

In 2021, Guinea made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. For the first time, it provided a dedicated budget for the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices and set up a national hotline to report violations, including those related to labor and trafficking in persons. The government also issued an Emergency Action Plan, as a supplement to the 2020–2022 National Action Plan for Trafficking in Persons, to address the 11 priority recommendations highlighted in the 2021 U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report. However, children in Guinea are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in artisanal mining, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in forced begging. The government lacks a coordinating mechanism and national policy to address all relevant worst forms of child labor. Laws related to the minimum age for work also do not meet international standards because they do not include children working outside of a formal employment relationship and children who are self-employed. In addition, the government does not implement sufficient social programs to address the extent of the child labor problem. On September 5th, the military launched a coup, seized control of the state, and dissolved the Constitution. The coup and the resulting changes in government likely impacted the ability of the Government of Guinea to fully engage in addressing the worst forms of child labor.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Guinea are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in artisanal mining, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in forced begging. (1-3) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Guinea. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	31.2 (Unavailable)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	54.2
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	17.3
Primary Completion Rate (%)		59.4

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2020, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022. (4)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 5 (MICS5), 2016. (5)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Farming cashews, cocoa, coffee, rubber, and palm oil (1,6,7)
	Herding livestock (1,2)
	Capturing and processing fish, sometimes with exposure to inclement weather, dangerous water surfaces, dangerous equipment, poor sanitation, and lack of fresh food and water (1,2,8)
Industry	Mining† granite, gold, and diamonds, including handling toxic chemicals, and quarrying gravel (1,2,9-14)
	Manufacturing, including soapmaking and dyeing, sometimes working with hazardous chemicals (2)
	Construction,† including carrying heavy loads, operating machinery, and fabricating construction materials, such as bricks (15-18)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Street work, including vending, begging, petty trading, shoe shining, and porting in the transportation sector (2,9,10,16,19,20)
	Working in restaurants (2)
	Domestic work (1,2,9,10,21)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced labor in market vending, domestic work, artisanal mining, herding, fishing, and farming (1,2,15)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1-3)
	Forced begging (1,15,22)

† 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.

Guinea is a source, destination, and transit country for child trafficking. Guinean girls are often subjected to domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation in various West African, Middle Eastern and European countries, while Guinean boys are subjected to forced labor in gold and diamond mines across West Africa. (1,23,24) Within Guinea, children are subjected to the worst forms of child labor in the artisanal gold and diamond mining sectors. (2,9,13,23,24) Children in the artisanal mining sector are subjected to forced labor and to hazardous conditions, including frequent collapses of open pit mines and use of dangerous chemicals. (2,19) Research indicated that during the COVID-19 pandemic, more children and families moved to the gold mining regions, and a rising number of children have been subjected to forced labor in gold mining. In addition, the commercial sexual exploitation of children is common in the capital city of Conakry and in the mining regions. (15,23) Through the system of *confiage*, parents who are unable to care for their children send them to relatives or strangers, who are expected to provide food, shelter, and schooling for the children in exchange for housework. In practice, some of these children receive care and an education, but many are subjected to abuse, forced labor in domestic work, and forced begging. (12,25)




Children in Guinea are sometimes subjected to forced begging, and research indicates that albino children are particularly vulnerable. In certain cases, traffickers promised to enroll the children in school, but instead they subjected the children to forced begging in Conakry. (2,15,20,23) Families send their children to Koranic schools, where they are to receive education from teachers known as marabouts. Often the marabouts force the boys to beg on the street. (1,2,23)

Significant factors hinder access to education and therefore leave children vulnerable to child labor. Two out of five children do not attend school. (22) Barriers to education include the limited number of public schools, poor school infrastructure and sanitation, lack of transportation, and the lack of teachers (particularly in rural areas). (2,15,26) Guinean families must pay school fees and other indirect costs, which can be prohibitively expensive. (2,19) Girls sometimes leave school early due to cultural barriers, pregnancy, and sexual harassment at school. (26) Finally, since children are required to have birth registration to attend school, some unregistered children are unable to access education. (27,28) Since the passage of the revised Children's Code in March 2020, the government has carried out multiple birth registration campaigns to provide documentation to children. (2)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Guinea 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 Guinea's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the minimum age for work.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	No	16	Articles 121.4 and 137.5 of the Labor Code; Article 919 of the Children's Code (29,30)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles 2–4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 137.4 of the Labor Code; Articles 922 and 925 of the Children's Code (17,29,30)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 2 and 4 of Order 2791 Working Conditions for Employees Aged Under 18 Years; Article 135 of the Mining Code; Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Articles 909–936 of the Children's Code (17,29,30,31)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 194, 195, and 323 of the Penal Code; Articles 4 and 137.6 of the Labor Code; Articles 912–915 and 922 of the Children's Code (29,30,32)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 195, 323, and 324 of the Penal Code; Articles 893–901 and 912 of the Children's Code (29,32)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 346–348 and 355 of the Penal Code; Articles 820 and 852–856 of the Children's Code (29,32)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 137.6 of the Labor Code; Article 890 of the Children's Code; Article 344 of the Penal Code (29,30,32)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 941 of the Children's Code (29)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*		
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Article 792.7 of the Penal Code; Article 941 of the Children's Code (29,32)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 6, Title I of Education Decree 97 (33)
Free Public Education	No		

