

Comoros

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

The government and UNICEF have worked together to evaluate the extent of child labor.⁵⁸³ Awareness-raising meetings and information campaigns on child labor have been organized among families and children.⁵⁸⁴

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 1999, the ILO estimated that 37.9 percent of children between the ages of 10 and 14 in Comoros were working.⁵⁸⁵ Children work in the informal sector, in agriculture, and in family enterprises, particularly in subsistence farming and fishing.⁵⁸⁶ Children also work as domestic servants, some as young as seven years.⁵⁸⁷ Migration from rural areas has led to a growing number of children working and living on the streets.⁵⁸⁸ Two armed separatist groups in Anjouan, an island in Comoros, have reportedly been recruiting boy soldiers between the ages of 13 and 16.⁵⁸⁹

Primary education is compulsory until the age of 10.⁵⁹⁰ In 1993, the gross primary enrollment rate was 74.6 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 52 percent.⁵⁹¹ There are gender disparities in school attendance and dropout rates.⁵⁹² In 1993, the gross primary enrollment

⁵⁸³ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Summary Record of the 666th Meeting: Comoros*, CDC/C/SR.666 (Geneva, October 4, 2000) [hereinafter *Record of 666th Meeting*], para. 39.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.* at para 46.

⁵⁸⁵ *World Development Indicators 2001* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2001) [hereinafter *World Development Indicators 2001*] [CD-ROM].

⁵⁸⁶ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention: Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Comoros*, CRC/C/15/Add.141 (Geneva, October 16, 2000) [hereinafter *Concluding Observations*], para. 48. See also *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000–Comoros* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, February 2001) [hereinafter *Country Reports 2000*], Section 6d, at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/af/index.cfm?docid=838>.

⁵⁸⁷ *Concluding Observations* at para. 29. See also *Record of 666th Meeting* at para. 3 and *Country Reports 2000* at Section 5.

⁵⁸⁸ *Concluding Observations* at para. 39. See also *Record of the 666th meeting* at para. 3.

⁵⁸⁹ *Record of 666th Meeting* at para 41. See also *Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Africa Report: Comoros* (London, March 1999).

⁵⁹⁰ *Country Reports 2000* at Section 5.

⁵⁹¹ *World Development Indicators 2001*.

⁵⁹² *Concluding Observations* at para. 43.

rate was 84.3 percent for boys and 69.2 percent for girls; the net primary enrollment rate was 57.3 percent for boys and 46.6 percent for girls.⁵⁹³ Primary school attendance rates are unavailable for Comoros. While enrollment rates indicate a level of commitment to education, they do not always reflect children's participation in school.⁵⁹⁴ There is a general lack of facilities, equipment, qualified teachers, and textbooks and other resources.⁵⁹⁵ Salaries for teachers are low and often so far in arrears that many teachers refuse to work.⁵⁹⁶

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Code sets the minimum age for work at 15 years. There are no laws prohibiting forced and bonded labor or trafficking in persons.⁵⁹⁷ There is lax enforcement of labor laws,⁵⁹⁸ in part because of a lack of labor inspectors and general lack of resources.⁵⁹⁹ Comoros has not ratified ILO Convention 138 or ILO Convention 182.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹³ *World Development Indicators 2001*.

⁵⁹⁴ For a more detailed discussion on the relationship between education statistics and work, see *Introduction* to this report.

⁵⁹⁵ *Concluding Observations* at para. 43.

⁵⁹⁶ *Record of 666th Meeting* at para. 23.

⁵⁹⁷ *Country Reports 2000* at Sections 6d, 6f.

⁵⁹⁸ *Concluding Observations* at para. 48.

⁵⁹⁹ *Country Reports 2000* at Sections 5, 6d.

⁶⁰⁰ In February 2000, the Council of Ministers in Comoros approved ILO Convention 182 for ratification. See *Record of 666th Meeting* at para. 39. See also ILO-IPEC, Ratification Campaign: Ratification Map, on 11/20/01.

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