

Côte d'Ivoire

Government Policies and Programs to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Côte d'Ivoire is one of nine countries participating in the ILO-IPEC project to combat the trafficking of children for exploitative labor in West and Central Africa, which is funded by USDOL.⁶⁸¹ In September 2000, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali signed a bilateral agreement to curb the trafficking of Malian children into Côte d'Ivoire.⁶⁸² The Government of Côte d'Ivoire is in discussions with Burkina Faso and Togo to establish similar agreements.⁶⁸³ In July 2001, the National Committee for Combating Trafficking and Exploitation of Children was created by presidential decree.⁶⁸⁴ The government has also undertaken several educational and training programs to discourage domestic trafficking⁶⁸⁵ and is now utilizing the police along the country's borders to stop international trafficking.⁶⁸⁶

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire has stated its support for efforts to combat exploitation of children in the country's cocoa sector. A program, funded by USDOL, will seek to withdraw children from hazardous work in this sector, provide income generation and economic alternatives, and promote education.⁶⁸⁷ In addition, the USAID-supported Sustainable Tree Crops Program is incorporating elements into its program and is coordinating with the USDOL-funded ILO-IPEC program to address child labor in the cocoa sector.⁶⁸⁸ The government has agreed to various surveys and studies on child labor and labor conditions in the cocoa sector funded by USAID,

⁶⁸¹ ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (Phase II): Country Annex IV: Côte d'Ivoire* (Geneva) [hereinafter *Combating the Trafficking of Children*] [fact sheet on file]. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (Phase II): Project Document*.

⁶⁸² U.S. Embassy—Abidjan, unclassified telegram no. 2176, June 2001 [hereinafter unclassified telegram 2176]. See also Ministry of Families, Women and Children, *Combating Trafficking and Economic Exploitation of Children in Côte d'Ivoire* (Abidjan, July 2001) [hereinafter *Trafficking and Economic Exploitation of Children*] [fact sheet on file].

⁶⁸³ Unclassified telegram 2176.

⁶⁸⁴ *Trafficking and Economic Exploitation of Children*.

⁶⁸⁵ Unclassified telegram 2176. See also *Trafficking and Economic Exploitation of Children*.

⁶⁸⁶ *Trafficking and Economic Exploitation of Children*.

⁶⁸⁷ The program will be coordinated by the National Project Advisory Committee established under the ILO-IPEC trafficking program. See ILO-IPEC, *Action to Combat Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labour in Commercial Agriculture in West Africa*, draft program document (Geneva, December 2001).

⁶⁸⁸ ILO-IPEC, *Action to Combat Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labour in Commercial Agriculture in West Africa*, program overview (December 2001) (Geneva, December 2001). See also *Trafficking in Persons: USAID's Response* (USAID, September 2001), 4.

USDOL, and the Chocolate Manufacturers' Association.⁶⁸⁹ A national child labor survey is also planned for 2002 in Côte d'Ivoire with technical assistance from ILO-IPEC's SIMPOC.⁶⁹⁰

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire allocates more than 40 percent of its budget to education⁶⁹¹ and has implemented a National Development Plan for Education, which calls for universal primary school education by 2010.⁶⁹²

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, UNICEF estimated that 40.3 percent of children between the ages of 5 and 14 in Côte d'Ivoire work.⁶⁹³ Children work on family farms or as vendors, carpenters, and automobile mechanics.⁶⁹⁴ They also work in restaurants and cafes, shine shoes, run errands, wash cars, and wash car windows.⁶⁹⁵ Children are reportedly trafficked from Côte d'Ivoire to African, European, and Middle Eastern countries.⁶⁹⁶ Children have also been trafficked within Côte d'Ivoire and into the country from Mali, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Togo to work as domestic servants, farm laborers, and indentured servants.⁶⁹⁷ These children are sometimes forced to work for owners of commercial farms harvesting cocoa, cotton, corn, rice, and pineapples.⁶⁹⁸ Other children are forced to work in the country's gold and diamond mines or in sweatshop conditions in small workshops.⁶⁹⁹ There have been reports of the trafficking of Nigerian girls into Côte d'Ivoire for the purpose of child prostitution.⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁸⁹ U.S. Embassy—Abidjan, unclassified telegram no. 3470, October 2001 [hereinafter unclassified telegram 3470]. See also Chocolate Manufacturers Association, *Protocol for the Growing and Processing of Cocoa Beans and Their Derivative Products in a Manner That Complies with ILO Convention 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor* [on file].

⁶⁹⁰ ILO-IPEC electronic correspondence on SIMPOC countries to USDOL official, January 18, 2001 [on file]. See also ILO-IPEC, *Child Labor Statistics: SIMPOC Countries*, at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/countries.htm> on 1/29/02.

⁶⁹¹ UN, Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention, Initial Reports of States Parties Due in 1993, Addendum, Côte d'Ivoire*, CRC/C/8/Add.41 (Geneva, April 2000) [hereinafter *Initial Reports of States Parties*], para. 168.

⁶⁹² UNICEF, *Enquête à Indicateurs Multiples - MICS2000: Rapport Final* (Abidjan, December 2000) [hereinafter *Indicateurs Multiples - MICS2000: Rapport Final*], 24, at http://www.childinfo.org/MICS2/natlMICSrepz/Ivory_Coast/mics2rap.pdf.

⁶⁹³ *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2* at <http://www.ucw-project.org>.

⁶⁹⁴ Unclassified telegram 3470. See also *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000—Côte d'Ivoire* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2001) [hereinafter *Country Reports 2000*], Section 6d, at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/af/index.cfm?docid=773>.

