

# Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor (CLEAR II) Project in Panama

## Overview

Implemented by Winrock International and partners Lawyers Without Borders (LWOB) and Verité, CLEAR II is a global four-year project funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) that works with governments and provides technical assistance to support a global reduction in child labor. Collaborating with host governments, CLEAR II is working to bring about meaningful reductions in child labor in Panama, Jamaica, Belize, Burkina Faso, Nepal, Liberia, and Honduras. Implementing targeted activities, CLEAR II partners with governments to support their goals to implement actions described in the USDOL's most recent child labor report. CLEAR II's four focus areas include: legislation, monitoring and enforcement, national plans of action and policies and social programs.

## CLEAR II in Panama

Panama has made significant advances towards eliminating the worst forms of child labor according to the USDOL's 2016 *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*. The Panamanian government has updated the list of hazardous employment for children, signed agreements with other countries to address child labor, and ratified key UN conventions and the ILO Protocol to the Forced Labor Convention. Additionally, Panama's National Institute of Statistics conducts a national child labor survey bi-annually.

The Government of Panama has demonstrated commitment to closing gaps in child labor prevention and enforcement. At the 4th Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor in November 2017, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Labor and Labor Development (MITRADEL) pledged that Panama will increase efforts to achieve Goal 8.7 to eradicate forced labor, end modern slavery, and secure the elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor. This commitment includes incorporating child labor issues into the national strategy and the work of local governments and civil society organizations. The country also pledged to implement mechanisms for monitoring the results of these actions.

To identify activities that will support Panama's efforts to eradicate child labor, CLEAR II has consulted with MITRADEL, civil society stakeholders, and private sector representatives. In collaboration with these stakeholders, CLEAR II in Panama will work to fulfill the following intermediate objectives:

1. Improvements in monitoring and enforcement of laws and policies related to child labor;
2. Strengthening of social programs, policies, and/or services that address child labor, including the Worst Forms of Child Labor.

## Project Activities in Panama

### Development of Training Curriculum on Child Labor for Labor Inspectors

Training on child labor gives labor inspectors the skills to identify child labor, interview youth, and manage the enforcement of child labor laws. In Panama, CLEAR II will build on MITRADEL's child labor training initiatives to date to develop a curriculum on child labor specific inspection capacities tailored to the needs identified by inspectors. CLEAR II will support the adoption of the curriculum by training inspectors who will use the curriculum to train others on child labor issues, as well as work with MITRADEL to develop training plans to mainstream child labor training for future labor inspectors.

### Support Coordination between Child Labor Stakeholders

To develop a coordination plan to address child labor, CLEAR II plans to engage with enforcement agencies, private sector representatives, and other stakeholders to sensitize them on collaboration opportunities. The project will also support existing

Panamanian coffee producer efforts to develop a code of conduct by promoting coordination and discussion with MITRADEL and other key government stakeholders to synchronize roles and responsibilities in addressing child labor in the coffee sector.

### Technical Assistance for the Committee on Child Labor and the Protection of Working Adolescents (CETIPPAT)

CETIPPAT serves as a coordinating body between child labor stakeholders implementing the Hoja de Ruta (national plan) to end child labor. CLEAR II will support CETIPPAT's efforts by providing child labor training for CETIPPAT members, as well as holding workshops for line ministry members to develop strategic plans, policies, and budgets for implementation of the Hoja de Ruta.

### Technical Assistance for Increased Child Labor Awareness & Decent Work for Adolescents

Panama has multiple private sector certifications and youth employment programs that help prevent child labor and raise awareness of opportunities to employ adolescent workers. CLEAR II will collaborate with CEITPPAT to identify avenues for coordination between ministries, nongovernmental organizations, and companies to integrate child labor and decent work for adolescents into their work. Through meetings and workshops, CLEAR II intends to assist in the development of a coordination plan between these entities.

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