

*In 2013, Burundi made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government collected and published data on the prevalence and nature of child labor for the first time and used these data to revise the 2010–2015 National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor to include a new list of worst forms of child labor. Additionally, a technical sub-committee of the National Multi-Sector Committee for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor was established to focus on the National Plan of Action's specific initiatives to combat the worst forms of child labor. However, children in Burundi continue to engage in child labor in agriculture, and in the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation. Education in Burundi is not compulsory; the age to which education is free remains below the minimum age for work, leaving children vulnerable to exploitation. In addition, the Government did not conduct any child labor inspections nor did it train inspectors on child labor law enforcement during the reporting period. Finally, while the Government has drafted at least three policies to provide greater protection to Burundian children, none has yet been adopted for implementation.*



## I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Burundi are engaged in child labor in agriculture and in the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation.(1-7) According to a national study published by the Government of Burundi and ILO, the majority of children work in cash crops such as tea, coffee, cotton, sugarcane, and palm oil.(4, 8) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Burundi.

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

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	7-14 yrs.	27.2 (633,126)
Attending School (%)	7-14 yrs.	60.9
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	26.0
Primary Completion Rate (%)		62.2

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.(9)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Demographic and Health Survey, 2010-2011.(10)

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	Cultivation of tea,* coffee,* sugarcane,* cotton,* and palm oil* (4, 8)
	Fishing,* activities unknown (4, 8)
Industry	Mining† (4, 6, 8, 11)
	Brick-making* (4)

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**Table 2. Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity (cont)**

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Domestic service† (4, 5, 8)
	Street vending (8)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation sometimes as a result of trafficking* (3-8, 12)
	Domestic service as a result of trafficking* (4, 5, 8)

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

† Determined hazardous by national law or regulation.

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




Commercial sexual exploitation of children exists in Burundi.(3-7) Older women sometimes push girls into commercial sexual exploitation; they initially offer the children free room and board, but then force the children into commercial sexual exploitation so they can pay for their expenses.(5-7) Poverty may also cause girls to enter commercial sexual exploitation to obtain money for basic needs.(12) Male tourists also are reported to sexually exploit girls in Burundi.(6) There are reports that Burundian children are trafficked internally for work in domestic service and commercial sexual exploitation.(5, 7, 13, 14) Burundian girls are also trafficked to other countries for commercial sexual exploitation.(6, 7, 13, 14)

Burundian children also work in domestic service and mining.(1, 3, 4, 8) There are reports of the internal trafficking of children for work in domestic service, and of trafficking for exploitation in various forms of forced labor in Tanzania. Children are also reportedly lured under false promises or coerced into forced labor in domestic service or agriculture.(6)

## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Burundi 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 related to child labor (Table 4).

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

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 3 of the Labor Code; Article 3 of Ministerial Ordinance n° 630/1 (15)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 13 of Ministerial Ordinance n° 630/1 (4, 16)
List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 13–15 of Ministerial Ordinance n° 630/1 (4, 17)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 26 of the Constitution (4, 18)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 242 and 514 of the Penal Code (19)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 521 of the Penal Code (19)

**Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor (cont)**

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 518 of the Penal Code (19)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Penal Code (19, 20)
Compulsory Education Age	No		
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 24 of Decree n° 100/08 (4, 16, 22)

\* No conscription or no standing military.

The Penal Code does not contain explicit penalties for forced labor.(14, 19) And while it sets 18 as the minimum age for military recruitment, the Penal Code makes only the military use of children under age 16 a crime.(19, 23, 24) This legal gap leaves children ages 16 and 17 vulnerable to potential be used in armed conflict; the ILO Committee of Experts has expressed concern over this vulnerability and has urged the Government to raise the military recruitment age to 18.(24) Education in Burundi is free and compulsory until grade six or approximately age 12.(4, 21, 22) This standard makes children ages 12 to 15 particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor, as they are not required to be in school and are below the minimum age for work.

### III. 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 and Social Security (MOL)	Enforce all labor laws, including those on child labor.(3)
National Police's Brigade for the Protection of Women and Children	Enforce criminal laws that prohibit of the worst forms of child labor and protect children from criminal influences and harm.(21)

Law enforcement agencies in Burundi took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms.

#### *Labor Law Enforcement*

In 2013, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security Agency employed 18 labor inspectors. According to an ILO official, the number of inspectors is not adequate to enforce child labor laws.(4) Additionally, inspectors are limited to registered businesses, while most child labor cases happen in unregistered or informal businesses. Inspections are further hindered by a lack of resources, such as office equipment or fuel for vehicles.(4) Inspectors only initiate investigations in response to complaints, although a formal system has not been established to file such complaints.(3, 4, 21) There were no child labor inspections conducted during the reporting period, thus no violations were found or no citations were issued.(4)

#### *Criminal Law Enforcement*

In 2013, ILO-IPEC trained judges of labor courts, labor inspectors, juvenile police officers, and legal advisors of NGOs working on child labor issues in matters of litigation related to child labor.(4) No information on the number of cases investigated, citations issued, or prosecutions made was found.

