

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

CÔTE D'IVOIRE - Significant Advancement

In 2017, Côte d'Ivoire made a significant advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government adopted a revised Hazardous Work List, new Regulations on Light Work, the child labor monitoring system SOSTECI was expanded into 19 new communities and the government launched SOSTECI (2018 – 2020), which aims to expand the system into 33 new departments. The First Lady of Côte d'Ivoire hosted a Conference of First Ladies in October 2017 which brought together First Ladies from 14 African countries to pledge support to their governments' efforts to prevent child labor, support victims, enhance regional cooperation, and mobilize resources. The Ministry of Justice worked with UNICEF to provide birth certificates to 1,165,325 primary school students. In addition, three World Bank projects trained 24,000 teachers, built or rehabilitated 1,272 classrooms, and provided cash transfers to 5,000 households. However, children in Côte d'Ivoire engage in the worst forms of child labor in the harvesting of cocoa and coffee, sometimes as result of human trafficking. Gaps remain in resources, personnel, and training for law enforcement, which resulted in victims being arrested for crimes they were forced to commit. Furthermore, the Labor Inspectorate is not authorized to assess penalties.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	31.5 (1,682,754)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	63.5
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	21.5
Primary Completion Rate (%)		65.9

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2016, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018. (6)

Source for all other data: Enquête Démographique et de Santé en Côte d'Ivoire (EDSCI-III) Survey, 2011–2012. (7)




According to a multiple indicator cluster survey conducted in 2016, 21.5 percent of children ages 5–17 are engaged in hazardous work.

Children from Côte d'Ivoire are subjected to human trafficking for forced labor in domestic work within the country and North Africa. Children are also brought from neighboring West African countries to Côte d'Ivoire for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor, including in begging, cocoa production, and artisanal mining.

Although the Law on Education provides for free education, students are often required to pay for textbooks, school fees, or uniforms, which may be prohibitive to some families. Approximately 23 percent of primary school-aged children and 41 percent of secondary-school aged children in Côte d'Ivoire are not enrolled in school, with the highest rates of nonenrollment found in the North, Northwest, and West regions. Although the government recruited 5,000 teacher assistants in 2017, distributed school kits, and constructed 4,510 new classrooms between 2015 and 2017, a lack of teachers, transportation, sanitation facilities, and schools, particularly in rural areas, remains. Research also suggests that some students are physically and sexually abused at school, which may deter some students from attending school.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Côte d'Ivoire has ratified all key international conventions concerning 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	✓

In 2017, the government also ratified the UN Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, and the Ministry of Justice is drafting a related law. The government's laws and regulations are in line with relevant international standards.

In 2017, the government adopted new Regulations on Light Work and a revised Hazardous Work List which includes prohibitions against children using sharp tools and work in mining. A draft law providing greater protection to domestic workers is no longer being actively considered, although government officials have noted the need for such a law. The government also adopted a decree on the function and composition of a new anti-trafficking committee in April 2017 in support of the 2016 Anti-Trafficking Law.

Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role and Description
National Monitoring Committee on Actions to Combat Trafficking, Exploitation, and Child Labor (CNS)	Supervise, monitor, and evaluate all government activities related to child labor and child trafficking, including making policy recommendations and harmonizing laws with international conventions. Chaired by the First Lady of Côte d'Ivoire and comprises 14 international and domestic partners. In 2017, launched an awareness raising campaign for the new Regulations on Light Work, published booklets and pictures explaining light work, and held a two-day work shop for labor inspectors. Under the leadership of First Lady Dominique Ouattara, hosted a Conference of First Ladies in October 2017 which brought together First Ladies from 14 countries to demonstrate what they are doing to combat child labor and pledged to support their governments' efforts to prevent child labor, support victims, enhance regional cooperation, and mobilize resources
Interministerial Committee on the Fight Against Trafficking, Exploitation, and Child Labor (CIM)	Design, coordinate, and implement all government actions to combat the worst forms of child labor, and monitor relevant programs implemented by partner organizations. Chaired by MEPS, includes representatives from 13 other ministries.
National Committee for the Fight Against Trafficking (CNLTP)	In support of the 2016 Anti-Trafficking Law, chaired by the Prime Minister and aims to fight human trafficking throughout Côte d'Ivoire. Oversees the implementation of the National Action Plan and Strategy Against Human Trafficking, validates programs, coordinates government efforts, and monitors implementation of all projects related to human trafficking. Includes representation at the local level through dedicated units charged with implementing the National Action Plan and Strategy Against Human Trafficking. The MWCPA serves as the executive secretariat and the committee comprises 13 ministries. This committee replaces a previous committee by the same name, which was defunct. As of February 2018, this committee had not convened since its establishment in April 2017, although it has worked together informally to resolve some cases of human trafficking.

