

Central African Republic

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i>	
Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working in 2000:	61.1% ⁸⁸⁶
Minimum age for admission to work:	14 ⁸⁸⁷
Age to which education is compulsory:	14 ⁸⁸⁸
Free public education:	No ⁸⁸⁹
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:	56% ⁸⁹⁰
Net primary enrollment rate:	Unavailable
Percent of children 5-14 attending school in 2000:	38.5% ⁸⁹¹
Percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	Unavailable
Ratified Convention 138:	6/28/2000 ⁸⁹²
Ratified Convention 182:	6/28/2000 ⁸⁹³
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No ⁸⁹⁴

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, in the Central African Republic, approximately 60.4 percent of all boys 5 to 14 were working compared to 61.7 percent of girls in the same age range.⁸⁹⁵ Children work in agriculture, domestic service, fishing, and mining. They also reportedly work alongside adult relatives in diamond fields.⁸⁹⁶ Some children work on farms at school.⁸⁹⁷

⁸⁸⁶ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, March 1, 2007, 19.

⁸⁸⁷ *Loi N° 61/221, Instituant le Code du Travail de la République Centrafricaine*, (June 2, 1961), Article 125.

⁸⁸⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Central African Republic," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78725.htm>.

⁸⁸⁹ U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, November 29, 2006. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties Due in 1994 : Central African Republic*, November 18, 1998, Article 29; available from [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/fb066e7732d518c0802567a6003b7aad?Opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/fb066e7732d518c0802567a6003b7aad?Opendocument). See also Right to Education, *Table 2: The Law and Practice in Sub-Saharan Africa*, [online] [cited April 2, 2007]; available from http://www.right-to-education.org/content/tables/table_02.html. See also UNESCO, *Education for All: The Quality Imperative*, [online], 2005, 282; available from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001373/137333e.pdf>.

⁸⁹⁰ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratios. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

⁸⁹¹ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

⁸⁹² ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, October 23, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/docs/declAF.htm>.

⁸⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁴ ILO-IPEC, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour-Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006; available from http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20061019_Implementationreport_eng_Web.pdf.

⁸⁹⁵ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

⁸⁹⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 6d.

⁸⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

The Ministry of Family and Social Affairs of the Central African Republic estimated that at least 3,000 street children live in the capital city of Bangui.⁸⁹⁸ These children, many orphaned by HIV/AIDS, are engaged in various economic activities including hauling, street vending, washing dishes in small eateries, and begging.⁸⁹⁹ Some girls are also involved in commercial sexual exploitation.⁹⁰⁰ Children from some indigenous groups are forced into agricultural, domestic, and other forms of labor by other ethnic groups in the country.⁹⁰¹ In addition, anecdotal evidence suggests that a number of boys have joined rebel forces fighting the government in the northwest region of the country.⁹⁰²

The Central African Republic is both a source and a destination for children trafficked for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. Children are reportedly trafficked to and from Cameroon and Nigeria. In addition to commercial sexual exploitation, trafficked children work in domestic services and as forced labor in shops and commercial activities.⁹⁰³ Also, anecdotal evidence suggests that children may be trafficked to other nearby countries to work in agriculture.⁹⁰⁴ In addition, traveling merchants, herders, and other foreigners working in and transiting through the country sometimes brought boys and girls with them. Such children did not attend school and were not paid for their work.⁹⁰⁵

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years.⁹⁰⁶ However, children who are at least 12 years old may engage in light work, such as traditional agriculture or home services.⁹⁰⁷

⁸⁹⁸ Government of the Central African Republic, *Analyse causale des problèmes de protection des enfants de la rue en Centrafrique*, Ministry of Family and Social Affairs, Bangui, April 2004, 4. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5.

⁸⁹⁹ Government of the Central African Republic, *Analyse causale des problèmes de protection des enfants de la rue en Centrafrique*, 19. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5.

⁹⁰⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Central African Republic: Teaching street children about HIV", IRINnews.org, [online], December 28, 2006 [cited April 4, 2007]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=64377>.

⁹⁰¹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5.

