In 2018, Mali made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government finalized the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking of Persons and allocated a budget of \$10 million over 5 years for implementation. The government also convicted I perpetrator for attempting to traffic 3 children to Cote d'Ivoire and provided services to 53 victims of child soldiering, of which 21 were reunited with their families. Finally, under the National Policy for Promotion and Protection of Children, the government conducted activities to increase birth registration. However, children in Mali engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in hereditary slavery and in armed conflict. Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture, particularly in the production of cotton and rice. Mali's law does not comprehensively prohibit hereditary slavery in



cases where recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a person is not involved nor does the law explicitly prohibit using, procuring, or offering children for illicit activities. In addition, resource constraints severely limited the government's ability to fully implement the National Plan to Combat Child Labor, and existing social programs are insufficient to adequately address the extent of the problem, particularly in artisanal gold mining, hereditary slavery, and debt bondage.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Mali engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in hereditary slavery and in armed conflict. (I-5) Children also perform dangerous tasks in agriculture, particularly in the production of cotton and rice. (2,6) Table I provides key indicators on children's work and education in Mali. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

Table I. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	25.1 (1,216,300)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	46.0
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	13.4
Primary Completion Rate (%)		49.6

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2017, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019. (7)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Demographic and Health Survey, 2012–2013. (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	Cultivating,† harvesting,† ginning,† transporting,† and applying chemical fertilizers,† particularly in the production of cotton and rice (2,6,9)	
	Raising livestock,† including oxen and small ruminants (6,10,11)	
	Fishing† (6,10)	
Industry	Artisanal gold mining,† including digging shafts,† extracting ore from underground tunnels,† crushing ore,† and amalgamating ore with mercury† (2,12-15)	
	Assembling fishing canoes† (6)	



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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Domestic work† (2,16,17)
	Street work,† including as market vendors,† beggars,† and in the transportation sector (2,6,17,18)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced labor in artisanal mining, domestic work, street work, production of salt, and farming, including in the production of rice, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (5,19)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2,19-22)
	Forced recruitment by armed rebel and extremist Islamic militia groups for use in armed conflict (2,4,23-25)
	Hereditary slavery (1,17,19,27)
	Forced begging by Koranic teachers, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (2,12,19)

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

Children, especially of the Bellah community (also known as black Tuaregs), are subject to hereditary slavery in northern Mali. (1,17,19,27) Some children are born into slavery, while others are born free, but remain in dependent status through which they are forced to work with their parents for their former masters in exchange for food, money, and lodging. Child slaves perform agricultural or domestic labor and are often sexually abused. (19,28) In addition, children, particularly those of Songhai ethnicity, work in debt bondage in the northern salt mines of Taoudenni. (19,29)

Children involved in artisanal gold mining in western and southern Mali are exposed to toxic substances and extreme temperatures, transport heavy loads, and work long hours. (2,12-15) Some boys placed in the care of Koranic teachers for education are forced by their teachers to beg on the street or to work in fields, after which they must then surrender the money they have earned to their teachers. (2,12,19,29)

In 2018, intermittent fighting and violence in central and northern Mali continued, resulting in the killing and displacement of children. (14,19,23,26,30) Although the incidence of child soldiers decreased during the reporting period, children continued to be forcibly recruited and trained by non-state armed groups, including the Coordination of Movements for Azawad, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, the High Council for the Unity of Azawad, the Arab Movement of Azawad, and Tuareg Imghad and Allies Self-Defense Group (GATIA), all signatories of the 2015 Peace Accord. (4,25,30) Research found evidence of ties between the government and GATIA, a non-state armed group led by a Malian general, including the provision of in-kind support to GATIA. (2,5,31,32) In 2018, the Directorate for the Promotion of Children and Family (DPCF) within the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and Family (MPFEF) reported identifying 53 cases of children used by armed groups, and other cases of forced recruitment of child soldiers during the reporting period are being confirmed. DPCF reported that there are cases of children who previously returned to their families but were recruited again by armed groups. (33)

Although the Constitution guarantees free and compulsory education, many children, especially girls, do not attend school because parents are expected to pay fees for registration, uniforms, books, and materials, which are prohibitive for many impoverished families.(2,17,29,34,35) Many children in Mali are not registered at birth. Unable to present their birth certificate, unregistered children may have difficulty accessing services, including education. (2,29,36,37) In addition, evidence suggests that incidences of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, including corporal punishment, prevent some children from remaining in school. (17,29,38) During the reporting period, numerous attacks on schools in northern Mali resulted in lootings, destruction of learning materials and infrastructure, and occupancy of school facilities by armed groups. (2,4,14,23,24,39-41) Many teachers and students remained displaced, and some teachers in insecure areas felt that it was unsafe to return to school. (2,14,42) In addition, during the reporting period, 735 schools remained closed, preventing 225,000 children from accessing education due to continuing conflict and displacement. (43-45) Beginning in December 2018, the majority of primary and secondary school teachers throughout the country went on a series of noncontinuous strikes causing many schools to close. The strikes ended in May 2019, and the Ministry of Education

