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In 2019, the Central African Republic made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Under a 2019 peace agreement, the government and non-state armed groups committed to ending and preventing grave violations against children, including the recruitment of child soldiers. Several parties signed Action Plans to implement these commitments, and 1,150 children were demobilized during the reporting period. The National Assembly also adopted an expansive new child protection code, and the government established the National Inter-Ministerial Committee to Combat Human Trafficking. However, children in the Central African Republic engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in armed conflict by non-state armed



groups and in diamond mining, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Additionally, the Central African Republic does not meet the international standard for minimum age protections since it does not include children working in the informal sector. Moreover, an estimated 1.3 million children lacked access to education because of ongoing instability, and limited resources hampered the government's implementation of policies and programs to address child labor.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in the Central African Republic (CAR) engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in diamond mining and armed conflict by non-state armed groups. Children also engage in child labor in agriculture and domestic work. (1-7) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in CAR.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	31.0 (373,742)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	63.1
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	28.0
Primary Completion Rate (%)		40.9

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020. (8)
Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 4, 2010. (9)

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	Working in agriculture, activities unknown (10)
	Working in forestry, including carrying tools (11)
	Fishing, activities unknown (12)
Industry	Diamond and gold mining† (10,13-15)
	Working in sawmills, forges, and foundries, including sharpening sawblades and maintaining fires (11,12)
	Construction, activities unknown (12)
Services	Domestic work (10)
	Street work, including carrying heavy loads, garbage scavenging, and market vending (10)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict, including as combatants, cooks, porters, informants, concubines, domestic workers, and guards (5,10,16,17)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced domestic labor and work in agriculture, markets, and mining, including in diamond mines, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking $(6,7,10,16,18-20)$
	Forced labor of indigenous Ba'aka children in farming (6)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (6,7,10,18-23)

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

In February 2019, the government and 14 armed groups signed the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. (24,25) The peace agreement calls for the immediate cessation of recruitment of child soldiers by all parties to the conflict. (25) However, implementation has been challenged by the government's limited control of territory outside the capital, Bangui. Non-state armed groups contest about 80 percent of the territory. (7,26) Many of these groups—including Anti-Balaka associated militias; ex-Seleka factions Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique, Mouvement des Libérateurs Centrafricains pour la Justice, Mouvement Patriotique pour la Centrafrique, and Unité pour la Paix en Centrafrique; and unaffiliated elements—continued to recruit children as combatants, informants, cooks, and sex slaves. (10) During the reporting period, 1,150 child soldiers were demobilized from armed groups, and UNICEF documented more than 500 grave violations against children, including recruitment and use. (7,10,27) However, due to lack of funding and persistent insecurity, as many as 25 percent of children released since 2014 have not received reintegration support. (28,29)

Armed groups and criminal elements, including in some pastoralist groups, subjected children to forced domestic servitude and commercial sexual exploitation. (6,7) Children in rural areas were forced to work in artisanal diamond and gold mines, often for long hours and without protective equipment. (7) Children exposed to silver nitrate in gold mines often sustained injuries as a result. In some instances, relatives willfully exploited family members to generate additional income to support their households. (6,7) Girls may be trafficked into forced domestic servitude, especially in rural areas where government presence is limited or non-existent. In *maisons de joie* ("houses of joy"), girls as young as age 13 are subject to commercial sexual exploitation. (7) *Maisons de joie* are typically private residences at which alcohol and food are served to middle and upper-class customers. (7) As of September 2019, approximately 600,136 people were displaced within CAR, half of whom were children. (28,30) An estimated 2.9 million people, half of them children, require assistance and protection, while 2.1 million people were food insecure. (24,27) Displacement and chronic food insecurity are aggravating risk factors for forced labor and sex trafficking. (6)

Between 2017 and 2019, CAR saw a 21 percent increase in verified attacks on schools. (30) Fewer than three in five children in CAR complete their primary education, and only 6 percent graduate from secondary school. An estimated 1.3 million children lacked access to education because of ongoing instability. (27,31) The Ministry of Education has attempted to improve access to education by providing free school admission to children from IDP camps, waiving school exam fees for children affected by conflict, and expanding programs to provide birth registration, which may be required for school enrollment. (10,18,32-34) However, children continue to experience difficulties accessing education due to school fees, an absence of teachers, security concerns, destruction or looting of school materials and buildings by armed groups, and the unavailability of schools, especially in rural areas or IDP camps. (10,20,27,35-42) The continued occupation of school buildings by non-state armed groups presents additional challenges. (10,43) The state's limited reach outside the capital precluded efforts to distribute educational resources in rural areas. (10,43,44) In 2019, some public school teachers were reportedly paid to work in rural areas, but due to persistent insecurity, they opted to remain in Bangui. Consequently, most rural schools remained closed. (10) During the reporting period, some civil society organizations reported that ethnic minority Muslims in the east were denied access to education. (5,10)

