



DEVATOP CENTRE FOR
AFRICA DEVELOPMENT



**A MAPPING REPORT
OF
LEGAL FRAMEWORKS ON
CHILD DOMESTIC WORK
AND FINANCE IN LAGOS
STATE, NIGERIA**

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Executive Summary

This report presents a comprehensive analysis of the legal and regulatory frameworks, policies, guidelines, and financial mechanisms related to child domestic work in Lagos State. The study is conducted under the Exploitative Child Domestic Work Project, aiming to identify gaps, strengths, and areas for improvement in addressing child domestic labour issues in the state.

Introduction

Exploitative Child domestic work (ECDW) remains a critical social issue in the world, Africa and Nigeria, particularly in Lagos State due to several factors militating against proper and adequate care and upbringing of children in Lagos State.

Exploitative child domestic work is fuelled by poverty and limited opportunities, families in Lagos, particularly those migrating from rural areas, often view child domestic work as a desperate escape route. Children, as young as eight or ten, are entrusted to strangers, their innocence traded for promises of education and a better life. However, these promises are rarely fulfilled as these children end up trapped in a relentless cycle of demanding tasks like cooking, cleaning, and caring for infants—their days blurring into an endless cycle of servitude. The consequences of this exploitation are profound. Education, a fundamental right, becomes a distant dream. Childhood, a tapestry meant to be woven with play and learning, is shredded by exhaustion and fear. Physical and emotional abuse are pervasive, leaving invisible scars that fester into adulthood. Stolen innocence haunts these children, casting a chilling shadow on their personal development and prospects.

Objectives

The primary purpose of this mapping activity is to systematically evaluate and analyze the existing legal and regulatory frameworks, policies, guidelines, and financial mechanisms relevant to CDW in Lagos. It seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the legal and regulatory landscape related to CDW in Lagos, with a focus on identifying areas for improvement and presenting actionable recommendations. It is intended to facilitate informed decision-making, policy reform, and advocacy efforts that will ultimately enhance the lives of Child Domestic Workers in Lagos

Methodology

The mapping of the available legal frameworks on Child Domestic Work in Lagos state exercise adopted a qualitative approach with mixed methods to triangulate information obtained from different sources through interviews, focused group discussions, and desk review of available secondary information.

Primary information: Interviews were conducted in Lagos state with various stakeholders in government, civil society and the children organization such as Child Safeguarding Commission, Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos State etc to obtain information on the existing legal frameworks on Child Domestic Work in Lagos state as well as the implementation level of these legal provisions. The key informant interviews were conducted in early December 2023.



Secondary Information: The mapping utilized extensive desk review of credible and available information on Child Domestic Work in Lagos state to map the existing legal frameworks in relation to Child Domestic Work in Lagos state. A total of twelve legal frameworks were identified with provisions on child labour that encompasses child domestic work related provisions.

Findings

Based on the primary and secondary information obtained from the mapping exercise, the legal frameworks on Child Domestic Work are categorized into three:

1. International frameworks.
2. National legal frameworks
3. State legal frameworks

List of international legal frameworks

1. Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
2. Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
3. The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and,
4. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.
5. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
6. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
7. The African Charter on Human Rights and People's Rights
8. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRCW).1999.
9. International Labour Act

List of national legal frameworks

1. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Section 17 requires the State to direct its policies towards ensuring that:

- There are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons;
- Children and young persons are protected against any exploitation whatsoever, and against moral and material neglect;
- The evolution and promotion of family life is encouraged.

Section 18 requires the State to direct its policies towards ensuring that:

- There are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels;
- Illiteracy is eradicated;
- Where practicable, free, compulsory and universal primary, secondary and university education is provided;
- Where practicable, adult literacy programmes are provided.

