

Guinea-Bissau

*Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor*¹⁶⁸⁵

Population, children, 5-14 years, 2000:	385,726
Working children, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	64.2
Working boys, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	64.4
Working girls, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	64.0
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%):	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	14
Compulsory education age:	12
Free public education:	Yes*
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2001:	69.7
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2001:	45.1
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%), 2000:	37.3
Survival rate to grade 5 (%):	-
ILO Convention 138:	No
ILO Convention 182:	8/26/2008
CRC:	8/20/1990
CRCOPAC:	No
CRCOPSC:	No
Palermo:	9/10/2007
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No

*In practice, must pay for various school expenses

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Most working children in Guinea-Bissau are involved in family enterprises. The rate of child work is higher in rural than urban areas.¹⁶⁸⁶ In rural areas, children perform farming and cattle herding.¹⁶⁸⁷ For 4 months each year, during the annual cashew harvest, some children are partially or completely withdrawn from school to work in the fields.¹⁶⁸⁸

In urban areas, many children work as street vendors, spending hours in the streets shining shoes, washing cars, and selling various items.¹⁶⁸⁹ The Child Protection Office of the Police Department of Bissau, the capital, estimated that approximately 1,000 children were living on the streets of the city during 2008.¹⁶⁹⁰

Children also work as apprentices in activities such as metalworking, mechanics, and carpentry.¹⁶⁹¹ Some children live with other families as unpaid domestic servants.¹⁶⁹²

Girls are sometimes exploited as prostitutes in Guinea-Bissau, but the extent of this problem is unknown.¹⁶⁹³ Children, primarily boys, are trafficked for begging and agricultural labor, including on cotton plantations. Many children from the Bafata and Gabu regions are trafficked to Senegal, but some children are trafficked to Mali and Guinea.¹⁶⁹⁴ The practice of sending boys to Koranic teachers to receive education, which may include a vocational or apprenticeship component, is a tradition in various countries, including Guinea-Bissau.¹⁶⁹⁵ While some boys receive lessons, many are forced by their teachers to beg for money and food.¹⁶⁹⁶ Each child must present the teacher an established amount and may be beaten if he fails to do so. Some children choose to live and beg on the streets rather than return to abusive teachers.¹⁶⁹⁷ Children also attend Koranic schools and engage in begging within Guinea-Bissau.¹⁶⁹⁸ Some girls may be trafficked for domestic service, but reliable evidence is lacking.¹⁶⁹⁹

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age for employment is 14 years. For heavy or dangerous labor, including work in mines, the minimum age is 18 years.¹⁷⁰⁰ Working minors may not work overtime and must have fulfilled the compulsory education requirements, except in areas where no schools are available. Fines are established for violations of Labor Code provisions involving children.¹⁷⁰¹ However, the Code applies only to certain kinds of work that involve wage payments and does not apply to many types of work performed by children, such as domestic and agricultural work.¹⁷⁰²

Forced child labor is prohibited.¹⁷⁰³ Prostitution is illegal, and the activities of brothel owners, pimps, customers, and prostitutes are criminalized. Laws against kidnapping and the removal of minors, sexual exploitation, and abuse

may be used to prosecute trafficking cases; kidnapping is punishable by imprisonment for 2 to 10 years.¹⁷⁰⁴ The Government has also instituted a policy that provides for imprisonment for parents who collude with traffickers and requires parents to sign a contract acknowledging this policy when trafficked children are returned to them.¹⁷⁰⁵ The compulsory military recruitment age is 18 years; however, boys under 16 years may volunteer for the armed forces with the consent of their parents or tutors.¹⁷⁰⁶

Guinea-Bissau was 1 of 24 countries to adopt the Multilateral Cooperative 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.¹⁷⁰⁷ As part of the regional Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, the Government agreed to investigate and prosecute trafficking offenders; to rehabilitate and reintegrate trafficking victims; and to assist fellow signatory countries to implement these measures under the Agreement.¹⁷⁰⁸

