

# Morocco

The Government of Morocco passed a new decree expanding the list of hazardous occupations prohibited for minors as a means to combat the worst forms of child labor. However, many children continue to engage in dangerous work, particularly in agriculture and domestic service, some under conditions of involuntary servitude. Continuing legislative and enforcement gaps leave these children unprotected.

## Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	4.5*
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	82.9
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable

\* Population of working children: 150,178



## Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Morocco<sup>3995</sup> are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, mostly in agriculture.<sup>3996</sup> Unsafe activities in agriculture commonly include using dangerous machinery and tools, carrying heavy loads and applying harmful pesticides.

Young girls are sent to work as live-in domestic servants, many before they reach age 10.<sup>3997</sup> Parents often sell their daughters or receive payment of wages in exchange for their daughters' servitude.<sup>3998</sup> These *petites bonnes* ("little maids") often face conditions of involuntary servitude, including long hours without breaks, physical, verbal and sexual abuse, withheld wages and even restrictions on their movement.<sup>3999</sup> Frequently, they are sent from rural villages to more urban areas and are unable to contact their families or make their way home.<sup>4000</sup> Most *petites bonnes* are denied an education, and illiteracy rates are especially high among this population.<sup>4001</sup>

Children also work in automobile repair, carpentry and construction, where they may use

dangerous tools and equipment and face exposure to chemicals, dust and high levels of noise.<sup>4002</sup> Children may also work cutting trees, tanning hides and fishing.<sup>4003</sup> Fishing exposes children to risks such as drowning. Children reportedly work with artisans, producing handicrafts, textiles and carpets.<sup>4004</sup> They are often sent to be artisan apprentices before reaching age 12.<sup>4005</sup> Some boys are subject to involuntary servitude as apprentices for mechanics and artisans and in the construction industry.<sup>4006</sup>






Street children are an ongoing concern, with thousands of children on the streets of Casablanca, Marrakech, Fès and Mèknes.<sup>4007</sup> They engage in diverse forms of work, including selling cigarettes, begging, shining shoes, washing cars and working as porters and packers in ports.<sup>4008</sup> In general, children living and working on the streets face a high risk of engaging in illicit activities, including sexual exploitation, violence and drug abuse.<sup>4009</sup>

Some children are subject to commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>4010</sup> Child prostitution has been reported principally in the cities of Azrou, Beni Mellal and Mèknes, but also in Tangier, Agadir,

Marrakech, Rabat and Casablanca.<sup>4011</sup> Former child domestic servants are especially likely to engage in prostitution as they frequently end up on the streets once they escape their domestic employer.<sup>4012</sup> Boys and girls are exploited for sex tourism, especially in Tangiers, Agadir, Marrakech and El Hajeb, popular tourist sites that attract customers from the Persian Gulf and Europe.<sup>4013</sup> Children are also trafficked to countries in the Middle East and Europe for forced labor, commercial sexual exploitation and other illicit activities.<sup>4014</sup>

### Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Labor Code of 2004 establishes the minimum age for employment 15 and limits the number of hours that children younger than age 16 can work.<sup>4015</sup> However, the Labor Code makes exceptions for minors to work beyond nighttime hourly restrictions in seasonal or time-sensitive agricultural activities.<sup>4016</sup>

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	No
	Minimum Age for Work	15
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	15
	Free Public Education	Yes

The Labor Code does not apply to those who work independently, for businesses with less than five

employees or in private residences, thus excluding domestic servants from the Labor Code.<sup>4017</sup> The draft domestic worker's bill has not yet been passed.<sup>4018</sup>

During the reporting period, the Government issued Decree No. 2.10.183 which refines and expands the list of hazardous occupations prohibited for children younger than age 18 to better protect minors from dangerous activities.<sup>4019</sup> The list addresses some work in agriculture, including hazards such as use of pesticides and sharp blades. Working in tanneries and slaughtering animals is also prohibited.<sup>4020</sup> The Labor Code also prohibits some hazardous activities for children younger than age 18, including work in underground mines.<sup>4021</sup>