2. The Children and Young Persons Law⁷ Cap 21 laws of Northern Nigeria, 1963

3. Child's Rights Act, 2003

- Forced or exploitative labour and the employment of children as domestic help outside their own home or family is prohibited (section 28)
 - Buying, selling, hiring or otherwise dealing in children for the purpose of begging, hawking, prostitution or for other unlawful immoral purposes are prohibited (section 30)
- Lagos assent to Child Right Law

4. Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP Act)

5. Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015 (ACJA)

6. Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administrative Act 2015

7. The National Priority Agenda (NPA) for Vulnerable Children in Nigeria.

8. Disability Act 2018

9. Cybercrime Act 2015

10. Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education Act 2004

11. Factories Acts, 1987

12. Penal code

13. National Policy on Child Labour

14. National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labour

15. Criminal Code

Chapter 21 of the Criminal Code contains specific provisions for the protection of the child and the preservation of the dignity of his person. The provisions cover the following areas of criminal behaviour towards children:

- Violence
- Sexual abuse
- Exploitation
- Witchcraft stigmatization

List of State legal frameworks

1. Lagos State Child's Rights Law, 2007
2. The Criminal Law Of Lagos State, 2011
3. Prevention Against Domestic Violence Law, 2007
4. The Family Court of Lagos State (Civil Procedure) Rules 2012
5. EO/BRF/005OF2014, Lagos State Sex Offenders Monitoring Programme And Mandated Reporting, 2014
6. Lagos state 2016 Child Safeguarding policy

Analysis of Legal Frameworks:

International Conventions and Policies:

1. International Labour Organization (ILO) Minimum Age Convention No. 138: Sets the minimum age for employment at 16, with 18 for hazardous work.
2. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC): Recognizes the right of every child to education, protection from exploitation, and a safe and healthy environment.
3. Nigeria's National Policy on Child Labour 2001: Outlines strategies to eliminate child labour, including domestic work.

National and State Legal Framework:

- **Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999:**
 - Guarantees the right to education for all children (Section 18(3)).
 - Prohibits child labor and exploitative practices (Section 28(1)).
- **Child Rights Act 2003:**
 - Defines a child as anyone below the age of 18 (Section 29).
 - Prohibits any form of hazardous or exploitative work for children (Section 26).
 - Mandates compulsory free and qualitative primary education for all children (Section 15).
- **Lagos State Child Protection Law 2011:**
 - Established the DVSRT AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEES as the Lagos State Child Protection Agency to safeguard children's rights.
 - Prohibits any act of violence, abandonment, or maltreatment of children.
 - Defines certain forms of domestic work as hazardous for children (Section 23).
- **Lagos State Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Law 2012:**
 - Criminalizes trafficking in persons, including children, for domestic servitude.

S/N	LAWS	RELEVANT SECTIONS	PROVISIONS	COMMENTS/GAPS IDENTIFIED
1.	CONSTITUTION OF FRN, 1999	Section 17. (3) (a-h) Exploitation of children and young persons.	Government policies must ensure that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Citizens have equal opportunity to adequate means of livelihood, and suitable employment, 2. Conditions at work are just and humane, with provision for leisure, social, religious, and cultural life, 3. The health, safety, and welfare of people in employment are not endangered or abused, 4. There are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons, 5. There is equal pay for equal work without any discrimination, 6. Children and young persons are protected from ALL forms of exploitation, and from moral and material neglect. 7. Public assistance is provided in all deserving cases. 8. The evolution and promotion of family life is encouraged. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The constitutional provisions are in general terms and not specific to Child Domestic work and related issues. 2. Similarly, there were no specific provisions to provide adequate resources to address issues of Child Domestic Work.
		Section 18 Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government policies must ensure equal and adequate educational opportunities at ALL levels. 2. Promote science and technology. 3. Eradicate illiteracy, and to this end, government shall as and when practicable provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free, compulsory, and universal primary education; • Free secondary education; • Free university education; and • Free adult literacy program 	
2.	CRIMINAL CODE ACT	Section 222A Seduction or prostitution of children	Any person who causes or encourages the seduction or prostitution of a girl under sixteen or allows her to enter or continue in the employment of any prostitute commits an offence punishable by 2 years imprisonment without an option of fine	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The age disparity in the criminal code should be harmonized with the Child Right Act of 18 years. 2. Different ages provided in the Criminal code are confusing. 3. The penalties are small compared to the impact of the offence on the child. The penalties should reflect the penalties in the Child Right Act.
		Section 222B Seduction, Children in Brothels	Allowing seduction, unlawful carnal knowledge, or prostitution of a person under 16 to reside in or frequent brothels is punishable by 6 months imprisonment or fine of N100,000 or both	

