

2017 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – US Department of Labor

GHANA - Moderate Advancement

In 2017, Ghana made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government secured at least five convictions for offenses related to the worst forms of child labor and launched the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana. The government began extending the Ghana School Feeding Program. However, children in Ghana continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in fishing and cocoa harvesting as a result of human trafficking. Although the government made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas during the reporting period, prohibitions related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the use of children for illicit activities do not meet international standards. Resource constraints severely limited government social protection agencies' abilities to fully implement social programs during the reporting period.

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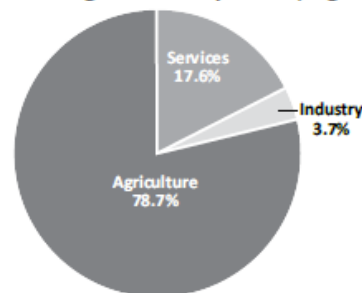
Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	24.7 (1,721,914)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	91.7
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	25.3
Primary Completion Rate (%)		95.2

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2017, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (6)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Living Standard Survey, Round 6, 2012–2013. (7)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



The majority of children subject to human trafficking are transported within Ghana for labor in cocoa, domestic work, commercial sexual exploitation, and fishing. Children as young as age 4 are subjected to forced labor in fishing in the areas around Lake Volta, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also use sharp tools and are exposed to agro-chemicals while working in the cocoa sector. According to the Constitution and the Education Act, primary education in Ghana is free and compulsory from kindergarten through junior high school. However, in practice, children must pay for school uniforms, fees, and materials, which may be prohibitive for many families. In addition, factors such as a shortage of classrooms, long distance to schools, absence of sanitation facilities, overcrowding in urban areas, sexual harassment of girls in schools, physical violence, verbal abuse, and poor educational infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, severely limit access to education for many children. In response, the government has made efforts to increase the accessibility of public education, including by building schools to reduce the distance students must travel, provide school uniforms, lift birth registration requirements for enrollment, and extend free education through high school in 2017.

ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor. However, gaps exist within the authority of the MELR that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR) has the role to Enforce child labor laws. Through its District Assemblies, labor inspectors investigate child labor violations, educate employers on compliance with child labor laws, and conduct inspections. In 2017, received a \$113,225 earmark for 2018 to combat child labor.

Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role and Description
National Steering Committee on Child Labor (NSCCL)	Coordinate government efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor and oversee implementation of the National Plan of Action Phase II on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (NPA2), which includes implementation of the GCLMS—a monitoring, data collection, and referral mechanism. Led by the MELR’s Child Labor Unit (CLU) and includes representatives from other ministries, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and civil society. In 2017, conducted monitoring exercises in seven districts, including three cocoa-growing areas, to evaluate the effectiveness of child labor interventions.
Inter-Ministerial Committee to Combat Human Trafficking	Aims to prevent Ghanaian migrants from becoming victims of human trafficking. Met twice in 2017, including with Ambassadors to destination countries in the Middle East, and MELR subsequently prohibited labor migration to these countries for domestic work to combat human trafficking.
MELR’s Child Labor Unit (CLU)	Facilitate the development of policies and laws to combat child labor, coordinate interventions to combat child labor, and oversee child protection committees at the district level. Provide technical support to ministries, departments and agencies, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and international agencies such as the ILO, IOM, and UNICEF. In 2017, organized a National Day Against Child Labor event, continued developing the NPA2, and contributed to the development of the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana (NPA).

Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Plan of Action Phase II on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Against Child Labor (NPA2) (2017–2020)	Aims to address gaps identified in the first NPA (2009–2015), improve coordination, and reduce the worst forms of child labor to 10 percent by 2020, with a focus on the fishing, mining, and cocoa sectors. In 2017, signed MOUs with relevant ministries and requested cabinet approval for the Hazardous Child Labor Activity Frameworks drafted in 2008 and 2012.
National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana (NPA) (2017–2021)	Aims to improve data collection, enhance victim protection, increase accountability for perpetrators, and emphasize prevention and outreach, including an expansion of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) Program. In 2017, disseminated NPA through a workshop with stakeholders and requested all relevant ministries incorporate the NPA in their 2018 budgets.
Hazardous Child Labor Activity Frameworks	Includes the Hazardous Child Labor Activity Framework and the Hazardous Child Labor Activity Framework for the Cocoa Sector. Both frameworks were developed in consultation with workers’ and employers’ organizations and identify hazardous activities that should be prohibited for children and are awaiting cabinet approval before implementation
2010 Declaration of Joint Action to Support the Implementation of the Harkin-Engel Protocol (2010 Declaration) and Its Accompanying Framework of Action	Joint declaration by the Governments of Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire, and the United States, and the International Cocoa and Chocolate Industry. Provides resources and coordinates with key stakeholders on efforts to reduce the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-producing areas. Ensures that all project efforts implemented under the Declaration and Framework align with Ghana’s national action plans to promote coherence and sustainability. USDOL-funded projects and some industry-funded projects carried out activities in support of this policy during the reporting period.
Bi-Lateral Commitments to Combat Cross-Border Trafficking	Joint declaration signed by the First Ladies of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana to combat the worst forms of child labor and advocate for sub-regional cooperation with other First Ladies. A subsequent cooperative agreement between the two governments further operationalizes the declaration, which targets high-risk sectors, provides protection to victims, improves coordination, and prosecutes offenders.

..the National Migration Policy and Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (F-CUBE) do not include child labor elimination and prevention strategies

Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
USDOL-Funded Projects	USDOL projects that aim to eliminate child labor. These projects include: Combating Forced Labor and Labor Trafficking of Adults and Children in Ghana (2017 –2021),* a \$2 million project implemented by Verité; Assessing Progress in Reducing Child Labor in Cocoa-Growing Areas of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana (2015–2019), \$3 million project implemented by NORC at the University of Chicago; Mobilizing Community Action and Promoting Opportunities for Youth in Ghana’s Cocoa-Growing Communities (MOCA) (2015–2019), \$4.5 million project implemented by Winrock International; CARING Gold Mining Project (ASGM), \$5 million project implemented by the ILO in Ghana and the Philippines; and the Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues (GAP), a research project implemented by the ILO in 10 countries. Some projects may be in support of the 2010 Declaration to combat child labor in the cocoa sector. Additional information is available on the USDOL website.
U.S. Government-Funded Projects	USG-funded projects aim to improve child protection measures in partnership with the host government. Includes Child Protection Compact Partnership (CPC) (2015–2020), \$5 million USDOS-funded project implemented by IOM and local NGO Free the Slaves; Accelerating Care Reform (2016 –2020), \$8 million USAID- project implemented by the DSW and UNICEF to strengthen the social welfare system; LEAP 1000 (2014 –2019), \$12 million USAID-project implemented by UNICEF to strengthen the existing LEAP program and fund cash transfers to 6,200 poor households; Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (2014–2019), \$24 million USAID-funded project implemented by CRC/URI which includes activities aimed at reducing child labor in the fishing sector; the Complementary Basic Education Program, a \$40 million joint contribution between USAID and the UK’s Department for International Development to support Ghana’s Ministry of Education’ efforts to educate and re-integrate out-of-school children into the basic school system; and the USAID-UNICEF \$37 million jointly funded Learning Support program, which helps increase inclusive education services for special needs children in primary schools. In 2017, the CPC collaborated with IOM to develop a database on human trafficking (TIPIS), finalized and disseminated Standard Operating Procedures to Combat Human Trafficking in Ghana with an Emphasis on Child Trafficking, and provided the AHTU with six vehicles and operational equipment to facilitate its ability to combat child trafficking. The CPC also trained 13 judges and 541 law enforcement officials and social workers on identifying victims of human trafficking, data collection, using TIPIS, and victim care.
Industry-Funded Projects	Industry-funded projects aim to increase sustainability in the cocoa sector, improve farmer livelihoods, improve access to education, and combat the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-growing areas. Some projects may be in support of the World Cocoa Foundation’s CocoaAction (2014–2020) initiative and the spirit of the 2010 Declaration.
Awareness-Raising Activities	Large-scale events by MOGCSP, AHTU, MOI, and MELR to raise awareness of child trafficking issues through radio and television broadcasts, public events, and community activities. In 2017, in support of the NPA, activities included implementing a nationwide awareness campaign, commemorating World Day Against Trafficking in Persons with events in the capital and six regions, providing training to over 100 journalists on human trafficking and investigative journalism, and partnering with a local NGO to raise awareness about human trafficking among traditional leaders.
Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP)	MOGCSP-administered conditional cash transfer program that provides monetary support to poor households with orphans and vulnerable children on the condition that these children attend school, receive vaccinations, and regularly visit health care facilities. Serves over 213,000 households throughout the country.
Educational Programs†	The Ghana Cocoa Board’s Child Education Support Program rehabilitates and builds schools in cocoa-growing areas. Ministry of Education-funded programs under the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (F-CUBE) aim to increase school attendance and enrollment. Includes the MOGCSP’s Ghana School Feeding Program, which aims to reduce malnutrition and improve attendance among students; the Capitation Grant Scheme, which helps defray the cost of basic education for students in public primary schools; and the Ghana Education Service—Girls’ Education Unit, which places girls’ education officers at the regional and district levels, and mobilizes communities to enroll more girls in school. Includes the distribution of 400,000–500,000 free school uniforms and exercise books to districts with poor enrollment rates. In 2017, the Ghana School Feeding Program began including schools in refugee camps, and the government extended free education to senior high schools with plans to extend the policy to other grades in the future.
MOGCSP Programs	MOGCSP received \$110,132 for the Human Trafficking Fund.
mBirths	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development program, supported by UNICEF and Tigo, to transition from a manual birth registration process to automated birth registration.