CAR's birth registration rate, stymied by endemic poverty and administrative collapse, remains one of the lowest in Africa. (45) However, CAR's new Child Protection Code enshrines the right to free, universal birth registration for all children. (46) Despite the new provision, the Family Code and a Presidential Decree mandate that schools

[‡] 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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will only accept children with documented proof of identity, such as a birth record/certificate. Based on this legal requirement, undocumented children were denied access to education and other social services. (10) Nevertheless in July 2019, the government, in collaboration with NGOs, delivered birth certificates to children who did not have civil status documentation. A total of 120 undocumented children received alternative judgments in the sub-prefecture of Berberati. (10)

The government did not collect or publish data on child work, child labor, or the worst forms of child labor in 2019. (10)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

CAR has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

	Convention	Ratification
KATOLIN	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	1

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in CAR'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	14	Article 259 of the Labor Code; Article 63 of the Child Protection Code (46-48)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 263 of the Labor Code; Articles 65–68 of the Child Protection Code (47,48)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	No		Article 261 of the Labor Code; Article 190 of the Mining Code (47,49)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Articles 7 and 393 of the Labor Code; Articles 65 and 175 of the Child Protection Code (46,47)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 151 of the Penal Code (50)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 262, 263, and 393 of the Labor Code; Articles 90–92 and III of the Penal Code; Article 69 of the Child Protection Code (46,47,50)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Articles 262-263 and 393 of the Labor Code; Article 65 and 175 of the Child Protection Code (46,47)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Decree N° 85.432, Declaration to the UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict (51)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes*		Article 22 of the Constitution; Articles 262 and 393 of the Labor Code; Articles 77–79 of the Child Protection Code (46,47,52)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non- state Armed Groups	Yes		Articles 262 and 393 of the Labor Code; Articles 77–79 and 181 of the Child Protection Code (46,47)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15	Ordinance N° 84/031 Orienting the Teaching System; Article 13 of Law N° 97/014 Orienting the Education System; Articles 40 and 52 of the Child Protection Code $(46,52-54)$

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

Standard	Meets International Age Standards	Legislation
Free Public Education	Yes	Ordinance N° 84/031; Article 9 of the Constitution; Articles 52 and 57 of the Child Protection Code (46,52-54)

^{*} No conscription (52,55)

The Child Protection Code (CPC) was adopted by the National Assembly on February 27, 2020. (46,56) The legislation guarantees children ages 5–18 the right to free education, with public primary education compulsory and free. However, research was unable to locate original copies of laws establishing the compulsory education age at 15. (46,54)

Although the Labor Code prohibits work by children under age 14, the law does not apply to children outside of formal employment relationships. This fails to meet international standards, which require the protection of all children under minimum age for work laws. (47,61) Despite a 2016 study on hazardous work, CAR has not determined by national law or regulation the types of hazardous work prohibited for children. (10,47,60,62) The minimum age for work is lower than the compulsory education age, which may encourage children to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. Lastly, while CAR has ratified the declaration to the UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict, it is unclear if law has been domesticated or published. (51)

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 the Ministry of Public Service, Modernization of Administration, Labor, Employment and Social Protection (MOL) that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Public Service, Modernization of Administration, Labor, Employment and Social Protection	Through its General Directorate of Labor and Social Welfare and seven regional labor directorates, monitors and enforces laws related to child labor. (12)
Ministry of the Promotion of Women, Family, and Protection of Children	Responsible for the enforcement of criminal laws against forced child labor. (5,34)
Internal Security Forces Police and Gendarmes	Enforce all laws, including those related to the worst forms of child labor. (61)
Ministry of Justice	Protects the rights of the child through its Rapid Response for Child Protection team and combats the worst forms of child labor through its courts and tribunals. (34,63)
Ministry of Social Affairs, Promotion of Gender, and Humanitarian Action (MSA)	Oversees child soldier issues and leads the government's anti-trafficking policy efforts through the National Council on Child Protection. Refers victims of child trafficking to NGOs and maintains an orphanage for children at risk of child trafficking. (63)
Special Criminal Court	Investigates serious human rights abuses committed since 2003, including the use of children in armed conflict. Hybrid court comprising international and national judges and prosecutors. (64,65)
Mixed Unit for Rapid Intervention and Repression of Sexual Violence (UMIRR)	Unit falls under the joint authority of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Public Security and is part of a state organization supporting investigations into conflict-related sexual violence. UMIRR refers cases to a Special Criminal Court, a hybrid court embedded in the national justice system to address human rights violations. (36)

