

Ethiopia

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor

Percent of children 5-14 estimated as working in 2005:	50.1% ¹⁶⁰⁰
Minimum age of work:	14 ¹⁶⁰¹
Age to which education is compulsory:	Not compulsory ¹⁶⁰²
Free public education:	Yes ^{1603*}
Gross primary enrollment rate in 2005:	93% ¹⁶⁰⁴
Net primary enrollment rate in 2005:	56% ¹⁶⁰⁵
Percent of children 5-14 attending school in 2005:	29.2% ¹⁶⁰⁶
Percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	Unavailable
Ratified Convention 138:	5/27/1999 ¹⁶⁰⁷
Ratified Convention 182:	9/2/2003 ¹⁶⁰⁸
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Yes, associated ¹⁶⁰⁹
*Must pay for school supplies and related items.	

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2005, approximately 58.1 percent of boys and 41.6 percent of girls ages 5 to 14 were working in Ethiopia. The majority of working children were found in the agricultural sector (95.2 percent), followed by services (3.4 percent), manufacturing (1.3 percent), and other sectors (0.2

¹⁶⁰⁰ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, March 1, 2007.

¹⁶⁰¹ Government of Ethiopia, *Labour Proclamation No. 42/1993*, (January 20, 1993), Chapter II. Working Conditions of Young Workers, Section 89, Article 2; available from <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/WEBTEXT/31977.64870/E93ETH10.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Ethiopia," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78734.htm>.

¹⁶⁰² UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Third Periodic Report of States Parties Due in 2003: Ethiopia*, CRC/C/129/Add.8, prepared by Government of Ethiopia, pursuant to Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, April 27, 2005, para 183; available from [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/512c282017f34921c12570b2003f5410?Opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/512c282017f34921c12570b2003f5410?Opendocument). See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention, Concluding Observations: Ethiopia*, CRC/C/ETH/CO/3, Geneva, November 1, 2006, Section 6, Item 63; available from [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/426c8f0ecdb895f1c125724300541453?Opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/426c8f0ecdb895f1c125724300541453?Opendocument).

¹⁶⁰³ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Third Periodic Report of States Parties Due in 2003: Ethiopia*, para. 183. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 5. See also UNGEI, *The School Fee Abolition Initiative (SFAI)*, [online] 2006 [cited April 2, 2007]; available from http://www.ungei.org/infobycountry/247_712.html. See also Andrew Heavens, *In Ethiopia, Better Education for a Better Future*, online, UNICEF, June 15, 2006; available from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia_34570.html?q=printme.

¹⁶⁰⁴ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Gross Enrolment Ratio. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

¹⁶⁰⁵ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Net Enrolment Rate. Primary. Total*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>.

¹⁶⁰⁶ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

¹⁶⁰⁷ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, accessed October 8, 2006; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.

¹⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰⁹ ILO, *IPEC Action Against Child Labour: Highlights 2006*, Geneva, 2006, 30; available from http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipec/prod/eng/20070228_Implementationreport_en_Web.pdf.

percent).¹⁶¹⁰ The number of working children is higher in the Amhara, Oromiya, Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNPR) and Tigray regions compared with other regions.¹⁶¹¹ Most children in Ethiopia work for their families without pay.¹⁶¹² In both rural and urban areas, children often begin working at young ages, with many starting work at 5.¹⁶¹³ In rural areas, children work in agriculture on commercial and family farms, and in domestic service.¹⁶¹⁴ Children in rural areas, especially boys, engage in activities such as cattle herding, petty trading, plowing, harvesting and weeding, while other children, mostly girls, collect firewood and water.¹⁶¹⁵ In urban areas, many children, including orphans, work in domestic service.¹⁶¹⁶ Child domestic workers work long hours, which may prevent them from attending school regularly. Many feel unable to quit their jobs and fear physical, verbal, and sexual abuse from their employers while performing their work.¹⁶¹⁷ Children in urban areas work in construction, manufacturing,¹⁶¹⁸ shining shoes, making clothes, portering, directing customers into taxis, petty trading, and herding animals.¹⁶¹⁹ Estimates of the population of street children vary, with the government estimating it to be between 150,000 and 200,000 for the whole country, and UNICEF estimating it to be 600,000 children. In the capital city of Addis Ababa alone, there are an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 street children according to the government, and 100,000 according to UNICEF. Some of these children work in the informal sector in order to survive.¹⁶²⁰

¹⁶¹⁰ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

¹⁶¹¹ Tassew Woldehanna, Bekele Tefera, Nicola Jones, and Alebel Bayrau, *Child Labour, Gender Inequality and Rural/Urban Disparities: How Can Ethiopia's National Development Strategies be Revised to Address Negative Spill-over Impacts on Child Education and Wellbeing?*, Working Paper No. 20, London, 2005, 15-17; available from <http://www.savethechildren.org/uk/younglives/data/publications/pdfs/WP20Labour.pdf>

¹⁶¹² Lorenzo Guarcello, Scott Lyon, and Furio Camillo Rosati, *The Twin Challenges of Child Labor and Youth Employment in Ethiopia*, Understanding Children's Work Rome, July 2006, 9; available from <http://www.ucw-project.org/pdf/publications/Youthethiopia.pdf>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 6d.