		Section 223 Procuration	Procuring a girl under the age of eighteen years for unlawful carnal knowledge or to become a common prostitute or to reside in a brothel in Nigeria or elsewhere is an offence punishable by 2 years imprisonment	
		Sections 302 & 340 Life and health of apprentices or servants	Endangering the life or health of apprentices or servants under the age of sixteen years is a felony (serious offence/crime) and attracts a maximum jail term of 3 years.	
		Section 341 Abandoning or exposing children to harm	Unlawful abandonment or exposure of a child under the age of 7 years, in a manner that causes any grievous harm, is a felony (serious offence/crime) which attracts a 5-year jail term without the option of fine.	
		Indecent Treatment of a Child.	135.—(1) Any person who unlawfully and indecently deals with a child is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for seven (7) years. (2) The term “deal with” includes doing any act which if done without consent would constitute an assault	
		Defilement of a Child	137. Any person who has sexual intercourse with a child is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for life	
		Householder Permitting Defilement of a Child on his Premises.	138. Any person who, being the owner or occupier of any premises, or having, acting or assisting in the management or control of any premises, induces or knowingly permits any child to resort to or be in or on such premises for the purpose of unlawful sexual intercourse or indecent dealing, is guilty of a felony and liable to imprisonment for fourteen (14) years.	
		Allowing a Child to be in a Brothel.	139.—(1) Any person having the custody, charge or care of a child who has attained the age of four (4) years and allows that child to reside in or frequent a brothel, shall be liable to a fine of Ninety Thousand Naira (N90,000.00) or to imprisonment for six (6) months or to both.	
		Abandoning or Exposing Children.	247. Any person who unlawfully abandons or exposes a child under the age of seven (7) years, in such a manner that any grievous harm is likely to be caused to him/her, is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for five (5) years.	
		Child Stealing.	275.—(1) Any person who, with intent to deprive any parent, guardian or other person who has the lawful care or charge of a child under the age of twelve years, of the possession of such child, or with intent to steal any article on or in custody of such child: (a) forcibly or fraudulently takes or entices away, or detains the child; or (b) receives or harbours the child, knowing him to have been taken or enticed away or detained,	

is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for fourteen (14) years. (2) It is a defence to a charge under this Section to prove that the defendant claimed in good faith a right to the possession of the child.

Desertion of Children

276. Any person who being the parent, guardian or other person having the lawful care or charge of a child under the age of twelve years, and being able to maintain such child, wilfully and without lawful or reasonable cause deserts the child and leaves him without means of support, is guilty of a misdemeanour, and is liable to a fine of One Hundred Thousand Naira (N100,000.00) without prejudice to the recovery of any cost any other person may have reasonably incurred with respect to the upkeep of the child.

3.

CHILD RIGHTS ACT 2003

Section 28
Forced or exploitative labour of a child.

a. A child must not be exposed to any form of forced or exploitative labour.
b. A child must not work in any capacity except where a family member engages him/her in light agricultural, horticultural, or domestic work.
c. No child should be allowed to lift, carry, or move any heavy thing that can likely affect his physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development.
d. (1) No child should be employed as a house-help outside his/her home or family environment.
(2) No child should be employed in industrial undertaking, except work done in technical schools or similar institutions.

Any person who is found guilty of these offenses is liable to fine or imprisonment for 5 years, or both. This applies to companies and their officials.

Some provisions are specific to Child Domestic Work.

Findings have shown ineffective implementation of these provisions to safeguard the child from Child Domestic Work.

Findings also indicate poor knowledge and awareness of these legal provisions.

Inadequate capacity and resources for a robust implementation of these legal provisions.

There is the absence of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to measure compliance to these legal provisions.

There is no mechanism for financing the implementation of the Child Right Act (CRA).

Section 29

Preserves Sections 58, 59, 60, 61, 62 and 63 of the Labour Act (cap198 LFN) which are reflected in the LABOUR ACT sections below

Section 277 defines a child as a person who has not attained the age of eighteen (18).

