

Federal Register Notice (November 8, 2007) "Request for Information on Efforts by Certain Countries to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor", Washington, DC, January 25, 2008. See also Government of Cape Verde, *MTFS realiza Workshop Nacional sobre Combate ao Trabalho Infantil e suas piores formas* Press Release, November 19, 2007; available from [http://www.governo.cv/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=527&Itemid=1](http://www.governo.cv/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=527&Itemid=1). See also Vozdipovo On-line, "Governo e Parceiros

Analisa Plano de Ação de Combate ao Trabalho Infantil", [online], November 20, 2007 [cited November 29, 2007]; available from [http://www.vozdipovo-online.com/conteudos/sociedade/governo\\_e\\_parceiros\\_analisa\\_plano\\_de\\_accao\\_de\\_combate\\_ao\\_trabalho\\_infantil/](http://www.vozdipovo-online.com/conteudos/sociedade/governo_e_parceiros_analisa_plano_de_accao_de_combate_ao_trabalho_infantil/).

<sup>666</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Cape Verde," section 6d.

## Central African Republic

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor<sup>667</sup></i>	
Working children, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	61.1
Working boys, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	60.4
Working girls, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	61.7
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%)	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for admission to work:	14
Age to which education is compulsory:	12-14*
Free public education:	Yes**
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2005	54
Net primary enrollment rate (%):	-
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%), 2000:	38.5
Survival rate to grade 5 (%):	-
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No
* Must pay for miscellaneous school expenses	
** Compulsory for 6 years, entrance age may vary	

### Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in the Central African Republic work in agriculture, domestic service, fishing, and mining.<sup>668</sup> They also reportedly work alongside adult relatives in diamond fields.<sup>669</sup> It has been reported that

children have been employed in public works projects.<sup>670</sup>

The large number of street children in the Central African Republic is a problem, particularly in the capital Bangui.<sup>671</sup> These children, many orphaned by HIV/AIDS, are engaged in various economic activities including hauling, street vending, washing dishes in small eateries, and begging.<sup>672</sup>

Some girls in the Central African Republic are reportedly involved in prostitution.<sup>673</sup> Children from some indigenous groups are forced into agricultural, domestic, and other forms of labor by other ethnic groups.<sup>674</sup>

Some boys have been reportedly recruited as child soldiers into rebel forces fighting the Government in the northwest and northeast regions of the country.<sup>675</sup> It is also reported that girls have been abducted as wives for rebel fighters.<sup>676</sup>

The Central African Republic is both a source and destination for children trafficked for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. Children are trafficked to and from Cameroon, Nigeria, Chad, the Republic of Congo, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>677</sup> Children from Rwanda are also reportedly trafficked to the Central African Republic.<sup>678</sup> In addition to commercial sexual exploitation, trafficked children work in domestic service and as forced laborers in diamond mines, shops, and other commercial enterprises.<sup>679</sup> Traveling merchants, herders, and others working in and transiting through the country sometimes

bring boys and girls with them. Some trafficked children did not attend school and were not paid for their work.<sup>680</sup> Anecdotal evidence also suggests that children may be trafficked to other nearby countries to work in agriculture.<sup>681</sup>

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

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years<sup>682</sup> and states that children must be over the age of 14 years to be employed as an apprentice, and the business owner himself must be over the age of 18 years.<sup>683</sup> However, children who are at least 12 years old may engage in light work, such as traditional agriculture or domestic services.<sup>684</sup> Children under 18 years are forbidden to work between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. or to perform certain kinds of work--including work in mines--that involves carrying heavy loads.<sup>685</sup> The law permits a labor inspector to require a young worker to undergo a medical examination to determine whether the work for which they are employed exceeds their physical strength.<sup>686</sup> The law prohibits a company or parent from employing children in mining. Violators are subject to imprisonment of 6 months to 3 years and/or a fine.<sup>687</sup>

Forced labor is prohibited under the law.<sup>688</sup> The minimum age for compulsory or voluntary recruitment into the Armed Forces is 18 years.<sup>689</sup>

