

## Rwanda

### *Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor*

Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working in 2000:	27.3% <sup>3595</sup>
Minimum age of work:	16 <sup>3596</sup>
Age to which education is compulsory:	13 <sup>3597</sup>
Free public education:	Yes <sup>3598*</sup>
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2004:	119% <sup>3599</sup>
Net primary enrollment rate in 2004:	73% <sup>3600</sup>
Percent of children 5-14 attending school in 2000:	55.3% <sup>3601</sup>
As of 2003, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	46% <sup>3602</sup>
Ratified Convention 138:	4/15/1981 <sup>3603</sup>
Ratified Convention 182:	5/23/2000 <sup>3604</sup>
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes, associated <sup>3605</sup>
*Must pay for school supplies and related items.	

### Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, approximately 29.9 percent of boys and 24.8 percent of 5 to 14 were working in Rwanda.<sup>3606</sup> Children work in domestic service for third-party households, in brick making, sand extraction, stone quarrying, and on tea, rice, and sugar cane plantations.<sup>3607</sup> Children also work in coffee harvesting, charcoal carrying and burning,<sup>3608</sup> and manufacturing,<sup>3609</sup> and are found

<sup>3595</sup> UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, March 1, 2007.

<sup>3596</sup> Government of Rwanda, *Law No. 51/2001 of 30/12/2001 Establishing the Labour Code*, (December 30, 2001), Article 11; available from <http://www.rwandainvest.gov.rw/lawlab.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Rwanda," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/81364.htm>.

<sup>3597</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *National Education Systems*, [online] [cited September 25, 2006]; available from [http://www.uis.unesco.org/statsen/statistics/yearbook/tables/Table3\\_1.html](http://www.uis.unesco.org/statsen/statistics/yearbook/tables/Table3_1.html). See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 5. See also Government of Rwanda, *Constitution of Rwanda*, (May 30, 1991), Article 27 Mandatory Education; available from [http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/rw00000\\_.html](http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/rw00000_.html).

<sup>3598</sup> Government of Rwanda, *Constitution of Rwanda*, Article 27 Mandatory Education. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 5.

<sup>3599</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>3600</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

<sup>3601</sup> UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

<sup>3602</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*, accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

<sup>3603</sup> ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed on September 24, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

<sup>3604</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3605</sup> ILO, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour: Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006, 30; available from [http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20070228\\_Implementationreport\\_en\\_Web.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20070228_Implementationreport_en_Web.pdf).

<sup>3606</sup> UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

<sup>3607</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 6d.

<sup>3608</sup> World Vision, *Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together (KURET)*, project document, July 18, 2005, 7.

<sup>3609</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting*, February 27, 2006.

working at waste disposal sites.<sup>3610</sup> In the capital city of Kigali and in provincial capitals, children live on the streets and work as porters, car guards, garbage collectors, and vendors, selling small items such as cigarettes and candy. Street children, particularly girls, are at high risk of sexual exploitation.<sup>3611</sup>

Child prostitution is a problem in Rwanda,<sup>3612</sup> particularly in urban areas. Children are engaged in commercial sexual exploitation, including forced prostitution, however the number of children engaged in prostitution remains low. Of the small numbers of girls engaging in prostitution, the majority are between 14 and 18 years.<sup>3613</sup> Orphans are among the groups at highest risk for being exploited in prostitution.<sup>3614</sup>

In 2006, an armed group from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) recruited and trafficked Congolese refugee children living in Rwanda for forced labor and soldiering in the DRC.<sup>3615</sup>

The problem of child labor has been attributed partly to the high incidence of children who have been orphaned and are now heading households as a result of Rwanda's civil war, 1994 genocide,<sup>3616</sup> and high incidence of HIV/AIDS.<sup>3617</sup> Estimates of the number of child-headed households vary, with the 2002 census estimating that there are 15,052 and UNICEF estimating that there are 106,000.<sup>3618</sup> Children who head households in Rwanda engage in informal work activities, primarily in subsistence agriculture. These households are most often headed by girls,<sup>3619</sup> and these girls, along with those who work in domestic service, are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation.<sup>3620</sup>

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age of employment at 16 years,<sup>3621</sup> but this does not apply to children working in subsistence agriculture.<sup>3622</sup> The Ministry of Labor can make exceptions to the minimum age law for children 14 to 16 years, for apprenticeships or other circumstances, and

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<sup>3610</sup> Republic of Rwanda, *National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children*, Kigali, 2003, 33.

<sup>3611</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 5. See also Human Rights Watch, *Lasting Wounds: Consequences of Genocide and War on Rwanda's Children*, New York, March 2003, 62-63; available from <http://hrw.org/reports/2003/rwanda0403>.

<sup>3612</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting*, March 1, 2007, Overview para 27 B. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Sections 5 and 6d.

<sup>3613</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Sections 5 and 6d.

<sup>3614</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, March 1, 2007*, Prevention para 28 D,E.

<sup>3615</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Sections 2d, 5, 6c, and 6d.