Children deserve to grow up in a happy, safe, healthy, productive, and enabling environment for learning and development. They are entitled to security and a decent upbringing and must be treated with utmost care and respect. They are both the present and the future. The boy and girl child of today are the men and women of tomorrow. They epitomize the next generation of lawyers, doctors, teachers, presidents, senators, leaders, parents, business owners etc.

			<p>Their ideas, skills and energies are very relevant for the attainment of sustainable development. Children, however, need special care and attention in social protection policy as they constitute the most vulnerable population worldwide and are naturally powerless at enforcing their rights</p>	
		<p>Section 30 Prohibits dealing in children for purpose of hawking, begging or prostitution etc.</p>	<p>1. Buying, selling, hiring, letting on hire, disposing, or unlawful possession of a child attracts a prison term of 10 years.</p> <p>2. The law prohibits using children for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Begging for alms, guiding beggars, and domestic or sexual labour b. Trafficking, sale, debt bondage, and forced or compulsory labour c. Street or brothel hawking d. Any purpose that denies him/her basic education e. Pornography, or any illicit sexual activity f. Illicit drug and Narcotics related activities. 	
		<p>Section 33 Other forms of exploitation are prohibited</p>	<p>Exploiting a child in any other way that is harmful to the child's welfare, attracts a fine of N500,000.00 or 5 years prison term, or both.</p>	
		<p>Section 34 Children in armed groups</p>	<p>No child should be recruited in the armed forces, or by any militant group or shall be engaged in military hostilities.</p>	
			<p>Sections 138 and 139 of the Child's Rights Law established for Lagos State a Court to be known and referred to as the Family Court at the level of the High Court of Lagos State and the level of the Magistrate Court of Lagos State to hear matters relating to children.</p>	
4.	LABOUR ACT, 2004	<p>Section 49 Contracts of apprenticeship</p>	<p>Any child between ages 12 & 16, can sign a contract of apprenticeship with the consent of his/her parents or guardian, and with the approval of a labour officer.</p> <p>The contract must be for the purpose of systematically acquiring a skill, or domestic training for not more than five years. Any person aged 16 years or above may choose an apprenticeship by himself for not more than 5 years.</p>	<p>1. The age disparity should be harmonized with the Child Rights Act provision of 18 years.</p> <p>2. The fines provided for these offenses should be reviewed upward.</p>
		<p>Section 53</p>	<p>(1) It is an offense to remove an apprentice between the ages of 12 and 16 years from Nigeria without the written approval of the Minister. This attracts a fine or one-year imprisonment, or both.</p>	

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		Section 53	(1) It is an offense to remove an apprentice between the ages of 12 and 16 years from Nigeria without the written approval of the Minister. This attracts a fine or one-year imprisonment, or both.	
		Section 59 Prohibited child work	<p>1. (a) No child must work in any capacity except where a family member engages him/her in light agricultural, horticultural, or domestic work</p> <p>(b) No child must engage in work that may be harmful or injurious.</p> <p>2. Children under the age of 15 years should not be employed in industrial work, except for work done in technical skills or similar institutions.</p> <p>3. Children under 14 years, except for those in domestic service, may be employed on a daily wage, on a day-to-day basis, so long as he returns to his parent's or guardian's house each night.</p> <p>4. (a) Any child below the age of Sixteen years (16) who is employed, must be able to return to his/her place of residence daily, except with the approval of a labour officer, or by a written contract</p> <p>5. Children below age fifteen (15) should not be employed to work underground; or to work on machines; or on public holidays</p> <p>6. A young person shall not be engaged in employment injurious to his health, dangerous, or immoral</p> <p>7. An employer of a young person under the age of 16 years shall discontinue the employment upon oral or written notice that such engagement is against the wishes of the parents or guardian of that child</p> <p>A child in employment should not be required to work for more than 4 hours at a time; neither should a child work for more than 8 hours in a day.</p>	
		Section 60 (1), (2), (3) Night Work	A child should not be employed to do night work, unless he/she is over sixteen years; and the work is such as is carried on day and night, or in an emergency.	

