



BURKINA FASO

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

In 2023, Burkina Faso made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government enacted a list of light work authorized for children that meets international standards. The government also deployed a mobile app called *Kogl-Kamba* in a few locations to facilitate reporting and share information with social services providers on child labor issues. Lastly, the government carried out radio campaigns nationally in five local languages to inform the population, especially rural communities, on what is considered hazardous work for children. However, despite these efforts, the government lacked financial resources for the enforcement of child labor laws and did not release information on its labor law enforcement efforts. Finally, the government did not provide information on activities undertaken to implement the National Child Protection Strategy during the reporting period.

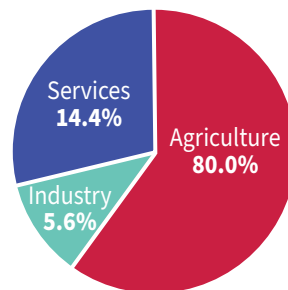


PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Statistics on Children’s Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent of Population
Working	10 to 14	35.7% (849,922)
Hazardous Work by Children	15 to 17	Unavailable
Attending School	5 to 14	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7 to 14	Unavailable

Working Children by Sector, Ages 5-14



Children in Burkina Faso are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in farming and commercial sexual exploitation, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also perform dangerous tasks in artisanal gold mining, which is particularly arduous and often exposes children to dangerous chemicals such as cyanide and mercury, which are used in the gold extraction process.

Overview of Children’s Work by Sector and Activity



Agriculture

Working in agriculture planting, weeding, and harvesting crops, including cotton. Also working in raising and herding† livestock.



Industry

Engaged in artisanal mining† of gold, including digging† and crushing† rock, working underground,† carrying heavy loads,† and using cyanide† and mercury.† Quarrying† and transporting heavy loads† while working to extract granite. Working in construction.



Services

Engaged in domestic work, and street work† as vendors.



Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡

Forced farming, including in the production of cotton, and livestock raising. Forced labor in domestic work, gold mining, quarrying, and begging. Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Forced begging in Koranic schools. Use in illicit activities, including recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict.

† 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.



SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

The suggested government actions below would close gaps USDOL has identified in Burkina Faso's implementation of its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

Enforcement

Ensure that labor law enforcement receives sufficient human and financial resources to fulfill its mandates, including conducting an adequate number of inspections and following up after preliminary inspections to ensure the remediation of notices to comply with labor law obligations.

Publish statistics on labor law enforcement efforts, including the labor inspectorate's funding, number of labor inspectors employed, number and type of labor inspections conducted, number of child labor violations found, number of penalties imposed and collected, number of inspections conducted at worksites, number of targeted and routine inspections, and whether unannounced inspections were conducted.

Establish and publish data on a mechanism to log all calls to the government child protection hotline and to track cases of child labor for referral to law enforcement or social services providers.

Ensure that criminal law enforcement authorities and frontline responders apply standard victim identification and referral procedures uniformly.

Publish statistics on criminal law enforcement efforts, including training for criminal investigators, number of investigations, violations found, and prosecutions initiated.

Take active measures, including ensuring that a mechanism is operational, to ensure that children are not inappropriately incarcerated, detained with adults, penalized, or physically harmed solely for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of their subjection to the worst forms of child labor, such as child soldiering.

Coordination

Ensure that the National Coordination Committee for the National Strategy Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor receives adequate resources, such as computers and electricity, to accomplish their mandates.

Enhance coordination and collaborative processes and procedures among ministries, law enforcement, and social services.

Government Policies

Ensure that activities are undertaken to implement key policies related to child labor, including the National Child Protection Strategy, and publish results from activities implemented on an annual basis.

Social Programs

Establish a social program to ensure that internally displaced persons and other vulnerable children have access to education and thus reduce their risk of exposure to the worst forms of child labor.

Improve access to education by eliminating school-related fees and other costs, such as uniforms, by increasing the number of schools and teachers in rural areas, ensuring access to affordable transportation, and ending violence in schools.

Ensure that children are registered at birth and that internally displaced persons have access to the requisite documentation to gain access to social services, including education.

Ensure that activities are undertaken to implement key social programs to address child labor during the reporting period, including the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family, and Humanitarian Action Projects to Combat Human Trafficking and the Eliminating Child Labor and Forced Labor in the Cotton, Textile and Garment Value Chains project, and make information about implementation measures publicly available.