* Country has no conscription (34)

The revised Children's Code and the Labor Code allow children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform light work, which does not meet international standards as it applies to children under the age of 13. (29,30) In addition, these laws do not prescribe the number of hours per week permitted for light work, nor do they specify the conditions under which light work may be done. Moreover, these laws only apply to workers with written employment contracts, leaving self-employed children and children working outside of formal employment relationships vulnerable to exploitation. (29,30) The updated Constitution, enacted in 2020, stipulated free education up to the age of 16 under conditions provided by the law; however, the government

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did not enact legislation to institute free basic education standards within Guinea's legal framework. During the September 2021 coup, the transitional government dissolved the Constitution. (35,36) On September 27, Colonel Mamady Doumbouya released the Transition Charter, which supersedes the Constitution and law until a new Constitution is promulgated. Guinea's penal and civil codes remain in force. (34,36)

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 operations of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor and Public Services	Enforces all labor laws, including those related to child labor, through its General Labor Inspectorate. (2,19,30) During the reporting period, the Ministry of Labor and Social Laws was reorganized as the Ministry of Labor and Public Services. (2)
Ministry of Security	Investigates violations of criminal law. Through its Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals (OPROGEM), investigates criminal cases related to the protection of minors, including the worst forms of child labor. (1,2,16,23,34,37) There is 1 representative of OPROGEM in each of the 33 central police stations of the country who specializes in issues related to the trafficking of women and children. (23,38)
Gendarmes Special Brigade for the Protection of Vulnerable People	Investigates criminal cases related to the protection of minors, including the worst forms of child labor in rural areas where there is less police presence. Housed under the Ministry of Defense. Formed in January 2020 with the aim of reducing pressure on OPROGEM and allowing OPROGEM to focus on urban areas. (34)
Ministry of Justice	Delivers judgements through its Juvenile Court on all cases involving children, including child labor cases. (2) The Juvenile Court also collaborates and monitors cases with the National Directorate of Supervised Education and Youth Protection (<i>Direction Nationale de l'Éducation Surveillée et de la Protection de la Jeunesse</i>), which is under the Ministry of Justice, and is, by law, the supervising body of public social services centers. (2,15,16)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2021, labor law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, the exceptionally low number of worksite inspections conducted at the national level in Guinea may have impeded the enforcement of child labor laws.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (15)	\$11,500 (2)
Number of Labor Inspectors	200 (15)	167 (2)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (30)	Yes (30)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (15)	No (2)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	No (15)	No (2)
Refresher Courses Provided	No (15)	Yes (2)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	200 (15)	120 (2)
Number Conducted at Worksite	116 (15)	120 (2)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	0 (15)	0 (2)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	N/A (15)	N/A (2)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	N/A (15)	N/A (2)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (39)	Yes (2)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (30)	Yes (30)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (15)	Yes (2)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	No (15)	No (2)

The labor inspectorate does not have a sufficient budget and maintains only a single vehicle, with a portion of each inspector's salary used to cover fuel costs for inspection trips, restricting the labor inspectorate's ability to conduct labor inspections. (15,16,40,41) In 2021, the labor inspectorate conducted inspections in Conakry, Boke in Lower Guinea, and Mandiana in Upper Guinea, and sectors inspected included mines, quarries, and manufacturing. (2) The government did not conduct inspections in the agriculture sector, in which child labor is known to be present. (2)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2021, criminal law enforcement agencies in Guinea took actions to address child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including the insufficient allocation of financial resources.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	N/A (15)	Yes (3)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A (15)	Unknown (2)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (15)	Yes (3)
Number of Investigations	2 (39)	Unknown (2)
Number of Violations Found	2 (39)	Unknown (2)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	2 (39)	Unknown (2)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (15)	Unknown (2)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (15)	Unknown (2)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (15)	Unknown (2)

