

Equatorial Guinea

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

In May 2000, the Government of Equatorial Guinea requested assistance from the ILO regional office to improve the country's adherence to international labor standards, including those related to child labor.⁹⁰³ The country also has government-sponsored and private programs to provide education for vulnerable children.⁹⁰⁴

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 1999, the ILO estimated that 32 percent of children between the ages of 10 and 14 in Equatorial Guinea were working.⁹⁰⁵ Children primarily work in the informal sector, on family farms, and in street vending.⁹⁰⁶ There is evidence that some children engage in prostitution, particularly in urban areas.⁹⁰⁷

Education is free and compulsory until the age of 14.⁹⁰⁸ In 1993, the gross primary enrollment rate was 149.7 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 83.4 percent.⁹⁰⁹ Late entry into the school system and high dropout rates are common, and girls are more likely than boys to drop out of school.⁹¹⁰

⁹⁰³ The ILO Representative has reported that progress is being made in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor. See U.S. Embassy–Yaounde, unclassified telegram no. 3123, July 2000 [hereinafter unclassified telegram 3123].

⁹⁰⁴ Unclassified telegram 3123.

⁹⁰⁵ *World Development Indicators 2001* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2001) [hereinafter *World Development Indicators 2001*] [CD-ROM].

⁹⁰⁶ *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000—Equatorial Guinea* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2001) [hereinafter *Country Reports 2000*], Section 6d, at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/af/index.cfm?docid=777>.

⁹⁰⁷ UN Commission on Human Rights, *Question of the Violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Any Part of the World: Report on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea Submitted by Mr. Alejandro Artucio, Special Rapporteur of the Commission, Pursuant to Commission Resolution 1998/71, 1999/41, E/CN.4/1999/41* (Geneva, 1999). See also “Child Labour Increasing in Equatorial Guinea,” November 21, 2000, at http://www.afrol.com/News/eqg023_child_labour.htm, and “Prostitution Booms in Equatorial Guinea As Education Sector Folds Up,” October 12, 2000, at http://www.afrol.com/News/eqg013_prostitution.htm on 10/4/01.

⁹⁰⁸ According to the State Department, this measure is not enforced. See *Country Reports 2000* at Section 5. See also Republic of Equatorial Guinea, “Quick Facts,” at <http://www.orgitecture.com/guinea/information1387/information.htm> on 1/10/01.

⁹⁰⁹ *World Development Indicators 2001*.

⁹¹⁰ The higher dropout rate for girls is attributable in part to early pregnancies. In 1999, only a small percentage of Equatorial Guinea's budget was earmarked for education (1.8 percent). See UN Commission on Human Rights, *Question of the Violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Any Part of the World: Report on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea Submitted*

Child Labor Law and Enforcement

The minimum age for employment is set at 14 years, but children as young as 13 can work in light jobs on the condition that these do not affect their health, growth, or school attendance. In addition, children who are 12 years old may work in agriculture or craft making.⁹¹¹ Children under 16 years are prohibited from work that might harm their health, safety or morals.⁹¹² Forced or bonded labor by children is prohibited.⁹¹³ The Ministry of Labor corps of 50 national labor inspectors enforces labor laws.⁹¹⁴ Equatorial Guinea ratified ILO Convention 138 on June 12, 1985 and ILO Convention 182 on August 13, 2001.⁹¹⁵

by the Special Representative of the Commission, Mr. Gustavo Gallon, Pursuant to Commission Resolution 2000/19, E/CN.4/2001/38 (Geneva, 1999).

⁹¹¹ For a 12-year-old to work, professional organizations of workers and authorities within the Ministry of Labor must be consulted in advance. These regulations are found in unspecified government labor laws. See unclassified telegram 3123.

⁹¹² Unclassified telegram 3123.

⁹¹³ *Country Reports 2000* at Section 6c.

⁹¹⁴ Unclassified telegram 3123.

⁹¹⁵ ILOLEX database: Equatorial Guinea at <http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/english/> on 10/4/01.

NOTE: Hard copies of all Web citations are on file.