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Uganda

SIGNIFICANT ADVANCEMENT

In 2013, Uganda made a significant advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government published the National Labor Force and Child Activities Survey 2011/12 during the year. The survey is the first comprehensive national survey on child labor in Uganda and includes detailed information on the activities of children in the country. The Government also trained 100 immigration officials to identify trafficking victims, registered 399 child victims of trafficking, and rescued 26 children who were being trained in Uganda to assist armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In addition, Uganda began to participate in two new child labor projects. However, children from Uganda are reportedly recruited and forcibly abducted to join rebel militias operating in the DRC and Kenya. Within the country, children continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor in agriculture and in commercial sexual exploitation. Gaps in the legal framework persist, such as between compulsory education and minimum working ages, and enforcement information is not made available.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Uganda are engaged in the worst forms of child labor in agriculture and in commercial sexual exploitation. (1-6) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Uganda.

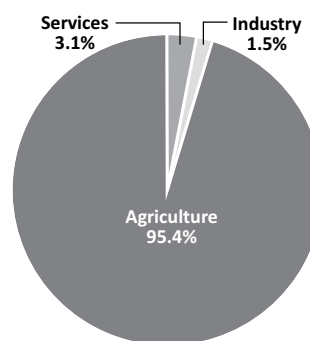
Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	30.0 (3,034,126)
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	88.7
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	34.4
Primary Completion Rate (%)		53.1

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2011, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.(7)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Labor Force Survey, 2010.(8)

Figure 1. Working Children by Sector, Ages 10-14



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	Picking coffee and tea† (6, 9-13)
	Growing cocoa* and tobacco (2, 11, 12, 14)
	Growing rice† and acting as scarecrows on rice fields (6, 11, 13, 15)
	Production of vanilla (6, 14)
	Cutting, collecting, and carrying sugarcane† (12, 16)
	Production of palm oil* (6)
	Herding cattle (1, 6, 12)
	Fishing, including catching, smoking, and selling fish; loading boats with equipment and offloading fish; using spears and diving under water to catch fish; and scaling, cleaning, and cutting fish (3, 5, 9, 11, 12)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Industry	Making bricks (4, 6, 11, 14, 17)
	Producing and carrying charcoal (6, 12, 18)
	Mining† and stone quarrying*† (3, 6, 11, 19, 20)
Services	Domestic work (1, 6, 11, 21, 22)
	Street vending† (1, 3, 6, 14)
	Cross-border trading, including carrying heavy loads to and from Ugandan border points (3, 23, 24)
	Food† and beverage workers,† including in restaurants and bars (1, 3, 11)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1, 3, 4, 25, 26)
	Work in agriculture, bars, begging, cattle herding, and domestic service as a result of human trafficking (25, 26)
	Forced labor in brick making,* mining, and stone quarrying* (4)
	Used in the production of pornography by pimps and brothel owners (1, 3, 27)
	Use of under age children in armed conflict, sometimes as a result of abduction and human trafficking (28, 29)

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

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

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

Uganda is a source and destination country for the trafficking of children.(27, 30) Children are trafficked internally for sexual exploitation and forced labor in fishing, agriculture, and domestic service.(30) In some cases, Ugandan children have been trafficked to Central, East, and North Africa for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor.(25, 31) Children from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and South Sudan are also trafficked to Uganda for commercial sexual exploitation and agricultural work.(30)

During the year, children from Uganda were recruited and forcibly abducted for service by the March 23 Movement (M23), an armed group based in the DRC, and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) armed group.(28, 29) It is reported that young Muslim boys between the ages of 10 and 15 were recruited and brought to the DRC and Kenya to join rebel militias, though the perpetrators are unknown. In addition, Ugandan children were reported to be in training in Uganda for Allied Defense Force (ADF)/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda rebel activity in the DRC.(28) Children associated with armed groups may be forced to serve as combatants, porters, spies, guards, domestic servants, and sex slaves. Children also monitor military check points and are used during looting expeditions.(29)

During the year, there were no reports that the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) had abducted or conscripted children within Uganda for use in armed conflict. However, limited evidence suggests that the LRA used abductees from South Sudan, the DRC, and Central African Republic (CAR) as temporary porters.(32) The Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) assisted two children returning from LRA captivity during the reporting period; however, children abducted by the LRA continue to be unaccounted for and may be held by the LRA in the DRC, CAR, and South Sudan.(28)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Uganda has ratified most key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor (cont)

Convention	Ratification
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	

Uganda has not ratified the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons.