Forced or compulsory child labor is prohibited in the Labor Code and Penal Code.<sup>4022</sup>

The commercial sexual exploitation of children, including pornography and prostitution, is also prohibited under the Penal Code.<sup>4023</sup> An amendment to the Penal Code forbids sex tourism.<sup>4024</sup>

Morocco does not have a specific trafficking in persons law, but child trafficking can be prosecuted using articles from the Penal Code and Immigration Law.<sup>4025</sup>

Education is free and compulsory for children ages 6 to 15.<sup>4026</sup>

The minimum age for voluntary military recruitment is 18, and there is no military conscription.<sup>4027</sup>

### Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Ministry of Social Development, Family and Solidarity (MOSDFS) coordinates child labor efforts and oversees the National Plan of Action for Children (PANE) in cooperation with other ministries.<sup>4028</sup>

The Ministry of Employment and Professional Training (MOEPT) enforces the Labor Code and implements child labor laws.<sup>4029</sup> The MOEPT Director of Work heads the Child Labor Task Force to coordinate this effort.<sup>4030</sup>

MOEPT employs 420 general labor inspectors nationwide, all of whom have received training on child labor issues.<sup>4031</sup> One inspector in each of the 45 inspectorate offices concentrates on children's issues and receives up to 14 weeks of specialized training on child labor.<sup>4032</sup> In the first six months of 2010, labor inspectors filed 877 reports on the inspection of alleged incidents of child labor, issued 142 formal warnings and imposed 45 fines to employers.<sup>4033</sup>

The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for enforcing the Penal Code's prohibitions on prostitution and trafficking.<sup>4034</sup> In addition, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) prosecutes criminal offenses, such as commercial sexual exploitation of children and child trafficking.<sup>4035</sup> According to the most recent available statistics, in 2009, there were 80 people prosecuted for facilitating the prostitution of a minor, and 12 individuals prosecuted for sexual exploitation for profit.<sup>4036</sup> Research did not reveal the sentences delivered to those convicted. MOJ reports that 10 foreigners were prosecuted in 2009 for crimes such as inciting a minor for prostitution and the violent rape of a minor, with sentences ranging from one month to two years in prison.<sup>4037</sup> In 2010, in a groundbreaking case, a woman was convicted of abuse of her child maid and sentenced to one year in prison.<sup>4038</sup>

### **Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor**

The Government, led by MOSDFS, is carrying out the broad PANE 2006-2015, which focuses on children's health, protection, participation and education. PANE includes the issue of child labor and pilot programs focusing on street children and domestic child labor.<sup>4039</sup>

The issue of child labor has been mainstreamed into Government policies and programs, such as the King's 2005 National Initiative for Human Development (NIHD) and the second phase NIHD launched in 2010. NIHD serves as a framework to reduce poverty through improved education and health facilities, access to electricity and drinking water, attention to the needs of girls and women and income and employment initiatives, such as microfinance. Reducing child labor is one of the goals of the initiative.<sup>4040</sup>

Many students, especially girls, do not have access to education for the compulsory 9 years.<sup>4041</sup> Middle and secondary schools are particularly scarce in rural areas. To address the issues of education access and quality, the Government is implementing the Emergency Plan (2009-2012) for education reform.<sup>4042</sup> The question of whether this policy has an impact on child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

### **Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor**

As part of PANE, Inqad, a national pilot program implemented through MOSDFS, is tasked with combating domestic child labor through judicial reform and cooperation with civil society.<sup>4043</sup> Inqad activities include national awareness-raising campaigns on the exploitation risks for domestic servants.<sup>4044</sup> MOSDFS is also piloting the INDIMAJ program, as set forth in PANE, to provide services to street children.<sup>4045</sup> Research did not identify the scale or results of these pilot programs.