¹⁶¹³ Tassew Woldehanna, Bekele Tefera, Nicola Jones, and Alebel Bayrau, *Child Labour, Gender Inequality and Rural/Urban Disparities: Ethiopia*, 15-17. See also Lorenzo Guarcello, Scott Lyon, and Furio Camillo Rosati, *The Twin Challenges of Child Labor and Youth Employment in Ethiopia*, 6.

¹⁶¹⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 6d.

¹⁶¹⁵ Tassew Woldehanna, Bekele Tefera, Nicola Jones, and Alebel Bayrau, *Child Labour, Gender Inequality and Rural/Urban Disparities: Ethiopia*, 15-17, 30. See also Sonia Bhalotra, *Child Labour in Africa*, OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, OECD, Paris, April 28, 2003, 48-49; available from <http://www.oecd.org/cataoecd/28/21/2955692.pdf>. See also Lorenzo Guarcello, Scott Lyon, and Furio Camillo Rosati, *The Twin Challenges of Child Labor and Youth Employment in Ethiopia*, 6-7.

¹⁶¹⁶ Abiy Kifle, *Ethiopia- Child Domestic Workers in Addis Ababa: A Rapid Assessment*, ILO-IPEC, Geneva, July 2002, 18-19, 22, 55; available from http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ippec/prod/eng/2002_ra_38_et_domestic_en.pdf. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Ethiopia: Child Domestic Work Rampant in Addis Ababa", IRINnews.org, [online], June 16, 2004 [cited April 3, 2007]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=50255>.

¹⁶¹⁷ Kifle, *Rapid Assessment of Child Domestic Workers in Addis Ababa*, 18-19, 22. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 6d.

¹⁶¹⁸ Lorenzo Guarcello, Scott Lyon, and Furio Camillo Rosati, *The Twin Challenges of Child Labor and Youth Employment in Ethiopia*, 11.

¹⁶¹⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 6d.

¹⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, Section 5.

In 2006, various regions of Ethiopia were affected by floods and drought. The drought in Ethiopia's Somali region has caused many children to drop out of school and start working.¹⁶²¹

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is increasing in Ethiopia, particularly in urban areas.¹⁶²² Young girls, some as young as 11, have reportedly been recruited to work in brothels, where they are sought by customers who believe them to be free of sexually transmitted infections.¹⁶²³ Girls are also exploited as prostitutes in hotels, bars, resort towns and rural truck stops. Reports indicate that some young girls have been forced into prostitution by their family members.¹⁶²⁴

Within Ethiopia, children are trafficked from rural to urban areas for domestic service, commercial sexual exploitation, and forced labor in street vending and other activities.¹⁶²⁵ Reports indicate that children have been trafficked from Oromiya and SNNPR to other regions of the country for forced or bonded labor in domestic service.¹⁶²⁶

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years.¹⁶²⁷ The law forbids employers to employ "young workers," defined as children 14 to 18 years, when the nature of the job or the conditions under which it is carried out might endanger the life or health of a child. Prohibited activities include transporting goods by air, land, or sea; working with electric power generation plants; and performing underground work.¹⁶²⁸ Young workers are prohibited from working more than 7 hours per day, between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., during weekly rest days, and on public holidays.¹⁶²⁹

The law states that children have the right to be protected against exploitive practices and work conditions and should not engage in employment that could threaten their health, education, or

¹⁶²¹ Andrew Heavens, *Resources Needed to Help Children and Families Cope with Ethiopia Floods*, UNICEF, September 11, 2006; available from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia_35693.html?q=printme. See also Andrew Heavens, *In Ethiopia, Schools Empty as Effects of Drought Wear On*, UNICEF, June 29, 2006; available from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia_34733.html?q=printme.

¹⁶²² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 5. See also Addis Ababa City Administrative Social and NGO Affairs Office, Save the Children Denmark, and ANPPCAN-Ethiopia Chapter, *Study on the Worst Forms of Child Labour With Special Focus on Child Prostitution- in Addis Ababa*, Addis Ababa, June 2003; available from http://www.redbarnet.dk/Files/Filer/sexuelt_misbrug/ChildProstitutionStudy.doc. See also ECPAT International CSEC Database, *Ethiopia*, accessed October 7, 2006; available from <http://www.ecpat.net>.

¹⁶²³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 5.

¹⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Ethiopia (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: Ethiopia," Section 5. See also Alisha Ryu, *Ethiopian Children Easy Prey for Child Traffickers*, Voice of America (VOA), Addis Ababa, May 26, 2005; available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/VBOL-6CSC3Y?OpenDocument>.

