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## USDOL – US Department of Labor

## 2021 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Nigeria

## Moderate Advancement

In 2021, Nigeria made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government validated the National Policy on Child Labor and the National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labor (2021–2025). The Ministry of Labor and Employment also created a new program to provide vulnerable households with seed capital to fund new businesses in areas with high rates of child labor. However, children in Nigeria are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation and use in armed conflict as well as quarrying granite and artisanal mining. The Child's Right Act has been adopted by only 29 out of Nigeria's 36 states (including the capital federal territory), leaving the remaining 7 states in northern Nigeria with legal statutes that do not meet international standards for the prohibition of children in illicit activities. In addition, the minimum age for work in the Labor Act does not apply to children who are self-employed or working in the informal economy.

## I. Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of Child Labor

Children in Nigeria are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation and use in armed conflict as well as quarrying granite and artisanal mining. (1) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Nigeria. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

| Children                      | Age     | Percent            |
|-------------------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Working (% and population)    | 5 to 14 | 47.5 (Unavailable) |
| Attending School (%)          | 5 to 14 | 76.6               |
| Combining Work and School (%) | 7 to 14 | 39.9               |
| Primary Completion Rate (%)   |         | Unavailable        |

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Primary completion rate was unavailable from UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022. (2)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 5 (MICS 5), 2016–2017. (3)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

| Sector/Industry | Activity                                                                            |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agriculture     | Production of coffee, cotton, tea, manioc/cassava, cocoa, rice, and tobacco (4-6)   |
|                 | Fishing, activities unknown (7)                                                     |
|                 | Herding livestock (1,5,8)                                                           |
| Industry        | Mining and quarrying of granite and gravel (1,4,8)                                  |
|                 | Artisanal gold mining and processing (5,8,9)                                        |
|                 | Harvesting sand (9)                                                                 |
|                 | Construction, including making bricks and carrying construction materials (1,4,5,8) |

|                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Services</b>                                | Domestic work (1,4,5,8,10,11)                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                | Collecting money on public buses, washing cars, and automotive repair (1,5,8,10)                                                                                                         |
|                                                | Street work, including vending, begging, and scavenging (1,4,5,8,10)                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡</b> | Commercial sexual exploitation, including use in the production of pornography, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1,5,11,12)                                                   |
|                                                | Forced labor in begging; domestic work; street vending; textile manufacturing; mining and quarrying gravel, granite, and artisanal gold; and agriculture, including in cocoa (5,8,11-13) |
|                                                | Recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict and in non-conflict support roles, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1,8)                          |

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

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

Nigeria continues to be a source, transit, and destination country for forced labor and sex trafficking of both adults and children. Trafficked Nigerians are recruited from primarily rural areas within the country, with women and girls recruited for domestic service and sex trafficking while boys are recruited for street vending, domestic service, mining, agriculture, and begging. (1) Benin City, the capital of Edo State, continues to be a major human trafficking hub in Africa, but increased enforcement efforts may have caused some human trafficking rings to shift their focus to other areas of southern Nigeria. (14) Girls from Nigeria are also sent to North Africa and Europe for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. (15) Children from West African countries experience forced labor in Nigeria, including in granite and gold mines. (12,16,17)

Despite notable military advances and proclamations of Boko Haram’s defeat by government forces, the group remained a security threat, with escalating attacks by both Boko Haram and ISIS West Africa (ISIS-WA) that force people out of Nigeria’s northeastern regions. These attacks have contributed to the displacement of more than 2 million people, of which 56 percent were children. (18-20)

Rapid population growth in Nigeria is driving the informal education sector, with several million boys in the north going to Quranic schools known as *Almajiri*. The *Almajiri* system includes a component of child labor, with some teachers tasking older children with menial jobs and other children coerced into forced begging. (1,8,16) Furthermore, these children are highly vulnerable to recruitment by Boko Haram and ISIS-WA, which continued to forcibly recruit and use child soldiers in combat and support roles, and as suicide bombers and concubines. The government does not officially recognize these schools, and students attending *Almajiri* schools are officially considered out of school. (1)