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 young persons, which the law defines as persons less than 15 years of age, face penalties of imprisonment from 1 to 5 years and/or a fine.<sup>690</sup> The law also establishes penalties including imprisonment from 2 to 5 years and/or a fine if a school official commits a sex offense involving a female student.<sup>691</sup> The ILO's Committee of Experts has raised questions about whether the country's laws adequately protect children under 18 from prostitution.<sup>692</sup>

The law does not specifically prohibit trafficking, but traffickers can be prosecuted under anti-slavery laws, laws against sexual exploitation, mandatory school-age laws, the labor code, and laws against

prostitution.<sup>693</sup> Trafficking victims can collect compensation through civil suits.<sup>694</sup> 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.<sup>695</sup> The law prohibits trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation and stipulates a penalty of 5 to 10 years imprisonment, and offenses including rape and forcible assault against minors younger than 18 are punishable by hard labor.<sup>696</sup> USDOS reports that the Government has investigated and made arrests in trafficking cases during the reporting period.<sup>697</sup>

The Labor Inspection body of the Ministry of Civil Service, Labor and Social Security, is tasked with implementing and enforcing child labor laws.<sup>698</sup> However, the Ministry has only 47 labor inspectors and lacks sufficient resources for enforcement. USDOS reports that enforcement of child labor laws occurs infrequently. Community brigades have been established to punish persons responsible for forcing children into prostitution. The Government has established a mobile border unit to monitor trans-border movement of minors.<sup>699</sup> During the reporting period the Government of the Central African Republic established an Inter-Ministerial Committee to Fight Child Exploitation and will focus efforts on developing an anti-trafficking national policy.<sup>700</sup>

The Central African Republic was 1 of 24 countries to adopt the Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the Joint Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central African Regions.<sup>701</sup> As part of the Multilateral Cooperation Agreement, the governments agreed to use the child trafficking monitoring system developed by the USDOL-funded ILO-IPEC LUTRENA project to assist each other in the investigation, arrest, and prosecution of trafficking offenders; and to protect, rehabilitate, and reintegrate trafficking victims.<sup>702</sup>

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

The Ministry of Social Affairs is implementing a National Action Plan to prevent child sexual abuse, including child sex trafficking.<sup>703</sup> During the reporting period the Government conducted awareness campaigns and provided training to Ministry of Justice personnel on trafficking in persons.<sup>704</sup> The Government operates two children's shelters in Bangui that provide services to street children, former working children, and trafficked children.<sup>705</sup> The Government of the Central African Republic has made efforts to demobilize child soldiers with the support of international agencies.<sup>706</sup> In 2007, the Government of the Central African Republic and UNICEF negotiated with rebel groups for the demobilization and reintegration of an estimated 400 child soldiers from the Northeastern region.<sup>707</sup>

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<sup>667</sup> For statistical data not cited here, see the Data Sources and Definitions section. For data on ratifications and ILO-IPEC membership, see the Executive Summary. For minimum age for admission to work, age to which education is compulsory, and free public education, see Government of the Central African Republic, *Loi N° 61/221, Instituant le Code du Travail de la République Centrafricaine*, (June 15, 1961), Chapter III, article 125. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Central African Republic (ratification: 2000)*, [online] 2007 [cited November 26, 2007]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>. See also Central African Republic official, Interview with USDOL official, March 10, 2008. See also U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, December 3, 2007, paras 1a, 1c. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Central African Republic (ratification: 2000)*, [online] 2007 [cited November 26, 2007]. See also U.S. Department of State, "Central African Republic," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2007*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2008, section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100472.htm>.

<sup>668</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 6d. See also U.S. Department of State, "Central African Republic (Tier 2 Watch List)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007*, Washington, DC, June 12, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/82805.htm>.

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<sup>669</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 6d. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Central African Republic."

<sup>670</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 6d.

<sup>671</sup> 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, 2. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5.

<sup>672</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5. See also Government of the Central African Republic, *Analyse causale des problèmes de protection des enfants de la rue en Centrafrique*.

<sup>673</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor*.

<sup>674</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5, 6c. See also U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, October 2, 2007, para 4b.