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

extended the school year until July 2019 in order to salvage the school year. (46-48) The lack of access to education and lack of teacher availability may increase the risk of children's involvement in the worst forms of child labor. (40)

II. Legal Framework for Child Labor

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

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

	Convention	Ratification
ETTO EN	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 laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Mali's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including recruitment by non-state armed groups and using children in illicit activities.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	15	ArticleL.187 of the Law 2017-021 modifying the Labor Code (49)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Hazardous Occupations List; Article I of the 2017-4388 Amendment to Hazardous Occupations List; Article D.189.14 of the Labor Code (50-52)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Hazardous Occupations List; Article I of the 2017-4388 Amendment to Hazardous Occupations List; Article I89 of the Labor Code (50-52)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	No		Article L.6 of the Law 2017-021 modifying the Labor Code; Article I of the Trafficking in Persons Law (49,53)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Article 244 of the Penal Code; Article 7 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 63 of the Child Protection Code (53-55)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Article 228 of the Penal Code; Article I and 7 of the Trafficking in Persons Law; Article 57 of the Child Protection Code (53-55)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		Article 183 of the Penal Code; Articles 18 and 50 of the Child Protection Code (54,55)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 17 of the Child Protection Code; Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code; Article 5 of the Military General Statute (54-56)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Article 17 of the Child Protection Code; Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code; Article 5 of the Military General Statute (54-56)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		Articles 31.23, 31.31, and 32 of the Penal Code (54)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	15‡	Articles 26 and 34 of the Law of Education (57)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 18 of the Constitution (58)

[‡] Age calculated based on available information (54)

The Labor Code allows children between the ages of 12 and 14 to perform domestic or light seasonal work, as long as it does not impede school attendance or exceed 4.5 hours of work per day. (50) However, the law



does not specify the conditions under which light work may be undertaken. (49,59) Although, Mali's Trafficking in Persons Law criminalizes slavery that occurs as a result of trafficking, it does not criminalize hereditary slavery in cases which do not involve the recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a person. In addition, Malian law does not prohibit using, procuring, or offering a child for the production and trafficking of drugs as established by international standards. (1,2,20,53,55)

The Child Protection Code provides protection for children under age 18, while the Penal Code establishes criminal penalties for several of the worst forms of child labor. For example, Articles 50 and 58 of the Child Protection Code identify begging as a form of economic exploitation of children, while Article 183 of the Penal Code specifies punishments for engaging a child in begging. (12,54,55) However, the Penal Code does not provide penalties for some of the prohibitions enumerated in the Child Protection Code. (54,55) Specifically, Article 17 of the Child Protection Code prohibits children under age 18 from participating in armed conflicts or joining the armed forces, yet Articles 31.23 and 31.31 of the Penal Code provide criminal penalties only for those recruiting and enlisting children under age 15. (54,55,60)

The Inter-Ministerial Circular on the Prevention, Protection, and Rehabilitation of Child Soldiers references Article 28 of the Penal Code, which states that crimes committed out of self-defense or under a force that could not be resisted should not be penalized as prescribed by the Penal Code. Although the Inter-Ministerial Circular states that Article 28 of the Penal Code is applicable to children involved in armed conflict, the Circular does not define the age range of the children it covers. (54,61) Considering the non-existence of criminal penalties in the Child Protection Code and the lack of criminal penalties in the Penal Code for those who recruit and enlist children ages 15 and older, the absence of a defined age range in this Inter-Ministerial Circular may leave children ages 15 to 17 unprotected. (54,61)

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 the Ministry of Labor that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor's National Directorate of Labor	Enforces labor laws and investigates Labor Code infractions, including those regarding child labor. (29,62,63)
Ministry of Justice	Initiates and coordinates with courts the implementation of laws related to the worst forms of child labor. (19,62)
Ministry of Internal Security's Police Brigade for the Protection of Morals and Children	Investigates crimes against children, including human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. (2,19)
Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family (MPFEF)	Develops and implements programs to protect vulnerable children and to monitor alleged violations of child labor laws, including those related to the worst forms of child labor. (34,62,63)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2018, labor law enforcement agencies in Mali took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including insufficient financial and human resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$71,942 (2)	\$70,000 (33)
Number of Labor Inspectors	109 (2)	109 (33)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (2)	Yes (33)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	No (2)	Yes (33)

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (Cont.)