¹⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, Section 6d.

¹⁶²⁷ Government of Ethiopia, *Negarit Gazeta of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia*, Chapter II. Working Conditions of Young Workers, Section 89, Article 1.

¹⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, Chapter II. Working Conditions of Young Workers, Section 89, Articles 1, 3-5.

¹⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, Chapter II. Working Conditions of Young Workers, Sections 90 and 91.

well-being.¹⁶³⁰ Most forms of human trafficking have been criminalized under the new penal code;¹⁶³¹ the trafficking of women and children carries a penalty of up to 20 years of imprisonment and a fine.¹⁶³² The law also prohibits the compulsory or forced labor of children.¹⁶³³ The minimum age for conscription and voluntary recruitment into the military is 18 years.¹⁶³⁴

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) is charged with the enforcement of child labor laws, but, according to the U.S. Department of State, the MOLSA's efforts to provide oversight and resources have been inadequate. Some efforts have been made to enforce child labor laws in the formal industrial sector; however, this was not where most child labor occurred in the country.¹⁶³⁵

The MOLSA, in collaboration with local police, is responsible for monitoring trafficking. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for enforcing laws related to trafficking. In July 2006, the government convicted and sentenced a trafficker to 13 years in prison and imposed a fine.¹⁶³⁶

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

In 2006, the MOLSA conducted a national workshop and established a committee to develop a national child labor policy.¹⁶³⁷

Ethiopia is one of four countries participating in 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.¹⁶³⁸ In 2006, the government indicated its support for KURET's Alternative Basic Education (ABE) centers by committing to pay part of their staffing costs.¹⁶³⁹ Ethiopia also participates in the 5-year USDOL-funded Reducing Child Labor through Education (CIRCLE 1) global project being implemented by Winrock International through

¹⁶³⁰ Government of Ethiopia, *The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*, Article 36; available from <http://www.ethiopianembassy.org/constitution.pdf>.

¹⁶³¹ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Ethiopia."

¹⁶³² U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 5.

¹⁶³³ *Ibid.*, Section 6c.

¹⁶³⁴ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Ethiopia." *In Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004; available from <http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/global-report>.

¹⁶³⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 6d.

¹⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, Section 5.

¹⁶³⁷ World Vision, *KURET (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia Together) Initiative*, technical progress report, March 2006, 11.

¹⁶³⁸ World Vision, *Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together (KURET) Initiative*, project document, July 18, 2005.

¹⁶³⁹ World Vision, *KURET (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together) Initiative*, technical progress report, September 30, 2006, 9.

2007, which aims to reduce exploitive child labor through the provision of educational opportunities.¹⁶⁴⁰

In 2006, the IOM trained judges, prosecutors, and police officers on trafficking.¹⁶⁴¹ The government undertook efforts to combat trafficking, including a program to raise public awareness on the dangers of migrating to the Middle East, consulting with the IOM, showing videos on the perils of human trafficking to passport applicants, and inspecting the employment contracts of prospective domestic workers who wanted to work overseas.¹⁶⁴² In Addis Ababa police stations, NGOs operated child protection units, which referred children who had been rescued from trafficking to an NGO for care pending their return home. The child protection units also collected data on rescued children to facilitate their reunification with their families.¹⁶⁴³ A USAID-funded center in Addis Ababa provides shelter, medical care, counseling, and reintegration assistance to girls victimized by trafficking.¹⁶⁴⁴ NGOs, such as the Forum on Street Children-Ethiopia, provided assistance to children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation, including such services as a drop-in center, shelter, educational services, skills training, guidance, assistance with income-generating and employment activities, and family reunification services. Such assistance often accompanies interaction with the government in order to develop long-term policy and program objectives.¹⁶⁴⁵

¹⁶⁴⁰ Winrock International, *Project Fact Sheet: Scholarships for African Girls*, [online] n.d. [cited October 13, 2006]; available from <http://www.winrock.org/fact/facts.asp?CC=5544&bu=>.

¹⁶⁴¹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 5.

¹⁶⁴² Ibid. See also U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Ethiopia."

¹⁶⁴³ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006: Ethiopia."

¹⁶⁴⁴ Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Ethiopia: Centre for Helping Victims of Trafficking Opens", IRINnews.org, [online], June 29, 2004 [cited January 31, 2007]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=41909>. See also ECPAT International, *The First-ever Centre to Help Victims of Trafficking Opened in the Ethiopian Capital, Addis Ababa, on Tuesday*, Addis Ababa, June 29, 2004; available from http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/IRC/tmpNews.asp?SCID=1446.

¹⁶⁴⁵ ECPAT International, *Annual Report 2004-2005*, Bangkok; available from http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/annual_report/index.asp. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Ethiopia," Section 5.