

Fiji," section 6d. See also U.S. Embassy- Suva, *reporting, December 9, 2007*.

¹³⁰¹ Global March Against Child Labour, *Plans to Stamp Out Child Labour*, [online] May 4, 2006 [cited May 20, 2008]; available from <http://www.globalmarch.org/clns/clns-may-2006-details.php3>. See also ILO, *Commemoration of the World Day Against Child Labour*, June 12, 2004; available from

http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/themes/domestic/download/wdacl_fiji_090704.pdf. See also Government of Fiji *Committee Set Up to See Eradication of Child Labour*, [Press Release] June 30, 2005; available from <http://www.fiji.gov.fj/cgi-bin/cms/exec/view.cgi/64/4884>. See also U.S. Embassy- Suva, *reporting, December 9, 2007*.

¹³⁰² U.S. Embassy- Bangkok, *reporting, June 27, 2007*.

Gabon

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i> ¹³⁰³	
Working children, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working boys, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working girls, 5-14 years (%):	-
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%)	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	16
Compulsory education age:	16
Free public education:	No
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2004:	152
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2001:	88
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%)	-
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2002:	69
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Gabon work in the informal economy.¹³⁰⁴ Child work and child trafficking are closely related in Gabon; one study indicated that 97 percent of children in Gabon's workforce are foreign nationals.¹³⁰⁵ Trafficked boys work in small

workshops and as street vendors, while girls who have been trafficked work as domestic servants and in the informal commercial sector, including in restaurants and market vending.¹³⁰⁶ Children are trafficked into the country from Benin, Guinea, Nigeria, and Togo, and to a lesser extent from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Sierra Leone.¹³⁰⁷ Children are trafficked from Benin to Gabon for agricultural work, including on cocoa and sugar plantations.¹³⁰⁸ Children trafficked from Nigeria are found working as mechanics.¹³⁰⁹ Togolese children are trafficked to Gabon for forced domestic service and prostitution.¹³¹⁰ Children trafficked to Gabon from other West African countries are typically from poor families, who believe their children will receive an education, opportunities, and wages for their work. While some children receive such benefits, many children are victims of trafficking and generally receive only rudimentary room and board, and wages are seldom paid either to them or their families.¹³¹¹ In general, trafficked children work long hours, are subject to physical abuse, and do not receive an education.¹³¹² The Gabonese social tradition of placement, where children of poor families are sent to live with affluent families to receive an education and opportunities, is believed to facilitate trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the country.¹³¹³ Gabonese children are trafficked to Equatorial Guinea for work in the cities of Malabo and Bata.¹³¹⁴

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 16 years. Younger children, however, may work with consent from the Ministries of Labor, Education, and Public Health. Children between 14 and 16 years may work as apprentices with permission from the Ministry of National Education.¹³¹⁵ The employment of children in jobs that are unsuitable for them because of their age, state, or condition, or that interfere with their education is also prohibited.¹³¹⁶ Children under 16 years who have been removed from exploitive labor must be placed in appropriate reception or transit centers. If they are of foreign nationality, the children must be repatriated to their country of origin at the expense of their guardian or employer.¹³¹⁷ Children under 18 years are prohibited from working at night in industrial establishments, except if the establishment is exclusively run by family members; however, children over 16 years are permitted to work in certain industries that, by their nature, must be continued at night, such as sugar refineries and metalworks.¹³¹⁸ The law imposes a fine for violations of minimum age laws and a larger fine along with a prison term of 2 to 6 months for repeat violators.¹³¹⁹

Gabonese law also prohibits forced labor, slavery, abduction, and pimping.¹³²⁰ The penalty for imposing forced labor is imprisonment for 1 to 6 months and a fine, and recurring violations are punishable with imprisonment for 2 to 12 months and a heavier fine.¹³²¹ Gabon's trafficking law outlines measures to protect children under 18 years from trafficking for labor and commercial sexual exploitation and stipulates 5 to 15 years imprisonment and a fine for perpetrators.¹³²² Procurement of a minor for the purpose of prostitution is punishable by imprisonment for 2 to 5 years and a fine.¹³²³ The minimum age for voluntary recruitment into the military is 20 years, and there is no conscription.¹³²⁴