Although the MELR continues to hold high-level discussions to re-establish the National Program for the Elimination of Child Labor in Cocoa (NPECLC), no funds have been allocated to NPECLC for implementation. The CLU, the GPS’s Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU), Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP), and local NGOs cite the lack of funding as one of the primary obstacles in implementing programs

to address child labor. In addition, government run shelters for child victims are poorly managed and did not receive sufficient funding during the reporting period. Furthermore, a Department of Social Welfare (DSW)-operated shelter for child trafficking victims and victims of other forms of abuse in Accra shares its space with a detention center for juvenile offenders, which presents safety concerns for victims. Although the government has worked closely with industry, NGOs, and international organizations to implement child labor programs in cocoa, fishing, and mining, the magnitude of these programs remains insufficient to address the scope of the problem.

Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

- Accede to the UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
- Ensure that laws criminally prohibit all forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children, including by prohibiting the use of a child in pornographic performances.
- Ensure that laws criminally prohibit the use of children in all illicit activities, including for the production and trafficking of drugs.
- Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.
- Ensure that the types of hazardous work prohibited for children are comprehensive.
- Ensure prosecutors who have received sufficient legal training oversee and lead the prosecution of cases of the worst forms of child labor, that government officials do not intervene in criminal investigations, and that these cases are prosecuted according to the law.
- Publish information on the amount of funding allocated to the Labor Inspectorate and ensure inspectorates have adequate resources, including office space, transportation, and supplies to effectively carry out their mandate throughout the country.
- Strengthen the Labor Inspectorate by ensuring inspectors conduct targeted routine and unannounced inspections, and are authorized to assess penalties for labor violations.
- Ensure that labor inspectors receive periodic refresher training.
- Significantly increase the number of labor inspectors and investigators responsible for enforcing labor laws in accordance with the ILO's technical advice.
- Establish a mechanism to log all calls to the GPS hotline and track cases of child labor for referral to law enforcement or social services providers.
- Ensure that criminal enforcement agencies coordinate effectively and receive adequate resources for transportation and victim support.
- Ensure that all coordinating bodies are fully funded and able to fulfill their respective coordinating roles.
- Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into existing policies.
- Improve access to education by eliminating school-related fees, increasing the number of classrooms, improving access to schools, providing sanitation facilities, and prohibiting sexual harassment in schools.
- Ensure that social programs receive sufficient funding to carry out their objectives.
- Expand the availability of government-supported shelter services for child victims and ensure victims are not housed in the same facilities as juvenile offenders.
- Create, replicate, and expand effective models for addressing exploitative child labor.