In June 2021, Guinean criminal law enforcement authorities arrested a Sierra Leonean woman for trafficking in persons while she was attempting to travel to Nigeria with 11 children between the ages of 8 months and 11 years. The Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals Special Police Unit (OPROGEM) coordinated with INTERPOL's Sierra Leone office to return the children to Sierra Leone and begin prosecution of the woman arrested for trafficking in persons. (42) During the reporting period, the police academies trained 1,500 new cadets and the gendarmes academy trained 500 new cadets on anti-trafficking in persons enforcement as part of the standard curriculum. In addition, gendarmes and police officials also received refresher courses on trafficking in persons, including identifying and referring trafficking cases, providing support to survivors, and anti-trafficking coordination. (3) In October 2021, the Government of Guinea developed a standardized manual to guide government officials, including criminal law enforcement officials, in providing legal assistance and social welfare services to human trafficking survivors. (3) In addition, in December 2021, the gendarmes set up a national "Green line" hotline to receive calls concerning abuses, including labor violations and trafficking in persons. (3)

The Government of Guinea did not provide complete data on criminal law enforcement efforts for use in this report, including information on trainings for criminal law enforcement on new laws and data on the numbers of investigations, violations found, prosecutions initiated, convictions, and penalties imposed. (2) Research indicated that the OPROGEM Special Police Unit was understaffed, underfunded, and without sufficient office supplies, transportation, or fuel to enforce laws related to the worst forms of child labor. (1,2,16,19,25,37,43) While courts briefly closed following the September 5 coup d'état, they resumed their activities by September 19. (3)

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 inadequate allocation of financial resources.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices (CNLTTPA)	Coordinates anti-trafficking efforts. Led by the Ministry of Social Action and Vulnerable People, includes representatives from OPROGEM, Ministry of Labor and Public Service, and other ministries. (1,43) Coordinates with civil society and foreign donors. Organized awareness campaigns for human trafficking prevention. (1) In the reporting year, CNLTTPA finalized a report evaluating and making recommendations on assistance and protection programs for trafficking victims. (2) CNLTTPA also organized a weeklong radio and television sensitization campaign on anti-trafficking work in Guinea, and in cooperation with OPROGEM, the Gendarmes, and the IOM, launched a bus campaign to educate bus riders about trafficking in persons. (2) During the reporting period, CNLTTPA organized a workshop with the IOM and Ministry of Justice to train judges and prosecutors on how to identify cases of trafficking in persons, including child trafficking. (2) In addition, in 2021, the Government of Guinea provided the CNLTTPA with dedicated funding for the first time, providing \$35,000 to acquire computers, office equipment, and fuel, and to fund communications efforts. (3)
Ministry of Women's Promotion, Children, and Vulnerable People	Provides protection and social services for survivors of child labor and human trafficking and is the lead agency for child protection. (1,2,19) During the reporting period, the Ministry of Social Action and Vulnerable People changed its name to the Ministry of Women's Promotion, Children, and Vulnerable People. (2) During the reporting period, the Ministry of Women's Promotion, Children, and Vulnerable people provided protection kits including masks, handwashing solution, and food to reception centers that serve human trafficking survivors. (3)
Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child (CGSDE)	Implements, coordinates, and monitors government efforts on child protection issues, including child labor. Led by the Ministry of Social Action and Vulnerable People, with participation from the Ministry of Labor and Public Service. (37,39,44) Prepares periodic reports to treaty bodies in the UN (Committee on the Rights of Children), and the African Union (African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of Children). (45) Research was unable to determine whether specific activities were undertaken by the CGSDE during the reporting period.

Limited budgets for the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices and the Committee for Monitoring, Protection, and Defense of the Rights of the Child affect their ability to operate and coordinate efforts to address child labor. (1,19,25,37,46) Although the government has established a coordination mechanism on human trafficking, research found no evidence of mechanisms to coordinate the government's efforts to address child labor. (23)

