labor through legislation, policy, and collaboration with civil society and other partners; led by the Minister of Labor, with members including the Minister of Family, the Minister of Justice, and the Minister of Finance.(25, 48)
National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons, in Particular Women and Children	Report on human trafficking in Senegal and coordinate the implementation of the National Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Persons and other efforts to combat the problem.(10, 49)

In 2013, the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons' budget was increased from \$20,000 to \$100,000. (23) No information was available on the funding of other child labor-related coordinating bodies. Redundancy between the four coordinating bodies creates confusion and hinders effective collaboration and implementation of efforts.(1, 16) The National Committee Against Child Labor was inactive during 2013.(48)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Senegal 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 the Prevention and Abolishment of Child Labor in Senegal	Aims to improve and enforce the legal framework on child labor, prevent the worst forms of child labor and child labor by increasing the supply of educational and training opportunities, and build institutional capacity by establishing regional and departmental branches to coordinate local efforts; budget is approximately \$2.7 million.(3, 50-52)
National Strategy on Child Protection†	Addresses child protection through a national body to coordinate social policy on child protection efforts; includes an action plan with a recommended budget of \$18 million.(3, 45, 47, 53)
National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings	Includes goals of enhancing the legal framework to prevent human trafficking, effectively implementing laws, providing effective protection and care for victims, and strengthening social and educational initiatives for vulnerable children.(1, 34, 47, 49)
Ten-Year Education and Training Program*	Aims to provide quality, universal, primary education to all children by 2015.(25, 47)
National Social Protection Strategy*	Classifies children as a specific vulnerable group and includes provisions for their protection against harmful practices, exploitation, and violence.(25, 47, 54)
National Strategy for Economic and Social Development†	Includes goals such as promoting youth employment and entrepreneurship, increasing access to social services such as education and health services, and improving the quality of education.(27)
Child Begging Action Plan†	Aims to combat child begging.(3)

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

† Policy was launched during the reporting period.

In 2013, the Government launched the National Strategy on Child Protection and the National Strategy for Economic and Social Development (2013–2017).(3, 27, 45, 47, 53) Limited capacity, leadership, and funding constrain the Government's efforts to implement policies such as those listed in Table 7. A lack of coordination among the relevant agencies also hinders implementation.(3)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

In 2013, the Government of Senegal 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
Project to Fight Against Trafficking and the Worst Forms of Child Labor†	Government program that aims to enhance government capacity to design and implement local initiatives to address child trafficking and other worst forms of child labor, particularly forced begging, forced labor of girls, and commercial sexual exploitation. Technical monitoring committees at the local level, composed of public and private stakeholders overseeing implementation of the project. As a result of the program, some departmental governments have developed individual action plans to address child labor.(1, 25, 47)
Daara Mapping Project†‡	Project that falls under the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings. Implemented by the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons; involves assessments of the daaras of Dakar, including the number of daaras, where they operate, the type of education given in each, as well as the number of children in daaras who are forced to beg, their place of origin, and who enrolled them.(10)
Modern Daaras‡*	Government-built schools that provide students with Koranic instruction, as well as courses in reading, writing, and mathematics.(18, 45)
Conditional Cash Transfers†‡	Government program that requires beneficiaries to keep their children in school; total budget for this program was approximately \$10 million in 2013.(3)
ILO Action Programs*	Program aiming to combat child labor in the gold mining region of Kedougou and in the informal urban economy in Saint Louis.(3)
Interagency Program for Improving the Situation of At-Risk Children in Senegal	ILO/UNICEF-funded program that provides services to directly benefit victims of the worst forms of child labor in the Thiés region. Services include the purchase of school equipment, placement in training programs, assistance with school enrollment, provision of health and counseling services, and the development of income-generating activities for families. Provides awareness-raising, information, and training on relevant ILO conventions and includes pilot system for observing and monitoring child labor in the rural community of Ngoudiane.(51, 55, 56)
Basic Education Program*	USAID-funded program to improve the quality of and access to education, and ensuring that talibés receive basic education.(57)
Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in West Africa and Strengthening Sub-Regional Cooperation through ECOWAS I & II	USDOL-funded regional projects that supported ECOWAS to strengthen its role in combating the worst forms of child labor in the West Africa sub-region by providing policy and capacity-building support for all ECOWAS states.(58, 59)
Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in West Africa	Government of Spain-funded, 5-year, \$5.4 million program in four countries in West Africa that aims to contribute to the progressive elimination of child labor and the prevention and immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labor through a systemic and sustainable response by the public and private sectors and civil society.(56)
Ginndi Center†	Government-run shelter that serves abused and vulnerable children, including runaway talibés, street children, and child trafficking victims; provides shelter, food, education, vocational training, family mediation, and medical and psychological care; and operates a toll-free child protection hotline through which the public can report child labor abuses.(1, 2, 8, 16, 18, 25, 49, 60)

* 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 Senegal.

Given the rising number of *talibés* in forced begging, current government programs are not adequate to combat the problem effectively. Additionally, existing programs do not target commercial sexual exploitation, domestic service, or agriculture, nor are existing programs on child labor in the gold mining district of Kedougou sufficient to address the problem fully.(16, 47, 51)

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 Senegal (Table 9).

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Laws	Amend the Labor Code so that the only exceptions to the minimum age for employment are consistent with international standards; specifically, those set out by ILO C. 138.	2011 – 2013
	Amend the law to prohibit all children under age 18 from engaging in any work in underground mines and quarries.	2009 – 2013
	Ensure laws fully protect children from work in illicit activities.	2011 – 2013
Enforcement	Penalize labor law violators on their first offense to create a stronger disincentive for illegally employing children.	2010 – 2013
	Assess the sufficiency of resources provided to authorities tasked with enforcing child labor laws, particularly the Child Labor Unit of the MOL.	2010 – 2013
	Ensure that all laws related to the worst forms of child labor are adequately and evenly enforced, including those against forced begging.	2010 – 2013
	Make data on child labor law enforcement publicly available.	2013
	Expand the jurisdiction and capacity of the Children's Unit of the Senegalese police force or implement systems to connect local police forces and the Unit to better track and combat child labor.	2010 – 2013
Coordination	Ensure the effectiveness of coordinating mechanisms on child labor by—	
	■ Eliminating redundancy and defining distinct scopes of responsibility.	2010 – 2013
	■ Providing adequate funding and resources to relevant bodies.	2011 – 2013
Government Policies	Reactivating the National Committee Against Child Labor.	2013
	Allocate funds to and establish clear lead agencies and coordinating processes for all government policies to ensure that they are implemented properly.	2012 – 2013
	Assess the impact that existing policies may have on child labor.	2013
Social Programs	Develop new programs and expand existing programs to combat the worst forms of child labor by—	
	■ Opening more shelters and service centers for abused and vulnerable children, including talibés, street children, and child trafficking victims.	2010 – 2013
	■ Establishing more extensive programming to address the most pressing forms of child labor, including forced begging, commercial sexual exploitation, agriculture, and mining.	2010 – 2013
	Assist families to ensure all children may attend school, including by—	
	■ Expanding programs to address issues that serve as a barrier to girls' education, such as sexual harassment in schools and early pregnancy.	2011 – 2013
	■ Increasing the number of school facilities and replacing voluntary or temporary teachers with permanent paid staff.	
	Assess the impact that existing programs may have on child labor.	2013

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