Livelihood projects implemented under NIHD have resulted in improved employment, housing and access to education and medical services for Moroccans.<sup>4046</sup> Programs aimed at increasing school enrollment and reducing dropout rates include the Tayssir Program, focused on primary school reform, and the Iqtane Program, focused on secondary schools.<sup>4047</sup> The question of whether these projects' improvements in access

to education have had an impact on the worst forms of child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

During the reporting period, the Government participated in a 3-year, \$3 million project funded by USDOL to combat the worst forms of child labor through direct education services. The project, which ended in October 2010, withdrew or prevented 8,620 children from the worst forms of child labor.<sup>4048</sup> Children in rural areas accessed education through community schools and received housing in dormitories or transportation

to distant formal schools. The project developed a model for after-school tutoring for at-risk children and conducted a study of the effects of the tutoring program to encourage countrywide adoption of the model.<sup>4049</sup> Research has not identified whether the Government has adopted this model.

Although the Government of Morocco has participated in a number of programs to address some of the worst forms of child labor, research found no evidence that it has carried out programs specifically to assist children involved in agriculture.

**Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the reduction of the worst forms of child labor in Morocco:**

**IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:**

- Amend legislation to restrict nighttime work hours of children in seasonal or time-sensitive agricultural activities.
- Amend legislation to apply to children engaged in hazardous activities working in agriculture or businesses.
- Adopt legislation to protect domestic workers and to prevent children under the legal working age from domestic servitude.

**IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:**

- Provide all children ages 6 to 15 access to education.
- Assess the impact that existing educational reform policies may have on addressing child labor.

**IN THE AREA OF PROGRAMS:**

- Develop targeted programs to address children working in agriculture.
- Assess the impact that existing education and livelihoods programs may have on addressing child labor.

<sup>3995</sup> Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are based on UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity, School Attendance, and Combined Working and Studying Rates*, 2005-2011. Data on working children and school attendance are from 2003. Data on children combining working and schooling are from 2003. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. As a result, statistics and information on children's

work in general are reported in this section, which may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information on sources used, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" section of this report.

<sup>3996</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Morocco," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2010*, Washington, DC, April 8, 2011, 37; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/160470.pdf>.

<sup>3997</sup> Ibid. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and*

*Recommendations*, 2011, 358; available from [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_151556.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_151556.pdf).

<sup>3998</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2010: Morocco,” 37. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Report of the Committee of Experts*, 358.

<sup>3999</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Report of the Committee of Experts*, 358. See also Human Rights Watch, “Morocco: ‘Hidden’ Child Workers Face Abuse,” HRW, [online], December 21, 2005 [cited April 29, 2011]; available from [http://www.hrw.org/legacy/english/docs/2005/12/21/morocc12278\\_txt.htm](http://www.hrw.org/legacy/english/docs/2005/12/21/morocc12278_txt.htm).

<sup>4000</sup> Human Rights Watch, “Morocco: ‘Hidden’ Child Workers Face Abuse”. See also U.S. Department of State, “Morocco,” in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010*, Washington, DC, June 14, 2010; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/143187.pdf>.

<sup>4001</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Report of the Committee of Experts*, 358. See also Human Rights Watch, “Morocco: ‘Hidden’ Child Workers Face Abuse”.

<sup>4002</sup> Naoufel Cherkaoui, “Child Labour Blights Morocco Development”, Magharebia, [online], June 16, 2010 [cited April 29, 2011]; available from [http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en\\_GB/features/awi/features/2010/06/16/feature-01](http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/features/2010/06/16/feature-01).

<sup>4003</sup> Ibid. See also U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, January 27, 2011*, para 1.1.

<sup>4004</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2010: Morocco,” 37.

<sup>4005</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4006</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Morocco.”

<sup>4007</sup> Imane Belhaj, “Shelters for Morocco’s street children are a drop in an ocean”, Magharebia, [online], March 14, 2008 [cited April 29, 2011]; available from [http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en\\_GB/features/awi/reportage/2008/03/14/reportage-01](http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/reportage/2008/03/14/reportage-01).