Uganda has ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention).(33) The Convention prohibits armed groups from recruiting children or allowing them to participate in conflict in any manner.(34)

The Government has established relevant laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	14	Article 32 (2) of the Employment Act 2006; Article 3 of the Employment (Employment of Children) Regulations 2012 (3, 35)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 32 (4) of the Employment Act 2006; Article 5 of the Employment (Employment of Children) Regulations 2012 (3, 35)
List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children	Yes		Article 6 and the First Schedule of the Employment (Employment of Children) Regulations 2012 (3, 9)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 25 of the Constitution (36)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 3 and 5 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009 (37-40)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Sections 131, 136-137, and 139 of the Penal Code; Article 5 of the Employment (Employment of Children) Regulations 2012 (3, 41)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Article 5 of the Employment (Employment of Children) Regulations 2012 (3)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Section 52(2)(c) of the Uganda People's Defense Forces Act; Article 5(b) of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009 (12, 42, 43)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	12	Article 10(3)(a) of the Education (Pre-Primary, Primary, and Post-Primary) Act 2008 (38, 44, 45)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 10(3)(a) of the Education (Pre-Primary, Primary, and Post-Primary) Act 2008 (12, 45)

* No conscription or no standing military.

The use, procurement, or offering of any child for prostitution is illegal under Article 5 of Uganda's Employment (Employment of Children) Regulations 2012. (3) Despite these Regulations, Section 131 of the Penal Code only criminalizes those who procure or attempt to procure a girl for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation. The Penal Code does not protect boys from being procured for the same purpose. (41, 46) The Penal Code penalizes intermediaries, but it is not clear whether it penalizes clients. The Code does not protect children who are procured or offered for prostitution from being treated as offenders rather than victims.(41, 46)

During the reporting period, Uganda passed the Anti-Pornography Act, 2014. Section 14 of the Act prohibits child pornography.(47)

Article 10(3)(a) of the Education (Pre-Primary, Primary, and Post-Primary) Act 2008 calls for free and compulsory primary education through age 12, but fees for school supplies and operating costs are often prohibitive for families. The law leaves children ages 12 to 14 particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor as they are not required to be in school nor are they legally permitted to work in areas other than light work.(12, 24, 45)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (MGLSD)	Enforce labor laws.(6, 9, 38) District labor officers conduct labor inspections, including occupational safety and health inspections, throughout the country.(9, 24, 38, 48, 49) The Child Labor Unit (CLU) develops policies and programs on child labor; serves as a resource for MGLSD's non-specialized labor inspectors, and occupational health and safety inspectors; and works with partners to implement awareness raising campaigns.(9, 49)
Ministry of Internal Affairs(MIA)	Enforce criminal laws against forced labor, trafficking, commercial exploitation, and the use of children for illicit activities. Lead investigations related to trafficking in persons.(9) Within the MIA, the Uganda Police Force's (UPF) Special Investigations Unit manage trafficking cases while the Sexual Offenses Department manage cases of commercial sexual exploitation. The Child and Family Protection Unit (CFPU) process child abuse cases, including child labor. (49) MIA's Immigration Department assist in the identification of potential trafficking victims.(28)
CFPU liaison officers	Handle child labor complaints and overall child protection issues at police posts that do not have a CFPU officer.(9)
Ministry of Justice and Directorate for Public Prosecutions	Prosecute trafficking cases.(50)