In 2017, SOSTECI received a budget of approximately \$307,000, which permitted its expansion to 19 new communities and the Direction of the Fight Against Child Labor received a 7 percent increase in its budget from the previous year.

Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
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 Côte d'Ivoire's national action plans to promote coherence and sustainability. USDOL-funded projects and some industry-funded projects carried out activities that support the spirit of this policy during the reporting period.
Partnership Agreement	Forms an agreement between the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) and CNS in support of the National Action Plan for the Fight Against the Worst Forms of Child Labor. Aims to reinforce and expand SOSTECI and improve school infrastructure. In November 2017, ICI and CNS signed another agreement to revise the training and awareness-raising tool by ICI and coordinate child labor monitoring and remediation efforts in cocoa growing areas.
Joint Declarations Against Cross-Border Trafficking	Bilateral declarations or cooperative agreements between Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Burkina Faso to combat child trafficking and the worst forms of child labor. In 2017, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso agreed to implement a previously signed agreement to create and operationalize a permanent commission to combat the cross-border trafficking of children.
Child Protection Policies	Includes the National Policy on Child Protection (PNPE) (2014–2018), led by the MWCPA, which seeks to reduce the incidence of violence, abuse, and exploitation of children; and the National Policy of Judicial Protection of Childhood and Youth (PNPJEJ) (2016–2020), led by the MOJ, aims to provide judicial protection to child victims of forced labor, which has yet to be officially adopted by the Council of Ministers. In 2017, the MWCPA began drafting a decree to establish a monitoring and coordination committee for the policy's implementation.
National Development Plan (2016–2020)	Aims to improve governance and accelerate human capital development, including by combatting child labor. Allocates almost \$6.1 million over 5 years to conduct diagnostic studies on child labor and child trafficking; creates a unit to combat the worst forms of child labor in regional labor inspectorate offices; expands SOSTECI into 10 new departments; constructs 3 transit centers; and develops a national action plan to combat human trafficking, particularly of girls. In 2017, launched SOSTECI (2018 – 2020) which aims to expand SOSTECI into 33 new departments with a proposed budget of \$4.3 million.
Compulsory Education Policy	In support of the Law on Education, aims to achieve 100 percent enrollment in primary school by 2020 and 100 percent enrollment in junior high by 2025. Allocates \$1.34 billion to modernize the education system, including by building new classrooms, providing free textbooks to low-income families, and providing additional pedagogical training to teachers. (In 2017, the Ministry of Education constructed 8,166 primary school classrooms, 36 school cantinas, 74 latrines, and distributed 4.4 million school kits. The Cocoa and Coffee Council distributed a further 60,000 school kits and the MEPS distributed 100 school kits.
Decent Work Country Program (2017–2020)	In collaboration with the ILO, this program aims to improve working conditions, strengthen SOSTECI, and combat the worst forms of child labor. It is pending adoption by the Council of Ministers

In 2017, the government pledged to intensify its efforts to prevent the worst forms of child labor and protect its victims at the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor. However, the government has not included child labor elimination and prevention strategies into the World Bank's Country Partnership Framework.

Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
National Action Plan for the Fight Against the Worst Forms of Child Labor (NAP) (2015–2017)	Coordinated by the CNS and the CIM, \$24.4 million project aimed to significantly reduce the number of children engaged in the worst forms of child labor by improving the legal framework, sensitizing high-risk communities to the dangers of exploitative child labor, improving victim services, building the capacity of law enforcement, and improving educational infrastructure. In 2017, received a budget of approximately \$7.5 million. At the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor, the government pledged to develop a new National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking, Exploitation, and Child Labor.
National Action Plan and Strategy Against Human Trafficking (2016–2020)†	With the support of UNODC and coordinated by CNLTP, \$14.8 million project that aims to prevent human trafficking, expand social services for victims by improving physical infrastructure, provide training for law enforcement personnel and other stakeholders, promote coordination, and collect data on human trafficking. This plan will begin implementation after the CNLTP becomes functional.