There is approximately I police officer for every I,300 Central Africans. Government authority is largely absent outside the capital, and security forces outside Bangui may lack the resources and knowledge to enforce the law, including a lack of access to copies of relevant laws. (66)

The Special Criminal Court held its inaugural session in late 2018, and the Special Prosecutor announced a prosecutorial strategy in 2019. (10,59) The 2020 Child Protection Code establishes a National Council for

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the Promotion and Protection of Children, which will report directly to the Prime Minister, and a Children's Parliament. A Juvenile Court, also established under the law, will field all cases involving the health, safety, morals, and education of children. (46)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2019, labor law enforcement agencies in CAR took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the MOL that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including adequate financial resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Number of Labor Inspectors	53 (5)	70 (10)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (5)	Yes (10)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	No (5)	Yes (10,47)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A (5)	N/A (10)
Refresher Courses Provided	No (5)	Yes (10)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	Unknown (5)	58 (10)
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (5)	Yes (10)
Routine Inspections Targeted	No (5)	No (5)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (5)	Yes (10)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (5)	No (10)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (5)	Yes (10)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (5)	Yes (10)

During the reporting period, the country's 7 regional labor directorates conducted 58 investigations. Inspectors issued 36 citations for labor violations, but no cases of child labor were reported. (7,10) However, research indicates that child labor is prevalent in all sectors of the economy. (7,10) Government efforts to combat child labor were hindered by a lack of labor inspectorate capacity and inadequate financial and material resources, including transportation, office facilities and supplies, and computers. (34,62,67-69) Also, the passage of Decree No. 12.177 in 2012 effectively removed regional labor directorates from the general directorate's chain of command. Thus, regional directorates are no longer required to submit periodic reports on inspection activities, as required under ILO C. 81. (67,70) In addition, civil unrest prevented labor inspectors outside Bangui from visiting artisanal mining sites. (7) Labor inspections remain limited to the formal sector and do not target the informal sector, in which child labor is most prevalent. (5,10)

In 2019, the government hired 17 additional labor inspectors, bringing the total number of labor inspectors and controllers employed to 70. Although newly hired labor inspectors received initial training, there was no record of child labor-specific training during the reporting period. (10,35) However, 5 inspectors and controllers received additional labor training at the African Work Administration Regional Center in Cameroon, and UNDP funded local training for 30 inspectors. (10) The Ministry of Labor also submitted a formal request to the ILO to provide training to labor inspectors. This training is scheduled to take place in 2020. (7) A complaint mechanism for filing and responding to reports of child labor exists, but there was no evidence that it was operational during the reporting period. (10)

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Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2019, criminal law enforcement agencies in CAR took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including insufficient human resources.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A (5)	N/A (10)
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown (5)	Yes (10)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (5)	Unknown (10)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (5)	No (10)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (5)	Yes (10)

The 2020 CPC created specialized children's police units to monitor industrial or mining areas for hazardous conditions. The units, under the expanded jurisdiction of the juvenile court system, will also be responsible for identifying criminal offenses against children. (10,46,56-60) The CPC also broadens social protections and creates new enforcement mechanisms for victims of sexual exploitation, forced labor, or human trafficking, and includes provisions for at-risk groups such as demobilized child soldiers, children of religious and ethnic minorities, and non-residents. (7,10,46) Under the new law, children associated with armed groups are entitled to state social protection services and immunity from prosecution. (10,46)

Nevertheless, judicial authorities lack the staff and resources to conduct investigations outside Bangui. (6,41,66,71) Cases were widely resolved outside of formal legal proceedings due to a lack of public trust, access, or knowledge about the justice system. (41,72-74)