According to USDOS, although minimum age requirements are generally respected in the small formal sector, these requirements were not enforced by the Ministries of Justice or Civil Service and Labor in the informal sector.¹⁷⁰⁹ Also according to USDOS, the Government's response to child labor is hampered by a lack of resources and political instability.¹⁷¹⁰ Child labor violations are not prosecuted in courts, as there is a general lack of awareness regarding relevant laws. Perpetrators often flee before court hearings, and the families of many victims believe that they will incur related financial costs, although the Public Prosecution Service may provide a lawyer at no cost for those who cannot afford one.¹⁷¹¹ According to USDOS, a number of factors inhibit the investigation and prosecution of trafficking. Local law enforcement lacks the resources to patrol the country's borders; police and border guards are often not paid for months at a time, creating an incentive to accept bribes; and the country has no functioning prisons.¹⁷¹² During 2008, there were some trafficking-related arrests but no prosecutions. Local law enforcement did, however, investigate parents suspected of collusion with traffickers.¹⁷¹³

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

The Government of Guinea-Bissau's 2006-2008 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper included among its goals the construction of welcome centers to assist street and working children. As of the writing of this report, however, the status of these centers was unclear.¹⁷¹⁴ In August 2008, the Government ratified ILO Convention 182.¹⁷¹⁵

The Government provides funding of approximately USD 16,000 per year to a local NGO that manages a shelter for child trafficking victims, and police actively refer victims to the shelter.¹⁷¹⁶ Local governments and police in victim-sending areas work with UNICEF, NGOs, and community members in surveillance committees to report on suspected cases of trafficking.¹⁷¹⁷ The Embassy of Guinea-Bissau in Senegal, along with the Ministry of Interior, raises awareness of child trafficking in both sending areas and Senegal, including by encouraging the establishment of centers for Koranic study in local villages to discourage parents from sending children far away to study. During 2008, the Embassy assisted with the repatriation of 63 children to Guinea-Bissau.¹⁷¹⁸ Police and the courts work with a local NGO to educate parents on the dangers of trafficking and their responsibilities to protect their children.¹⁷¹⁹ UNICEF likewise supports Government efforts to combat trafficking, providing training to Government officials.¹⁷²⁰

¹⁶⁸⁵ For statistical data not cited here, see the Data Sources and Definitions section. For ratifications and ILO-IPEC membership, see the Introduction. For minimum age for admission to work, see General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 26, 2006, 10. See also U.S. Department of State, "Guinea-Bissau," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2008*, Washington, DC, February 25, 2009, section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119006.htm>. For age to which education is compulsory, see Ministry of Education official, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 14, 2006, 62. See also UNESCO, *Overcoming Inequality: Why Governance Matters*, 2009, 298; available from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001776/177683E.pdf>. For free public

education, see Ministry of Education official, Interview, June 14, 2006, 60, 62. See also UNESCO, *Overcoming Inequality*, 298.

¹⁶⁸⁶ Ministry of Economy and UNICEF, *Guinée-Bissau: Enquete par Grappes a Indicateurs Multiples 2006*, June 2006, 84; available from http://www.childinfo.org/files/MICS3_GuineaBissau_FinalReport_2006_Fr.pdf.

¹⁶⁸⁷ Guinea-Bissau PLAN International official, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 13, 2006, 56. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 6d.

¹⁶⁸⁸ Ministry of Education official, Interview, June 14, 2006, 61. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 6d.

¹⁶⁸⁹ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, September 28, 2007. See also African Young Workers and Children Movement representative, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 24, 2006, 2.

¹⁶⁹⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 5.

¹⁶⁹¹ African Young Workers and Children Movement representative, Interview, May 24, 2006, 2. See also Network of Young Educators official, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 25, 2006, 6.

¹⁶⁹² Cooperation and Development official, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 12, 2006, 52.

¹⁶⁹³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 5.

¹⁶⁹⁴ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *Trafficking in Persons Reporting*, March 2, 2009. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 5. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Child trafficking on the decline say local authorities", IRINnews.org, [online], October 15, 2008 [cited February 10, 2009]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/PrintReport.aspx?ReportId=80928>. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "On the Child Trafficking Route", IRINnews.org, [online], November 23, 2007 [cited February 10, 2009]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=75485>.

¹⁶⁹⁵ Peter Easton, Mark Peach, Ibrahima Lalya Bah, ElHadj Bella Doumboula, and Mohammed Lamine Barry, *Research Studies Series no. 8*, International Working Group on Nonformal Education of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, May 1997; available from <http://www.adeanet.org/wgnfe/publications/abel/abel2.html>. See also Peter Easton, "Education and Koranic Literacy in West Africa," *IK Notes*, no. 11 (August 1999), 1 and 3; available from <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/iknt11.pdf>. See also UNICEF, *Under the Facade of Religious Study, Children Fall Victim to Trafficking*, July 9, 2007; available

from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guineabissau_40282.html.