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

Labor Law Enforcement

Uganda's centralized labor inspection system was taken apart in the mid-1990s, following the decentralization of the country. The Local Governments Act, No. 1 of 1997 transferred labor issues from the central government to the districts.(48) The labor inspection function in the country has subsequently deteriorated.(48) Each of the 112 districts in the country is supposed to have a district labor officer responsible for addressing all labor issues, including child labor. There are conflicting estimates of the total number of district labor officers; however, the highest estimate is 49 officers countrywide.(49) Funding and logistical support for district labor officers is inadequate, and some officers are responsible for additional non-labor duties.(6, 49)

Comprehensive information on labor inspections is not available, but labor officials in some districts report conducting about 20 general inspections per year. This level of inspection is inadequate given the size of the country but lack of funding prohibits a sufficient number of inspections.(49) Information is unavailable on the number of child labor law violations and penalties issued. Labor officials participated in a two-day training on assisting women and child laborers to access justice.(49)

A source indicates that Uganda is in the process of developing a more comprehensive inspection program that involves all relevant public sector agencies.(51)

Criminal Law Enforcement

The Uganda Police Force's (UPF) Child and Family Protection Unit (CFPU) has about 500 officers throughout the country who handle child abuse, including child labor, complaints.(49)

Information was not available on the exact number of child labor complaints or investigations during the reporting period. The CFPU lacks sufficient resources to fully carry out its mandate.(49)

Uganda

SIGNIFICANT ADVANCEMENT

The Anti-Human Trafficking National Taskforce trained 100 immigration officers to identify potential trafficking victims during the reporting period. All 300 immigration officers have now received training on trafficking.(28) UNODC trained the Anti-Human Trafficking National Taskforce on investigation techniques. IOM and the National Coordinator of the Anti-Human Trafficking National Taskforce trained over 30 police, immigration, and Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (MGLSD) officials on providing assistance to child victims of trafficking. (28) In addition, IOM trained 15 officials from the Directorate of Public Prosecution, the National Taskforce, and the Police's Special Investigations Unit on investigations and prosecuting trafficking suspects. The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act has yet to be integrated into the general police training curriculum.(28) Training on other worst forms of child labor appears to be insufficient.(49)

Uganda registered 236 male and 243 female child victims of trafficking.(52) Fifty-six defendants were taken to court for new cases during the year and four people were convicted of trafficking crimes. Two of the parties were convicted for attempting to take a baby out of the country illegally.(28) The parties each paid a fine of \$485 in lieu of imprisonment. During the year, the government also arrested three people in eastern Uganda suspected of holding four girls for sexual exploitation.(28) The three defendants were on trial during the reporting period. In addition, the government arrested 56 suspected illegal labor recruiters.(28) A Chinese national accused of trafficking two girls for sexual exploitation was released on bail during the year and fled the country; an international warrant has been issued for his arrest.(28)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Steering Committee (NSC) on the Elimination of Child Labor	Coordinate child labor issues and implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2012/2013-2016/2017). Led by the MGLSD with representation from several ministries and trade unions, development agencies, civil society, and media houses.(12)
Stop Child Labor Partners Forum	Coordinate, monitor, and evaluate child-related program and policies in Uganda. Led by the National Council for Children (NCC), representatives come from several ministries, CPFU, and civil society groups.(12)
Anti-Human Trafficking National Taskforce	Coordinate anti-trafficking efforts among government ministries, draft policy, implement public information campaigns, and establish a database for trafficking cases. Led by MIA with 30-member representation from several ministries and government directorates, UPF, Interpol, and other security organizations.(12, 28) Standard Operating Procedures outline the responsibilities of various stakeholders.(12, 28)
National Child Protection Working Group	Address child protection issues. Led by MGLSD with participation from various ministries and civil society.(12)

In 2013, all of Uganda's coordinating mechanisms for child labor met regularly. The Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce met nearly every month, and the National Steering Committee (NSC) on the Elimination of Child Labor, Stop Child Labor Partners Forum, and National Child Protection Working Group met quarterly.(12)

In 2012, Uganda established a Coordination Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (COCTIP) and Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce.(28, 53) The COCTIP Office is supposed to draft policy, implement public information campaigns, and manage a database on trafficking cases; however, it is not yet operational and serves primarily as a coordinating center.(4, 28, 50, 53)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