Furthermore, juvenile criminal offenders may be imprisoned with adults, despite a 2016 decree that prohibits this practice, because no separate juvenile cells or juvenile prisons exist. (20,32) In 2019, in an isolated event, two child soldiers were arrested and detained in the prison of Bangui for several days following the fighting in Birao, located in northern CAR. (10,75) The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR Child Protection Unit successfully advocated for their release. The two child soldiers were admitted to a host family for reintegration. (10)

The MOL is supposed to work with other ministries and UNICEF to provide assistance to victims of child labor, including its worst forms. Due to a lack of resources, the government relies primarily on the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR, NGOs, and UNICEF to provide social services to victims. (5,20,76,77) In 2019, UNICEF reported cases of forced child labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and child soldiering, with some children also forced to engage in illicit activities. (10,78) The Mixed Unit for Rapid Intervention and Repression of Sexual Violence (UMIRR) operated a 24-hour hotline to report cases of child trafficking but did not provide statistics on the number of calls received in 2019. (6) UMIRR officers identified two children who were victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Officials initiated an investigation into the alleged recruiter, but the case had not been referred for prosecution at the end of the reporting period. (79) Although the government has referral mechanisms that enable enforcement authorities and social services to refer children found in child labor situations, due to limited resources, the majority of cases were handled by NGOs. (10)

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 efforts to address all forms of child labor.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Children Soldier Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Mechanisms	The government worked with the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR (MINUSCA), UNICEF, and other partner agencies to demobilize and reintegrate children into community life. (7,10,25,34,69) During the reporting period, UNICEF assisted 2,875 children who were child soldiers or victims of sexual violence, including psychosocial assistance, shelters, and community reintegration. (10) Between January and October 31, 2019, UNICEF and partners provided reintegration services to 965 children, including 219 girls, who were released from armed groups. This represented around 32 percent of the target. (42,75) During the same period, 105,962 children affected by conflict (including 43,182 girls) accessed protection and integrated psychosocial services through UNICEF-supported projects. Support included individual counselling and follow-up, structured play and recreational activities, and, when needed, referral to basic social services. (75,80) In addition, the UN Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting engaged with Action Plan signatories to end grave violations against children, and monitored their implementation. (43) A 2019 Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting meeting with a leader of <i>Unité pour la Paix en Centrafrique</i> (UPC) led to the appointment of a child protection coordinator at UPC headquarters. The leader indicated that he would designate other focal points in localities under UPC control. (43) In the fourth quarter of 2019, MINUSCA provided child protection training to 793 peacekeepers (military, police, and civilian personnel). (43)
National Inter-Ministerial Committee to Combat Human Trafficking*	Coordinates drafting and implementation of CAR's inaugural national trafficking in persons strategy and the National Action Plan to combat trafficking. In September 2019, President Faustin-Archange Touadéra appointed Gisele Pana, Minister for the Promotion of Women, Family and the Protection of Children, to be the government focal point for the new committee. (7) In addition to the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior, local and international NGOs, along with international organizations, serve on the committee. The committee met five times during the reporting period, and formally validated a 2020-2021 national action plan to combat human trafficking in March 2020. The president signed the action plan into law in March 2020, and the government allocated in-kind resources to implement plan components beginning in 2020. (7,79)
UMIRR	Combats sexual violence against women and children. This mixed unit includes representatives from MSA, the Ministry of Justice, and law enforcement (gendarmerie, police, and civilians) and is tasked with fighting violence against women and children. (7,34) During the reporting period, the government partnered with MINUSCA and IOM to provide training to police, gendarmerie, UMIRR, and community leaders on recognizing signs of human trafficking. IOM also provided training on developing and implementing standard operating procedures for government officials and law enforcement. (7) The 2020 Trafficking In Person National Action Plan extends UMIRR's authority to include human trafficking, and UMIRR has already investigated and referred cases to the High Court of Bangui. (7)

^{*} Mechanism to coordinate efforts to address child labor was created during the reporting period.

