In 2021, Cabo Verde made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government amended the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure to increase penalties for sexual crimes committed against children, notably those between the ages of 14 and 16. These amendments also increase benalties by one-third in situations involving family relationships or guardianships, and attribute accountability not only to perpetrators but also to those who assist in the victimization of children. In addition, the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents launched a program to ensure that children remain in school and stay off the streets. Furthermore, a National Plan to Prevent and Combat Sexual Violence Against Children and Adolescents, along with a National Communications Strategy for the Prevention and Combat of Sexual Violence were approved. In 2021, Maio Island recorded zero cases of child labor



after having recorded the highest number of cases in the country during the previous reporting period, due to extensive awareness-raising efforts conducted throughout the island and increased collaboration between relevant agencies. However, children in Cabo Verde are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture. Laws prohibiting forced labor are not sufficient as they do not criminalize practices similar to slavery or debt bondage and forced or compulsory labor. In addition, communication among law enforcement agencies is limited and social programs to assist children involved in agriculture and domestic work are not sufficient to address the scope of the problem.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Cabo Verde are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. (1-6) Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture. (6-8) Table I provides key indicators on children's work and education in Cabo Verde.

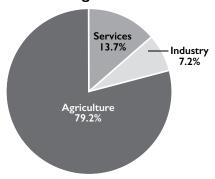
Table I. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	10 to 14	3.2 (2,392)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	90.1
Combining Work and School (%)	10 to 14	1.7
Primary Completion Rate (%)		100.0

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2019, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022. (9)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Inquérito as Despesas e Receitas Familiares (HHS), 2001–2002. (10)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 10-14



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

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Farming, including carrying heavy loads† (1,7,8,11)
	Raising livestock (12)
	Artisanal fishing in small boats† (8,13)
Industry	Construction, including sand extraction (8,13)
Services	Domestic work (1,7,8,11)
	Street work, including vending, garbage scavenging,† car washing, and begging (6-8,13-15)
Categorical Worst Forms of	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1-5)
Child Labor‡	Use in illicit activities, including drug trafficking (6,12)

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

As of June 2021, the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents in Maio Island reported zero child labor cases, likely due to extensive awareness-raising efforts conducted throughout the island and increased collaboration between relevant agencies. In 2020, according to the Institute, the island had recorded the highest number of cases in the country. (16)

The commercial sexual exploitation of boys and girls, including in the tourism industry, occurs in Cabo Verde. (3,4,6,12) Research indicates that the islands of Sal and Boa Vista register the highest incidence of commercial sexual exploitation of children. (2) In addition, anedoctal reports indicate that children may have been victims of commercial sexual exploitation on the islands of Brava, Santiago, Fogo, and São Vicente. (6)

According to the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents (ICCA), not all special needs students or children in remote areas of Cabo Verde have equal access to education. In some areas, children must travel long distances through mountainous topography to reach secondary schools. (8)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

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

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

	Convention	Ratification
WALL TO THE	ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
A THE STATE OF THE	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 Cabo Verde's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the prohibition of forced labor.

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

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	Article 261 of the Labor Code (17)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 264 of the Labor Code; Article 133 of the Civil Code (17,18)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		National List of Dangerous Work for Children (19)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	No		Article 14 of Chapter 3 of the Labor Code; Articles 271 and 271-A of the Penal Code (17,20,21)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 149 and 271-A of the Penal Code (20)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 144, 145, 148–150, and 271-A of the Penal Code (20)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 8 of the Drug Trafficking Law (22)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	17	Article 31 of the Military Service Law (23)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 2 of the Military Service Law (23)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Article 268-C of the Penal Code (20)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15‡	Articles 13 and 20 of the Education Law (24)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 14 of the Education Law (24)

[‡] Age calculated based on available information (25)

In 2021, amendments were made to the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, increasing penalties, in some cases by several years, for sexual crimes committed against children up to age 16, including commercial sexual exploitation crimes. These amendments also increase penalties by one-third in cases involving a family relationship or guardianship, and not only hold perpetrators accountable but also any persons who may have assisted in the victimization of children in such crimes. (21)

Laws prohibiting forced labor are not sufficient because they do not criminalize practices similar to slavery, including debt bondage and forced or compulsory labor. (17,20) The Civil Code includes a list of light work activities that children age 14 are allowed to perform; however, the law does not prescribe the number of hours per week permissible for light work, nor does it specify the conditions under which light work may be performed. (18,26,27)

