

Guinea-Bissau

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i>	
Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working in 2000:	64.2% ¹⁹¹⁷
Minimum age for admission to work:	14 ¹⁹¹⁸
Age to which education is compulsory:	12 ¹⁹¹⁹
Free public education:	Yes ¹⁹²⁰
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2001:	70% ¹⁹²¹
Net primary enrollment rate in 2001:	45% ¹⁹²²
Percent of children 5-14 attending school in 2000:	37.3% ¹⁹²³
Percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	Unavailable
Ratified Convention 138:	No ¹⁹²⁴
Ratified Convention 182:	No ¹⁹²⁵
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No ¹⁹²⁶
*Must pay for school supplies and related items.	

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, approximately 64.4 percent of boys and 64.0 percent of girls ages 5 to 14 were working in Guinea-Bissau.¹⁹²⁷ Most working children can be found in the informal sector.¹⁹²⁸ In urban areas many children work as street vendors.¹⁹²⁹ Children also work as shoe shiners and car washers.¹⁹³⁰ Many serve as trade apprentices in workshops where they may perform hazardous

¹⁹¹⁷ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, March 1, 2007.

¹⁹¹⁸ General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 26, 2006.

¹⁹¹⁹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Ending Age of Compulsory Education*, accessed October 21, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

¹⁹²⁰ UNESCO Institute for Statistics Education for All Global Monitoring Report, *Access to Primary Education*, accessed October 22, 2006; available from <http://gmr.uis.unesco.org>. See also Ministry of Education official, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 14, 2006. See also Cooperation and Development official, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 12, 2006.

¹⁹²¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

¹⁹²² UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

¹⁹²³ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

¹⁹²⁴ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed October 19, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

¹⁹²⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹²⁶ ILO, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour: Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006, 29; available from http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipcc/prod/eng/20070228_Implementationreport_en_Web.pdf.

¹⁹²⁷ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

¹⁹²⁸ General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview, May 26, 2006. See also Industry Chamber of Commerce, and Agriculture official, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 7, 2006.

¹⁹²⁹ African Young Workers and Children Movement representative, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 24, 2006. See also ILO official, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 26, 2006.

¹⁹³⁰ African Young Workers and Children Movement representative, Interview, May 24, 2006. See also Network of Young Educators official, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 25, 2006. See also Independent Consultant, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 5, 2006.

work such as that involving metallurgy, mechanics or carpentry.¹⁹³¹ Some children, including orphans, live with other families as unpaid domestic servants.¹⁹³² In rural areas, children perform unpaid farming and cattle herding.¹⁹³³ For four months, during the annual cashew harvest, some children are partly or completely withdrawn from school to work in the fields.¹⁹³⁴

Girls are sometimes exploited as prostitutes in Guinea-Bissau, but the extent of this problem is unknown.¹⁹³⁵ Children, primarily boys, are trafficked for begging and agricultural labor. Most come from the Bafata and Gabu regions and are trafficked to Senegal; some are sent to other locations such as Mali and Guinea.¹⁹³⁶ Some children are sent by their parents from rural to urban areas to attend Koranic schools where some are exploited and forced to beg or shine shoes to earn money for the school masters.¹⁹³⁷ Some teachers also require children to do agricultural work on plantations.¹⁹³⁸ To a lesser extent, children from neighboring Guinea may also be trafficked to Guinea-Bissau.¹⁹³⁹

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The minimum age for employment is set at 14 years. For heavy or dangerous labor, including work in mines, the minimum age is 18 years.¹⁹⁴⁰ 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.¹⁹⁴¹

¹⁹³¹ African Young Workers and Children Movement representative, Interview, May 24, 2006. See also Network of Young Educators official, Interview, May 25, 2006. See also Cooperation and Development official, Interview, June 12, 2006.

¹⁹³² African Young Workers and Children Movement representative, Interview, May 24, 2006. See also Association for Children's Rights official, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 6, 2006. See also Cooperation and Development official, Interview, June 12, 2006.

¹⁹³³ Independent Consultant, Interview, June 5, 2006. See also Cooperation and Development official, Interview, June 12, 2006. See also Guinea-Bissau official PLAN International, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 13, 2006. See also U.S. Department of State, "Guinea-Bissau," 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/2006/78739.htm>.

¹⁹³⁴ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, August 2, 2004, para 2. See also Association for Children's Rights official, Interview, June 6, 2006. See also Cooperation and Development official, Interview, June 12, 2006. See also PLAN International, Interview, June 13, 2006. See also Ministry of Education official, Interview, June 14, 2006.

¹⁹³⁵ General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview, May 26, 2006. See also Independent Consultant, Interview, June 5, 2006. See also Association of Friends of Children official, Interview with USDOL consultant, June 6, 2006. See also PLAN International, Interview, June 13, 2006. See also ECPAT International CSEC Database, *Guinea-Bissau*, accessed October 18, 2006; available from <http://www.ecpat.net>. See also U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting, August 2, 2004*, para 1.

¹⁹³⁶ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, February 28, 2007.

¹⁹³⁷ Ibid. See also African Young Workers and Children Movement representative, Interview, May 24, 2006. See also Network of Young Educators official, Interview, May 25, 2006. See also Laudolino Carlos Medina, Executive Secretary of the Association of Friends of Children, Interview with USDOL Consultant, June 6, 2006.