		Section 61 Child labour in Ships	Young persons below the age of fifteen years (15) should not be employed in a ship, except for the purpose of schooling, or training, and under the supervision of a public officer or family member(s), and with a certificate signed by a medical practitioner.	
		Sector 62 Register of young employees	A register of young persons must be kept in any organization where children work; with detailed information about the young people in that organization, which must be open for inspection by Labour officers	
		Section 63 Minister's powers	The Minister in charge of Labour affairs can make any additional regulations as he deems fit regarding the employment and care of young persons	
		Section 64 Offences	Liability for contravention of Sections 59 to 62 attracts a fine.	
		Section 65 Minister's powers	The Minister in charge of Labour affairs can make any regulations concerning the employment of women and young persons as domestic servants.	
5.	FACTORIES ACTS, 1987	Section 26, Sub-sections (8) and (9) Children should not operate machines	No child should be given the responsibility to use any lifting machine driven by mechanical power or to give signals to the operator of such machines.	
6.	Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administrative Act 2015	Section 13 Child Trafficking can be established whether the 'means' of trafficking is present or not Consent of a child victim of trafficking is not a defence	The act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, receiving, or harbouring a person who is under 18 years for purpose of exploitation shows that trafficking has taken place and attracts a fine and 2 years' imprisonment. The Victim's "consent" is not a defence to Trafficking in persons It does not matter whether a victim is in agreement or approved of the act, as long as force, fraud, deception, and other means of trafficking was used. And if the victim is a child, consent is absolutely immaterial. No one can truly give his consent to be exploited.	The fines should be reviewed upward to 20 years imprisonment.
		Section 14 Importation and exportation of person	It is an offense to import or export a person for forceful prostitution or sexual exploitation either in Nigeria or outside Nigeria. This attracts 5 years' imprisonment and a fine of N1,000,000.	

		Section 15 Procurement for Prostitution, Cross-border sexual exploitation, and bestiality	Anyone who moves a child from place to place for illicit intercourse or detains or keeps a person for prostitution or other sexual exploitation with people or with animals shall go to prison for 5 years and pay a fine of N500,000.	
		Section 16 Recruiting Children for Sexual Exploitation	Anyone who recruits children [persons under 18 years] for prostitution or sexual exploitation anywhere will go to prison for not less than 7 years and pay a fine of 1,000,000 Naira.	
		Section 17 Recruiting Children for Pornography and Brothels	Anybody who recruits or uses children [persons below 18 years] for pornography or for sexual exploitation in brothels shall go to prison for not less than 7 years and pay a fine of at least 1,000,000 Naira. He shall get one or more extra years in jail if the victim was drugged.	
		Section 18 Organising Foreign Trips to Promote Prostitution	Anyone who organises travels abroad to promote or encourage prostitution and exploitation of others will go to prison for not less than 7 years and pay a fine of at least 1,000,000 Naira.	
		Section 19 Trafficking persons for use in Armed Conflicts	Anyone who forcefully recruits a person to serve in an armed conflict will go to prison for a minimum of 7 years and pay a fine of at least 1,000,000 Naira.	
		Section 20 Recruiting Children for organ harvesting	Anybody who enlists, transports, delivers, and accommodates a child for removing his/her organs commits an offence which attracts 7 years imprisonment and N5, 000, 000 fine.	
		Section 22 Trafficking for Forced Labour	Anybody who exploits people for forced labour or allows any premises to be used for forced labour will go to prison for not less than 5 years and will pay a fine of at least 1,000,000 Naira.	
		Sections 23 Employment of a child as Domestic Workers is prohibited	<p>1. Anybody who employs, requests, transports, receives, keeps or gives out a child below the age of 12 as a domestic worker or house help; or employs, requests, transports, receives, keeps or gives out a child for injurious exploitative, hazardous work commits an offence and will go to prison for between 6 months to 7 years without the option of a fine.</p> <p>In addition, refusal to pay the child attracts 2 years imprisonment, defilement and infliction of bodily harm of the child attracts 3 years imprisonment</p>	