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### IV. 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 Multi-Sector Committee for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Coordinate efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor, including through the implementation of community development programs that address the education and socio-economic reintegration of children engaged in or removed from the worst forms of child labor.(14, 21, 25, 26) Permanent Secretariat of the Committee was established in 2013; meets regularly and focuses on specific initiatives within the National Plan of Action to combat the worst forms of child labor.(4) Committee, in cooperation with UNICEF and ILO-IPEC, organized a training on the worst forms of child labor for staff of Department of Child and Family in the Ministry of National Solidarity, Human Rights, Refugee Repatriation, and Gender (MNS).(4)
Centers of Family Development	Province-level units of the MNS's National Directorate of the Promotion of Women and Gender Equality to coordinate and implement policies on children, women, and the family.(27, 28)

The National Independent Commission for Human Rights is an independent, government-supported committee created to defend and promote human rights.(29, 30)

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has expressed concern that the Centers of Family Development do not cover all regions of the country.(27)

### V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

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

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

Policy	Description
National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2014–2016)	Aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labor by 2016; includes an updated list of the worst forms of child labor.(4)
Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan*	Seeks to reduce poverty, increase economic growth and development, and strengthen government institutions, including schools.(11, 13, 14, 21)

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

In 2013, the Government, in cooperation with ILO, published a study on the incidence of child labor by sector and region. The Government also revised the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor to include a new list of worst forms of child labor; this list was expanded by the National Multi-Sector Committee for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor based on studies conducted by ILO and UNICEF. These two organizations supported the Ministry of Labor to develop the list of worst forms of child labor in Burundi so that the Ministerial Ordinance No. 630/1, the government order regulating and limiting child labor, could be revised accordingly.(4) The Government has not yet adopted or implemented the National Plan of Action.(4)

The Ministry of Labor and Social Security has adopted a plan to eliminate all forms of child labor by 2025; however, this plan has not yet been implemented, as the Government is waiting on assistance from UNICEF and ILO.(31)

The Government also approved a National Policy of Child Protection and a National Strategy for Children Living on the Street with UNICEF's support, but neither policy has been implemented.(32)

### VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

In 2013, the Government of Burundi funded 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
Child Domestic Labor Study†‡	Qualitative study carried out by MOL with the support of UNICEF Burundi; study is being finalized and will be made publicly available in February 2014.(4)
Child Trafficking Study†‡	Implemented by the National Independent Commission for Human Rights to better understand how to eliminate child trafficking in Burundi.(33)
Department of Child and Family Interventions‡	Ministry of National Solidarity, Human Rights, Refugee, and Gender programs that help reintegrate street children through local associations by annually allocating a certain amount of money; assist vulnerable families in developing revenue-generating activities; provides financial assistance to 40 professional children training centers; financially support health care for children at some local hospitals.(34)

† Program was launched during the reporting period.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Burundi

In 2013, the Government released the results of a 2012 rapid assessment of the sexual and commercial exploitation of children.(16, 21, 34)

The Government relies primarily on NGOs to provide care and services for exploited children.(35) The Government's Municipal Council for Youth and Children (CMEJ) aims to provide a network of services for street children, former child soldiers, and child trafficking victims; the CMEJ was established in 2009 and began drafting an action plan in 2010.(13, 36) However, the action plan is not yet operational.(13)

Although the Government has supported programs to reach children engaged in some forms of child labor, research found no evidence that it has carried out programs to assist children engaged in agriculture or commercial sexual exploitation.

## VII. 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 Burundi (Table 8).

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Laws	Amend the Penal Code to contain explicit penalties for forced labor and making the military use of children under age 18 a crime.	2012 – 2013
	Make education free and compulsory to age 16, the minimum age for work.	2009 – 2013
Enforcement	Devote additional resources to enforcement, including increasing the number of inspectors and providing adequate resources for these inspectors to conduct inspections, establishing a system for filing complaints, and targeting investigations in sectors where a high prevalence of child labor exists, including in the informal sector	2009 – 2013
	Make data on child labor law enforcement publicly available.	2013
Coordination	Expand the Centers of Family Development to cover all regions of the country.	2009 – 2013
Government Policies	Assess the impact of the Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan on child labor.	2010 – 2013
	Establish a policy framework that protects children, including by—	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Implementing the current draft plan of action for eliminating child labor by 2025</li> <li>■ Making the CMEJ operational</li> </ul>	2010 – 2013 2011 – 2013
Social Programs	Implement programs to address all of the worst forms of child labor in the country.	2009 – 2013

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