# Togo

# Minimal Advancement

In 2013, Togo made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government released a report on child labor and youth. The Government intercepted a number of child trafficking victims and prosecuted traffickers of children. In addition, the Government continued to operate a hotline and shelter for children. However, children in Togo continue to engage in child labor in agriculture and in the worst forms of child labor in domestic service. The Government has not devoted sufficient resources to enforce its child labor laws effectively. Togo’s social programs to combat the worst forms of child labor do not match the scope of the problem, and rely largely on NGOs and international organizations for implementation.

# Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of Child Labor

Children in Togo are engaged in child labor, including in agriculture and in the worst forms of child labor in domestic service.([1-4](#_ENREF_1)) More than 70 percent of all working children in Togo, ages 5 to 14, are engaged in agriculture. The majority of children employed as domestic servants are girls ages 5 to 14.([1](#_ENREF_1), [5-8](#_ENREF_5)) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Togo.

**Table 1. Statistics on Children’s Work and Education**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Working children, ages 5 to 14 (% and population):** | 35.7 (616,132) |
| **School attendance, ages 5 to 14 (%):** | 85.3 |
| **Children combining work and school, ages 7 to 14 (%):** | 35.5 |
| **Primary completion rate (%):** | 73.5 |

*Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2011, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.*([9](#_ENREF_9))

*Source for all other data: Understanding Children’s Work Project’s analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 4, 2010.*([8](#_ENREF_8))

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 | Harvesting cotton,\* cocoa,\* and coffee\* ([4](#_ENREF_4), [10-13](#_ENREF_10)) |
| Producing beans\* and corn\* ([11](#_ENREF_11)) |
| Herding cattle†\* ([14](#_ENREF_14)) |
| Industry | Quarrying\*† ([11](#_ENREF_11), [12](#_ENREF_12)) |
| Construction, activities unknown\* ([15](#_ENREF_15)) |
| Services | Domestic work† ([1](#_ENREF_1), [5-8](#_ENREF_5), [15](#_ENREF_15), [16](#_ENREF_16)) |
| Portering\* and small-scale trading in markets ([4](#_ENREF_4), [11](#_ENREF_11), [13-15](#_ENREF_13)) |
| Begging† ([4](#_ENREF_4), [13](#_ENREF_13)) |
| Auto and motorcycle repair\* ([15](#_ENREF_15)) |
| Garbage scavenging\* ([15](#_ENREF_15)) |
| Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡ | Forced begging ([4](#_ENREF_4), [13](#_ENREF_13)) |
| Commercial sexual exploitation sometimes as a result of human trafficking ([4](#_ENREF_4), [13](#_ENREF_13), [15](#_ENREF_15), [17](#_ENREF_17)) |
| Farming, domestic work, and market work, as a result of human trafficking ([4](#_ENREF_4), [13](#_ENREF_13), [15](#_ENREF_15), [17](#_ENREF_17)) |

\* Evidence of this activity is limited and/or the extent of the problem is unknown.

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

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

The practice of sending Muslim boys to Koranic schools is a tradition in certain communities.([10](#_ENREF_10)) Some boys are forced by their teachers to beg in the streets.([4](#_ENREF_4), [13](#_ENREF_13)) In 2013, the majority of children trafficked were trafficked from rural areas, especially the Plateau Region, and research indicates the majority of trafficking victims were boys.([18](#_ENREF_18)) The customary practice of *confiage*, which involves sending a child to a relative or friend for school, may place children at risk of exploitation by internal trafficking.([3](#_ENREF_3), [19](#_ENREF_19)) Children are trafficked from Togo to countries in West and Central Africa to work in agriculture. In addition, children from Benin and Ghana are trafficked to Togo for forced labor.([13](#_ENREF_13))