⁹⁰² Integrated Regional Information Networks, "CAR: Conflict forces children into insurgency", IRINnews.org, [online], February 23, 2007 [cited March 26, 2007]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=70329>. See also CARE, *Inter-Agency Mission Report on the Central African Republic*, [online], February 17, 2007; available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/JBRD-6ZGCV9?OpenDocument>. See also UNICEF, *Thousands Displaced in the Central African Republic Struggle to Survive*, [online] February 20, 2007 [cited March 4, 2007]; available from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/car_38398.html?q=printme.

⁹⁰³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5. See also U.S. Department of State, "Central African Republic," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/>.

⁹⁰⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁶ *Loi N° 61/221, Instituant le Code du Travail de la République Centrafricaine*. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 6d.

⁹⁰⁷ ILO NATLEX National Labor Law Database, *Central African Republic: Elimination of Child Labour, Protection of Children and Young Persons*, accessed June 20, 2006; available from

Children under 18 years old are forbidden to perform certain kinds of work, including work in mines, work that involves carrying heavy loads, or work between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.⁹⁰⁸ The law prohibits a company or parent from using children in mining. Violators are subject to imprisonment of 6 months to 3 years.⁹⁰⁹ Forced labor is prohibited under the law. Although they are not specifically mentioned, the prohibition against forced and compulsory labor applies to children.⁹¹⁰ The minimum age for enlisting in the armed forces is 18 years.⁹¹¹

The law prohibits the procurement of individuals for sexual purposes, including assisting in or profiting from prostitution, with penalties that include imprisonment of 1 month and 1 day to 1 year. Those found guilty of engaging in such acts with minors, which the law defines as persons less than 15 years of age, face penalties of imprisonment from 1 to 5 years. The law also establishes penalties including imprisonment from 2 to 5 years if a school official commits a sex offense involving a female student. The ILO's Committee of Experts has raised questions about whether the country's laws adequately protect children under 18 from prostitution.⁹¹²

The law does not specifically prohibit trafficking.⁹¹³ However, traffickers can be prosecuted under anti-slavery laws, laws against sexual exploitation, mandatory school-age laws, the labor code, and laws against prostitution.⁹¹⁴ In addition, the law establishes a penalty of imprisonment from 5 to 10 years for any person who abducts or causes the abduction of a child younger than 15 years old.⁹¹⁵

The Ministry of Civil Service, Labor and Social Security, specifically its Labor Inspection body, is tasked with implementing and enforcing child labor laws.⁹¹⁶ However, the Ministry lacks sufficient resources for enforcement and has only 47 labor inspectors.⁹¹⁷ The U.S. Department of State reports that enforcement of child labor laws occurs infrequently.⁹¹⁸ Community brigades have been established to punish persons responsible for forcing children into prostitution.

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.details. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 6d.

⁹⁰⁸ ILO NATLEX National Labor Law Database, *Central African Republic: Elimination of Child Labour*. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties Due in 1994*, para 62.

⁹⁰⁹ U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting, November 29, 2006*.

⁹¹⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Sections 6c and 6d.

⁹¹¹ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties Due in 1994*, para 61. See also Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Central African Republic," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004; available from <http://www.child-soldiers.org/regions/country.html?id=41>.

⁹¹² UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties Due in 1994*. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct request, Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Central African Republic (ratification: 2000)*, May 4, 2007, Clause b1; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org>.

⁹¹³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5.

⁹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁵ *Code Pénal de la République Centrafricaine*, (2000), Article 212.

⁹¹⁶ U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting, November 29, 2006*. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 6d.

⁹¹⁷ U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting, November 29, 2006*. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5.

⁹¹⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 6d.

However, few cases have been prosecuted because of the reluctance of victims' families to press charges.⁹¹⁹ The government does not currently investigate trafficking cases.⁹²⁰

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

Research has not identified any policies or programs by the Government of the Central African Republic to specifically address exploitive child labor.

⁹¹⁹ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, *Summary Record of the 658th Meeting: Central African Republic*, [online] 2001 [cited October 4, 2006], Section 28; available from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/7c0595bc56c343b5c12569f500598d21?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/7c0595bc56c343b5c12569f500598d21?Opendocument).

⁹²⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Central African Republic," Section 5.