		Section 47 Witness Protection	<p>4. The court may make orders to hide the identity of a witness for safety reasons. Anyone who goes against such orders shall go to prison for 5 years or more.</p>	
		<p>Sections 61</p> <p>Treatment of Trafficked persons</p> <p>Non-discrimination</p> <p>Access to Health and Social Services</p> <p>Access to Embassy or Consulate Services</p> <p>Right to Safe Return</p> <p>Right to temporary Residence Visas</p> <p>Right to Privacy Stigmatization is Prohibited</p> <p>Facilities for Trafficked Persons</p> <p>Personal Safety</p>	<p>NAPTIP shall protect victim's rights and make sure that they enjoy the following rights:</p> <p>(A) Victims shall not suffer discrimination for any reason, including their status as victims of trafficking or being ex-sex workers.</p> <p>(B) Trafficked victims are entitled to receive adequate medical attention and other social welfare services.</p> <p>(C) Foreigners shall be allowed to enjoy the protection of their countries' embassy or diplomatic representative.</p> <p>(D) Trafficked Persons who want to return home, can do so safely if and when they choose to do so.</p> <p>(E) A trafficked person who has any pending legal matters shall be allowed to remain in Nigeria until it is concluded.</p> <p>(F) During investigation, intrusion into a victim's privacy or personal history shall be minimized.</p> <p>(G) the identity of a trafficked person shall be protected.</p> <p>(H) A victim's history shall not be used to discriminate against him or harm him or his family in any way, especially in his right to freedom of movement, marriage or search for employment.</p> <p>(I) NAPTIP shall maintain and rehabilitate facilities provided for the care of trafficked persons.</p> <p>(5) Victims and their families shall be protected from threats and attacks from traffickers or their associates, or persons in position of authority.</p>	
		Section 62 Non-Detention or prosecution of trafficked persons	<p>Trafficked victims are not suspects and so except the circumstances justify otherwise, they are not to be detained or prosecuted for offences related to being trafficked [e.g. the non- possession of valid travel documents or the use of false travel or other document].</p>	

		Section 63 Right of a victim to information, Legal Assistance and Counselling	Victims of trafficking shall receive all necessary information and counselling on their rights, and on court or administrative proceedings in a language they understand; and also helped to present their views or concerns in the case against their traffickers.	
		Section 64 Provision of Transit Shelters	NAPTIP shall have transit shelters in order to provide protection, help, counselling, rehabilitation and training for rescued victims and help them re-integrate into the society.	
		Section 65, Sub-section (3) Trafficked victims' right to civil claim	A trafficked Victim can institute a civil action against a Trafficker and any other person including a public officer who may have exploited or abused his person.	
7.	VAPP Act, 2015	Section 10 Deprivation of liberty	Anyone who deprives a person of his/her liberty for any purpose will be guilty of an offense, and is liable to a jail term of 2 years' imprisonment, or a fine of N500,000.00, or both. Persons who attempt to commits this offense, or who aids, abets, incites, or counsels another to commit the offense, or receives or assists another to commit same is liable to jail terms ranging from 1-3 years' imprisonment, or a fine.	The fines should be reviewed upward to 20 years imprisonment.
		Section 13 Forced Isolation or separating individuals	(1) Forcefully isolating or separating from his/her family and friend attracts a maximum jail term of 6 months' imprisonment, or a fine or both. (2,3, & 4) Persons who attempt to commit this offense, or who aid, abets, incite, or counsel, or receive or assists another to commit the offense, will also be liable. This attracts 3 months imprisonment, or a fine, or both.	
		Section 14 Emotional, verbal and psychological abuse	(1) Causing emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse on a person will attract a maximum term of 1-year imprisonment, or a fine or both. (2,3, & 4) Persons who attempt to commit this offense, or who aids abets, incite, or counsel, or receive or assist another to commit the offense, will also be liable. This attracts 6 months imprisonment, or a fine, or both.	
		Section 16 Child abandonment	Parents who fail to provide for their children, leaving them without a means of sustenance are guilty of an offense, and liable to a maximum of 3 years imprisonment, and a fine of N500,000.00, or both	