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
Inspector General for Labor	Monitors and enforces child labor laws, working closely with the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents (ICCA). (11)
Attorney General's Office	Determines whether cases have merit and refers relevant cases to the Judicial Police for further investigation. Prepares cases for trial. (28)
Judicial Police and National Police	Judicial Police conduct criminal investigations; National Police make arrests related to the worst forms of child labor, including human trafficking. (8)

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2021, labor law enforcement agencies in Cabo Verde took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Inspector General for Labor (IGT) that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including insufficient financial resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspectors	21 (11)	21 (8)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (29)	Yes (29)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	N/A	N/A
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown	Yes (8)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	723† (11)	1,087 (8)
Number Conducted at Worksites	723† (11)	1,087 (8)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown	I (8)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown	I (8)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown	I (8)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (II)	Yes (8)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (II)	Yes (8)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (29)	Yes (29)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (II)	Yes (8)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (II)	Yes (8)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (11)	Yes (8)

[†] Data are from January 2020 to June 2020. (11)

During the reporting period, labor inspectors received training on laws related to child labor and hazardous child labor. In addition, about a quarter of the IGT's labor inspectors completed a 15-hour online training focused on the elimination of child labor, along with other participants from the community of Portuguese-speaking countries. (8) Course objectives focused on increasing participants' understanding of child labor and how to eliminate it, sharing best practices to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and defining how governments and relevant entities can be more effective toward eliminating child labor. (30)

From January to June 2021, ICCA received 17 allegations of child labor violations through its child protection hotline. ICCA conducts informal inspections when it receives any allegations of child labor and keeps the Attorney General's office informed whenever further investigative action is needed. (8) All child labor cases found by IGT inspectors are referred to ICCA for care or for referral to social services providers. (8)

Reports indicate that the number of labor inspectors is insufficient to cover the entire country. The IGT also reported that its budget is not sufficient to fulfill all its operational needs. (8)

Criminal Law Enforcement

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

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Unknown	Unknown
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Unknown	Unknown

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (Cont.)

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Number of Investigations	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Convictions	0 (31)	I (32)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (II)	Yes (8)

The government did not provide information on its criminal law enforcement efforts for inclusion in this report. However, reports indicate that the Judicial Police and the National Police often lack the necessary financial and human resources to conduct thorough investigations, including cases of child labor. (33)

Although the government compiled anti-trafficking statistics during the reporting period, reports indicate that comprehensive sharing of anti-human trafficking and victim protection data remained weak among agencies. (6) In addition, while law enforcement agencies work well together, limited coordination between these agencies, such as struggles in sharing case information and updates, may hinder their enforcement efforts. (12) Reports indicate that the judicial system is overburdened with a backlog of cases, which can contribute to a lack of protection for child victims of the worst forms of child labor, including children subjected to commercial sexual exploitation. (2,3,33)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8).

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Committee for Child Labor Prevention and Eradication in Cabo Verde	Coordinates the execution of the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and provides a functional mechanism for reciprocal referrals between law enforcement and social services. Led by ICCA, with support from the Ministry of Youth, Labor and Development of Human Resources. (34) In 2021, continued drafting an updated National Action Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor. (8)
ICCA	Coordinates and monitors the implementation of all national programs and activities to prevent and eliminate child labor. Works closely with the Inspector General for Labor and the National Committee for Child Labor Prevention and Eradication on all matters related to prevention and elimination of child labor in the country. (8) During the reporting period, began collecting data to better understand how the pandemic is affecting the child labor situation in the country. Moreover, launched a program to ensure children remain in school and stay off the streets and conducted a mapping analysis of NGOs and community associations involved in the protection of children's rights. (8,35,36)
Children and Adolescent Committee to Prevent and Combat Sexual Abuse and Exploitation	Contributes to the prevention and elimination of child sexual exploitation by coordinating the activities of member organizations and public and private services. Supervises, monitors, and evaluates the National Plan to Combat Sexual Violence Against Children and Adolescents. (12) Led by ICCA. (37) In 2021, in collaboration with UNICEF, drafted the new National Plan to Prevent and Combat Sexual Violence against Children and Adolescents (2022–2024), which was approved by the government. (38,39)
Observatory for Monitoring and Rapid Identification of Situations of Trafficking in Persons	Coordinates and monitors all efforts to eliminate human trafficking. Comprises law enforcement, NGOs, civil society, and various government agencies. (12,40) Led by the Ministry of Justice and Labor. (12) In 2021, conducted meetings with representatives of law enforcement and other agencies and, with IOM, participated in a launch of standard operating procedure manuals for entities responsible for responding to cases of human trafficking. (8)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies that are consistent with relevant international standards on child labor (Table 9).