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	No (2)	No (33)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (2)	Yes (33)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	792 (33)	Unknown (33)
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown (2)	Unknown (33)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown (2)	Unknown (33)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown (2)	Unknown (33)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown (2)	Unknown (33)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (2)	Unknown (33)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (2)	Unknown (33)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (2)	Yes (33)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (2)	Unknown (33)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (2)	Yes (33)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (2)	Yes (33)

In 2018, the National Directorate of Labor employed 70 inspectors and 39 controllers, of which 3 inspectors and 12 controllers were dedicated to child labor. The number of labor inspectors is likely insufficient for the size of Mali's workforce, which includes approximately 6.5 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 40,000 workers in less developed countries, Mali would employ about 161 inspectors. (33,64-66) One labor inspector in each region is designated as the point of contact for the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE) to facilitate regional coordination. Although all regions have labor inspectors, government services are limited or non-existent in some areas due to the insecurity caused by the presence of non-state armed groups. (2,33) According to the Government of Mali, increasing decentralization efforts have allowed ministry funds to be allocated to regional labor inspectorates so that they can carry out inspections. Despite this, only three regional directorates have vehicles to carry out inspections, and the CNLTE lacks a vehicle for its services. (33) In addition, reports indicate that a lack of trained staff, equipment, transportation, and funding hampered the labor inspectorate's ability to conduct child labor inspections and legal proceedings, especially in remote areas of northern Mali. (2,29,59,67)

Although the government revised the Labor Code and hazardous occupation list in 2017, labor inspectors had not received training on the amended Labor Code and hazardous occupation list by the end of the reporting period. (68)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2018, criminal law enforcement agencies in Mali took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including insufficient financial and human resource allocation.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2017	2018
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Unknown (2)	Unknown (33)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (2)	Unknown (33)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (2)	Unknown (33)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (2)	I (33)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (2)	3 (33)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown (2)	I (33)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (2)	I (33)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Unknown (2)	Yes (2)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (2)	Yes (33)



In 2018, the Ministry of Internal Security's Moral Brigade employed 28 staff, 3 more than in 2017. Despite this, there are reports that the number of law enforcement agents is inadequate given the prevalence of the worst forms of child labor in the country. (33) Although the total number of investigations conducted throughout the country during the reporting period is unknown, the Appeals Court of Bamako reported that the Morals Brigade investigated I case of child trafficking and secured a conviction of 4 years imprisonment for the individual who attempted to traffic 3 children ages 14 to 16 to Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, the Morals Brigade reported eight cases of mistreatment of child domestic workers. (33)

In addition to an operational budget, the government provided the Morals Brigade with 31 gallons of fuel for each 3-month period. (33) During the reporting period, the government funded and organized anti-trafficking awareness trainings for judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement officers and conducted an additional training for community leaders and *marabouts*. The government also distributed 200 copies of the Trafficking in Persons Law to judges, prosecutors, and magistrates who took part in Ministry of Justice-led trainings. (25) IOM also held trainings for government officials and non-governmental actors on combatting trafficking in persons and victim identification and referral. (25)

Despite these efforts, there is a lack of trained staff, equipment, transportation, and funding to adequately conduct criminal law enforcement efforts related to the worst forms of child labor, particularly in remote areas. (5,33,69) Reports indicate that because of political instability, which may hinder labor and criminal law enforcement efforts in northern Mali, the prevalence of hereditary slavery, forced labor, and trafficking in persons has worsened since the conflict began in 2012. (5,29,30,33)

In 2018, the Morals Brigade received training from the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali Child Protection Office and from the EU Capacity Building Mission in Mali. During the reporting period, MPFEF provided medical and psycho-social support to 53 children associated with armed groups and reunited 21 with their families. (33)

Research found no indication that the government either investigated or prosecuted individuals alleged to have illegally recruited and used child soldiers. (25)

An informal referral mechanism exists among NGOs, UN bodies, police, and other government agencies to allow withdrawal of children from armed conflict and provide social services to victims of the worst forms of child labor. In 2018, the government worked with local organizations to withdraw and provide reintegration services to 109 child victims of human trafficking. (25,33) Despite these efforts, reports indicate that resources and facilities available to social services agencies are inadequate. (5,29,33,62)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including a lack of coordination between key bodies.