¹⁹³⁸ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting, February 28, 2007*.

¹⁹³⁹ Independent Consultant, Interview, June 5, 2006. See also Cooperation and Development official, Interview, June 12, 2006. See also PLAN International, Interview, June 13, 2006.

¹⁹⁴⁰ General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview, May 26, 2006. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Guinea-Bissau," Section 6d.

¹⁹⁴¹ General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview, May 26, 2006. See also ILO official, Interview, May 26, 2006.

However, the Code applies only to certain kinds of work that involve wage payments and may not apply to many types of work performed by children.¹⁹⁴²

Prostitution is illegal, as is the use of violence, threats, or other coercive actions to transport victims to foreign countries.¹⁹⁴³ The practices of selling and kidnapping of children are also criminal offenses.¹⁹⁴⁴ Laws against kidnapping and removal of minors, sexual exploitation, and abuse may be used to prosecute trafficking cases.¹⁹⁴⁵ To prevent trafficking, the law requires that persons traveling with children outside of the country submit their personal identification documents as well as the identification documents of the children's parents or of the children.¹⁹⁴⁶ Boys under 16 years may volunteer for the armed forces with the consent of their parents or tutors; the compulsory recruitment age is 18.¹⁹⁴⁷ Forced child labor is prohibited.¹⁹⁴⁸

According to the U.S. Department of State, although age requirements are generally respected in the formal sector, these requirements were not enforced by the Ministries of Justice or Civil Service and Labor in the informal sector.¹⁹⁴⁹ Child labor violations are not prosecuted in courts, as there is a lack of child labor inspectors or awareness regarding relevant laws. Perpetrators often flee before court hearings, as 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.¹⁹⁵⁰ The Ministry of Interior has an inspector responsible for crimes against children who coordinates law enforcement efforts on trafficking. The government has detained suspected traffickers, but there have been no trafficking prosecutions.¹⁹⁵¹ The U.S. Department of State reports that deference to religious teachers and some instances of corruption negatively affect the enforcement of laws regarding child trafficking.¹⁹⁵²

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

The Government of Guinea-Bissau, including its embassy in Senegal, cooperates with Senegalese authorities to provide trafficking victims with services. During 2006, the government repatriated 92 trafficked children from Senegal.¹⁹⁵³ It also provides funding to a local NGO whose efforts include eradicating child trafficking.¹⁹⁵⁴

¹⁹⁴² General Labor Inspectorate official, Interview, May 26, 2006.

¹⁹⁴³ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, February 28, 2007. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial reports of States parties due in 1992, Guinea-Bissau*, CRC/C/3/Add.63, prepared by Government of Guinea-Bissau, pursuant to Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, July 26, 2001, para. 259.

¹⁹⁴⁴ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties*, para 263.

¹⁹⁴⁵ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, February 28, 2007.

¹⁹⁴⁶ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties*, para. 176.

¹⁹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 137.

¹⁹⁴⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Guinea-Bissau," Section 6c.

¹⁹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Section 6d.

¹⁹⁵⁰ Network of Young Educators official, Interview, May 25, 2006. See also Children Guardianship official, Interview with USDOL consultant, May 30, 2006.

¹⁹⁵¹ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, February 28, 2007.

¹⁹⁵² *Ibid.* See also U.S. Department of State, "Guinea-Bissau (Tier 2)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006*, Washington, DC, June 5, 2006; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/>.

¹⁹⁵³ U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, February 28, 2007.

¹⁹⁵⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Guinea-Bissau." See also U.S. Embassy- Dakar, *reporting*, December 15, 2006. See also Association of Friends of Children official, Interview, June 6, 2006.

In July 2006, 24 of the 26 governments represented in ECOWAS and the ECASS participated in a Joint Ministerial Conference on Trafficking in Persons held in Nigeria to develop a common understanding of trafficking in West and Central Africa and to adopt a common set of strategies against trafficking in persons, especially women and children. During the Ministerial Conference, Guinea-Bissau was 1 of 24 countries to adopt the Multilateral Cooperative Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central Africa and the Joint Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children in the West and Central African Regions.¹⁹⁵⁵ As part of the Multilateral Cooperative Agreement, the governments agreed to put into place the child trafficking monitoring system developed by the USDOL-funded ILO-IPEC LUTRENA project; ensure that birth certificates and travel identity documents cannot easily be falsified or altered; provide assistance to each other in the investigation, arrest and prosecution of trafficking offenders; protect, rehabilitate, and reintegrate trafficking victims; and improve educational systems, vocational training and apprenticeships.¹⁹⁵⁶

¹⁹⁵⁵ ECOWAS and ECASS, *Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central Africa*, Abuja, July 7, 2006. See also Catholic Relief Services official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, October 2, 2006.

¹⁹⁵⁶ ECOWAS and ECASS, *Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons in West and Central Africa*. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (LUTRENA)*, technical progress report, Geneva, September 1, 2006. See also Emmanuel Goujon, "African States Sign up to Fight Human Trafficking," *Agence France-Presse*, July 7, 2006.