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

Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
NAP for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2012/2013–2016/2017)	Aims to reduce the worst forms of child labor in Uganda by 2017 by increasing enrollment and completion of primary education; increasing access to social protection and assistance by households; increasing public awareness; strengthening the legal and policy framework; withdrawing, rehabilitating, and integrating working children; and enhancing tripartite collaboration.(15)
National awareness strategy on trafficking†	Developed during the year as a result of a training conducted by IOM and the National Coordinator of the Anti-Human Trafficking National Taskforce for government officials from intelligence agencies and the Justice, Law, and Order sector.(28)
Decent Work Country Program (2013–2017)	Outlines strategies for promoting decent work in Uganda. Priorities include youth employment and improved social protection for both formal and informal workers.(54) Includes a focus on prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labor.(54)
National Development Plan (2010/2011–2014/2015)	Outlines Uganda's development priorities and implementation strategies. Includes an objective to promote and empower artisanal and small scale miners, in part by training mining communities on child labor issues and enhancing monitoring of child labor in the mining industry. Addresses increasing household incomes and the availability and quality of gainful employment and access to social services.(55)
National Education Development Plan (2004–2015)*	Supports expansion of the basic education system to include complementary programs for disadvantaged children and youth.(56)
Skilling Uganda (2011–2020)*	Strategic plan for business, technical, and vocational education and training. Aims include providing vocational training to youth who drop-out of school.(57)
UNDAF Uganda (2010–2014)*	Aims to improve the situation of vulnerable populations through sustainable livelihoods and access to quality social services.(58)
Implementation Plan for the Amnesty Act of 2000 (2013–2015) †	Published during the year, the plan continues activities to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate former LRA rebels, including child soldiers. Implemented by the Uganda Amnesty Commission along with other government agencies, (28)

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

† Policy was launched during the reporting period.

The National Anti-Trafficking Taskforce has drafted a national action plan to combat trafficking; the plan is in the final stages of review. The plan aims to prevent trafficking, increase prosecutions, and improve coordination and services. (59)

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

In 2013, the Government of Uganda participated in and provided funding for programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Skilling Uganda*	Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) program that provides vocational training to youth who drop-out of school. During the reporting period, the World Bank contributed \$75 million, OPEC contributed \$25.5 million, and Saudi Arabia contributed \$13.5 million.(12, 57) Government will improve 26 vocational schools with these funds.(12)
Uganda Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE)*‡	MGLSD program that provides direct income support of about \$8 a month to poor and vulnerable households in 14 pilot districts located in Central, Northern, and Western Uganda. Supported by donors in the amount of approximately \$49 million.(12) Government has provided about \$2.4m in office space, equipment, and staff and has also released \$800,000 in funding for the program. During the year, 104,000 people received program benefits.(59)
Coordinated Response to Human Trafficking in Uganda†	IOM project that provides support to children trafficked from Karamoja region for exploitive labor on streets in urban areas of Uganda and builds capacity of services providers in Karamoja and elsewhere in Uganda.(53) Provided assistance to 77 girls and 55 boys trafficked internally from Karamoja.(28, 53) During the year, the program, together with the government, launched a Web site to raise awareness about trafficking issues in Uganda and provide information on laws and government activities. The Web site helps link trafficking victims to appropriate contacts.(28, 53)

Uganda

SIGNIFICANT ADVANCEMENT

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor (cont)