Research found that many children lack access to education and birth registration. Moreover, the UN CRC has noted that there are not enough schools, and many children in rural areas have no access to primary education.([3](#_ENREF_3)) The CRC has also noted that half of all children in Togo are not registered at birth.([3](#_ENREF_3)) Unable to prove citizenship, non-registered children are vulnerable to trafficking and may have difficulty getting health care and education.([3](#_ENREF_3), [8](#_ENREF_8), [20](#_ENREF_20)) Research also found that children face sexual abuse in school. Moreover, the UN CRC has noted that sexual abuse and rape of children in school is widespread throughout Togo.([3](#_ENREF_3)) Victims of sexual violence in schools often have extended absences or drop out.([21](#_ENREF_21)) In addition, a source indicates that girls perform domestic duties, such as fetching water and laundry, for their schoolteachers.([22](#_ENREF_22))

# Legal Framework on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

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

**Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Convention** | **Ratification** |
| ILO C. 138, Minimum Age | ✓ |
| ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor | ✓ |
| UN CRC | ✓ |
| UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict | ✓ |
| UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography | ✓ |
| Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons | ✓ |

The Government has established relevant laws and regulations concerning child labor.

**Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Standard** | **Yes/No** | **Age** | **Related Legislation** |
| Minimum Age for Work | Yes | 15 | Labor Code of 2006 ([23](#_ENREF_23)) |
| Minimum Age for Hazardous Work | Yes | 18 | Law 1464 ([24](#_ENREF_24)) |
| List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children | Yes |  | Law 1464 ([24](#_ENREF_24)) |
| Prohibition of Forced Labor | Yes |  | Article 4 of the Labor Code of 2006 ([13](#_ENREF_13), [23](#_ENREF_23)) |
| Prohibition of Child Trafficking | Yes |  | Law for the Repression of Child Trafficking; Child Code of 2007 ([25](#_ENREF_25), [26](#_ENREF_26)) |
| Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children | Yes |  | Child Code of 2007 ([11](#_ENREF_11), [25](#_ENREF_25)) |
| Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities | Yes |  | Child Code of 2007 ([15](#_ENREF_15), [25](#_ENREF_25)) |
| Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment | N/A\* |  | Child Code of 2007; Article 42 of the General Statue of the Togolese Armed Forces ([15](#_ENREF_15), [18](#_ENREF_18), [25](#_ENREF_25), [27](#_ENREF_27)) |
| Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service | Yes | 18 | Child Code of 2007; Article 42 of the General Statue of the Togolese Armed Forces ([15](#_ENREF_15), [18](#_ENREF_18), [25](#_ENREF_25), [27](#_ENREF_27), [28](#_ENREF_28)) |
| Compulsory Education Age | Yes | 15 | Decree 2008-129 ([11](#_ENREF_11), [29](#_ENREF_29)) |
| Free Public Education | Yes |  | Decree 2008-129 ([11](#_ENREF_11), [30](#_ENREF_30)) |

\* No conscription or no standing military.

Although Law 1464 and the Labor Code prohibit excessive work hours and night work for children, these laws do not establish penalties for employing children in hazardous child labor, including work at night.([11](#_ENREF_11), [23](#_ENREF_23), [24](#_ENREF_24)) The Labor Code’s forced labor provisions do not impose penalties sufficient to deter it. Violators can receive a fine and 3 to 6 months’ imprisonment, which can be doubled if it is a repeat offense.([23](#_ENREF_23)) Also, though education is free, in practice, the costs of uniforms and books prohibit many families from sending their children to school.([11](#_ENREF_11), [29](#_ENREF_29))

# Enforcement of Laws on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

**Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Organization/Agency** | **Role** |
| Ministry of Labor (MOL) | Enforce all labor laws, including child labor laws.([31](#_ENREF_31)) |
| Ministry of Justice (MOJ) | Enforce criminal laws related to the worst forms of child labor.([10](#_ENREF_10), [12](#_ENREF_12)) |
| Ministry of Social Action and National Solidarity (MASSN) | Enforce laws against the worst forms of child labor.([10](#_ENREF_10), [12](#_ENREF_12), [15](#_ENREF_15)) |
| Police’s Child Protection Unit (CPU) | Investigate cases with child victims, including child trafficking.([15](#_ENREF_15), [32](#_ENREF_32)) |

Criminal law enforcement agencies in Togo took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms. However, research found no evidence that labor law enforcement agencies took such actions.

