

# Cape Verde

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

The Government of Cape Verde has harmonized its Constitution and national legislation with international agreements on the rights of children; however, legislation regarding underage workers remains inadequate.<sup>694</sup> The government's education reform plan, developed for years 1993 to 2000, contained strategies for improving the curriculum, training teachers and extending compulsory basic education.<sup>695</sup> In July 2001, Cape Verde signed an MOU with the sponsors of Education for All.<sup>696</sup> Under the MOU, the sponsors and the government will prepare a National Plan of Action for Education for All, in order to coordinate efforts to ensure that access to a quality education for all is achieved between the years 2001 and 2015.<sup>697</sup> The Ministry of Education and the World Food Program have agreed to renew collaboration through 2005 on efforts that support primary school feeding programs on the island.<sup>698</sup> UNICEF and the Government of Cape Verde have also launched a variety of initiatives to improve access to schooling, particularly for girls, including programs that provide educational materials, improve the quality of education, and address gender bias.<sup>699</sup>

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, the ILO estimated that 13.6 percent of children ages 10 to 14 years in Cape Verde were working.<sup>700</sup> A study of child labor in Cape Verde in 1995 found that children in urban areas are engaged in carpentry, metallurgy, in mechanic shops and on the streets. Street children in Cape

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<sup>694</sup> Government of Cape Verde, *Cape Verde National Report on Follow Up to the World Summit for Children and Lima Accord*, Ministry of Employment, Training, and Social Integration, Praia, 2000. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: Periodic Reports of States Parties Due in 1994: Cape Verde*, CRC/C/12/Add.22, United Nations, January 2001, 7.

<sup>695</sup> Oxfam International, *Aid and Education: Shrinking Budget Poorly Spent*, [online] March 2000 [cited October 9, 2002]; available from <http://www.caa.org.au/oxfam/advocacy/education/aid/index.html>.

<sup>696</sup> The sponsors of EFA in Cape Verde include FAO, UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, UN Population Fund, the World Bank, and WHO. *Cape Verde- Memorandum of Understanding between the Sponsors of Education for All and the Government of Cape Verde*, UNESCO, July 20, 2001 [cited October 8, 2002]; available from [http://www.dakar.unesco.org/countries/news\\_docs\\_comnat/010816\\_en\\_capvert.shtml](http://www.dakar.unesco.org/countries/news_docs_comnat/010816_en_capvert.shtml).

<sup>697</sup> Ibid.

<sup>698</sup> World Food Programme, "Cape Verde: How Long Should Support Last," in *Global School Feeding Report- 2002* Rome, 2002.

<sup>699</sup> UNICEF, *Girls' Education in Cape Verde*, [online] [cited July 27, 2002]; available from [http://www.unicef.org/programme/girlseducation/action/cases/cape\\_verde.htm](http://www.unicef.org/programme/girlseducation/action/cases/cape_verde.htm).

<sup>700</sup> World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002* [CD-ROM], Washington, D.C., 2002. The Ministry of Employment, Training and Social Integration estimates that 3.3 percent of children, 5 to 13 years old, are engaged in paid or unpaid work either inside or outside the home. Government of Cape Verde, *Cape Verde National Report on Follow Up to the World Summit for Children*, Annex 1.

Verde wash cars, haul cargo, distribute newspapers, and work in organized drug peddling gangs.<sup>701</sup> Juvenile prostitution is believed to be a problem in Cape Verde.<sup>702</sup> In 2000, press reports indicated that the police made some arrests of traffickers and victims, but information on the extent of trafficking to and from the country is unavailable, and there are no reports supporting or denying that children were involved.<sup>703</sup>

In 1994, the Government of Cape Verde made education compulsory until the age of 16 years.<sup>704</sup> Education is free for six years of primary school.<sup>705</sup> In 1998, the gross primary enrollment rate was 144.4 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 99 percent.<sup>706</sup> Primary school attendance rates are unavailable for Cape Verde. While enrollment rates indicate a level of commitment to education, they do not always reflect children's participation in school.<sup>707</sup> A 1999 report by the World Bank noted that while most children have access to education, some problems remain. For example, many students and some teachers speak Creole at home and have a poor command of Portuguese (the language of instruction); insufficient funds are spent on school materials, lunches and books; and there is a high repetition rate for certain grades.<sup>708</sup>

