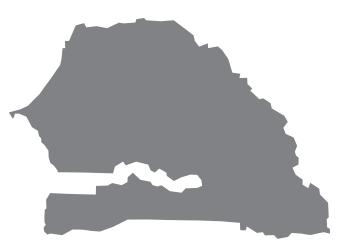
In 2021, Senegal made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government commenced activities for the 2021–2023 National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and launched a program to support children living and working on the streets. It also held trainings for labor inspectors focused on data collection on child labor in the informal economy. However, children in Senegal are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in forced begging. Children also perform dangerous tasks in gold mining, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Hazardous work prohibitions do not include domestic work or street work, areas in which there is



evidence of potential harm to child workers, and labor and criminal law enforcement agencies lack resources to adequately enforce child labor law. In addition, Senegal does not have a current national action plan or a national coordinating body for the elimination of child labor.

### I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

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

Table I. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	22.3 (Unavailable)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	53.0
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	13.9
Primary Completion Rate (%)		60.5

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 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), 2015. (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	Fishing, activities unknown (2)
	Farming, including harvesting crops (2)
Industry	Mining gold and iron, including washing ore, crushing rocks, using mercury, and carrying heavy loads† (2,3,7)
Services	Welding and auto repair (2,8)
	Domestic work (2,9)
	Street work, including vending (2,10)
Categorical Worst	Forced labor in domestic work and gold mining (2,7,9,11)
Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2,7,9,11)
	Forced begging (2,3,9,12-15)

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

Forced begging remains a significant problem in Senegal. (2,3) It is a traditional practice to send boys to Koranic schools called *daaras*, where students known as *talibés* receive a Koranic education from teachers known

<sup>‡</sup> 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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as marabouts. The traditional Islamic practice of asking for alms has in certain instances been corrupted, and some daaras force children to beg all day to collect money to enrich the marabouts. (2,3,9,14,16) Some marabouts set daily quotas and frequently beat or whip talibés who fail to collect enough. (14) An estimated 100,000 talibés are subjected to forced begging, including over 30,000 in the capital city, Dakar. (15) Talibés are often forced to live in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions, receive inadequate food and medical care, and are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse. (3,14,15) Children from rural areas in Senegal and neighboring countries including The Gambia, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, and Guinea are particularly vulnerable to this practice and are sometimes subjected to human trafficking. (2,9,15,16)

Children in Senegal are exploited in domestic servitude and forced labor in gold mines and are subjected to human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation, particularly within the country. (2,9,11,17) Children are particularly vulnerable to forced labor in mining and commercial sexual exploitation in the gold producing regions. (2,3,7,9) Adolescent girls are often trafficked from other countries, including Nigeria, for purposes of commercial sexual exploitation around the gold mines in Kédougou. Research shows that traffickers often tell girls that they are going to Europe, then withhold their identity documents and use debt bondage to force them into commercial sexual exploitation in Senegal. (2,7,9,11) Under a system known as *confiage*, Senegalese parents sometimes send their children, primarily young girls, to live with relatives and family friends to have better educational and economic opportunities, often in exchange for domestic labor. Some girls, however, are not sent to school and are subjected to forced labor and sexual exploitation. (2,9,11)

While Senegalese law provides for free and compulsory education from ages 6 to 16, approximately one-third of children in this age group do not attend school. (18) In practice, only primary school is tuition-free, and supplementary fees are often charged for secondary school. (1,18) Other barriers to education include lack of birth registration documents, distance from schools, and lack of accommodations for students with disabilities. (8,18,19) Poor sanitation infrastructure, including lack of running water and bathrooms, and sexual harassment in schools force some girls to leave school early. According to one NGO, sexual harassment and abuse is widespread in secondary schools in Senegal. In certain cases, when some girls attempted to reject male teachers' advances, they were penalized with lower grades and exclusion from class activities. (2,18,20,21)

## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR 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
KETTOEN	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 Senegal's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the lack of prohibition of military recruitment by non-state armed groups.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article L. 145 of the Labor Code; Article 6 of the Decree Establishing the Scale of Penalties for Violations of the Labor Code and Associated Rules for Application (22,23)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles I–3 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor; Article I of the Ministerial Order No. 3750 Determining the Types of Hazardous Work Prohibited for Children and Youth; Articles I–3 of the Ministerial Order No. 3751 Determining the Categories of Business and Work Prohibited to Children and Youth (24-26)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor; Ministerial Order No. 3750 Determining the Types of Hazardous Work Prohibited to Children and Youth; Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3751 Determining the Categories of Business and Work Prohibited to Children and Youth (24-26)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles L. 4 and L. 279 of the Labor Code; Articles 2 and 4 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor; Articles I and 2 of the Law Concerning the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices and the Protection of Victims (22,26,27)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article I of the Law Concerning the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Similar Practices and the Protection of Victims (27)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor; Articles 323 and 324 of the Penal Code (26,28)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		Article 2 of the Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor (26)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 19 of Law No. 2008-28 (29)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*		
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Article 3 of Law No. 2004-37 (30)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 3 of Law No. 2004-37; Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution (30,31)

<sup>\*</sup> Country has no conscription (6)

Ministerial Order No. 3749 Determining and Prohibiting the Worst Forms of Child Labor bans the use of children in illicit activities, but neither this law, the Penal Code, nor the Labor Code define specific criminal penalties for this offense. (26-28) The 2005 anti-trafficking law criminalizes forced begging. However, section 245 of the Penal Code provides that "the act of seeking alms on days, in places and under conditions established by religious traditions does not constitute the act of begging," which makes it unclear whether forced begging under these religious traditions is criminally prohibited. (3,27,28) Furthermore, the types of hazardous work prohibited for children do not include domestic work or street work, areas in which there is evidence of potential harm to child workers. (6,11,24,26) Because the minimum age for work is lower than the compulsory education age, children may be encouraged to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. (22,23,30)

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### 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, Social Dialogue, and Institutional Relations (MOL)	Identifies and investigates labor code violations, including child labor cases. (2,22) Empowered to refer criminal cases to the Police or Gendarmerie. (2)
Ministry of Justice (MOJ)	Responsible for the enforcement and prosecution of all criminal laws, including criminal violations of child labor laws. (2,32) Through its Department of Correctional Education and Social Protection, coordinates with the Ministry of Women, Family, Gender, and Child Protection (MWFGCP) to provide services to vulnerable children. (2,32) Through its Criminal Affairs and Pardons Branch, collects information and statistics on criminal cases involving forced child labor, child trafficking, and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. (2,32)
Ministry of the Interior and Public Security	Oversees all law enforcement agencies, including police officials who investigate cases of human trafficking and forced child begging, and arrests perpetrators of the worst forms of child labor. Houses the Children's Unit, located in Dakar, which employs three officers who specialize in child protection, victim identification, and reintegration. (32) Through its Children's Unit, receives assistance from the Vice Squad in child protection cases. Through its Air and Border Police ( <i>Police de l'air et des frontiers</i> ), focuses on migrant smuggling and transnational crimes. (32)
Ministry of Women, Family, Gender, and Child Protection (MWFGCP)	Contributes to the creation and implementation of child protection policies and provides services to victims of exploitative child labor. Operates the Ginddi Center, which cares for children who are survivors of labor exploitation or human trafficking. (2,9,16) In 2021, chaired a 2-day regional meeting on child protection in West Africa and held informational meetings with religious leaders about the protection of children in daaras. (2)

## **Labor Law Enforcement**

In 2021, labor law enforcement agencies in Senegal took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including the insufficient allocation of human resources.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (19)	Unknown (2)
Number of Labor Inspectors	68 (19)	68 (2)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (22)	Yes (22)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (19)	N/A (2)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A (19)	N/A (2)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (19)	Yes (2)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	2,835 (19)	Unknown (2)
Number Conducted at Worksite	2,835 (2)	Unknown (2)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	0 (19)	0 (2)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	N/A (19)	N/A (2)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	N/A (19)	N/A (2)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (19)	Yes (2)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (19)	Yes (2)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (22)	Yes (22)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (19)	Yes (2)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	No (19)	No (2)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (19)	Yes (2)

The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Senegal's workforce, which includes over 4.7 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in developing economies, Senegal would need to employ about 317 labor inspectors. (33,34) The labor inspectorate has assigned one inspector and one controller, who assists the labor inspector in their duties, to child labor cases. (2,22)