***Labor Law Enforcement***

In 2013, the Ministry of Labor (MOL) employed 81 labor inspectors, which was an increase from 75 inspectors employed the previous year.([15](#_ENREF_15)) However, the MOL acknowledges that funding for inspectors is insufficient. Moreover, UNICEF and several NGOs have noted that inspectors do not devote enough time to children.([15](#_ENREF_15), [33](#_ENREF_33)) In addition, information is not available on the number of inspections conducted, child labor violations found, or the number of citations and penalties issued by the Government in 2013.([15](#_ENREF_15))

***Criminal Law Enforcement***

In 2013, the Government rescued and provided assistance to 324 boys and 256 girls who were trafficking victims.([18](#_ENREF_18)) During the reporting period, the Government identified 85 suspected child traffickers, arrested 81, prosecuted 61, and convicted 40 of child trafficking.([18](#_ENREF_18), [34](#_ENREF_34)) However, the Police’s Child Protection Unit (CPU) lacks resources to conduct investigations, and its employees must respond to calls in taxis and personal cars.([35](#_ENREF_35)) Furthermore, among law enforcement personnel, knowledge of the different laws protecting children varies from region to region. A source indicates that staff members in some regional offices do not have copies of many child labor laws.([31](#_ENREF_31))

# Coordination of Government Efforts on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

**Table 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Coordinating Body** | **Role & Description** |
| National Committee for the Reception and Social Reinsertion of Trafficked Children (CNARSEVT) | Serve as the primary focal coordinating agency for child labor issues, including the worst forms of child labor.([15](#_ENREF_15), [18](#_ENREF_18)) Responsible for compiling information and statistics on trafficking, and coordinating actions against the worst forms of child labor. Assisted by MOL’s Child Labor Unit.([10](#_ENREF_10), [18](#_ENREF_18), [20](#_ENREF_20)) |
| National Steering Committee for the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (NSC) | Promote child labor legislation, mobilize resources, and collect data.([31](#_ENREF_31), [36](#_ENREF_36)) MOL’s Child Labor Unit acts as its secretariat.([10](#_ENREF_10), [14](#_ENREF_14), [15](#_ENREF_15), [31](#_ENREF_31), [36](#_ENREF_36)) |
| Child Labor Committees | Operate in Togolese villages and include representatives from several ministries, the National Council of Employers, unions, and NGOs.([10](#_ENREF_10), [12](#_ENREF_12), [18](#_ENREF_18), [20](#_ENREF_20), [27](#_ENREF_27), [31](#_ENREF_31)) Coordinate efforts by sharing information with officials in Lomé about trafficking trends and work with the MASSN to track the return of trafficking victims.([18](#_ENREF_18), [20](#_ENREF_20), [27](#_ENREF_27), [36](#_ENREF_36)) |

In 2013, CNARSEVT continued to coordinate with other agencies and refer child victims to social services.([15](#_ENREF_15)) NSC has limited its actions to evaluating and approving NGO action programs to eliminate child labor.([36](#_ENREF_36))Members of the NSC attribute this shortcoming to the committee’s lack of financial resources: Its secretariat is understaffed and has no budget.([36](#_ENREF_36))

# Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Togo has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 7).

**Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Policy** | **Description** |
| National Action Plan on Child Labor 2012–2015 | Serves as the primary government policy instrument to prevent and eliminate child labor in Togo.([15](#_ENREF_15), [34](#_ENREF_34), [37](#_ENREF_37)) |
| National Strategy on Elimination of Child Labor through Education, Training, and Apprenticeship | Aims to reduce child labor through education, training, and apprenticeship.([34](#_ENREF_34)) |
| National Plan of Action on Child Trafficking | Calls for legal and health services, including providing meals and medical care for child-trafficking victims and conducting awareness-raising activities for local communities and border officials. Promotes the education of children and improvement of livelihoods for families, and calls for the establishment of structures to monitor the trafficking of children.([34](#_ENREF_34), [38](#_ENREF_38)) |
| National Labor Policy | Seeks to raise awareness among parents, employers, and community leaders on child labor; seeks to provide labor inspectors with training on child labor issues; and calls for the adoption and implementation of the National Action Plan on Child Labor.([39](#_ENREF_39), [40](#_ENREF_40)) |
| National Plan for Registering Births in Togo\* | Aims to increase documentation of births. Calls for simplifying the process for regional officials to document births in rural areas.([18](#_ENREF_18)) |
| Quadripartite Agreement between Governments of Togo, Ghana, Benin, and Nigeria | Works to prevent child trafficking along the countries’ shared borders and facilitate the repatriation of trafficked children and extradition of traffickers.([18](#_ENREF_18)) |
| Strategy to Increase Growth and Promote Employment 2013-2017† | Serves as the primary national anti-poverty plan, which includes components on child labor and education.([15](#_ENREF_15), [34](#_ENREF_34), [41](#_ENREF_41)) |

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

† Policy was launched during the reporting period.

# Social Programs to Address the Worst Forms of Child Labor

In 2013, the Government of Togo funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

**Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Program** | **Description** |
| Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues | USDOL-funded project implemented by the ILO in approximately 40 countries to support the priorities of the *Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor by 2016* established by the Hague Global Child Labor Conference in 2010. Aims to build the capacity of the national government and develop strategic policies to eliminate child labor, improve the evidence base on child labor through data collection and research, and strengthen legal protections and social service delivery for child domestic workers.([42](#_ENREF_42)) |
| Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in West Africa and Strengthening Sub-Regional Cooperation through ECOWAS I & II | USDOL-funded regional projects that supported ECOWAS to strengthen its role in combating the worst forms of child labor in the West Africa sub-region by providing policy and capacity building support for all ECOWAS states.([43](#_ENREF_43), [44](#_ENREF_44)) |
| MASSN Radio awareness campaign\*‡ | Government program that conducts awareness campaigns to disseminate the Child Code of 2007.([10](#_ENREF_10), [13](#_ENREF_13), [27](#_ENREF_27)) |
| Allo 1011 hotline‡ | Government program that maintains a hotline for reporting child abuse, including child trafficking.([10](#_ENREF_10), [13](#_ENREF_13), [15](#_ENREF_15), [27](#_ENREF_27)) |
| Tokoin Community Center‡ | Government program that maintains a temporary shelter for victims referred by the Allo 1011 hotline.([13](#_ENREF_13), [27](#_ENREF_27)) |
| Cash Transfer Program for Vulnerable Children in Northern Togo† | World Bank-funded program that aims to prevent child labor and child trafficking by providing cash transfers to high-risk families with young children.([33](#_ENREF_33), [45](#_ENREF_45)) |
| Togo Community Development and Safety Nets Project\* | World Bank-funded program that aims to improve access to development and social safety nets for vulnerable populations.([46](#_ENREF_46)) |
| Free school lunch program\*‡ | Government program that provides free school lunches.([33](#_ENREF_33), [47](#_ENREF_47)) In 2013, increased the number of beneficiaries from 44,000 to 67,774 students.([34](#_ENREF_34)) |

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

† Program was launched during the reporting period.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Togo.