<sup>4008</sup> International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN), “Street Children in Morocco: Analysis of the Situation,” *The Link* 15, no. 3 (Winter 2006); available from <http://www.ispcan.org/resource/resmgr/link/link15.3.english.pdf>. See also Belhaj, “Shelters for Morocco’s street children”.

<sup>4009</sup> International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN), “Street Children in Morocco.” See also Belhaj, “Shelters for Morocco’s street children”.

<sup>4010</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Morocco.”

<sup>4011</sup> U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, February 22, 2010*, 5. See also International Trade Union Confederation, *Internationally Recognised Core Labour Standards in Morocco: Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of Morocco (Geneva, 24 to 26 June 2009)*, Geneva, June 2009, 7; available from [http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/WTO\\_report\\_Morocco\\_Final\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/WTO_report_Morocco_Final_EN.pdf).

<sup>4012</sup> Maria Daif, “Reportage. Les Filles des Rues”, Telquel, [online], June 26, 2009 [cited May 2, 2011]; available from <http://www.telquel-online.com/163/sujet2.shtml>. See also l’Association Bayti, “Petites bonnes et filles des rues”, *Esclavage Moderne*, [online], [cited May 2, 2011]; available from [http://www.esclavagemoderne.org/img\\_doc/maroc\\_les\\_petites\\_bonnes.pdf](http://www.esclavagemoderne.org/img_doc/maroc_les_petites_bonnes.pdf).

<sup>4013</sup> U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, February 22, 2010*, 6. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Observation concerning Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Morocco (ratification: 2001) Published: 2010*, April 29, 2010; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/iloquery.htm>.

<sup>4014</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Morocco.”

<sup>4015</sup> Government of Morocco, *Le Nouveau Code de Travail*, (2004), articles 143, 172; available from <http://www.maroc.ma/NR/rdonlyres/9A951844-BCA6-4468-9EFD-7460E229E00F/0/codedetravail.pdf>.

<sup>4016</sup> Ibid., articles 172-173.

<sup>4017</sup> Ibid., article 4. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Observation concerning Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Morocco (ratification: 2000) Published: 2010*, March 4, 2011; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/pdconv.pl?host=status01&textbase=iloeng&document=11761&chapter=6&query=Morocco%40ref&highlight=&querytype=bool&context=0>. See also International Trade Union Confederation, *Internationally Recognised Core Labour Standards*.

<sup>4018</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request C182: Morocco (2010)*. See also Siham Ali, “Morocco pushes for law against gender abuse, child labour”, Magharebia, [online], October 20, 2010 [cited May 2, 2011]; available from [http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en\\_GB/features/awi/features/2010/10/20/feature-02](http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/features/2010/10/20/feature-02). See also U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, January 27, 2011*.

<sup>4019</sup> Laila Zerrou, “Travail des enfants : La liste des travaux dangereux s’élargit”, *Aujourd’hui Le Maroc*, [online], December 27, 2010 [cited May 2, 2011]; available from <http://new.aujourdhui.ma/couverture-details79907.html>.

<sup>4020</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4021</sup> Government of Morocco, *Nouveau Code de Travail 2004*, articles 145-147, 179-181.

<sup>4022</sup> Ibid., article 10. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request C182: Morocco (2010)*.

<sup>4023</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 12 (1) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Concluding Observations: Morocco*, March 17, 2006, para 4; available from <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,CRC,CONCOBSERVATIONS,MAR,45377ed80,0.html>.

<sup>4024</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Individual Direct Request C182: Morocco (2010)*.

<sup>4025</sup> U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, February 23, 2011*, section 14 A-B.

<sup>4026</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Morocco,” in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2009*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2010, section 6; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/nea/136075.htm>.

<sup>4027</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, “Morocco,” in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, London, 2008; available from [http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country\\_pdfs/FINAL\\_2008\\_Global\\_Report.pdf](http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/FINAL_2008_Global_Report.pdf).