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor (CNLTE)	Coordinates Mali's efforts to eliminate child labor, especially its worst forms. Chaired by the Ministry of Labor and includes representatives from other government ministries, civil society, and worker and employer organizations. (2,20,70,71) In 2018, received a budget of \$70,000 to conduct activities including conducting labor inspections on farms. (33)
National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices	Coordinates government efforts to combat human trafficking. Chaired by the Ministry of Justice and includes various government agencies and civil society groups. (2,19,72,73) In 2018, finalized the National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking of Persons (PAN) 2018–2022, which was published in January 2019. (69,74)

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

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Inter-Ministerial Committee to Prevent Grave Violations Against Children	Conducts awareness-raising campaigns to prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict and implements reintegration programs for former child soldiers. (2) Conducts joint missions with international partners to determine the presence of children in armed conflict. (62) Led by MPFEF. (2) In 2018, continued to train regional actors in the protocol to release and transfer children associated with armed groups and forces. (33)
Artisanal Gold Mining Summit Committee	Comprising gold mining associations and local government officials that monitor the recommendations from a 2014 summit on artisanal mining, including the ban on child labor in artisanal gold mines. (75,76) In 2018, collaborated with the Embassies of Canada and Switzerland and mining companies to establish a commission charged with examining issues in gold mining, including the use of child labor. (33)

Reports indicate that there is confusion with regard to roles and a lack of coordination between the CNLTE and the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices. (19,30,72) In addition, the CNLTE indicated that budget constraints continue to hamper its effectiveness as a whole. (2,33)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including insufficient funding and ineffective implementation.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Table 7. Rey Folicies Related to Clinic Labor		
Policy	Description	
National Plan to Combat Child Labor (PANETEM) (2011–2020)	Aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labor by strengthening child labor laws, training relevant government officials, and mobilizing funds for social programs to withdraw children from child labor. Implemented by CNLTE. (6,59,76) In 2018, CNLTE reported a lack of funding for PANETEM and no resources to evaluate its progress. (33)	
Roadmap to Combat Child Labor in Agriculture (2015–2020)	Seeks to enhance the legal framework and build the capacity of the government to prevent child labor in agriculture. Led by the Ministry of Agriculture and supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN. (77-80) In 2018, conducted a workshop with the ILO; produced pictures for awareness about child labor; and recruited a consultant to conduct a study on the agriculture, fishing, and livestock farming sectors. (68)	
National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (PAN) (2018– 2022)†	Aims to enhance the legal framework to prevent human trafficking, improve implementation of the laws, and provide effective protection and care for victims. Led by the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices. (5,74) In 2018, the government retroactively allocated a budget of \$2 million to implement activities. (69,74)	
National Policy for Promotion and Protection of Children (2015–2019)	Aims to protect children from abuse, violence, and exploitation and promotes improved access to education and livelihood services for vulnerable children, especially those affected by armed conflict. (2,81) Overseen by MPFEF. (2) In 2018, supported formal registration of children at birth by conducting awareness-raising campaigns and sharing information with other government departments involved in birth registration. (33)	
Inter-Ministerial Circular and the Protocol on the Release and Transfer of Children Associated with Armed Groups and Armed Forces	Provides a framework that highlights the responsibility of the government to prevent children's involvement in armed conflict, and protect and reintegrate those children who become involved. (2,82,83) In 2018, organized a workshop on child soldiering and protecting children in emergencies for local government representatives and regional technical officers in regions affected by armed conflict. (33)	
National Strategic Education Sector Plan (2017–2026)	Sets out a comprehensive map to improve the quality of and access to basic and secondary education, especially in conflict-affected areas of northern Mali. Led by the Ministry of Education and supported by international donors. (59,62,84) In 2018, the Government of Mali allocated \$771,000 to basic education. (33)	

[†] Policy was approved during the reporting period.

In 2018, the government published the National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking of Persons (PAN) for 2018–2022, which calls for the establishment of a formal body to coordinate government efforts to combat trafficking in persons and allocates a budget of \$10 million for the 5-year period or \$2 million per year. The government has pledged to contribute \$350,000 annually and intends to mobilize development partners and the private sector to provide the remaining financial support needed to implement the plan. (25)

[‡]The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (2,4)