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 covering all worst forms of child labor.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan for Trafficking in Persons (2020–2022)	Focuses on six strategies to address child trafficking, including strengthening the legal framework, reinforcing prevention devices, promoting assistance and support of survivors, strengthening cooperative partnerships, and improving monitoring and evaluation. (47,48) In 2021, the Government of Guinea conducted evaluations of existing protection and assistance programs, held trainings on trafficking in persons for judicial officials, and undertook public awareness campaigns. (2) In October, it also issued an Emergency Action Plan, as a supplement to the 2020–2022 National Action Plan, specifically to address the 11 priority recommendations highlighted in the 2021 U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report. (3)
Ten-Year National Education Plan for Guinea (2020–2029)	Launched under the third tier of the National Economic and Social Development Policy. Sets the goal of progressively providing free primary education in Guinea, and makes provisions to ensure vulnerable students such as orphans, disabled, and albino students have access to education. (49) Implemented by the Ministry of National Education and Literacy at the primary school level and published October 2019, covers the 10-year period from 2020–2029. (49) Research was unable to determine what activities were undertaken as part of this plan in the reporting year. (2)

The release of the 2021–2025 National Economic and Social Development Plan, to replace the prior plan that expired at the end of 2020, remains delayed due to the September 5th, 2021, coup. (2) Although the Government of Guinea has adopted a National Action Plan for Trafficking in Persons, research found no evidence of a policy on other worst forms of child labor. (8,16,41)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2021, the government participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including inadequate efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Guinea Project for Results in Early Childhood and Basic Education (2019–2024)	\$50 million World Bank project in Guinea that aims to increase access to quality early childhood and basic education and strengthen the capacity of the education system. (50) In 2021, the World Bank paused this program in response to the September 5th coup d'état, and the funding was not reinstated during the reporting period. (2)
UNICEF Rapid Response to COVID-19 Pandemic (2020–2021)	Worked on expanding continuous learning during pandemic closures through print, radio, TV, and online, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as children in rural areas and those with disabilities; also mobilized a back-to-school campaign, assisted in the safe reopening of schools through water, sanitation, and hygiene programs, and provided guidance to parents on school health. (51) This program continued during the reporting year. (52)

Research found that the scope of programs implemented by the Government of Guinea is insufficient for the extent of the problem, including addressing children engaged in agriculture, domestic work, forced begging, mining, and street work. (2,53) In addition, reports indicate that social services available are not effective to meet the needs of the survivors, and, as a result, the government relied on NGOs to provide shelter and other basic services. Moreover, financial shortfalls still constrain services. (1,2,15,19,25,37)

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 Guinea (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Raise the minimum age for light work to age 13 to comply with international standards; ensure that the law's light work provisions specify the conditions in which light work may be undertaken and the number of hours that are permitted for children engaged in light work.	2015 – 2021
	Ensure that all children are protected by law, including children working outside of a formal employment relationship and children who are self-employed.	2009 – 2021
	Establish by law free basic education.	2019 – 2021
Enforcement	Provide consistent training, including initial courses and training on new laws, for labor law officials.	2009 – 2021
	Establish a referral mechanism between the Ministry of Labor and Public Service and the Ministry of Women's Promotion, Children, and Vulnerable People to protect and rehabilitate children involved in child labor.	2016 – 2021
	Ensure the government conducts an adequate number of labor inspections.	2021
	Conduct labor inspections in the agricultural sector.	2021
	Ensure labor inspectors and criminal law enforcement officers receive adequate resources to enforce labor laws, including office supplies, fuel, and vehicles.	2020 – 2021
	Publish data on criminal law enforcement efforts to address the worst forms of child labor, including the numbers of investigations, violations found, prosecutions initiated, convictions, and penalties imposed.	2011 – 2021
	Provide criminal investigators with training on new laws on child labor.	2021
Coordination	Ensure all coordinating bodies receive sufficient funding to carry out their mandates.	2010 – 2021
	Ensure all coordinating bodies are active and able to carry out their intended mandates.	2018 – 2021
	Establish coordinating mechanisms to prevent and eliminate child labor.	2021
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor.	2014 – 2021
	Adopt a National Economic and Social Development plan to replace the prior plan that expired in 2020 and incorporate efforts against child labor into the new plan.	2021

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Social Programs	Enhance efforts to make education accessible for all children by eliminating fees and associated costs, improving school infrastructure, providing transportation, protecting students from sexual harassment in schools, ensuring pregnant students may continue their studies, and increasing school and teacher availability.	2010 – 2021
	Provide all children with access to birth registration	2020 – 2021
	Institute programs to address the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture, domestic work, forced begging, mining, and street work.	2010 – 2021
	Ensure that social services are properly funded and adequately meet the needs of victims of the worst forms of child labor.	2010 – 2021
	Ensure that activities are undertaken to implement the Ten-Year Education Program for Guinea during the reporting period and make information about implementation measures publicly available.	2021

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