<sup>4028</sup> U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, January 27, 2011*, section 7.

<sup>4029</sup> Ibid., section 3.

<sup>4030</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4031</sup> Ibid., section 4.

<sup>4032</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4033</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4034</sup> Ibid., section 5.

<sup>4035</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4036</sup> U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, February 23, 2011*, section 14E.

<sup>4037</sup> U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, January 27, 2011*, section 5.6.

<sup>4038</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4039</sup> Ibid., section 7.1.

<sup>4040</sup> Ibid., section 7.2. See also Fadoua Jouti, “People First: The National Initiative for Human Development” (paper presented at the 1st EMUNI Research Souk 2009 (EMUNI Res 2009): The Euro-Mediterranean Student Research Multi-conference, Unity and Diversity of Euro-Mediterranean Identities, CITY, 2009); available from [http://www.emuni.si/Files//Denis/Conferences/EMUNI\\_ReS/2009/Proceeding/AlAkhawayn/Jouti.pdf](http://www.emuni.si/Files//Denis/Conferences/EMUNI_ReS/2009/Proceeding/AlAkhawayn/Jouti.pdf). See also Morocco Board, “Morocco Fights Poverty Through ‘Human Development’ Approach”,

MoroccoBoard.com, [online], August 3, 2010 [cited May 2, 2011]; available from <http://www.moroccoboard.com/projects/2395-morocco-fights-poverty-through-human-development-approach>.

<sup>4041</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2010: Morocco,” 31. See also The World Bank, “Kingdom of Morocco: Moving out of Poverty in Morocco”, Social and Economic Development Group Middle East and North Africa Region, [online], July 2007 [cited May 2, 2011]; available from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMOROCCO/Resources/Morocco.Moving.out.of.Poverty.DEF.ENG.pdf>. See also USAID, “Dormitories Keep Moroccan Girls in School”, [online], March 2009 [cited May 2, 2011]; available from [http://www.usaid.gov/press/frontlines/fl\\_mar09/p6\\_morocco.html](http://www.usaid.gov/press/frontlines/fl_mar09/p6_morocco.html).

<sup>4042</sup> Morocco Board, “Implementation of Morocco’s ‘Education Emergency program 2009-2012’”, MoroccoBoard.com, [online], June 8, 2010 [cited May 2, 2011]; available from <http://www.moroccoboard.com/projects/1104-the-world-bank-supports-the-implementation-of-moroccos-education-emergency-program-2009-2012>.

<sup>4043</sup> U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, January 27, 2011*, section 7.1. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Report of the Committee of Experts*, 359. See also Ministère du Développement Social de la Famille et de la Solidarite, *Programmes: INQAD*, [online] 2009 [cited May 4, 2011]; available from <http://www.social.gov.ma/fr/Index.aspx?mod=3&rub=14&srub=113>.

<sup>4044</sup> U.S. Consulate- Casablanca, *reporting, January 27, 2011*, section 7.1. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Report of the Committee of Experts*, 359. See also Ministère du Développement Social de la Famille et de la Solidarite, *Programmes: INQAD*.

<sup>4045</sup> Ministère du Développement Social de la Famille et de la Solidarite, *Programmes: INDIMAJ*, [online] 2009 [cited May 4, 2011]; available from <http://www.social.gov.ma/fr/Index.aspx?mod=3&rub=14&srub=112>.

<sup>4046</sup> CIA, *The World Factbook: Morocco*, [online] April 25, 2011 [cited May 4, 2011]; available from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mo.html>. See also Jouti, “People First: The National Initiative for Human Development”. See also Morocco Board, “Morocco Fights Poverty Through ‘Human Development’ Approach”.

<sup>4047</sup> Management Systems International, *Combating Child Labor through Education in Morocco (Project Dima Adros)*, Final Technical Progress Report, Rabat, February 2011, section V.

<sup>4048</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4049</sup> Ibid.