The Ministry of Justice is responsible for enforcement of child labor laws, while the Ministry of Labor is charged with receiving, investigating, and addressing child labor complaints.¹³²⁵ Minimum age laws were strictly enforced for the

protection of Gabonese children in urban areas, but rarely in rural areas.¹³²⁶ Theoretically, the law also protects foreign children in Gabon, many of whom are victims of child trafficking, but these children rarely reported child labor abuses. According to USDOS, the number of labor inspectors was inadequate, and child labor complaints were not routinely investigated.¹³²⁷

With a fleet of 10 boats, the Government of Gabon conducts regular patrols to combat maritime child trafficking. As of June 2007, there were up to 20 trafficking cases pending within the judicial system. However, USDOS reported that enforcement and investigation of trafficking cases remains weak.¹³²⁸

Gabon 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.¹³²⁹ 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.¹³³⁰

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

Gabon's UN Development Assistance Framework 2007-2011 includes a component to bring national legislation into alignment with Gabon's bilateral and regional agreements to combat child trafficking, as well as ILO Convention 182 and other international conventions it has ratified.¹³³¹

The Government continued to operate three reception centers for trafficking victims, which included children.¹³³² The Government's child trafficking "Watch Committees," located in each of the country's nine provinces, continue to identify and provide assistance to trafficking victims; and the Government is working to repatriate trafficked children to their countries of origin.¹³³³ The Government has worked with UNICEF to raise awareness on child trafficking through workshops and seminars, radio and television messages, and

posters.¹³³⁴ In collaboration with UNICEF, the Government continues to support a toll free hotline for child trafficking victims, which provides assistance and free transportation to a shelter.¹³³⁵

¹³⁰³ 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 Gabon, *Code du travail*, Loi no 3/94, (November 21, 1994), article 177; available from <http://natlex.ilo.org/txt/F94GAB01.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Gabon," 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>.

¹³⁰⁴ ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1990 (No.182) Gabon (ratification: 2001)* [online] 2007; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/iloquery.htm>.

¹³⁰⁵ U.S. Embassy-Libreville, *reporting*, December 4, 2007, para 1. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Gabon," section 6d.

¹³⁰⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Gabon (Tier 2)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007*, Washington, DC, June 12, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/>. See also U.S. Embassy-Libreville, *reporting*, December 4, 2007, para 9. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Gabon: Laws Fail to Curb Child Trafficking Racket", IRINnews.org, [previously online], February 4, 2005; available from <http://irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=45400> [hard copy on file].

¹³⁰⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Gabon." See also Antoine Lawson, "Gabon cracks down on child trafficking," *Mail and Guardian*, February 26, 2005; available from http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=198353&area=/insight/insight__africa/.

¹³⁰⁸ "Benin parliament cracks down on child trafficking," *Agence France Presse*, February 3, 2006. See also Silvia Scarpa, "Child trafficking: The worst face of the world," in *Global Migration Perspectives: No. 40*, Geneva: Global Commission on International Migration, 2005, 9; available from http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/policy_and_research/gcim/gmp/gmp40.pdf.

¹³⁰⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Gabon," section 5.

¹³¹⁰ UNODC, *Measures to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings in Benin, Nigeria, and Togo*, Vienna, September

2006, 30; available from http://www.unodc.org/pdf/human_trafficking/ht_research_report_nigeria.pdf. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Gabon."

¹³¹¹ Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Laws Fail to Curb Child Trafficking Racket". See also The Protection Project, "Gabon," in *2005 Human Rights Report on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, Washington, DC, 2005; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org>.

¹³¹² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Gabon," section 5. See also Lawson, "Gabon cracks down on child trafficking." See also Committee on Government Reform, Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness, Statement of Mohamed Y. Mattar: The Role of the Government in Combating Trafficking in Persons- A Global Human Rights Approach, October 29, 2003; available from <http://protectionproject.org/gabon.doc>.

¹³¹³ ECPAT International CSEC Database, *Gabon*, accessed December 13, 2007; available from <http://www.ecpat.net/>.