		Section 18 Intimidation	Anyone who intimidates another for any reason whatsoever, is guilty of an offense, and is liable to maximum of 1 year imprisonment, or a fine or both. Persons who attempt to commit this offense, or who aids, abets, incites, or counsels another to commit the offense, or receives or assists another to commit same will also be held liable.	
		Section 20 Harmful traditional practices	Carrying out harmful traditional practices on a child attracts a maximum term of 4 years' imprisonment, or fine of N500, 000.00, or both. Persons who attempt to commit this offense, or who aids, abets, incites, or counsels another to commit the offense, or receives or assists another to commit same will also be held liable.	
		Sections 21 & 22 Use of Substances in sexual exploitation	Administering a substance to overpower a child for Sexual abuse is liable to a sentence of life imprisonment without the option of fine. Any Persons who attempt to commits this offense, or who aids, abets, incites, or counsels another to commit the offense, or receives or assists another to commit same is also liable.	
		Section 38 Child victims	Victims of violence are entitled to specific rights including rehabilitation, material, medical, social and legal assistance	
8.	DISABILITY ACT 2018	Part 5, Section 16, Sub-section 1 (a), (b) and (c) Persons with disabilities	It is an offence punishable with a fine or 6 months imprisonment, to: 1. Employ, use or involve any person with disability in begging 2. Display persons with disabilities in public as a way of begging Using disability as a guise for begging.	The fines should be reviewed upward to 20 years imprisonment.
9.	CYBERCRIME ACT 2015	Section 23 Use of children in pornography	(3 C) It is an offence to recruit, induce, coerce, expose, or cause a child to participate in pornographic performances; or to profit from or otherwise exploit a child for such purposes. This attracts a maximum term of 10 years imprisonment or a fine of N15,000,000.00.	The fines should be reviewed upward to life imprisonment.

10.	COMPULSORY, FREE, UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION ACT 2004	Section 2 and 15 Right of a child to compulsory, free, universal basic education etc	<p>(1) Government at EVERY level to provide free, compulsory and universal basic education for every child of primary and secondary school age</p> <p>(2) Parents to ensure their children and ward complete primary to junior secondary education</p> <p>(3) Stakeholders at local governments to ensure that parents adhere to the provisions of section 2(2)</p> <p>(4) Contravention of section 2(2) by a parent attracts</p> <p>(a) reprimand on first conviction</p> <p>(b) fine or one-month imprisonment on second conviction or both</p> <p>fine of or two months imprisonment on subsequent conviction or both</p>	There is no enforcement mechanism provided as there are out of school children in Lagos state as a result of child domestic work.
		Section 4 Duty of a parent to ensure the education of his child.	(4) Every parent to ensure their child receives FULL TIME education by regular attendance at school	
11.	The National Priority Agenda (NPA) for Vulnerable Children in Nigeria	2013-2020	The NPA serves as a policy document, which committed the Nigerian government to guarantee that all children will be safe from abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence.	
12.	Executive Order (NO. EQ/AA08 OF 2016), Lagos State	Safeguarding and Child Protection Programme. The explicit and exclusive of this Order is to provide clear direction for reporting disclosures of abuse and commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to keep children safe and that child protection concerns are identified, referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child's wellbeing.	<p>It is hereby ordered by the Governor:</p> <p>1. That it shall be mandatory for all Lagos State Child-Centred institutions; schools, health facilities, orphanages and recreational centres to adopt a Child Protection Policy which ensures that the rights of children are safeguarded</p> <p>2. the Lagos State Safeguarding and Child Protection Programme shall apply to:</p> <p>(a) All State Government Organisations</p> <p>(b) All schools, child-centred structures, orphanages and children related institutions located in the State</p> <p>(c) All institutions and organisations in the state's public sector both formal and informal</p> <p>(d) All employers/employees and prospective employers/employees from the public sector in the state</p> <p>3. For the purpose of identifying abuse, the approach of all child centred institutions shall be guided by the following principles:</p>	

This order is also intended only to protect children from abuse and is not intended to and does not create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against Lagos State, its departments, agencies or entities, its officers, employers or agents or any other person.

(a) Overall wellbeing of the child;

(b) Best interest of the child;

(c) Consultation and transparency; and

(d) Early recognition and intervention

4. There shall be a designated officer who shall be the social worker or trained Child Protection Personnel with the key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the organization, disseminating information on issues relating to the welfare of children and the promotion of a safe environment for the child.

5. The Designated Officer shall also have the following responsibilities:

(a) Coordinate a system-wide response to child abuse and neglect

(b) Ensure audit and evaluation tools are in place to access child protection policy, processes and practice;

(c) Ensure regular audit of child protection practice;

(d) Access and provide resources required to support the programme and make these available for staff;


(e) Provide support and advice to staff regarding child abuse and neglect.

