

Bhutan

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i>	
Percent of children 10-14 estimated as working in 2003:	19.6% ⁴⁷³
Minimum age for admission to work:	18 ⁴⁷⁴
Age to which education is compulsory:	17 ⁴⁷⁵
Free public education:	Yes ⁴⁷⁶
Gross primary enrollment rate:	Unavailable
Net primary enrollment rate:	Unavailable
Percent of children 5-14 attending school in 2003:	69% ⁴⁷⁷
As of 2000, percent of primary school entrants likely to reach grade 5:	91% ⁴⁷⁸
Ratified Convention 138:	Non-ILO member ⁴⁷⁹
Ratified Convention 182:	Non-ILO member ⁴⁸⁰
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No ⁴⁸¹

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2003, approximately 16.1 percent of boys and 22.7 percent of girls ages 10 to 14 were working in Bhutan. The majority of working children were found in the agricultural sector (92.2 percent), followed by services (1.9 percent), manufacturing (0.1 percent), and other sectors (5.9 percent).⁴⁸² Children working in agriculture do so primarily on family farms.⁴⁸³ Migrant workers including child workers as young as 11 are found in road construction.⁴⁸⁴ Children also work as doma sellers and as street vendors,⁴⁸⁵ according to UNICEF, they are also involved in commercial sexual exploitation.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁷³ UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, March 1, 2007.

⁴⁷⁴ Government of Bhutan, *Rules and Regulations on Employment of Bhutanese Nationals in the Private Sector*, (1997).

⁴⁷⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Bhutan," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006*, Washington, DC, March 6, 2007, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78870.htm>.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Attendance Statistics*, accessed December 20, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

⁴⁷⁸ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Survival Rate to Grade 5. Total*, accessed December 18, 2006; available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/>.

⁴⁷⁹ ILO, *Alphabetical list of ILO member countries*, [online] 2006 [cited December 21, 2006]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/country.htm>.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ ILO, *IPEC Actions Against Child Labour- Highlights 2006*, Geneva, October 2006; available from http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/docstore/ipecc/prod/eng/20070228_Implementationreport_en_Web.pdf.

⁴⁸² UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*.

⁴⁸³ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Bhutan," Section 6d.

⁴⁸⁴ U.S. Embassy- New Delhi, *reporting* September 17, 2004.

⁴⁸⁵ UNICEF, *Report on Assessment of Protection Factors of Children in Bhutan*, Ministry of Health, Thimphu, 2004.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Bhutanese law prohibits the employment of children and states that candidates seeking employment shall have attained the age of majority, 18 years, to be eligible for appointment to any post in a business establishment.⁴⁸⁷ The Ministry of Labor reportedly conducts 10 to 15 inspections per week, most of which are in the construction sector, where most foreign child workers are found.⁴⁸⁸ Forced labor is prohibited by Bhutanese law.⁴⁸⁹ Bhutanese law also criminalizes sex crimes and offenses against children.⁴⁹⁰ According to the law of Bhutan, child trafficking has a minimum penalty of 3 years.⁴⁹¹ Prostitution is a felony with penalties varying according to the age of the child.⁴⁹² Children are permitted to enlist in the armed forces at 15 years.⁴⁹³

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

Research has not identified any policies or programs by the Government of Bhutan to address exploitive child labor.

⁴⁸⁷ United Nations, *Initial Reports of State Parties due in 1992: Bhutan*, October 14, 1999, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of State Parties due in 1992: Bhutan*, CRC/C/3/Add.60, prepared by Government of Bhutan, pursuant to Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, October 1999. See also Government of Bhutan, *Rules and Regulations on Employment*.

⁴⁸⁸ U.S. Embassy- New Delhi, *reporting September 17, 2004*.

⁴⁸⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2006: Bhutan," Section 6c.

⁴⁹⁰ U.S. Embassy- New Delhi, *reporting September 17, 2004*.

⁴⁹¹ Government of Bhutan, *Penal Code of Bhutan*, para 3(a).

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*, para. 380.

⁴⁹³ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Summary Record of the 715th Meeting: Bhutan*, United Nations, Geneva, June 2001.