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor	Prioritizes the eradication of child labor. Outlines specific objectives, including data collection, institutional capacity building, and enhancement of measures to prevent, protect, and remove children from involvement in child labor. (34) Active in 2021. (8)
National Plan to Prevent and Combat Sexual Violence Against Children and Adolescents (2022–2024)†	Aims to prevent and eliminate the sexual exploitation of children by building on lessons learned from the previous plan, while ensuring coordination among institutions and organizations that work to prevent and address sexual violence against children and adolescents. Establishes five goals, including (1) the active participation of children and adolescents; (2) the development of preventive actions against sexual violence; (3) a network of specialized care by trained professionals; (4) combating impunity; and (5) strengthening the national, regional and local entities focused on combating and eliminating sexual violence against children and adolescents, including commercial sexual exploitation. (39)
National Communication Strategy for the Prevention and Combat of Sexual Violence†	Aims to coordinate public policies to protect children and adolescents against sexual violence, including commercial sexual exploitation. Approved in August 2021 for implementation in 2022. (41)
Code of Ethics Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children	Guides and governs agencies involved in the tourism sector to eliminate the commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. (42) In 2021, UNICEF, in partnership with ICCA, introduced the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism to the Cabo Verdean Institute of Tourism, the Association of Tourist guides, travel agencies, hotels, and NGOs. (36)
National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2018–2021)	Prioritized five strategic areas: prevention, awareness, protection, investigation, and coordination. (43) Established the Observatory for Monitoring and Rapid Identification of Situations of Trafficking in Persons. (12,40) Implemented during the reporting period. (8)

[†] Policy was approved during the reporting period.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

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

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Child Labor Awareness Campaigns†	Government program implemented by ICCA and the National Committee for Child Labor Prevention and Eradication that conducts national awareness-raising campaigns on the worst forms of child labor. (8) In 2021, a campaign was conducted in the capital to raise awareness of the consequences of child labor among parents and the community. (44)
Help for At-Risk Children and Social Protection and Reintegration Centers†	ICCA-implemented program that provides education, health services, and professional training to vulnerable children and their families. (33) Operates six day centers for street children vulnerable to sexual and labor exploitation, including sex trafficking. Moreover, ICCA operates three additional centers for street children through its Nôs Kaza project. (33) The government also operates five long-term social protection and reintegration centers that provide support and educational integration services to children who have experienced long-term trauma, including child trafficking. (45) In 2021, a new day center was opened in Maio Island. (46)
Child Emergency Centers†	ICCA-implemented program that operates two emergency centers for child victims of abuse and sexual exploitation on Santiago and São Vicente islands, operating 24/7. (34) Active in 2021. (8)
Cabo Verdean Foundation for Social Action in Education†	Government programs aimed at providing access to education for disadvantaged children by paying for school fees, materials, and meals. (47) In 2021, continued collecting donations for school kits, including backpacks, uniforms, notebooks, and books, to be distributed to students in need. (48)

[†] Program is funded by the Government of Cabo Verde.

Research indicates that awareness-raising efforts on human trafficking, including child sex tourism, remained insufficient on some of the nine inhabited islands. (6) Research also found that programs to assist children involved in agriculture and domestic work are not sufficient to address the scope of the problem.

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 Cabo Verde (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that laws prohibiting forced labor criminalize slavery and practices similar to slavery, including debt bondage and forced or compulsory labor.	2021
	Prescribe by law the number of hours per week and conditions under which light work may be undertaken.	2015 – 2021
Enforcement	Publish information on labor inspectorate funding and ensure that the number of labor inspectors is sufficient to cover the country's workforce.	2011 – 2021
	Ensure that the Inspector General for Labor is provided with an adequate budget to fulfill all its needs.	2021
	Ensure that criminal investigators receive sufficient financial and human resources to conduct thorough investigations, including investigations of child labor.	2014 – 2021
	Make criminal law enforcement data publicly available, including information on training for new criminal investigators, whether refresher courses are provided, and the number of investigations conducted, violations found, prosecutions initiated, and penalties imposed for violations related to the worst forms of child labor.	2011 – 2021
	Develop a system to compile and share comprehensive anti-trafficking in persons and victim identification data among criminal enforcement agencies to improve coordination efforts.	2018 – 2021
	Ensure that the judiciary has sufficient resources and personnel to allow cases to be prosecuted in a timely manner.	2019 – 2021
Social Programs	Ensure that special needs students and children in remote areas have equal access to education, including by providing adequate transportation.	2020 – 2021
	Conduct awareness-raising activities on human trafficking, including child sex tourism, on all nine inhabited islands.	2018 – 2021
	Institute programs to address child labor in agriculture and domestic work.	2010 – 2021

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