UNICEF reported that as of January 2022, at least 10.5 million children, or one-third of all Nigerian children, are out of school in Nigeria, making it the highest out-of-school rate in the world. Northeastern and northwestern states have female primary net attendance rates of 47.7 percent and 47.3 percent. (1,21) The widespread increase in kidnappings, killings, village raids, and cattle-rustling throughout the North West and North Central regions led by organized criminal groups has also contributed to the intermittent closure of schools throughout the region with these challenges being more acute in rural areas. (1,21)

Although free and compulsory education is federally mandated by the Education Act, little enforcement of compulsory education laws occurs at the state level. School fees are often charged in practice, and the cost of materials can be prohibitive for families. (5,8) In addition to the lack of funds, parents also need the children’s assistance in household chores and with caring for younger siblings. (8) When families experience economic hardship, the enrollment of boys is typically prioritized over the enrollment of girls. Other barriers to education include a lack of trained teachers, sexual harassment, inadequate sanitation facilities, poor infrastructure, and fear of abduction or attack by Boko Haram while at school, particularly for girls in the northeastern part of the country. (1,5,10,17,19,22)

Reports suggest that children lacking birth certificates or other formal documentation have been denied access to public schools. Although it is unclear how widespread this issue is, research suggests that it is most common in the northeastern region and rural areas. (8)

## II. Legal Framework for Child Labor

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

| 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                                                 | ✓ |

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Nigeria’s legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the minimum age for work.

| Standard                                                                      | Meets International Standards | Age | Legislation                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Minimum Age for Work                                                          | No                            | 12  | Section 59(1) of the Labor Act; Sections 28, 29, and 277 of the Child's Right Act (23,24)                                                                                                                  |
| Minimum Age for Hazardous Work                                                | Yes                           | 18  | Section 59 (5) and (6) of the Labor Act; Sections 28, 29, and 277 of the Child's Right Act (23,24)                                                                                                         |
| Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children | No                            |     | Sections 59–61 of the Labor Act; Section 28 of the Child's Right Act; Sections 23 and 82 of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015 (23-25)                       |
| Prohibition of Forced Labor                                                   | Yes                           |     | Sections 13, 21-25, and 82 of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015; Sections 28, 30, and 277 of the Child's Right Act; Article 34 of the Constitution. (24-26) |
| Prohibition of Child Trafficking                                              | Yes                           |     | Section 13, 16, 17, 21-25, and 82 of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015; Sections 30, 33, and 277 of the Child's Right Act (24,25)                           |
| Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children                     | Yes                           |     | Sections 13–17 and 82 of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015; Section 23 of the Cybercrimes Act; Sections 30, 32, and 277 of the Child's Right Act (24-27)    |
| Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities                           | No                            |     | Sections 25, 26, and 30 of the Child's Right Act (24)                                                                                                                                                      |
| Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment                          | Yes                           | 18  | Section 28 of the Armed Forces Act; Sections 34 and 277 of the Child's Right Act (24,28)                                                                                                                   |
| Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military         | N/A*                          |     |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups                 | No                            |     | Section 19 of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act (25)                                                                                                             |
| Compulsory Education Age                                                      | Yes                           | 15  | Sections 2 and 15 of the Education Act; Section 15 of the Child's Right Act (24,29)                                                                                                                        |
| Free Public Education                                                         | Yes                           |     | Sections 2 and 3 of the Education Act; Section 15 of the Child's Right Act (24,29)                                                                                                                         |

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

\* Country has no conscription (28)

During the reporting period, Nigeria entered into Memorandums of Understanding to counter human trafficking with the Governments of Niger, Burkina Faso, and Cote d'Ivoire. (30) In addition, Sokoto and Jigawa States adopted the Child's Right Act (CRA). The legislatures in Kebbi and Yobe States have also approved the law and are awaiting their governors' signatures to ratify the bill. (1)