While the government has established mechanisms to address some of the worst forms of child labor—including human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, and children in armed conflict—these efforts do not extend to other sectors, such as mining, where child labor is prevalent. (20)

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 coverage of all forms of child labor.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic†	Peace agreement signed by 14 armed groups and the Transitional Government in February 2019. Includes provisions to end the recruitment and use of children by armed groups, and to facilitate the separation of children from their ranks. (25,76,81) Armed groups listed by the UN for grave violations against children have signed Action Plans to implement these commitments. (82-84) The Action Plans cover the four areas for which the groups are listed, including recruitment and use, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and attacks on schools and hospitals. (82-84) The Mouvement Patriotique pour la Centrafrique has appointed four commanders to serve as child protection focal points in areas under its control. (76,82) In August 2019, as part of its efforts toward implementing its Action Plan, the Mouvement Patriotique pour la Centrafrique signed a Command Order prohibiting its forces from committing grave violations against children. UPC and the Front Popularie pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique also signed orders to prevent the grave violations for which the groups are listed. (85)

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Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor (Cont.)

Policy	Description
Child Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Policy	Based on the 2015 Bangui Forum, this policy aims to facilitate initiatives to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate child soldiers, in cooperation with UN agencies, other ministries, and armed groups. (12,32,55,74,86) Through its National Strategy for Community-Based Reintegration of Children Formerly Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups, provides temporary care to children separated from armed groups and establishes Community Child Protection Networks throughout the country. (33,75,86-88) During the reporting period, UNICEF and partners helped the government demobilize and reintegrate 1,150 child soldiers who were liberated from armed groups. (7)
National Strategy to Fight Gender-Based Violence in CAR (2018–2021)†	Aims to achieve "zero tolerance" for gender-based violence, including commercial sexual exploitation. (75) Written by the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Family, and Protection of Children, in partnership with the UN Population Fund, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UN Women. (59) The government dedicated some funding toward public information campaigns and several prosecutions related to gender-based violence in 2019. (75) By October 2019, the government had prosecuted 26 cases in criminal court and 375 cases in civil court; 75 cases remained under investigation. In cooperation with the EU, the government has opened a temporary shelter called "House of Hope" for female victims of gender-based violence. (75)
National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (2017–2021)	Aims to re-establish peace and security, and support reconciliation by disarming and reintegrating children associated with armed groups, promoting legal reform, seeking justice for victims, and improving access to education. (18,55,75) By the end of 2019, built 290 schools in Bangui and provinces with the support of international partners. Moreover, 2,000 teachers were trained in French pedagogy and assigned to schools in Bangui and other prefectures as part of the redeployment of the administration. (75) These efforts resulted in a 51 percent increase in school enrollment, with a significant improvement registered among girls in 2019. (75)

[†] Policy was approved during the reporting period.

In 2019, several major parties to the conflict committed to a UN Action Plan to end and prevent grave violations against children. (82-84) In addition, research found no evidence of a policy on other worst forms of child labor, and a draft of a national policy addressing the elimination of child labor has yet to be adopted. (60,63) Furthermore, the government has not included child labor elimination and prevention strategies in the National Strategy for the Education Sector (2008–2020). (89)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2019, the government funded and participated in programs that may contribute to eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the adequacy of programs to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Awareness-Raising Programs†	Programs that aim to raise awareness of child labor and international conventions. (12,32,33) In May 2019, during a ceremony attended by the Prime Minister, the government announced a national 3-year campaign to end and prevent recruitment and use of children by armed groups. The campaign will be implemented by state and multilateral child protection stakeholders, and with the support of War Child. (90)
Shelters for Unaccompanied Children†	MSA and UNICEF-supported centers that provide immediate care, food, and psychosocial support to vulnerable children and former child soldiers. (2) Between January and August 2019, 76,100 children affected by conflict were able to continue schooling through the establishment of temporary learning spaces. (42) NGOs, in coordination, with UNICEF and the MSA, removed children from forced labor and provided social services for rehabilitation, schooling or vocational training, and placement in stable homes. (10,78)
Education Programs	Programs to restore educational infrastructure include: a \$23.4 million, EU-funded Education Program to rehabilitate and equip more than 300 schools in 4 prefectures and the capital; a Bangui Ministry of Mines and Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research program to construct schools in mining zones; and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Education Clusters, led by UNICEF and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, to provide access to education in conflict-affected areas. (32-34,40,91-94) In 2019, the government supported the UNICEF-funded programs "Temporary Spaces for Learning and Child Protection (STEPS)" and "Child Friendly Spaces." Together, these programs reached approximately 100,000 children with psychosocial support, including access to child-friendly spaces, and provided 120,000 children with formal or non-formal education. (42,75)