<sup>3616</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, February 27, 2006*.

<sup>3617</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 5.

<sup>3618</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, August 11, 2006.

<sup>3619</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting*, November 17, 2005. See also Human Rights Watch, *Lasting Wounds: Consequences of Genocide and War on Rwanda's Children*, 47-48.

<sup>3620</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, March 1, 2007*, Overview para 27 A. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 5.

<sup>3621</sup> Government of Rwanda, *Labour Code, Law No. 51/2001 of 30/12/2001 Establishing the Labor Code*, (December 30, 2001), Article 11; available from <http://www.rwandainvest.gov.rw/lawlab.htm>.

<sup>3622</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 6d.

allow children to work with parental permission. Children under the age of 16 years are prohibited from working between the hours of 7 p.m. and 5 a.m.; from performing any work deemed hazardous or difficult, as determined by the Ministry of Labor; and must have at least 12 hours of rest between work shifts.<sup>3623</sup> The ILO CEACR has detected a gap in the labor code with respect to the age of admission to hazardous work. Children 16 to 18 years are allowed to engage in hazardous work, which is prohibited until 18 years under ILO Conventions 182 and 138.<sup>3624</sup> In 2006, a by-law was adopted in Gicumbi District, which stipulated penalties for employers who engaged children in the worst forms of child labor.<sup>3625</sup>

Trafficking is not specifically prohibited by law. However, laws against slavery, forced prostitution, kidnapping, and child labor can be used to prosecute traffickers.<sup>3626</sup> The law prohibits forced labor,<sup>3627</sup> but not specifically by children.<sup>3628</sup> All sexual relations with children are considered rape under Rwandan law. The law also prohibits prostitution and compelling another person to engage in prostitution. These crimes are punishable by imprisonment for up to 5 years and a fine. Penalties are doubled if the crime is committed against a minor under the age of 18 years.<sup>3629</sup> If the child is between 14 and 18 years and the crime is committed by a person in a position of authority over the child, it is punishable by a fine and life imprisonment. Using or exploiting children in pornographic publications is prohibited and is punishable by a fine and between 5 and 12 years imprisonment.<sup>3630</sup> The law also prohibits the use of children in drug trafficking.<sup>3631</sup> The law sets the minimum age for military service at 18 years.<sup>3632</sup> However, this law does not apply to the Local Defense Forces,<sup>3633</sup> a paramilitary government militia;<sup>3634</sup> there

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<sup>3623</sup> Government of Rwanda, *Labour Code*, Articles 11 and 60-66. U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports-2006: Rwanda," Section 6d.

<sup>3624</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Madagascar (ratification: 2001)*, [online] 2006 [cited October 8, 2006]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention No. 182, Madagascar*.

<sup>3625</sup> World Vision, *KURET (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together) Initiative*, technical progress report, September 30, 2006, 7-8.

<sup>3626</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Rwanda (Tier 2)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 5.

<sup>3627</sup> Government of Rwanda, *Labour Code*, Article 4.

<sup>3628</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 6d.

<sup>3629</sup> Interpol- Legislation of Interpol Member States on Sexual Offences against Children, *National Laws: Rwanda*, September 24, 2006, accessed April 3, 2007; available from <http://www.interpol.int/public/children/sexualabuse/nationallaws>. See also The Protection Project, *Criminal Code*, Articles 363-365, 374; available from [www.protectionproject.org](http://www.protectionproject.org) [hard copy on file].

<sup>3630</sup> Interpol- Legislation of Interpol Member States on Sexual Offences against Children, *National Laws- Rwanda*.

<sup>3631</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, March 1, 2007*, Investigation and Prosecution of Trafficking para. 29 A.

<sup>3632</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflict: An Inter-Regional Programme*, project document, Geneva, September 17, 2003, 23. See also Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Rwanda," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004; available from [http://www.child-soldiers.org/document\\_get.php?id=791](http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=791). See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, March 1, 2007*, Investigation and Prosecution of Trafficking para. 29 A.

<sup>3633</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182) Rwanda (ratification: 2000)*, [online] [cited September 24, 2006]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>. See also Human Rights Watch, *Lasting Wounds: Consequences of Genocide and War on Rwanda's Children*, 16.

<sup>3634</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Child Soldiers Global Report 2004."

are no mechanisms in place to prevent children from being recruited or to remove children from armed conflict.<sup>3635</sup> Additionally, the government has not established any penalties for violations of the law against recruiting children under 18 years for military service.<sup>3636</sup>

The Ministry of Public Service, Skills Development, and Labor (MIFOTRA) is the ministry responsible for the enforcement of child labor laws. MIFOTRA employs 30 child labor inspectors. Inspectors generally address child labor violations by issuing warnings and educating employers on child labor laws.<sup>3637</sup> In some cases, fines were levied against employers who employed children illegally and parents who made their children work to the detriment of their schooling. The government continued to support 12 regional child labor offices; however, these offices were not given adequate resources to identify or prevent child labor. According to the U.S. Department of State, the government lacked the staff and capacity to effectively enforce child labor laws.<sup>3638</sup>