The CRA codifies the rights of children in Nigeria and implements the core principles that were enshrined in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the 1990 African Union Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Each state must adopt and implement the act in its territory for the CRA to become law. (24,31,32) However, only 29 of the 36 states have adopted and implemented the CRA, leaving the 7 remaining states in northern Nigeria with legal statutes that do not meet international standards for the prohibition against the use of children in illicit activities. (24,27,31,32) Furthermore, the CRA upholds certain portions of the Labor Act that are not in compliance with international child labor standards. This includes Section 59, which sets the minimum age for employment at age 12 in contradiction to the CRA, which only permits children under age 18 to engage in light work for family members. (23,24) The minimum age for work is lower than the compulsory education age, which may encourage children to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. (23,24,29)

Although the Labor Act forbids the employment of youth under age 18 in work that is dangerous to their health, safety, or morals, it does not establish the types of hazardous activity that are prohibited to children under age 18. (23,33) The National Steering Committee for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor developed a report in 2013 that identified hazardous child labor in Nigeria; however, the government has yet to determine by law or regulation the types of hazardous work prohibited for children. (4,33) The Labor Act also permits children of any age to do light work in agriculture and domestic work if they are working with a family member, which does not meet international standards. Furthermore, the minimum age protections in the Labor Act do not apply to children who are self-employed or working in the informal economy. (23,33) Lastly, children are not excluded from the Terrorism Prevention Act's penalty of life imprisonment for assisting in acts of terrorism. (34)

### 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 enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

| Organization/Agency                                                                              | Role                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Labor Inspectorate, Ministry of Labor and Employment (MLE)                                       | Deploys labor inspectors across 36 state labor offices and the federal capital territory to enforce federal child labor laws. On April 15, 2021, the Ministry launched the commemoration for the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labor, which prioritized the elimination of child labor, forced labor, modern slavery, and human trafficking. (5,35-37) |
| National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP) | Enforces laws against human trafficking and exploitative labor. Coordinates with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development and state governments to provide child labor survivors with social services and reunite trafficked children with their families. (5,11,35) Operates hotlines for survivors in Abuja and each zonal command center. (14)          |
| Nigeria Police                                                                                   | Enforce all laws prohibiting forced child labor and commercial sexual exploitation. Collaborate with NAPTIP on human trafficking enforcement. (5)                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Nigeria Immigration Service                                                                      | Collaborates with NAPTIP to enforce laws against child trafficking. (5)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Edo State Task Force Against Human Trafficking                                                   | Enforces the Edo State Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Law and other laws prohibiting trafficking in persons and investigates all cases of child trafficking and forced child labor. Includes an Investigation and Security Unit tasked with the prevention and detection of human trafficking cases. (17,38)                                                         |

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

#### Labor Law Enforcement

In 2021, labor law enforcement agencies in Nigeria took action to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor and Employment (MLE) that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including insufficient human resource allocation.

| Overview of Labor Law Enforcement | 2020 | 2021 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|
|-----------------------------------|------|------|

|                                                                                    |              |               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Labor Inspectorate Funding                                                         | \$75,358 (8) | \$515,375 (1) |
| Number of Labor Inspectors                                                         | 1,888 (8)    | 1,402 (1)     |
| Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties                                                | Yes (23)     | Yes (23)      |
| Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors                                          | Yes (8)      | Yes (1)       |
| Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor                                        | N/A (8)      | Yes (1)       |
| Refresher Courses Provided                                                         | Yes (8)      | Yes (1)       |
| Number of Labor Inspections Conducted                                              | 9,877 (8)    | 10,526 (1)    |
| Number Conducted at Worksite                                                       | 9,719 (8)    | 10,526 (1)    |
| Number of Child Labor Violations Found                                             | 3,422 (8)    | 3,234 (1)     |
| Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed                  | 88 (8)       | 0 (39)        |
| Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected                        | 75 (8)       | 0 (39)        |
| Routine Inspections Conducted                                                      | Yes (8)      | Yes (1)       |
| Routine Inspections Targeted                                                       | Yes (8)      | Yes (1)       |
| Unannounced Inspections Permitted                                                  | Yes (23)     | Yes (23)      |
| Unannounced Inspections Conducted                                                  | Yes (8)      | No (1)        |
| Complaint Mechanism Exists                                                         | Yes (8)      | Yes (1)       |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services | Yes (8)      | Yes (1)       |

**Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

While the government is permitted to conduct unannounced inspections, it did not do so during the reporting period due to security concerns. (1)

Enforcement of child labor laws remained an issue due to a lack of resources for inspections, including office facilities, transportation, fuel, and other necessities to carry out the number of inspections deemed necessary. In addition, research did not find mechanisms to enforce existing protections for children in the informal sector. (1,8,40,41)

The total number of labor inspectors is insufficient for the size of Nigeria's workforce, which includes approximately 60 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in industrializing economies, Nigeria would need to employ about 4,005 labor inspectors. (42,43)

#### **Criminal Law Enforcement**

In 2021, criminal law enforcement agencies in Nigeria took actions to address child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including the allocation of resources.

| <b>Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement</b>                    | <b>2020</b> | <b>2021</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators                | Yes (8)     | N/A (1)     |
| Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor | N/A (8)     | Yes (1)     |
| Refresher Courses Provided                                     | Yes (8)     | Yes (1)     |
| Number of Investigations                                       | 381 (44)    | 6 (39)      |
| Number of Violations Found                                     | 3,422 (8)   | 62 (39)     |

|                                                                                       |          |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------|
| Number of Prosecutions Initiated                                                      | 40 (44)  | 6 (39)  |
| Number of Convictions                                                                 | 24 (44)  | 0 (39)  |
| Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor            | Yes (44) | 0 (39)  |
| Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services | Yes (8)  | Yes (1) |

**Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor**

During the reporting period, 1,193 children were rescued and removed from child labor situations in 2021. Of those, 120 received social services. (1)

In an official memo dated November 2020 from the Ministry of Defense, the government stated that there were no children in military detention, and since the signing of the memo, children who have been rescued from Boko Haram camps pass through a de-radicalization process that is open to international observers and other interested parties. These efforts were taken in response to past reports of abuse and exploitation within the military's detention system that had occurred in previous years. (12,35,41,44,45)

#### 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 inefficacy in accomplishing mandates.

| Coordinating Body                                                                 | Role & Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| National Steering Committee for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor | Coordinates efforts to address child labor. Led by MLE and comprises representatives from seven governmental agencies, faith-based organizations, NGOs, ILO, and UNICEF. (5,8) Members are charged with leveraging resources for project implementation from their institutions and identifying synergies with other existing programs. (5,8) During the reporting period, this committee reviewed and validated the National Policy on Child Labor and the National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labor 2021–2025 to conform to the Regional Action Plan on Child Labor. In addition, the committee trained 37 Child Labor Desk Officers across the country on the application of the National Policy on Child Labor and the National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labor. (1) |
| State Committees on the Elimination of Child Labor                                | Operates in the 36 Nigerian States and executes the provisions of the National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labor at sub-national levels. During the reporting period, the State Steering Committee trained media practitioners from the public and private sector on the contents and implementation of the National Social Behavioral Change Communication Strategy. (8) Also, the State Steering Committee held meetings across the country to develop and align local plans with the National Action Plan. (1)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Interministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons                             | Coordinates child labor issues related to human trafficking. Chaired by NAPTIP, the task force is responsible for developing national policies on human trafficking. (5) Research was unable to determine whether the Interministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons was active during the reporting period.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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