¹⁶⁹⁶ Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Child trafficking on the decline say local authorities". See also UNICEF, *Under the Facade of Religious Study*. See also IOM, *Traditional Practices Being Abused to Exploit Children in West Africa, Warns IOM*, [online] 2006 [cited April 28, 2009]; available from <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/newsArticleAF/cache/offonce?entryId=12007>.

¹⁶⁹⁷ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *Trafficking in Persons Reporting*, March 2, 2009.

¹⁶⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹⁹ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *Child Labor Reporting*, March 2, 2009. See also U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *Trafficking in Persons Reporting*, March 2, 2009.

¹⁷⁰⁰ General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview, May 26, 2006. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 6d.

¹⁷⁰¹ General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview, May 26, 2006, 10. See also Ministry of Labor and Civil Society official, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 26, 2006, 13.

¹⁷⁰² General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview, May 26, 2006, 10.

¹⁷⁰³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 6c.

¹⁷⁰⁴ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, February 21, 2008, para 28b. See also U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *Trafficking in Persons Reporting*, March 2, 2009, para 25.

¹⁷⁰⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Guinea-Bissau (Tier 2 Watch List)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2008*, Washington, DC, June 4, 2008; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/105656.pdf>.

¹⁷⁰⁶ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Guinea-Bissau," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, London, 2008, 159; available from http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/FINAL_2008_Global_Report.pdf.

¹⁷⁰⁷ 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.

¹⁷⁰⁸ ECOWAS and ECCAS, *Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central Africa*, Abuja, July 7, 2006, 5-13.

¹⁷⁰⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 6d.

¹⁷¹⁰ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *Child Labor Reporting*, March 2, 2009.

¹⁷¹¹ Network of Young Educators official, Interview, May 25, 2006, 9. See also Office of the Public

Prosecutor official, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 30, 2006.

¹⁷¹² U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *Trafficking in Persons Reporting, March 2, 2009*.

¹⁷¹³ Ibid.

¹⁷¹⁴ Ministry of Economy, *National Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (NPRSP)*, September 2006, 42 and 85; available from <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2007/cr07339.pdf>.

¹⁷¹⁵ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed February 9, 2009; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

¹⁷¹⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2008: Guinea Bissau." See also U.S. Embassy-Dakar, *Trafficking in Persons Reporting, March 2, 2009*.

¹⁷¹⁷ Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Child trafficking on the decline say local authorities".

¹⁷¹⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2008: Guinea-Bissau," section 5.

¹⁷¹⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2008: Guinea Bissau."

¹⁷²⁰ Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Child trafficking on the decline say local authorities".

Guyana

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor¹⁷²¹

Population, children, 5-14 years, 2000:	172,342
Working children, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	26.3
Working boys, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	28.7
Working girls, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	23.9
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%):	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	15
Compulsory education age:	15
Free public education:	Yes
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2006:	115.2
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2002:	93.0
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%), 2000:	95.8
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2001:	64.3
ILO Convention 138:	4/15/1998
ILO Convention 182:	1/15/2001
CRC:	1/14/1991
CRCOPAC:	No
CRCOPSC:	No
Palermo:	9/14/2004
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Associated

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Guyana work in farming, construction, logging, and fishing. Some children are domestic servants, shop assistants, street

vendors, brick makers, and welders.¹⁷²² There are three times more children working in the interior than in the coastal urban areas.¹⁷²³ The work performed by children includes lifting and carrying heavy loads, spraying pesticides, using power-driven machines, handling raw meat, preserving lumber, and varnishing and spraying furniture.¹⁷²⁴ There are reports of children involved in the illicit drug trade. Sexual exploitation of children also occurs in Guyana, including prostitution.¹⁷²⁵ Trafficking in children is a problem, particularly among young Amerindian girls who are trafficked internally.¹⁷²⁶

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years. Children at least 14 years of age may be employed if the work conducted is for general, vocational, or technical education.¹⁷²⁷ Children or adolescents under 18 years are prohibited from work between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. and for 11 consecutive hours in industrial undertakings, which include mining and quarrying, construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and transportation of passengers or goods. The law provides an exception when a family member of the child is employed by the industrial undertaking.¹⁷²⁸ Children older than 16 years may work in the manufacture of steel, iron, paper, and raw sugar as well as gold mining reduction or glass work. Businesses that employ children are required to keep a child labor registry.¹⁷²⁹ There