¹³¹⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Equatorial Guinea (Tier 3)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report 2007*, Washington, DC, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/82805.htm>. See also Government of Equatorial Guinea, *Plan de Acción de Lucha Contra el Tráfico y la Trata de Niños 2005-2009*, 2005, page 10.

¹³¹⁵ Government of Gabon, *Code du travail*, articles 82 and 177.

¹³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, article 6.

¹³¹⁷ ILO, *The Effective Abolition of Child Labour*, [previously online], 2003; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/decl/download/review03/childlabour.pdf> [hard copy on file].

¹³¹⁸ Government of Gabon, *Code du travail*, articles 167 and 168.

¹³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, article 195.

¹³²⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Gabon (Tier 2)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2005*, Washington, DC, June 3, 2005; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/46613.htm>.

¹³²¹ Government of Gabon, *Code du travail*, articles 4 and 16.

¹³²² ILO, *Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Gabon*, Observation, CEACR 2005/76th Session, Geneva, 2005; available from <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-displaycomment.cfm?hdroff=1&ctry=2610&year=2005&type=O&conv=C182&lang=EN>. See also U.S.

Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report-2007: Gabon."

¹³²³ Government of Gabon, *Penal Code*, articles 260 and 261; available from www.protectionproject.org [hard copy on file].

¹³²⁴ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Gabon," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004; available from http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=774.

¹³²⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Gabon."

¹³²⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Gabon," section 6d.

¹³²⁷ Ibid.

¹³²⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Gabon."

¹³²⁹ ECOWAS and ECCAS, *Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central Africa*, Abuja, July 7, 2006. See also ILO-IPEC Geneva official, E-mail

communication to USDOL official, November 16, 2006.

¹³³⁰ ECOWAS and ECCAS, *Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in West and Central Africa*. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labor Exploitation in West and Central Africa (LUTRENA)*, technical progress report, Geneva, September 1, 2007. See also Emmanuel Goujon, "African States Sign Up to Fight Human Trafficking," *Agence France-Presse*, July 7, 2006.

¹³³¹ U.S. Embassy-Libreville, *reporting, December 4, 2007*, para 3.

¹³³² U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Gabon."

¹³³³ U.S. Embassy-Libreville, *reporting, December 4, 2007*, paras 4 and 10.

¹³³⁴ UNICEF, *At a Glance: Gabon*, [online] [cited December 13, 2007]; available from <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/gabon.html>.

¹³³⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Gabon," section 5.

The Gambia

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Working children in The Gambia are primarily found in the informal sector, agriculture, and domestic service.¹³³⁶ Working girls are most likely to engage in street vending, selling food items such as candy, water, and fruits for their parents.¹³³⁷

Working boys are most commonly found doing such odd jobs as hauling items or sweeping and working as taxi or bus attendants in urban areas.¹³³⁸

Many children between 14 and 16 years work in technical sectors such as lumbering, sewing, plumbing, masonry, and auto repair.¹³³⁹ The practice of sending boys to Koranic teachers to receive education is a common tradition. While some boys are cared for and receive lessons, many are forced by their teachers to beg and surrender the money that they have earned.¹³⁴⁰

Commercial sexual exploitation of children, including prostitution, is common in The Gambia.¹³⁴¹ Both Gambian men as well as visiting European pedophiles exploit children through prostitution and sex tourism.¹³⁴²

The Gambia is country of origin, transit, and destination for children trafficked for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. Children are reportedly trafficked to the country from Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Benin, Mali, and Guinea-Conakry.¹³⁴³ Gambian boys are trafficked to Senegal for forced begging.¹³⁴⁴ Girls are trafficked to and from Gambia for sexual exploitation and forced domestic servitude.¹³⁴⁵ Boys are trafficked to Gambia for a wide range of activities including, but not limited to, sexual exploitation, street vending, and begging.¹³⁴⁶

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Laws governing the minimum age for work in The Gambia are contradictory. The Labor Law of 2007 prohibits children, defined in Gambian law as those under 18 years, from engaging in agricultural, industrial or non-industrial work.¹³⁴⁷