6. Failure of a Designated Officer to ensure the programme is adhered to as stipulated in paragraph 4 shall be regarded as gross misconduct and subjected to disciplinary action.

7. That every Lagos State Child Centred Institutions, which employs staff or volunteers to work with children, shall, ensure a consistent and thorough safe recruitment process of persons voluntary or paid who have direct or indirect contact with children in order to ensure that those recruited are suitable.

8. Should anyone believe that this Order is not being upheld, it shall be his or duty to report the matter to the attention of the Designated Officer at the earliest opportunity.

9. It shall be mandatory for all Lagos State Child Centred institutions to adopt the attached Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which ensures that the rights of children are safeguarded and adequately protected.



The Lagos State Child Protection Law Implementation Committee and the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team shall be on behalf of Lagos State government, jointly oversee the implementation of the Lagos State Safeguarding and Child Protection Programme and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Gaps and Inconsistencies

- Inadequate financing mechanisms to effectively implement the legal provisions on child domestic work in Lagos state.
- Lack of comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to assess implementation of the legal provisions against child domestic work.
- Ineffective implementation of the legal provisions by the stakeholders in Lagos state.
- Age ambiguity/inconsistency: The definition of "hazardous work" for children in domestic work varies, creating loopholes for exploitation.
- Enforcement challenges: Implementation and enforcement of existing laws are often weak, leaving children vulnerable.
- Lack of awareness: Many households and employers remain unaware of legal protections for children.
- Economic factors: Poverty and limited education opportunities drive parents to send their children into domestic work.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are targeted at addressing the issues of Child Domestic Work in Lagos state:

- 1.** There is a need to establish consistent funding mechanisms dedicated to effective implementation of the existing legal frameworks to reduce the rate of Child Domestic Work in Lagos state.
- 2.** Harmonize definitions: Clearly define "hazardous work" in domestic work and align national and state legislation.
- 3.** Improve state capacity to enforce existing legislation through adequate provision of resources and training for law enforcement and child protection agencies.
- 4.** Increase knowledge and awareness of the provisions of the key legal frameworks on the rights of a child especially against domestic work in Lagos state through public awareness campaigns about the dangers of child domestic work and children's rights.
- 5.** Address root causes: Invest in poverty reduction programs and educational opportunities for families.

6. Support rehabilitation: Provide education, vocational training, and psychosocial support to former child domestic workers.

Specific recommendations for DEVATOP

1. Establish a steering committee on Child Domestic Work in Lagos state to coordinate all other government and non-government actions against Child Domestic Work in Lagos state.
2. Carry out advocacy visits to key stakeholders in Lagos state to raise awareness on CDW.
3. Develop tailor-made training curriculum on CDW and build the capacity of stakeholders on the provisions of legal frameworks to protect children from CDW.

Conclusion

Addressing exploitative Child domestic work and protecting child domestic workers requires a multi-pronged approach. Mapping and understanding the existing legal framework are a crucial first step. However, sustained efforts are needed to harmonize definitions, strengthen enforcement, address root causes, and support rehabilitation to effectively protect children from this exploitative practice. Poverty alleviation programs must empower families, offering them viable alternatives to sending their children into servitude. Educational opportunities must be expanded and made accessible, equipping children with the tools to forge their destinies. Law enforcement and DVSRT AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEES established by the law must be strengthened, their boots resolutely placed on the ground, ensuring swift and effective intervention. Ultimately, the responsibility to address **exploitative child domestic work** and protect child domestic workers lies not just with the government and authorities, but with all the stakeholders including civil society organizations. We must raise our voices, demanding accountability, and action. As citizens, we must become vigilant watchdogs, reporting suspected exploitative cases and challenging social norms that perpetuate this exploitation. Every rescued child, every life rewoven with opportunity, is a testament to the collective will to create a society where childhood is cherished, not bartered. Lagos, the megacity pulsating with ambition, has the potential to become a beacon of hope, not just for itself but for the entire nation. Let us strive for a future where every child in Lagos, and indeed in the world, can bask in the sunshine of their rightful place – safe, educated, and free to dream.

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