#### 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 a lack of implementation.

| Policy                                                                                                         | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NAPTIP 2019 Plan of Action                                                                                     | Provides a framework for mobilizing NAPTIP and all stakeholders involved in addressing human trafficking, with an emphasis on enforcement, prosecution, and provision of services to survivors. During the reporting period, NAPTIP continued to support the work of civil society organizations to increase capacity, coordination, and services provision for countering trafficking in persons. (1,8,46) |
| National Social Behavioral Change Communication Strategy for Elimination of Child Labor in Nigeria (2020–2023) | Addresses child labor at the household and community levels through awareness-raising activities. (8) Research was unable to determine whether any actions were undertaken to implement this policy during the reporting period.                                                                                                                                                                            |

National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism

Designed to end the recruitment and use of children by the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). Aims to promote the protection of children’s rights, ensures that suspects under age 18 are treated in accordance with international law, and provides for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration for children previously associated with CJTF. (47-49) The UN and CJTF, with the support of the government, continued to reintegrate children during the reporting period. (30)

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

‡ The government had other policies that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (8)

Since the signing of the National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, the UN has reported nearly no use of children by the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). In addition, the UN delisted the CJTF as an armed group using child soldiers, a long-time goal in previous anti-trafficking action plans. (8,30)

During the reporting period, a National Policy of Child Labor and a National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labor were validated by the government, with the goal of having a standardized policy and plan of action on child labor throughout the country. The document, which is awaiting adoption, incorporated elimination of forced labor and modern slavery. (8,37)

#### VI. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

In 2021, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the inadequacy of efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

| Program                                                                                       | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NAPTIP Shelters for Human Trafficking Victims†                                                | Government-funded program that operates 10 shelters in Nigeria, capable of housing up to 315 trafficking survivors. Shelters provide legal, medical, and psychological services, as well as vocational training and business management skills, along with referring survivors to NGOs for additional care. (11,12,16) Shelters continued to operate during the reporting period. (11,12,16)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Safe Schools Initiative                                                                       | Donor-funded program implemented by the government and international organizations that aims to improve access to education in northeastern Nigeria. (50) Research was unable to determine whether this project was active during the reporting period.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Accelerating Action for the Elimination of Child Labor in Supply Chains in Africa (2018–2022) | ILO-sponsored regional project aimed at eliminating child labor in supply chains, with particular focus on those involved in the production of cocoa, coffee, cotton, gold, and tea. Collaborates with global supply chain actors working in Africa on public policy, good governance, empowerment, representation, partnership, and knowledge sharing. (6) Research was unable to determine whether this project was active during the reporting period.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| USDOL-Funded Projects                                                                         | USDOL-funded projects that aim to eliminate child labor. These projects include: <a href="#">Measurement, Awareness-Raising, and Policy Engagement Project on Child Labor and Forced Labor</a> , a project implemented by ILO to conduct research and develop new survey methodologies, improve awareness, strengthen policies and government capacity, and promote partnerships to address child labor and forced labor; and the <a href="#">ILO Global Accelerator Project</a> , a \$10 million project implemented by ILO. (51) Additional information is available on the USDOL <a href="#">website</a> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| World Bank-Funded Programs                                                                    | Projects aim to improve access to education. Include: <a href="#">National Social Safety Nets Project</a> (2016–2022), a \$50 million project that aims to provide primary school lunches and offers conditional cash transfers based on children’s enrollment; and the <a href="#">Better Education Service Delivery for All</a> (2017–2022), a \$611 million project that aims to increase access to education for out-of-school youth and improve literacy. (52-54) In 2021, the National Social Safety Nets Project continued working to enroll participants in 33 states across the country; 17 focus states have adopted one or more forms of intensive literacy program across 21,035 formal basic education schools. (55) Since its inception, the Better Education Service Delivery for All project has helped reduce the number of out-of-school children by 924,590, of which 633,772 were girls. (54,55) |

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

† Program is funded by the Government of Nigeria.



