

Somalia

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Statistics on the number of working children under age 15 in Somalia are unavailable.⁴²⁹⁰ Somalia's workforce is composed predominantly of farmers and nomadic herders, and, in 2004, working children were often found engaged in herding, agricultural work, and household labor.⁴²⁹¹ A 2002 World Bank study found urban-rural differences in the forms of employment relationship among working children; self-employment and casual labor were more often observed in urban areas, while in rural areas unpaid farm labor was the primary employment form.⁴²⁹²

Children are reportedly trafficked for forced labor and sexual exploitation by armed Somali militias; their destinations are believed to include the Middle East and Europe. Children are also reportedly trafficked to South Africa for sexual exploitation.⁴²⁹³ There is a reported increase in the number of children sent to live with relatives and friends in western countries. Some of these children may work or collect welfare in their host countries and send remittances to family members in Somalia.⁴²⁹⁴ Boys as young as 14 years of age have taken part in militia combat.⁴²⁹⁵

A new Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was formed in October 2004. However, until June 2005, the TFG was located entirely in Nairobi, Kenya and since that time, the establishment of the TFG within Somalia was in its early stages.⁴²⁹⁶ The Somali TFG does not provide for free or compulsory education. Results from the UNICEF Primary Schools' Survey (1998-1999) indicate that 62 percent of primary schools in Somalia required families to pay fees.⁴²⁹⁷ In a separate 1998 study, Development Solutions for Africa (DSA) estimated that school fees – by DSA estimates, approximately USD 15.60 per year for each child – were not sufficient to provide a “reasonable primary education.”⁴²⁹⁸ Somali schools at all levels are reported to be staffed with poorly trained teachers and lack textbooks and running water, as well as other items like laboratory equipment.⁴²⁹⁹

⁴²⁹⁰ This statistic is not available from the data sources that are used in this report. Please see the “Data Sources and Definitions” section for information about sources used. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms, such as the use of children in the illegal drug trade, prostitution, pornography, and trafficking. As a result, statistics and information on children's work in general are reported in this section. Such statistics and information may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information on the definition of working children and other indicators used in this report, please see the “Data Sources and Definitions” section of this report.

⁴²⁹¹ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2004: Somalia*, Washington, D.C., February 28, 2005, Sections 1 and 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/>.

⁴²⁹² World Bank, *Socio-Economic Survey Somalia 2002*, May 28, 2003, 21; available from <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/so/surveydoc.htm>.

⁴²⁹³ U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2005: Somalia*, Washington, D.C., June 3, 2005; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/>. The U.S. Department of State also notes that, in 2004, “trafficking in children for forced labor was a serious problem.” See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2004: Somalia*, Section 5.

⁴²⁹⁴ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2004: Somalia*, Section 5.

⁴²⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁹⁶ Integrated Regional Information Networks, “Somalia: TFG preparing to begin operating from Jowhar”, IRINnews.org, [online], June 22, 2005 [cited September 29, 2005]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=47767>. See also, U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Somalia*, June 14, 2005; available from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/so.html>.

⁴²⁹⁷ UNESCO, *Education for All 2000 Assessment: Country Reports- Somalia*, pursuant to UN General Assembly Resolution 52/84, 2000; available from http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/somalia/rapport_2.html.

⁴²⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹⁹ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2004: Somalia*, Section 5.

Gross and net enrollment, and primary school attendance statistics are not available for Somalia.⁴³⁰⁰ Private Koranic and Madrassa schools in Somalia are inexpensive and provide basic education; according to some accounts, they require adherence to conservative Islamic practices that are outside the local custom and culture.⁴³⁰¹

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

A new Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was formed in October 2004. The establishment of TFG institutions in Somalia is not yet complete, and the TFG has no means of enforcing labor laws.

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

Somalia has no national education policies or programs on child labor or education. In many cases, local community education committees (CEC) have organized to take on the task of running Somali schools. These committees are often made up of parents; teachers; members of women’s, youth, and religious groups; NGO’s; and business people.⁴³⁰² UNICEF has provided support and training to CEC members as part of its program to promote school enrollment and improve the quality of education and school facilities in Somalia.⁴³⁰³ A 2005 European Commission grant provides 2

Selected Child Labor Measures Adopted by Governments	
Ratified Convention 138	
Ratified Convention 182	
ILO-IPEC Member	
National Plan for Children	
National Child Labor Action Plan	
Sector Action Plan	

years of support for the continuation of UNICEF’s education efforts in Somalia, which include training for teachers and local education authorities, school building repairs, and the creation of community learning centers that provide primary education to disadvantaged Somali populations.⁴³⁰⁴ An international effort to improve education in Somalia is coordinated by the Education Sectoral Committee of the Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB), which is made up of UN agencies, donors, and international NGOs.⁴³⁰⁵ The SACB endeavors to assist in the “reconstruction and overall development of the education sector in Somalia at all levels” and facilitate children’s access to high-quality education.⁴³⁰⁶

⁴³⁰⁰ These statistics are not available from the data sources that are used in this report. Please see the “Data Sources and Definitions” section for information about sources used.

⁴³⁰¹ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2004: Somalia*, Section 5.

⁴³⁰² UNICEF, *2002/3 Survey of Primary Schools in Somalia*, September, 2003; available from <http://www.sacb.info/MainPubs%20and%20Docs.htm>. See also, UNGEI, *The GAP Project, Stories from the Field: Somalia, Communities united around education*, (April 7, 2005), [online] [cited June 24, 2005]; available from http://www.ungei.org/gap_2005005.html.

⁴³⁰³ UNICEF, *EC and UNICEF Join Hands to Support Education in Somalia*, (January 31, 2005), [online] [cited June 24, 2005]; available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/VBOL-696HBA>.

⁴³⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁰⁵ Somalia Aid Coordination Body, *The Somalia Aid Coordination Body - Introduction*, [online] [cited June 24, 2005]; available from <http://www.sacb.info>.

⁴³⁰⁶ Somalia Aid Coordination Body, *Education Sectoral Committee - Terms of Reference*, [online] [cited June 24, 2005]; available from <http://www.sacb.info>.