

## Uganda

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i>	
Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working:	Unavailable
Minimum age for admission to work:	14 <sup>4286</sup>
Age to which education is compulsory:	Not
Free public education:	Yes <sup>4288*</sup>
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2005:	118% <sup>4289</sup>
Net primary enrollment rate:	Unavailable
Percent of children 5-14 attending school:	Unavailable
As of 2001, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	70% <sup>4290</sup>
Ratified Convention 138:	03/25/2003 <sup>4291</sup>
Ratified Convention 182:	6/21/2001 <sup>4292</sup>
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes <sup>4293</sup>
*Must pay for school supplies and related items.	

### Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Child work is common in Uganda. In rural areas, children work in crop farming and in commercial agriculture related to tea, sugar, tobacco, and rice.<sup>4294</sup> In urban areas, children sell small items on the streets, work in shops, or are involved in the commercial sex industry.<sup>4295</sup> Children are also engaged in domestic work, stone quarrying, stone crushing, and cross-border smuggling.<sup>4296</sup> Within Uganda, girls are trafficked from rural areas to urban areas and border towns for sexual exploitation.<sup>4297</sup> The high incidence of HIV/AIDs has left many orphans,

<sup>4286</sup> Government of Uganda, *The Employment Act, 2006*, (June 8, 2006), Act 5, 32 (1-3); available from <http://www.oit.org/public/english/protection/trav/aids/laws/ugandalaw.pdf>.

<sup>4287</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, December 12, 2006, para 11.

<sup>4288</sup> Government of Uganda, *The National Report on the Development of Education in Uganda at the Beginning of the 21st Century: Report to the 47th Session of the International Conference on Education, Geneva Switzerland*, August 30, 2004, 3; available from [http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE47/English/Natrep/rep/uganda\\_rev.pdf](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE47/English/Natrep/rep/uganda_rev.pdf). See also U.S. Department of State, "Uganda," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*

Washington, D.C., March 6, 2007, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78763.htm>.

<sup>4289</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total* accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

<sup>4290</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total* accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

<sup>4291</sup> ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, [cited September 25, 2006]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/docs/declAFpr.htm>.

<sup>4292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4293</sup> ILO-IPEC, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour-Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October, 2006, 29; available from [http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20061019\\_Implementationreport\\_eng\\_Web.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20061019_Implementationreport_eng_Web.pdf).

<sup>4294</sup> ILO-IPEC, "Child Labour in Uganda: A report Based On the 2000/2001 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey," (2001), 36. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Uganda," Section 6d. See also U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, Dec. 12, 2006, para 2.

<sup>4295</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Uganda," Section 6d.

<sup>4296</sup> Ibid. See also U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, Dec. 12, 2006, para 2- 3.

<sup>4297</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Uganda (Tier 2 Watch List)," Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65990.htm>.

resulting in child-headed homes. The orphans drop out of school to work to survive and to fend for their siblings.<sup>4298</sup>

Children from northern Uganda and southern Sudan were abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and were trafficked to the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and other areas within northern Uganda and southern Sudan.<sup>4299</sup> Upon being abducted by the LRA, children were forced to become cooks, porters, agricultural workers, soldiers, sex slaves, or guards. Many were also beaten, raped, and required to participate in the murder of other children who attempt to escape.<sup>4300</sup>

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years.<sup>4301</sup> Children between the ages of 12 and 14 may engage in light work that does not hinder their education and is supervised by an adult over 18. Children under 12 are prohibited from working in any business or workplace.<sup>4302</sup> The law states that no child may be employed in hazardous work or between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m.<sup>4303</sup> The Constitution of Uganda states that children under 16 years have the right to be protected from social and economic exploitation and should not be employed in hazardous work; work that would otherwise endanger their health, physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development; or work that would interfere with their education.<sup>4304</sup> Attendance in primary school is not required under the law.<sup>4305</sup> The absence of such a requirement may result in children entering work illegally.

The law prohibits compulsory and forced labor.<sup>4306</sup> While trafficking in persons is not a specific violation under Ugandan law, related offenses cover detaining a person with sexual intent, which is punishable up to 7 years of imprisonment; trading in slaves, which is punishable by up to 10 years of imprisonment; and "defilement," defined as having sex with a minor, which is a punishable offense with a range of sentences leading up to the death penalty.<sup>4307</sup> The minimum age for military service in Uganda is 18.<sup>4308</sup> An April 2007 report presented to the Uganda Parliament by the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Forum for Children revealed that there are 5,000 under age soldiers serving in the Uganda Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) in northern Uganda. The report stated that child recruitment into the army is caused by the difficulty to

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<sup>4298</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kampala official, Email communication to USDOL official, July 26, 2007.

<sup>4299</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report 2006: Uganda."

<sup>4300</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Uganda," Section 5. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report 2006: Uganda."

<sup>4301</sup> *The Employment Act*, 32 (1-3).

<sup>4302</sup> *Ibid.*, Act 6, 32 (1-4).

<sup>4303</sup> *Ibid.*, Act 6, part I (2) and 32 (1-5)

<sup>4304</sup> *Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Chapter 4*; available from <http://www.government.go.ug/constitution/#>.