The government indicated that efforts to implement the National Plan to Combat Child Labor have been slow due to insufficient allocation of resources. (2,33)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2018, the government participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However gaps exist in these social programs, including adequacy of efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description	
South-South Cooperation for the promotion of decent work in cotton-producing countries (2015–2019)	\$6.8 million Government of Brazil-funded project that aims to improve working conditions in the cotton sector, including by combating child labor. (86,87) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the program during the reporting period.	
Decent Work Country Program (2016–2018)	Identified two objectives of decent work: (a) to create jobs and guarantee rights at work for vulnerable populations, and (b) extend social protection and promote social dialogue. (76) Included activities in support of PANETEM. Overseen by the Ministry of Labor and supported by the ILO. (76) Research was unable to determine whether activities were undertaken to implement the Decent Work Country Program during the reporting period. (68)	
Clear Cotton Project on Child Labour and Forced Labour (2018–2022)*	An \$8.5 million EU and FAO-funded global project implemented by the ILO to combat child labor and forced labor in cotton and textile supply chains. (33,88)	
Combating Descent-Based Slavery Program	USDOS-funded program implemented by the American Bar Association to combat hereditary slavery and forced child labor in Mali. (3,89) In 2018, held a conference on combating hereditary slavery in the Kayes region. (68,90)	
National Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Program	\$25 million UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali-implemented program that aims to provide reintegration services to former combatants in Mali, including children. (2,42,91) By 2018, 17 of the 24 planned sites for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration had been built, each site with the capacity to receive 750 combatants, including children. (33)	
Global Action Against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants	\$13 million EU-funded, global project implemented by UNODC, UNICEF, and IOM to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling. (92,93) In 2018, Government of Mali representatives attended a subregional conference on combating migrant smuggling. (68,94)	
USAID Country Program (2016–2020)	\$600 million USAID-funded program that supports the government's efforts to improve education, food security, and health; and to provide humanitarian assistance in crisis areas. In 2018, provided quality basic and secondary education to vulnerable communities in northern Mali, including by re-opening schools, training teachers, and providing school kits for students. (2,33,95)	

^{*} Program was launched during the reporting period.

In 2018, the government funded training events conducted by an NGO working in the artisanal gold mining sector for 375 stakeholders on the national Trafficking in Persons law and on victim identification and referral. (25)

Although Mali participates in some programs to reduce the worst forms of child labor, these programs are insufficient to fully address the scope of the problem, especially in artisanal gold mining, slavery, and debt bondage. (2) In addition, Mali does not fund or participate in programs to address child labor in domestic work, fishing, forced begging, and commercial sexual exploitation. (100)

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 Mali (Table 11).

[‡]The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (2,96-99)

Table II. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Criminally prohibit the use, procurement, or offering of children for the production and trafficking of drugs.	2009 – 2018
	Ensure that the Labor Code specifies the conditions under which light work may be undertaken to prevent child labor.	2015 – 2018
	Criminally prohibit hereditary slavery.	2017 – 2018
	Criminally prohibit the recruitment of children under age 18 into non-state armed groups and in any armed conflict, and ensure that the specific ages of children protected by the Inter-Ministerial Circular on the Prevention, Protection, and Reintegration of Children in Armed Conflict comply with international standards.	2013 – 2018
	Enact laws to provide penalties for violations of the worst forms of child labor, including the use of children under age 18 in armed conflict.	2009 – 2018
Enforcement	Publish complete information on the type of labor inspections, violations, and penalties related to child labor.	2010 – 2018
	Increase the resources, training, and number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice, and increase the number of criminal investigators responsible for enforcing laws related to child labor to provide adequate coverage of the workforce.	2012 – 2018
	Take measures to adequately enforce laws related to child labor, particularly in northern Mali, and increase efforts to ensure that perpetrators of the worst forms of child labor, including the use of child soldiers and hereditary slavery, are prosecuted in accordance with the law.	2013 – 2018
	Ensure that government social services have sufficient resources and facilities to provide the necessary care for victims of the worst forms of child labor.	2016 – 2018
Coordination	Streamline coordination across government agencies, including by ensuring effective coordination among the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor, the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Associated Practices, and other relevant agencies.	2010 – 2018
	Ensure that the National Unit to Fight Against Child Labor has sufficient resources to coordinate efforts to address child labor.	2012 – 2018
Government Policies	Ensure that the National Plan to Combat Child Labor is implemented, including by allocating sufficient financial and human resources.	2012 – 2018
Social Programs	Enhance efforts to eliminate barriers and make education accessible for all children, including girls and those living in conflict-affected areas, by removing school-related fees, increasing school infrastructure, increasing teacher availability, providing school supplies, and taking measures to ensure the safety of children and teachers in schools.	2010 – 2018
	Increase birth registration rates to ensure that children have access to social services, including education.	2010 – 2018
	Expand existing programs to fully address child labor, especially in artisanal gold mining, slavery, and debt bondage.	2014 – 2018
	Institute new programs to address child labor in domestic work, fishing, forced begging, and commercial sexual exploitation.	2009 – 2018
	Ensure the military and non-state armed groups do not occupy schools.	2018

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