The Rwanda National Police, which is part of the Ministry of Internal Security, is responsible for the government's efforts to fight trafficking<sup>3639</sup> and for enforcing laws related to child prostitution. The MIFOTRA and the Ministries of Education, Gender, and Local Government are responsible for providing assistance to children exploited in prostitution.<sup>3640</sup>

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

The Government of Rwanda has a National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (OVC), which targets working children, children living in child-headed households, children affected by armed conflict, children exploited in prostitution and sexual abuse, children affected by HIV/AIDS, and street children. The National Policy on OVC includes specific strategies to address child labor, which include improving children's working conditions, better enforcement of labor laws, supporting income-generating activities for families, strengthening a "catch up" education system, and conducting child labor studies and sensitization campaigns.<sup>3641</sup> The Ministry of Gender and Family Protection, the lead implementing agency for the National Policy on OVC,<sup>3642</sup> assists local NGOs to provide children exploited in prostitution with housing, health services, and vocational education.<sup>3643</sup> The government also provided rehabilitation and training programs to children who had been working in plantations, mines, and quarries. These programs helped children to return to school.<sup>3644</sup>

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<sup>3635</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182) Rwanda (ratification: 2000)*, [online]2006 [cited September 24, 2006]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>.

<sup>3636</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3637</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting*, Kigali, December 14, 2006. See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting*, August 23, 2004.

<sup>3638</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 6d.

<sup>3639</sup> Ibid., Section 5.

<sup>3640</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, March 1, 2007*, Prevention para. 28 B.

<sup>3641</sup> Republic of Rwanda, *National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children*. See also ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, Rwanda*.

<sup>3642</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, March 1, 2007*, Protection and Assistance to Victims para 30 A-C.

<sup>3643</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Rwanda." See also U.S. Embassy- Kigali, *reporting, March 1, 2007*, Protection and Assistance to Victims paras 30 F, I.

<sup>3644</sup> ILO Committee of Experts, *Direct Request, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, Rwanda*.

The Government of Rwanda participated in a global USD 7 million USDOL-funded project implemented by ILO-IPEC to prevent the involvement of children in armed conflict and support the rehabilitation of former child soldiers.<sup>3645</sup> The project targets a total of 5,264 children for withdrawal and 4,250 children for prevention from involvement with armed groups in seven countries, including Rwanda.<sup>3646</sup> Throughout 2006, children who had been soldiers in the DRC received assistance and reintegration services from the Muhazi child demobilization center in the Eastern province.<sup>3647</sup> The Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission also operates a vocational training center for former child soldiers repatriated from the DRC.<sup>3648</sup> The National Poverty Reduction Program, the Local Development Program through Labor-Intensive Public Works, and other local initiatives also provide opportunities for former child soldiers.<sup>3649</sup> The government collaborated with the National Demobilization and Reintegration Committee to raise awareness among refugees living in Rwandan camps on the dangers of child soldiering.<sup>3650</sup>

The Government of Rwanda is collaborating on the 4-year, USD 14.5 million Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together (KURET) project, funded by USDOL and implemented by World Vision, in partnership with the International Rescue Committee and the Academy for Educational Development. The KURET Project aims to withdraw or prevent a total of 30,600 children from exploitive labor in HIV/AIDS-affected areas of these four countries through the provision of educational services.<sup>3651</sup>

The Government of Rwanda continues to provide police officers with training on sex crimes and crimes against children as part of its training curriculum. Specialized training on identifying human trafficking, including trafficking of children, was offered to many police officers in 2006.<sup>3652</sup> The government closely monitors security checkpoints and vehicle cargo for signs of trafficking.<sup>3653</sup>

The Ministry of Education provides educational services to vulnerable children who were previously out of school, including domestic workers, street children, and children who head their households.<sup>3654</sup> The government continues to work with NGOs to assist child-headed households and sensitize local officials to their needs.<sup>3655</sup> Local authorities continue to place street children in foster homes or government-run facilities. The government supports 12 centers throughout the country that provide street children with shelter and meets basic needs.<sup>3656</sup> Local

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<sup>3645</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflict*, project document.

<sup>3646</sup> Ibid. See also ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflict: An Inter-Regional Programme*, Annex to the project document, Geneva, September 17, 2006.

<sup>3647</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Reintegration of Children involved in Armed Conflict, Annex to the project document*, 4. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Sections 2c and 5.

<sup>3648</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Reintegration of Children involved in Armed Conflict, Annex to the project document*, 4.

<sup>3649</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3650</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 2c.

<sup>3651</sup> World Vision, *KURET, project document*.

<sup>3652</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 5.

<sup>3653</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Rwanda."

<sup>3654</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3655</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Rwanda," Section 5.

<sup>3656</sup> Ibid.

government officials conducted an awareness raising campaign to sensitize employers on child labor.<sup>3657</sup>

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<sup>3657</sup> Ibid., Section 6d.