⁶⁹⁵ *Country Reports 2000* at Section 6f. See also unclassified telegram 3470.

⁶⁹⁶ U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report - Côte d'Ivoire*, June 2001.

⁶⁹⁷ Unclassified telegram 2176. See also *Country Reports 2000* at Section 6f.

⁶⁹⁸ Unclassified telegram 3470.

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁰ U.S. Embassy—Abidjan, unclassified telegram no. 177014, October 2001.

Primary education in Côte d'Ivoire is compulsory for children between the ages of 7 and 13.⁷⁰¹ Beginning in the 2001-2002 school year, tuition fees for primary school students are waived.⁷⁰² However, parents must still pay an annual fee of 2,600 FCFA (USD 3.50) for each child's enrollment in public secondary schools and a monthly fee of 3,000 FCFA (USD 4) for transporting their secondary school children.⁷⁰³ Parents also are responsible for buying books and school supplies.⁷⁰⁴ In 1996, the gross primary enrollment rate was 71.3 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 55.2 percent.⁷⁰⁵ A UNICEF study in 2000 indicated that 56.9 percent of Ivorian children ages 6 to 11 attend school and that 69.3 percent of children who enter Grade 1 actually reach Grade 5.⁷⁰⁶ There is a disparity in primary school attendance between children in urban areas (66.5 percent) and rural areas (48.5 percent), as well as between boys (61.4 percent) and girls (51.8 percent).⁷⁰⁷

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Code sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years and prohibits children under 18 years from working more than 12 consecutive hours or at night, unless working as an apprentice.⁷⁰⁸ Decree No. 96-204 also prohibits night work by children between 14 and 17 years, unless granted on exception by the Labor Inspectorate.⁷⁰⁹ The Minority Act requires parents or legal guardians to sign employment contracts on the behalf of children under 16 years of age and to serve as witnesses to the signing for children between the ages of 16 and 18.⁷¹⁰ The Labor Inspec-

⁷⁰¹ UNESCO, *Education Indicators: Statistical Yearbook, 1996*, at <http://esa.un.org/socdev/unyin/country3b.asp?countrycode=ci>. See also *Country Reports 2000* at Section 5.

⁷⁰² Unclassified telegram 3470.

⁷⁰³ Ibid. Currency conversion at <http://www.carosta.de/frames/convert.htm> on 1/29/02.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁵ *World Development Indicators 2001* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2001) [CD-ROM].

⁷⁰⁶ *Indicateurs Multiples - MICS2000: Rapport Final* at 27, 28. See also UNICEF, *Enquête à Indicateurs Multiples - MICS2000: Principaux Résultats* (Abidjan, November 2000), at http://www.childinfo.org/MICS2/natlMICSrepz/Ivory_Coast/Principaux_resultats.pdf.

⁷⁰⁷ *Indicateurs Multiples - MICS2000: Rapport Final* at 27.

⁷⁰⁸ Code du travail [hereinafter Code du travail], Titre II, Chapitre 2, Articles 22.2, 23.8, at <http://www.natlex.ilo.org/txt/F95CIV01.htm>.

⁷⁰⁹ Decree No. 96-204, as cited in unclassified telegram 3470. Employers found in violation of the night work prohibition are punishable with imprisonment from 10 days to two months and/or a fine ranging from 2,000 to 72,000 FCFA (USD 3 to 97). Currency conversion at <http://www.carosta.de/frames/convert.htm> on 1/29/02.

torate can require children to take a medical exam to ensure that they can undertake the work for which they are hired. If the child cannot perform the required tasks, the employer must move him/her to a suitable job, and if that is not possible, the contract must be cancelled.⁷¹¹ Decree No. 96-193 restricts children from working in bars, hotels, pawnshops, and second-hand clothing stores.⁷¹² Forced or compulsory labor is prohibited,⁷¹³ as is having sexual relations with a minor 15 years or younger.⁷¹⁴

The child labor laws in Côte d'Ivoire apply to all sectors and industries in the country, although the lack of government resources make them difficult to enforce in the informal sector.⁷¹⁵ Côte d'Ivoire has not ratified ILO Convention 138 or ILO Convention 182.⁷¹⁶

⁷¹⁰ Unclassified telegram 3470. See also *Initial Reports of States Parties* at para. 85.

⁷¹¹ Code du travail at Titre II, Chapitre 3, Article 23.9.

⁷¹² Unclassified telegram 3470.

⁷¹³ Code du travail, Dispositions Générales, Article 3.

⁷¹⁴ The penalty for statutory rape or the attempted rape of children age 15 or younger is imprisonment for 1 to 3 years and a fine of 100,000 to 1,000,000 FCFA (USD 135 to 1,351). Persons convicted of procuring a prostitute under age 21 may be imprisoned for 2 to 10 years. See *Country Reports 2000* at Section 5. See also *Initial Reports of States Parties* at 32. Currency conversion at <http://www.carosta.de/frames/convert.htm> on 1/29/02.

⁷¹⁵ Unclassified telegram 3470.

⁷¹⁶ The Ivorian Parliament passed ILO Convention 138 and ILO Convention 182 on January 3, 2002. See ILOLEX database: Côte d'Ivoire at <http://ilolex.olo.ch:1567>. See also Youssoufou Bamba, Ambassador of Côte d'Ivoire, letter to Cadbury International Limited official, January 22, 2002.

NOTE: Hard copies of all Web citations are on file.