In 2013, the Government released a report on child labor and youth, which was conducted by Understanding Children’s Work. The report provides information on the scope of the child labor situation in Togo.([48](#_ENREF_48), [49](#_ENREF_49)) The Government also released a report on commercial sexual exploitation of children aged 8 to 17 in Togo. The report identified 1,533 children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation.([15](#_ENREF_15), [18](#_ENREF_18), [34](#_ENREF_34))

Although Togo has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem. Many programs rely largely on NGOs and international organizations for implementation. As a result, many of these interventions may not be sustainable over the long term. In addition, it is unknown how many complaints related to child labor were made to the Allo 1011 hotline.

# Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Togo (Table 9).

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **Suggested Action** | **Year(s) Suggested** |
| Laws | Establish penalties for violations of the laws governing hazardous child labor, including for requiring children to work at night. | 2009 – 2013 |
| Include sufficient penalties for violations of forced labor provisions. | 2009 – 2013 |
| Enforcement | Provide the MOL’s inspectors with adequate financial resources to enforce child labor laws. | 2012 – 2013 |
|  | Strengthen measures to investigate, prosecute, and convict individuals involved in the worst forms of child labor, as follows:   * + Provide training for all personnel charged with the enforcement of relevant laws.   + Ensure that all law enforcement personnel have access to child labor law reference materials.   + Provide sufficient resources to the police’s CPU for enforcement purposes. | 2009 – 2013  2009 – 2013  2011 – 2013 |
|  | Publish data on inspections, violations, citations, and penalties assessed for the worst forms of child labor. | 2010 – 2013 |
| Coordination | Provide the NSC with sufficient financial and human resources to implement its mandate. | 2009 – 2013 |
| Government Policies | Assess the impact that existing policies may have on addressing child labor. | 2013 |
| Social Programs | Conduct research to determine the activities carried out by children working in construction to inform policies and programs. | 2013 |
| Improve access to education by building additional schools. | 2010 – 2013 |
|  | Provide more resources to ensure children are registered at birth. | 2011 – 2013 |
|  | Train teachers, with the following objectives:   * Stop the practice of using students for domestic labor. * Halt the sexual abuse of students and penalize teachers who engage in such crimes. | 2010 – 2013 |
|  | Ensure that education is free, by eliminating school expenses, including the costs of uniforms and books. | 2010 – 2013 |
|  | Assess the impact that existing social programs may have on addressing child labor. | 2013 |
|  | Ensure social protection programs to combat the worst forms of child labor are sufficient to address the scope of the problem and to promote the long-term sustainability of project initiatives. | 2009 – 2013 |
|  | Disaggregate the number of complaints made to the Allo 1011 hotline that relate to child labor. | 2013 |

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2. ILO Committee of Experts. *Individual Observation concerning Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Togo (ratification: 1984) Published: 2011*; accessed January 27, 2014; <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/iloquery.htm>.

3. UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention: Concluding Observations: Togo*. Geneva; March 8, 2012. Report No. CRC/C/TGO/CO/3-4. <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/413/00/PDF/G1241300.pdf?OpenElement>.

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9. UNESCO Institute for Statistics. *Gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary. Total*. [accessed Frebruary 10, 2014]; <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/default.aspx?SPSLanguage=EN>. Data provided is the gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary school. This measure is a proxy measure for primary completion. For more information, please see the “Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” section of this report.

10. U.S. Embassy- Lome. *reporting, February 2, 2012*.

11. U.S. Department of State. "Togo," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2013*. Washington, DC; February 27, 2014; <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/>.

12. U.S. Embassy- Lome. *reporting, January 31, 2011*.

13. U.S. Department of State. "Togo," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2013*. Washington, DC; June 19, 2013; <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/index.htm>.

14. USDOL. *Trip Report to Togo*. Washington, DC; July 26-31, 2011.

15. U.S. Embassy- Lome. *reporting, January 23, 2014*.

16. WAO-Afrique. *Analyse de l'estimation rapide du travail des enfants dans le travail domestique au Togo*. Brussels; July 2013.

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28. Child Soldiers International. *Louder than words*. Oxford, Oxuniprint; 2012.

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