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years, and prohibits children under the age of 16 from working at night or in enterprises that produce toxic products.<sup>709</sup> Children between the ages of 14 and 18 may not work more than 38 hours per week or more than 7 hours per day, except where special permission is granted, and can only work with the consent of their parents.<sup>710</sup>

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<sup>701</sup> Government of Cape Verde, *Cape Verde National Report on Follow Up to the World Summit for Children*, para. 73-74.

<sup>702</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2001: Cape Verde*, Washington, D.C., March 4, 2002, 103-04, Section 5 [cited December 16, 2002]; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/af/8291.htm>. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports: Periodic Reports: Cape Verde*.

<sup>703</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Cape Verde*, 104-05, Section 6f.

<sup>704</sup> Government of Cape Verde, *Cape Verde National Report on Follow Up to the World Summit for Children*, para. 67.

<sup>705</sup> Secondary education is free only for children whose families have an annual income below approximately 160,000 escudos (USD 1,421). See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Cape Verde*, 103-04, Section 5. For currency conversion see FX Converter, [online] [cited October 9, 2002]; available from <http://www.carosta.de/frames/convert.htm>.

<sup>706</sup> World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*.

<sup>707</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the relationship between education statistics and work, see the preface to this report.

<sup>708</sup> World Bank, *Cape Verde- Education and Training Consolidation and Modernization Project*, project appraisal document, Washington, D.C., April 30, 1999, 4 [cited October 9, 2002]; available from [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSServlet?pcont=details&eid=000094946\\_99052608145863](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSServlet?pcont=details&eid=000094946_99052608145863).

<sup>709</sup> Embassy of the Republic of Cape Verde, letter to USDOL official, October 26, 2001. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Cape Verde*, 104-05, Section 6d.

<sup>710</sup> Gregorio Semondo, First Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Cape Verde, letter to USDOL official, October 26, 2001.

Cape Verde's Constitution states that children of compulsory schooling age are prohibited from working, and expressly forbids the exploitation of child labor.<sup>711</sup> Forced and bonded child labor are prohibited by law.<sup>712</sup> The civil code prohibits certain forms of child sexual exploitation.<sup>713</sup> The trafficking of children for the purposes of prostitution is punishable by 12 to 16 years in prison.<sup>714</sup>

The Ministries of Justice and Labor enforce child labor laws, but only in the urban, formal sector of the economy with limited success.<sup>715</sup> The government has cooperated with European authorities and neighboring governments to address the issue of trafficking.<sup>716</sup>

The Government of Cape Verde has not ratified ILO Convention 138, but ratified ILO Convention 182 on October 23, 2001.<sup>717</sup>

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<sup>711</sup> *Constitution of the Republic of Cape Verde*, Article 87 (2) and (3), (1992), [cited September 11, 2002]; available from <http://oncampus.richmond.edu/~jjones//confinder/CapeVerde.htm>.

<sup>712</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Cape Verde*, 104-05, Section 6c.

<sup>713</sup> According to Article 405 of the Civil Code, parents who incite, encourage or facilitate the prostitution of a minor can be imprisoned for one to two years. According to Article 406 of the Civil Code, another person, legally responsible for the minor, who incites, encourages or facilitates the prostitution of the minor can be imprisoned for six months to two years while a person with no legal responsibility for the minor can be imprisoned for three months. See UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports: Periodic Reports: Cape Verde*, 35-36.

<sup>714</sup> Law No. 91/V/98, Article 406-D, as cited in Protection Project, "Cape Verde," in *Human Rights Report on Trafficking of Persons, Especially Women and Children* Washington, D.C., March 2002, [cited December 26, 2002]; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org>.

<sup>715</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Cape Verde*, 104-05, Section 6d.

<sup>716</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-05, Section 6f.

<sup>717</sup> ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, in ILOLEX, [database online] [cited August 29, 2002]; available from <http://ilolex.ch:1567/english/newratframeE.htm>.