While labor inspectors are allowed to conduct inspections in private homes and farms, where child labor is widespread, there were no inspections in these sites during the reporting period. (2) In November 2021, the Ministry of Labor, Social Dialogue, and Institutional Relations organized a workshop for labor inspectors on data collection in the fight against child labor in the informal economy. (2) Anecdotal reports indicate that there is a lack of child labor law enforcement in the informal sector, in which most children are employed. Research suggests that the labor inspectorate only has sufficient funding to inspect the formal sector. (2) The Government of Senegal does not have a dedicated hotline or complaint mechanism to receive reports of child labor. (2)

## **Criminal Law Enforcement**

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

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (19)	Yes
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A (19)	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (19)	Yes
Number of Investigations	Unknown (19)	Unknown
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (19)	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	3 (19)	Unknown
Number of Convictions	3 (19)	Unknown
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (19)	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (19)	Yes

The government did not provide information on its criminal law enforcement efforts, including the number of investigations, the number of violations found, or the number of penalties imposed for violations related to the worst forms of child labor for inclusion in this report. (2)

The authorities have had limited success in prosecuting cases related to forced begging due to a lack of governmental coordination, resource constraints, and lack of political support. (2,3,9,15,35) Judicial officials often drop or reduce charges again Koranic teachers due to social and political pressures. (15) Although police stations in Senegal are expected to report cases involving children to the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security's Children's Unit, research found no evidence that this occurs regularly. Research was unable to determine how police stations handled cases that were not referred to the Children's Unit. (9) Research also indicates that training for criminal investigators was cursory and not sufficient to fully enforce existing laws protecting children against labor abuses. (2)

## 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 the lack of an entity dedicated to coordinating efforts to address child labor.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP)	Leads efforts to prevent trafficking in persons, prosecute perpetrators, and protect survivors. (36) Housed under MOJ. Includes elected officials and representatives from MWFGCP; the National Police; and the Department of Social Services. (2,35) Reports on human trafficking in Senegal and coordinates the implementation of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings. (9,35,36) In 2021, organized trainings on trafficking in persons for law enforcement, magistrates, and local elected officials. (2)
Childhood Protection Unit (CAPE)	Housed under the MWFGCP. Coordinates government efforts related to child protection, including through the implementation of the National Strategy on Child Protection. (2) Contributes to the creation and implementation of child protection policies, and is developing a national system for collecting and disseminating data on vulnerable children. Advocates on behalf of all entities working on issues related to child begging, violence against children, and child labor. (37) Brings complaints of child endangerment before the President of the Juvenile Court. (2) In April 2021, CAPE sponsored a workshop for various stakeholders on child digital literacy and protecting children against sexual exploitation online, especially during periods of school inactivity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. (38)
Trafficking in Persons Database (Systraite)	Launched in partnership with the IOM and funding from the USDOS with the aim to track cases of trafficking in persons. Initially piloted in Dakar, Saint Louis, Thiès, Kédougou, and Tambacounda. (17,39,40) Continued to function in the pilot cities in 2021. (9)

While various bodies coordinated efforts to address forced child begging and commercial sexual exploitation of children, there was no active coordinating body dedicated to preventing and eliminating other forms of child labor, including in agriculture and domestic work. (2)

### 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 the lack of a national policy covering all worst forms of child labor

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings (2021– 2023)†	Drafted and implemented by the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP). (2) Structured around four priority areas: prevention; protection and care of victims; pursuit; and research, monitoring, evaluation, and partnerships. (42) Goals include raising awareness and advocating for legislation, conducting public awareness campaigns, improving capacity of shelters and services for survivors, strengthening the capacity of criminal law enforcement and the judicial system, and improving regional cooperation. (42) In 2021, efforts outlined within the plan commenced, including trainings for law enforcement and awareness-raising events. (36)
National Strategy on Child Protection	Aims to strengthen child protection systems in Senegal and accelerate behavioral change toward child protection. Organized around the pillars of prevention, care, and promotion of children's rights. (32) As part of this strategy, during the reporting year, the government, in coordination with the Child Protection Committee in the Dakar region, continued its program for the withdrawal and social reintegration of street children. (2)

<sup>†</sup> Policy was approved during the reporting period.

In 2021, the government began the process of updating the National Action Plan on the Prevention and Abolition of Child Labor in Senegal, which expired in 2016. (2)

## VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2021, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the inadequacy of programs to address the full scope of the problem.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Removal and	Government of Senegal-funded and operated program to oversee the removal and socioeconomic reintegration
Socioeconomic	of street children, many of whom are victims of forced begging. (2) Provides assistance to daaras to curb forced
Reintegration Program	begging. Aids child victims by returning them to their families, providing shelter in government-sponsored centers,
for Children in Street	or placing them in foster families. (2) In 2021, the program spent \$603,000 and assisted 10,934 children, including
Situations†*	418 removed from daaras or the street by the government. (2)

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor (Cont.)