National Awareness Campaign Against Child Labor (2015–2017)†	CNS-led national awareness campaign against child labor which disseminated information to increase public awareness through television and radio broadcasts, billboards, and newspapers in French and local languages. Called on national actors to take a greater role in media campaigns to raise awareness about child labor. In 2017, held two awareness campaigns and revised a 2013 agreement with the media to promote children’s rights and combat child labor, which was signed by 191 media partners.
USDOL-Funded Projects in Support of the 2010 Declaration	USDOL projects in cocoa-growing areas of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana that aim to eliminate child labor through research, improved monitoring and enforcement, and implementation and expansion of SOSTECI. These projects include: Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor (CLEAR) (2013–2017), \$7.95 million project implemented in at least 10 countries by the ILO; 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; and Eliminating Child Labor in Cocoa (2015–2019), \$4.5 million project implemented by the International Cocoa Initiative.
Industry-Funded Projects	Industry-funded projects to increase sustainability in the cocoa sector, improve farmer livelihoods and access to education, and combat the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-growing areas. Some projects support World Cocoa Foundation (WCF)’s CocoaAction (2014–2020) strategy and the spirit of the 2010 Declaration.
Centers for Vulnerable Children	Operates approximately 90 MWCPA- and MEPS-funded social centers and 36 special education centers throughout the country that receive women and children who are victims of crime or violence, including children who are victims of the worst forms of child labor. (26) International NGOs also operate additional centers that provide meals and basic education. In 2017, provided assistance to 167 victims of child trafficking or labor exploitation.
Programs to Promote Education	These programs aim to raise school attendance rates in rural areas, particularly among girls, by providing school meals, birth registration, and constructing community schools (<i>écoles de proximité</i>). Programs include: the Integrated Program for Sustainable School Feeding, a \$42.5 million WFP-funded program; the Ministry of National Education School Feeding Program; and the McGovern-Dole School Feeding Program, a \$31 million joint initiative between WFP and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Ministry of National Education; and the Birth Registration Program, a MOJ and UNICEF program that aims to provide birth registration to 1 million children who are currently enrolled in primary school. In 2017, provided birth certificates to 1,165,325 primary school students.
World Bank-funded Projects	Programs aim to improve access to education and provide poverty relief. Includes: Emergency Support Project for Basic Education (2012–2017), \$41.4 million project to construct and rehabilitate classrooms and school latrines; Second Fiscal Management, Education, Energy and Cocoa Reforms Development Policy Operation (2017–2020), \$125 million project to increase the number of primary school teachers; Productive Social Safety Net (2015–2020), \$50 million cash transfer project to poor households in the Central, Northern, and Western regions of Côte d’Ivoire. By the end of 2017, recruited or trained 24,000 teachers, built or rehabilitated 1,272 classrooms, provided cash transfers to 5,000 households.
Community Animation Program for Child Protection (2015–2020)	\$228,168 MWCPA program as part of the National Policy on Child Protection, implemented with technical assistance from UNICEF, provides a service package for behavior change and improving communication at the community level that can be tailored to meet local needs. At the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor, the government pledged to intensify social protection programs and continue support for the Community Animation Program.
National Solidarity Fund	\$2.5 million fund that provides assistance to poor households, including victims of human trafficking. In 2017, provided funding to assist in the repatriation of human trafficking victims.

The government dedicated funding to SOSTECI for its expansion and disbursed funds to the National Action Plan for the Fight Against the Worst Forms of Child Labor (NAP), but the scope of existing programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem, and not all relevant sectors are addressed. (15) In addition, the government primarily relies on NGOs to provide social services to victims of child labor and child trafficking and government services are under-resourced.

Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

- Strengthen the Labor Inspectorate by authorizing the Inspectorate to assess penalties and ensure that criminal investigators receive periodic training so they can adequately enforce criminal laws related to child labor.
- Publish information about whether inspections are conducted at worksites, and if routine inspections target sectors where child labor is known to occur in Côte d’Ivoire.

- Ensure that labor inspectorates and criminal law enforcement agencies receive an adequate amount of funding to conduct inspections and investigations throughout the country, including in the informal sector.
- Increase the number of labor inspectors in accordance with the ILO's technical advice.
- Ensure that victims are not punished for the worst forms of child labor.
- Ensure all coordinating bodies function as intended and are able to carry out their mandates.
- Improve coordination on data collection among ministries and between different regions.
- Integrate child labor elimination and prevention strategies into all existing policies.
- Improve access to education by eliminating all school-related fees, improving the accessibility of schools, ensuring that schools are free of physical and sexual abuse, and increasing the number of teachers, sanitation facilities, and schools, particularly in rural areas.
- Expand existing programs to address the scope of the child labor problem in Côte d'Ivoire and institute programs to address child labor in all relevant sectors.
- Ensure that victims of the worst forms of child labor are able to access social services throughout the country.