[‡]The government has other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (75)

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

Program	Description
Birth Registration Campaign†	In support of the 2014 decree mandating free birth registration to children born during the 2012–2014 conflict, re-opens civil registration centers in areas affected by conflict and provides registration to children. (32) In July 2019, the government collaborated with NGOs to deliver birth certificates to children who were without civil status documentation. To this end, "Avocats Sans Frontieres," in partnership with "Expertise France," conducted a survey in the prefecture of Mambéré Kadéï (Berberati). A total of 120 children without birth certificates have received alternative judgments in the sub-prefecture of Berberati. (10,75)

[†] Program is partially funded by the Government of CAR.

Although the government participates in a program that assists former child soldiers, coordination with non-government actors is weak, and the scope of this program is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem. (5,34,74,87,95) The absence of resources and government authority throughout much of the country significantly hindered the government's ability to combat child labor, and research found no evidence that the government has programs to assist children engaged in other worst forms of child labor. (34)

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 CAR (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that laws establishing the compulsory education is publicly available.	2019
	Ensure that all children are protected by law, including children working outside of formal employment relationships.	2017 – 2019
	Determine the types of hazardous work prohibited for children, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, and ensure that the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are comprehensive.	2013 – 2019
	Publish the legal source that establishes a minimum age for voluntary military service.	2015 – 2019
	Raise the minimum age for work to the age up to which education is compulsory.	2018 – 2019
Enforcement	Report on the labor inspectorate's funding level; type of training provided to investigators, and data related to national and regional enforcement efforts, including the number of worksite inspections conducted, violations found, penalties imposed and collected, prosecutions initiated and convictions obtained.	2014 – 2019
	Ensure that enforcement agencies have sufficient staff, resources, and funding, and training to enforce laws related to child labor, including its worst forms, and provide services to victims throughout the country.	2009 – 2019
	Initiate targeted and unannounced inspections based on available child labor prevalence data, and expand inspections to include the informal sector.	2018 – 2019
	Ensure that the complaint mechanism for filing and responding to reports of child labor functions is in accordance with its mandate, as required by ILO C. 182.	2018 – 2019
	Ensure that regional labor inspection offices are under the supervision and control of a central authority, and that regional inspectors are able to conduct inspections outside of Bangui, where many mining operations take place.	2018 – 2019
	Ensure that courts and security services are sufficiently funded, that security forces are sufficiently trained, that citizens can report violations and access formal judicial processes throughout the country, and the number of trafficking cases reported to the 24-hour TIP hotline are documented.	2016 – 2019
	Ensure that children are not subject to violence during criminal investigations, are not kept in detention centers with adults, and are granted access to social services providers and humanitarian assistance when released from armed groups.	2016 – 2019
	Ensure that referral mechanisms for children found in child labor situations are well-funded and fully operational.	2019
Coordination	Establish coordinating mechanisms to combat all forms of child labor.	2019
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor.	2014 – 2019
	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the National Strategy for the Education Sector.	2009 – 2019
	Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the National Strategy for the Education Sector.	2009 – 2019

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

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Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested	
Ensure that social programs to address the worst forms of child labor are funded and implemented in accordance with their mandates.	2018 – 2019	
Improve access to education for all children, including in rural areas, regardless of IDP status or religious affiliation, by eliminating school-related fees, making additional efforts to provide all children with birth registration, ensuring that ethnic and religious minorities are not denied access to education, establishing an adequate number of teachers and classrooms throughout the country, and ensuring that schools are safe spaces and free from armed groups.	2009 – 2019	
Expand programs to assist former child combatants and children associated with armed groups, and improve coordination among relevant actors.	2013 – 2019	
Allocate sufficient resources and implement programs to address the worst forms of child labor throughout the country.	2009 – 2019	
	Ensure that social programs to address the worst forms of child labor are funded and implemented in accordance with their mandates. Improve access to education for all children, including in rural areas, regardless of IDP status or religious affiliation, by eliminating school-related fees, making additional efforts to provide all children with birth registration, ensuring that ethnic and religious minorities are not denied access to education, establishing an adequate number of teachers and classrooms throughout the country, and ensuring that schools are safe spaces and free from armed groups. Expand programs to assist former child combatants and children associated with armed groups, and improve coordination among relevant actors. Allocate sufficient resources and implement programs to address the worst forms of child labor throughout	

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