Expand existing programs to fully address child labor in cotton production and gold mining.



CHILDREN AT HIGHER RISK

A *coup d'état* in January 2022 and a subsequent military takeover in September 2022, as well as continued insecurity, has led to the mass displacement of more than 2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the last 4 years, including a large number of vulnerable children. Displaced children are at higher risk of child labor and its worst forms, including forcible recruitment by non-state armed groups.



BARRIERS TO EDUCATION ACCESS

Although the Law Orienting the Education System mandates free education until age 16, many children face barriers to educational access. Due to a lack of infrastructure, some communities create makeshift structures to serve as schools, and in rural areas teacher shortages are common, especially for the post-primary levels. In addition, there are fees for all levels of public education, which sometimes pose heavy burdens on families. Moreover, school violence exists and is exacerbated by the current security crisis, and transportation costs restrict access to schooling in urban areas. Children in Burkina Faso must have birth documentation (e.g., a birth certificate or supplemental birth judgment) to register for school. A student may begin schooling without documentation; however, documentation must be provided before the end of the first quarter following the child's registration. Because more than one in five children do not have a birth certificate, many children in Burkina Faso remain out of school and vulnerable to child labor. Refugees and IDPs face many educational challenges, mainly due to the sudden increase in educational needs in the communities hosting them. Less than 20 percent of displaced people manage to obtain school registration. In some localities where armed attacks on schools have intensified, especially in the East and Sahel regions, there is a preference of some communities for other types of education, such as Koranic schools. Ongoing insecurity in the country has resulted in more than 6,000 schools being closed, affecting more than 1,000,000 children. Transition government forces and non-state armed groups occupied and used seven schools in 2023.



LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Burkina Faso has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor. In addition, Burkina Faso's laws are in line with relevant international standards.

Child Labor Laws and Regulations	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work, 16 Years		Article 152 of the Labor Code; Order Deviating the Age of Admission to Employment
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work, 18 Years		Articles 149 and 150 of the Labor Code; Article 1 of the Hazardous Work List
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children		Article 153 of the Labor Code; Articles 3–6 of the Hazardous Work List; Article 77 of the Mining Code
Prohibition of Slavery, Debt Bondage, and Forced Labor		Articles 5, 153, 422 and 424 of the Labor Code; Article 1-4 of the Law on Combating Trafficking of Persons and Similar Practices
Prohibition of Child Trafficking		Articles 153 and 424 of the Labor Code; Articles 1–5, 14, and 15 of the Law on Combating Trafficking of Persons and Similar Practices
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children		Articles 153 and 424 of the Labor Code; Articles 3, 4, 7–10, and 20 of the Law Suppressing the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities		Articles 153 and 424 of the Labor Code

Legal Framework for Child Labor (Cont.)

Child Labor Laws and Regulations	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment, 20 Years	✓	Article 2 of the Decree Organizing Operations Related to Convoking the Contingent
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*	
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	✓	Articles 153 and 424 of the Labor Code
Compulsory Education Age, 16 Years	✓	Article 4 of the Law Orienting the Education System
Free Public Education	✓	Article 6 of the Law Orienting the Education System

*Country has no conscription

In August 2023, Burkina Faso authorized a list for light work in which children aged 13 to 16 can engage.



ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

In 2023, labor and criminal law enforcement agencies in Burkina Faso took actions to address child labor. However, insufficient human and financial resource allocation hindered enforcement efforts.

Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Ministry of Public Service, Labor, and Social Security (MFPTSS): Enforces labor laws as the lead agency on child labor law enforcement and establishes policy to address child labor. The Ministry of Territorial Administration, Decentralization, and Interior Security assists MFPTSS by participating in joint routine inspections for suspected child trafficking cases.

Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family, and Humanitarian Action (MFSNF): Removes children from exploitative child labor, provides reintegration services through a mobile unit, works with local village surveillance committees on awareness-raising efforts, and participates in joint routine inspections with MFPTSS. Also operates a free hotline to report child abuse and maintains civil registry offices in maternity wards to register newborn babies. It is unknown how many cases of child labor were identified as a result of complaints made to the MFSNF hotline.