<sup>675</sup> United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict Sixty Second Session, A/62/609-S/2007/757*, December 21, 2007, section 28; available from <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/656/04/PDF/N0765604.pdf?OpenElement>. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "CAR: Conflict forces children into insurgency", IRINnews.org, [online], February 23, 2007 [cited December 4, 2007]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=70329>. See also Human Rights Watch, *Central African Republic: State of Anarchy, Rebellion and Abuses Against Civilians*, September 2007, 70; available from <http://hrw.org/reports/2007/car0907/>.

<sup>676</sup> United Nations Security Council, *Report of Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict*, section 32.

<sup>677</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Central African Republic." See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5. See also U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, March 5, 2008, para 27a.

<sup>678</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Central African Republic." See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5.

<sup>679</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Central African Republic." See also U.S.

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Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, March 5, 2008, para 27a, b.

<sup>680</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5.

<sup>681</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>682</sup> Government of the Central African Republic, *Loi N° 61/221, Instituant le Code du Travail de la République Centrafricaine*, article 125. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Minimum Age*. See also U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, December 3, 2007, para 1a.

<sup>683</sup> Government of the Central African Republic, *Loi N° 61/221, Instituant le Code du Travail de la République Centrafricaine*, article 61. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties due in 1994: Central African Republic*, CRC/C/11/Add.18, prepared by Government of the Central African Republic, pursuant to Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, November 18, 1998; available from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/fb066e7732d518c0802567a6003b7aad?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/fb066e7732d518c0802567a6003b7aad?Opendocument).

<sup>684</sup> ILO NATLEX National Labor Law Database, *Central African Republic: Elimination of Child Labour, Protection of Children and Young Persons*, November 26, 2007; available from

[http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex\\_browse.home](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home). See also U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, December 3, 2007, para 1a.

<sup>685</sup> ILO NATLEX National Labor Law Database, *Central African Republic: Elimination of Child Labour, Protection of Children and Young Persons*.

<sup>686</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Minimum Age*. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor*.

<sup>687</sup> U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, December 3, 2007, para 1a and 1b. See also Government of the Central African Republic, *Le Code Miner*, (February 1, 2004), article 153.

<sup>688</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 6c.

<sup>689</sup> 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/library/global-reports?root\\_id=159&directory\\_id=165](http://www.child-soldiers.org/library/global-reports?root_id=159&directory_id=165).

<sup>690</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor*. See also U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, December 3, 2007, para 1b.

<sup>691</sup> U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, December 3, 2007, para 1b.

<sup>692</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor*.

<sup>693</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5.

<sup>694</sup> U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, March 5, 2008, para 29g.

<sup>695</sup> Government of the Central African Republic, *Code Pénal de la République Centrafricaine*, (2000), articles 212-214. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor*.

<sup>696</sup> U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, March 5, 2008, para 28b.

<sup>697</sup> *Ibid.*, section 28f.

<sup>698</sup> U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, December 3, 2007, para 1b. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor*.

<sup>699</sup> U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, December 3, 2007, para 1b.

<sup>700</sup> U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, March 5, 2008, para 27b, 27c, and 30e.

<sup>701</sup> Catholic Relief Services official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, October 2, 2006. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (LUTRENA)*, Technical Progress Report, Washington, DC, September 1, 2006, 2.

<sup>702</sup> ECOWAS and ECCAS, *Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central Africa*, Abuja, July 7, 2006, 5-7. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (LUTRENA)*, Technical Progress Report, 10-11.

<sup>703</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Central African Republic."

<sup>704</sup> U.S. Embassy- Bangui, *reporting*, March 5, 2008, para 27d, 27e, and 30b.

<sup>705</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Central African Republic," section 5 and 6d.

<sup>706</sup> UNICEF, *Central African Republic signed child soldiers reintegration agreement*, Press Release, June 16, 2007; available from [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media\\_40015.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media_40015.html).

<sup>707</sup> *Ibid.* See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "CAR: Negotiations Under Way for Demobilisation of Child Soldiers", IRINnews.org, [online], May 21, 2007 [cited December 4, 2007]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=72265>. See also Human Rights Watch, *CAR: State of Anarchy*, 98.