<sup>4305</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting, Dec. 12, 2006*, Section 11.

<sup>4306</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Uganda," Section 6c.

<sup>4307</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Uganda," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2004*, Washington, D.C., February 28, 2005, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41632.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Uganda," Section 5.

<sup>4308</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, November 17, 2004; available from [http://www.child-soldiers.org/document\\_get.php?id=801](http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=801).

identify those above 18 years. The report findings also showed that because of poverty, some parents convince their underage children to join the army.<sup>4309</sup>

The Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (MGLSD), charged with enforcing child labor laws, investigates child labor complaints through district labor officers<sup>4310</sup> and houses a Child Labor Unit.<sup>4311</sup> Local governments are also empowered to investigate child labor complaints.<sup>4312</sup> Under the Employment Act No. 6 2006, violation of the provisions of the law is punishable with a fine of 240 currency points. Each currency point is equivalent to Uganda Shillings 2000 (two thousand). According to the U.S. Department of State, the government demonstrates a strong will to combat child labor, but lacks resources to be effective.<sup>4313</sup>

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

The Government of Uganda adopted a National Child Labor Policy in November 2006. The objectives of the policy are to integrate child labor issues into national and community-level programs; establish frameworks for coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating child labor programs; and encourage efforts to eliminate child labor.<sup>4314</sup> The MGLSD also coordinates the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Policy, which extends social services to groups that include children who participate in the worst forms of labor.<sup>4315</sup>

The government is participating in the “Opportunities for Reducing Adolescent and Child Labor through Education (ORACLE)” project, a 4-year USD 3 million project funded by USDOL and implemented by the International Rescue Committee and the Italian Association for Volunteers in International Service. The ORACLE project contributes to the prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labor amongst conflict-affected children in Northern Uganda through the provision of transitional and non-formal education and family-based poverty reduction strategies.<sup>4316</sup> ORACLE aims to withdraw 1,495 children and prevent 1,105 from exploitive labor.<sup>4317</sup>

The government is also participating in a 3-year USD 3 million regional project that is implemented by ILO-IPEC and funded by USDOL. The objectives of the project are to combat and prevent HIV/AIDS-induced child labor in Uganda and Zambia. To reduce vulnerability to participation in child labor, the project provides vocational and basic education, psycho-social

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<sup>4309</sup> US Embassy Official, Email communication to USDOL Official, July 26, 2007. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Uganda," Section 5.

<sup>4310</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, September 2, 2005, para 2b. See also U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, Dec. 12, 2006, para 4.

<sup>4311</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, Sep 2, 2005, para 2b.

<sup>4312</sup> Ibid. See also U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, Dec. 12, 2006, para 4.

<sup>4313</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, Dec. 12, 2006, para 15.

<sup>4314</sup> Ibid., para 13.

<sup>4315</sup> U.S. Embassy- Kampala, *reporting*, Sep 2, 2005.

<sup>4316</sup> International Rescue Committee, *Opportunities for Reducing Adolescent and Child Labor through Education (ORACLE)*, project document, New York, 2004, II and III.

<sup>4317</sup> International Rescue Committee, *ORACLE Technical Progress Report*, New York, September 15, 2006, Annex D.

rehabilitation and social protection to children orphaned by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.<sup>4318</sup> The project aims to withdraw 1,600 children and prevent 2,000 children from exploitive labor over its lifetime.<sup>4319</sup> Another regional program is being implemented by World Vision in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia and is funded by USDOL. The USD 14.5 million project, “Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia Together”(KURET), provides educational alternatives to children who are especially vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor because of HIV/AIDS.<sup>4320</sup> The 4-year KURET program aims to prevent or withdraw 30,600 children from exploitive labor in four countries, including Uganda.<sup>4321</sup>

The government, tobacco exporters, and unions supported a project that aimed to reduce child labor in the tobacco growing industry by improving access to education. In 2003, the Eliminate Child Labour in Tobacco Foundation funded a 3-year USD 516,560 project to reduce the incidence of child labor in the tobacco industry in the Masindi region of the country.<sup>4322</sup>

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<sup>4318</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Combating and Preventing HIV Induced Child Labour in Sub-Saharan Africa: Pilot Action in Uganda and Zambia*, project document, Geneva, September 8, 2004.

<sup>4319</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>4320</sup> World Vision, *Project Document Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together (KURET)*, projec document, Kampala, July 18, 2005, 2-3.

<sup>4321</sup> World Vision, *KURET Technical Progress Report*, Washington D.C., September 27, 2006, Annex D.

<sup>4322</sup> Eliminate Child Labour in Tobacco Foundation, *The Project for Elimination of Child Labour from Tobacco Farms in Masindi District, Uganda*, November 14, 2003, 1-3; available from <http://www.eclt.org/filestore/UgandaProgramme.pdf>. See also ECLT Foundation, *ECLT Foundation Program in Uganda 2003-2006: The Project for Elimination of Child Labour from Tobacco Farms in Masindi District, Uganda*, [online] November 14, 2004 [cited May 26, 2004]; available from <http://www.eclt.org/filestore/UgandaProgramme.pdf>.