

# Mali

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

The Government of Mali has been a member of ILO-IPEC since 1998.<sup>1586</sup> Since joining the program, Mali has cooperated with ILO-IPEC in launching direct interventions to assist children working in mines, in woodworking and metalworking, as mechanics, and girls working in service sector establishments and as domestic workers.<sup>1587</sup> In 1999 Mali joined eight other countries in an ILO-IPEC project funded by USDOL to address child trafficking for exploitative labor. In September 2001, the Malian and the Ivorian Governments signed a cooperative agreement to control cross-border trafficking, whereby the two countries agreed to strengthen and enforce child trafficking laws, raise awareness about trafficking, implement bilateral and national programs to combat child labor, identify child traffickers, and develop programs to address child labor and trafficking issues.<sup>1588</sup> Several efforts have been made to reduce child begging, including campaigns using school teachers and a vocational training program aimed at child beggars.<sup>1589</sup> The Government of Mali also plans to conduct a national child labor survey in 2004 with technical assistance from ILO-IPEC's SIMPOC.<sup>1590</sup>

The Government of Mali recently implemented a "Ten-Year Program for the Development of Education" that aims to establish recruitment and enrollment parity between boys and girls and improve the overall quality of education.<sup>1591</sup> Working with international donors, the government has also established programs to promote girls' education, to allow pregnant schoolgirls to continue their education, to introduce or revitalize school canteens in economically disadvantaged communities and to build and refurbish new schools and classrooms.<sup>1592</sup>

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<sup>1586</sup> Government of Mali, Ministry of Labor, *Etat d'Execution du Programme National de Lutte contre le Travail des Enfants au Mali* (Bamako: Ministere de l'Emploi de la Fonction Publique et du Travail, 2000).

<sup>1587</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1588</sup> Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of Mali and the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire to Control Cross-Border Trafficking of Children. *See also* ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (Phase II): Mali Country Annex* (Geneva, December 2000) [hereinafter *Combating the Trafficking of Children*].

<sup>1589</sup> *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Mali*, UN Document No. CRC/C/15/Add. 113, paras. 6, 33. (Geneva: United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, September 28, 1999) [hereinafter *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child*].

<sup>1590</sup> SIMPOC countries, electronic correspondence from ILO-IPEC to USDOL official, January 18, 2002. *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.

<sup>1591</sup> *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child*.

<sup>1592</sup> *Ibid.*

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 1999, the ILO estimated that 51.8 percent of children between the ages of 10 and 14 in Mali were working.<sup>1593</sup> Children work in the agricultural sector, in wood and metalworking, in mining and gold panning, as mechanics, and as domestic servants and street vendors in urban areas.<sup>1594</sup> In some cases, children work as street beggars at the urging of Koranic teachers who require students to beg before coming to school.<sup>1595</sup>

Mali is a source of trafficked children, most of whom are sold into forced labor in Cote d'Ivoire; for commercial coffee, cotton, and cocoa farms; or to work as domestic servants.<sup>1596</sup> Organized networks of traffickers, claiming to parents that they will provide paid employment for their children, reportedly sell the children to commercial farm owners for between 10,000 to 20,000 CFA (USD 14 to 27).<sup>1597</sup>

Primary education is compulsory and free through the sixth grade,<sup>1598</sup> but just 58 percent of school-age children receive an education (only 48 percent among girls).<sup>1599</sup> In 1997, the gross primary enrollment rate was 48.9 percent, and in 1995, the net primary enrollment rate was 31.3 percent.<sup>1600</sup> In 1996, the gross primary attendance rate was 41 percent and the net primary atten

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<sup>1593</sup> *World Development Indicators 2001* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2001) [hereinafter *World Development Indicators 2001*].

<sup>1594</sup> *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child*, para. 32. See also *Committee on Rights of the Child Begins Consideration of Report of Mali*, UN Document No. HR/CRC/99/48 (Geneva: United Nations Committee on Rights of the Child, September 28, 1999). See also Government of Mali, Ministry of Labor, *Etat d'Execution du Programme National de Lutte contre le Travail des Enfants au Mali* (Bamako: Ministere de l'Emploi de la Fonction Publique et du Travail, 2000). See also Electronic Correspondence from Mr. Claude Sama Tounkara, Embassy of the Republic of Mali, to USDOL Official, February 10, 1998.

<sup>1595</sup> *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child* at para. 33.

<sup>1596</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report*, July 2001, Mali. See also *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000—Mali* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2001) [hereinafter *Country Reports 2000*], 6f, at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/af/index.cfm?docid=853>. According to a national report, 1,500 children between the ages of 7 and 10 years were living in work encampments in Côte d'Ivoire. See Sory Ibrahim Guindo, "Rapport d' etape sur le trafic d'enfants maliens: Plus de 1,500 mineurs recensés en Côte d'Ivoire," *Liberté*, December 21, 1998.

<sup>1597</sup> *Country Reports 2000* at 6f.

<sup>1598</sup> *Country Reports 2000* at 5.

<sup>1599</sup> USAID, "Mali: The Development Challenge," Mali FY 2002 congressional budget justification, at [www.usaid.gov/country/af/ml](http://www.usaid.gov/country/af/ml) on 12/5/01.

<sup>1600</sup> *World Development Indicators 2001*.

dance rate was 29 percent.<sup>1601</sup> A significant gender disparity exists for primary school students; in 1996, the gross primary attendance rate was 48 percent for boys and 34 percent for girls.<sup>1602</sup> In 1997, the government allocated 2 percent of GNP to education.<sup>1603</sup>

### **Child Labor Laws and Enforcement**

The Labor Code, adopted in 1996, sets the basic minimum age at 14 years.<sup>1604</sup> However, children ages 12 to 14 may work up to two hours per day during school vacations with parental approval. Children ages 14 to 16 years may work up to four and a half hours per day with the permission of the labor inspectorate (but not during nights, holidays, or Sundays) and children ages 16 to 18 years may work in jobs that are not physically demanding.<sup>1605</sup> The Constitution prohibits forced labor by children.<sup>1606</sup> Articles 187, 188, and 189 of the Malian criminal code prohibit the trafficking of children.<sup>1607</sup> Labor inspectors conduct surprise and complaint-based inspections but operate only in the formal sector due to lack of resources for enforcement.<sup>1608</sup> Mali has not ratified ILO Convention 138, but ratified ILO Convention 182 on July 14, 2000.<sup>1609</sup>

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<sup>1601</sup> USAID, Demographic and Health Survey, Mali [on file].

<sup>1602</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1603</sup> *World Development Indicators 2001.*

<sup>1604</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Child Labor in Africa: Targeting the Intolerable* (Geneva, 1998), 36.

<sup>1605</sup> *Country Reports 2000* at Section 6d.

<sup>1606</sup> *Ibid* at 6c.

<sup>1607</sup> *Combating the Trafficking of Children*, 2.

<sup>1608</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1609</sup> ILO, "Table of Ratifications and Information Concerning the Fundamental Conventions of the ILO," at [http://www.ilo.org/public/french/standards/norm/sources/rats\\_pri.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/french/standards/norm/sources/rats_pri.htm) on 5/5/01.

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