Enforcement Mechanisms and Efforts

Has a Labor Inspectorate	Yes	Has a Complaint Mechanism	Yes
Able to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes	Imposed Penalties for Child Labor Violations	Unknown
Routinely Conducted Worksite Inspections	Unknown	Conducted Criminal Investigations for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes	Imposed Penalties for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Yes

It is **unknown** how many labor inspectors conducted worksite inspections, or whether child labor violations were found. The government conducted **2** investigations into suspected cases of the worst forms of child labor, initiated an **unknown** number of prosecutions, and convicted **5** perpetrators.



COORDINATION, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

<p>Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor</p> <p>Burkina Faso established a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor. However, there is a lack of funding and insufficient coordination among ministries.</p>	<p>National Coordination Committee for the National Strategy Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor (CNC-SN/PFTE): Defines appropriate strategies for mobilizing the resources necessary to implement the SN/PFTE, and comprises representatives from other ministries, civil society organizations, NGOs, unions, and employers. MFPTSS serves as the Secretariat for CNC/SN/PFTE. It promotes consultation and synergy of action among the actors involved in SN/PFTE implementation, validates the annual activity programs of SN/PFTE, and monitors and evaluates implementation and proposes necessary readjustments. CNC/SN/PFTE reviews and adopts the reports submitted to it by the Technical Secretariat. During the reporting period, the Committee led the formulation and enactment of the regulation for authorized light work for children, as well as the deployment of the mobile app <i>Kogl-Kamba</i> to support labor inspectors working on child labor related inspections. The Committee also held two meetings that included other ministries, civil society organizations, the private sector, and ILO.</p>
<p>Key Policies Related to Child Labor</p> <p>Burkina Faso established policies related to child labor. However, research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement these policies during the reporting period.</p>	<p>National Strategy to End the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2019–2023) (SN/PFTE): Aimed to prevent, monitor, and protect children against the worst forms of child labor in Burkina Faso, and reintegrate victims. Developed by law enforcement agencies focused on child labor and its worst forms; governmental and non-governmental bodies; technical, financial, and social partners; and civil society organizations, including children’s associations. During the reporting period, several activities were carried out under the SN/PFTE, including the enactment of a light work list, the launch of the mobile app <i>Kogl-Kamba</i>, as well as updates to the training of labor inspectors.</p> <p>National Child Protection Strategy (2020–2023): Aimed to strengthen the institutional, community, and family environment to ensure effective protection for children. Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the National Child Protection Strategy during the reporting period.</p>
<p>Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor</p> <p>Burkina Faso funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. However, these social programs are inadequate because they do not address the problem in all sectors.</p> <p><small>† Program is funded by the Government of Burkina Faso.</small></p>	<p>Campaign to Remove Street Children: NGO MinWomen-funded program, led by MFSNF. Includes outreach missions in the streets to identify and refer vulnerable children, including victims of forced begging, and reintegrate them back into society or to one of the four youth shelters established in the Somgandé, Baskuy, Nongremassom, and Cissin districts of Ouagadougou. In 2023, this campaign removed over 500 women and their children from the street.</p> <p>MFSNF Projects to Combat Human Trafficking:† Aim to address human trafficking by operating transit centers that provide food, medical assistance, and counseling to child trafficking survivors and children vulnerable to human trafficking. Transit centers aim to reintegrate victims into their communities and facilitate the repatriation of foreign victims when possible. The National Parenting Program assists parents in providing access to education and raising awareness about child trafficking. Nationwide media campaigns to address human trafficking provide advocacy, raise awareness, and build capacity for key actors involved in child protection issues, including child trafficking. Watchdog and monitoring committees ensure that all cases of alleged trafficking of children are reported to the justice system by social workers. Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement MFSNF Projects to Combat Human Trafficking Program during the reporting period.</p> <p>Eliminating Child Labor and Forced Labor in the Cotton, Textile and Garment Value Chains: An Integrated Approach (2018–2023): Was a \$9.75 million (9 million Euro) EU and ILO initiative of the UN-funded global project to combat child labor and forced labor in cotton and textile supply chains. Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the Eliminating Child Labor and Forced Labor in the Cotton, Textile and Garment Value Chains: An Integrated Approach program during the reporting period.</p>

For information about USDOL’s projects to address child labor around the world, visit dol.gov/ILABprojects
 For references, please visit dol.gov/ChildLaborReports