Program	Description
Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL)	Program focused on child protection, including protection from sexual exploitation, trafficking, and labor, that provides rehabilitation and livelihoods skills training to victims. Services provided at five drop in centers and outreach posts in Kampala slum, one drop-in center in Kitega, Mukono District, and one rehabilitation transit center at Masooli in Wakiso District.(60)
Uganda Women's Effort to Save Orphans (UWESO)	Provides shelter and counseling to trafficking victims under the age of 18.(28)
Strengthening the evidence base on child labour through expanded data collection, data analysis, and research-based global reports	\$5,028,453 million USDOL-funded, 4.5-year project implemented by the ILO to increase statistical information and research for improved policy and program formulation on child labor. With support of the project, the Government published the National Labor Force and Child Activities Survey 2011/12 during the reporting period.(11, 61) The survey is the first comprehensive national survey on child labor in Uganda and includes detailed information on the activities of children in the country.(11)
Combating Child Labor through Education‡	MOES three-hour after school education program in areas where children are unable to attend school for a full day. Program collaborates with MGLSD and received support from ILO and the Dutch government.(12) Schools receive some funding from district budgets.(12)
Global Action Program on Child Labor Issues Project	USDOL-funded project implemented by the ILO in approximately 40 countries to support the priorities of the Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor by 2016 established by the Hague Global Child Labor Conference in 2010. Aims to improve the evidence base on child labor through data collection and research in Uganda.(62)
Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce (CLEAR) Child Labor Project†	USDOL-funded capacity building project implemented by the ILO in at least 10 countries to build local and national capacity of the Government to address child labor. Aims to build local and national capacity of the Government to address child labor by improving legislation addressing child labor issues, including by bringing local or national laws into compliance with international standards; improve monitoring and enforcement of laws and policies related to child labor; and develop, validate, adopt, and implement a NAP on the elimination of child labor in Uganda.(63)
African Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative(AYEDI)†	\$3 million USDOL-funded, 4-year project awarded in 2013 and implemented by World Education, Inc. to address exploitative labor among youth under the age of 18. The project will provide training to youth to help them develop marketable skills and serve as civic leaders in their communities.(64, 65)
Youth Venture Fund‡*	Government program aimed at reducing youth unemployment.(28)

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

† Program was launched during the reporting period.

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Uganda.

In 2013, the government carried out a number of activities to raise awareness about trafficking in Uganda. The National Coordinator of the Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce made regular contributions to media pieces on trafficking and spoke with target audiences, including youth groups, and Taskforce worked with NGOs to develop awareness raising campaigns.(28) The CPFU held regular discussions with secondary school students about commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor. Together with the IOM, the government screened an anti-trafficking movie and the National Theatre and is continuing to use the film for sensitization and discussion.(28)

The UPDF rescued 26 children between the ages of three and thirteen who were allegedly in training for ADF rebel activity in the DRC on Buvuma Island in Lake Victoria. The children were taken to a rehabilitation shelter run by the Ugandan Youth Development Link (UYDEL).(28) With IOM assistance, the National Taskforce and UPF assisted some victims of trafficking with their return home, including through provision of temporary shelters for children. The government's anti-trafficking budget is small, and the country is dependent on agency and donor contributions for its activities.(28) Funds for assistance to trafficking victims come primarily from the IOM and NGOs.(28)

Although Uganda has programs that address child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Uganda (Table 9).

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

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Laws	Ratify the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons.	2013
	Amend the Penal Code to ensure that boys are protected from being procured for commercial sexual exploitation, all clients are penalized, and children who are procured or offered for prostitution are protected from being treated as offenders.	2009 – 2013
	Adopt legislation that increases the age of compulsory education to 14 so that it is commensurate with the minimum age for work.	2009 – 2013
Enforcement	Establish an adequately resourced, staffed, and trained labor inspection system.	2013
	Collect and publishing data on child labor violations and inspections.	2013
	Integrate the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act into the police officer training curriculum.	2013
Coordination	Operationalize the Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (COCTIP) and increase funding for anti-trafficking efforts.	2013
Government Policies	Assess the impact that existing policies may have on addressing child labor.	2013
	Finalize and adopt the National Action Plan to combat trafficking.	2013
Social Programs	Take additional steps to ensure that all children are able to attend school regardless of their ability to pay school fees and other related costs.	2012 – 2013
	Assess the impact that existing social programs may have on addressing child labor.	2013
	Increase funding and services for trafficking victims.	2013
	Expand social programs to target children involved in the worst forms of child labor, particularly in agriculture and armed conflict.	2009 – 2013

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