MLE's new program, Elimination of Child Labor in Child Labor-Endemic Areas, provides recipient households (from the participating states of Adamawa, Ebonyi, and Nasarawa) \$240 (N100,000.00) to establish any business of their choice. The program began in November of 2021 and is expected to end in December 2025. (1)

USAID also issued a 5-year award entitled "Strengthening Civic Advocacy and Local Engagement (SCALE)." Working with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP), this program will focus on countering trafficking in persons by supporting the work of civil society organizations to increase capacity, coordination, and services provision for countering trafficking in persons. (8)

There are increasing concerns regarding the conditions in shelters housing human trafficking survivors. These conditions include poor housing facilities, a lack of food, and insufficient stipends, along with reports of survivors being held against their will for extended periods at shelters run by the NAPTIP. (41,56)

In addition, research found no evidence of programs to address all relevant worst forms of child labor, including the use of children in armed conflict, quarrying granite, artisanal mining, and commercial sexual exploitation. (8)

#### 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 Nigeria (Table 11).

| Area                       | Suggested Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Year(s)<br>Suggested |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Legal Framework</b>     | Raise the minimum age for work to the age up to which education is compulsory and ensure that national legislation on the minimum age for work is consistent so that all children are protected, including those in the informal sector and who are self-employed. | 2012 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that the types of work determined to be hazardous for children are prohibited by law or regulation for all children under age 18.                                                                                                                           | 2009 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that using, procuring, and offering a child for the production and trafficking of drugs are criminally prohibited in all states.                                                                                                                            | 2015 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.                                                                                                                                                       | 2016 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that provisions related to light work conform to international standards.                                                                                                                                                                                   | 2009 – 2021          |
|                            | Amend the Terrorism Prevention Act to prohibit the punishment of children for their association with armed groups.                                                                                                                                                 | 2016 – 2021          |
| <b>Enforcement</b>         | Significantly increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice.                                                                                                                                                                          | 2016 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that labor inspectors receive sufficient resources to enforce child labor laws.                                                                                                                                                                             | 2016 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that a mechanism exists for enforcing existing protections for children working in the informal sector.                                                                                                                                                     | 2009 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that there are penalties imposed for the worst forms of child labor.                                                                                                                                                                                        | 2020 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that unannounced inspections are conducted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2021                 |
| <b>Coordination</b>        | Ensure that all coordinating bodies are active and able to carry out their mandates as intended.                                                                                                                                                                   | 2018 – 2021          |
| <b>Government Policies</b> | Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor, including the commercial sexual exploitation of children and forced child labor in granite, gravel, and cocoa production.                                                                   | 2018 – 2021          |
|                            | Ensure that activities are undertaken to implement government policies and that data on these activities are published during the reporting period.                                                                                                                | 2021                 |
| <b>Social Programs</b>     | Ensure that all states adopt programs to offer free education and expand existing programs that provide funds to vulnerable children, especially girls, to cover school fees and the cost of materials.                                                            | 2014 – 2021          |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Make additional efforts to provide all children with birth documentation.                                                                                                                                                                               | 2020 – 2021 |
| Ensure that there is an adequate number of trained teachers and provide sufficient educational infrastructure for children, particularly girls, to access schools.                                                                                      | 2015 – 2021 |
| Conduct research to gather comprehensive data on child labor, including activities carried out by children working in fishing, to inform policies and programs.                                                                                         | 2020 – 2021 |
| Ensure that the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters and related agencies provide appropriate facilities and resources to survivors, and that survivors are not held against their will in shelters. | 2019 – 2021 |
| Establish programs that prevent and remove children from all relevant worst forms of child labor, including armed conflict, commercial sexual exploitation, and illicit activities.                                                                     | 2009 – 2021 |
| Ensure that all social programs are active and pursuing their mandates.                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2020 – 2021 |

**Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor**

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