Program	Description
Daara Modernization Program†	\$18.5 million government-funded voluntary program implemented by Tostan and the African Meeting for the Defense of Human Rights (La Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits d'Homme). Aims to eliminate forced begging and to regulate, inspect, and fund daaras. (19) The program continued in 2021. (32)
Ginddi Center†	Serves abused and vulnerable children, including runaway talibés, street children, and child trafficking survivors. (8,9,16,35) Provides food, education, vocational training, family mediation, medical care, and psychological care in its shelter. (16,35) Supports a 24-hour a day toll-free hotline, staffed by French, Wolof, and Pular speakers, that allows anonymous reporting of cases of child trafficking and/or labor abuse. (9,16) During the reporting period, continued to operate its hotline and provide assistance to survivors of child trafficking and labor exploitation. (2)
Senegal Social Safety Net Program	\$108.55 million World Bank-funded project which aims to build social safety nets by providing targeted cash transfers to poor households. During the reporting period, the project continued to provide cash transfers to poor and vulnerable households. (43)
Centers to address child trafficking†	Provides monitoring, education, rehabilitation, and reintegration services for survivors of child trafficking through Ministry of Justice-run transit houses in Dakar, Pikine, and Saint-Louis. (8) During the reporting period, the government continued to provide food and shelter through these centers. (9,32)

<sup>†</sup> Program is funded by the Government of Senegal.

Although the Government of Senegal has implemented programs to address child trafficking and forced begging, research found no evidence that the government has carried out programs to assist children involved in domestic work, agriculture, or mining. (2) Civil unrest for several days in March 2021 temporarily stopped the activities of the Removal and Socioeconomic Reintegration Program for Children in Street Situations program, and as of December 2021, the government has not yet resumed program activities. In addition, sometimes rehabilitated street children who are returned to their families end up again being subject to forced begging in daaras. (2,36)

### 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 Senegal (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2021
Framework	Establish criminal penalties for the use of children in illicit activities.	2021
	Clarify forced begging provisions in the Penal Code and the Law Concerning the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons to explicitly prohibit forced begging, including alms-seeking, under any circumstances.	2017 – 2021
	Ensure that the law governing hazardous work prohibitions for children is comprehensive.	2016 – 2021
	Raise the minimum age for work to the age up to that which education is compulsory.	2018 – 2021
Enforcement	Publish all relevant information on labor inspectorate funding and on the number of inspections conducted, including those conducted at worksites.	2013 – 2021
	Establish a mechanism to receive child labor complaints, and track cases of child labor for referral to law enforcement or social services providers.	2014 – 2021
	Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice, provide adequate labor inspectorate funding, and ensure that cases of child labor are formally reported.	2010 – 2021
	Ensure that labor inspections and enforcement are carried out in the informal sector, including in private homes and farms.	2014 – 2021
	Publish criminal law enforcement information on the number of investigations, violations found, and imposed penalties on the worst forms of child labor.	2020 – 2021
	Ensure that courts have sufficient resources and coordination to be able to successfully prosecute cases.	2019 – 2021
	Ensure that criminal cases involving child victims are referred to the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security's Children's Unit.	2021
	Ensure that training for criminal investigators adequately addresses issues related to the worst forms of child labor in Senegal.	2019 – 2021
Coordination	Establish a national coordinating body with established mechanisms to prevent and eliminate child labor.	2021

<sup>\*</sup> Program was launched during the reporting period.

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Government Policies	Adopt a national policy to address child labor.	2016 – 2021
Social Programs	Ensure that all children have access to education by eliminating school-related fees, building additional schools, improving school infrastructure and sanitation, ensuring access for students with disabilities, providing all children with access to birth registration, and protecting children in schools from sexual harassment and abuse.	2011 – 2021
	Institute programs to address child labor in domestic work, agriculture, and mining.	2010 – 2021
	Conduct education and awareness-raising activities among families of rescued street children to ensure children are not returned to forced begging.	2021
	Restart the removal activities of the Removal and Socioeconomic Reintegration Program for Children in Street Situations program.	2021

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