

# Mali

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

The Government of Mali has been a member of ILO-IPEC since 1998.<sup>2268</sup> With support from ILO-IPEC, the government has been building its capacity to combat child labor on the national and regional level.<sup>2269</sup> Mali is one of nine countries participating in the USDOL-funded ILO-IPEC project to combat the trafficking of children for exploitative labor in West and Central Africa.<sup>2270</sup> In January 2002, the President of Mali, the Confédération Africaine de Football, the Comité d'Organisation de la Coupe d'Afrique des Nations, and ILO-IPEC launched an awareness raising campaign on child labor to coincide with the 2002 African Cup of Nations, a popular soccer tournament.<sup>2271</sup> In 2002, the government was also preparing to implement a national child labor survey in Mali, with technical assistance from ILO-IPEC's SIMPOC, to measure the nature and extent of child labor at a national level.<sup>2272</sup>

In September 2000, the Governments of Mali and Côte d'Ivoire signed a cooperative agreement to control cross-border trafficking. The two countries have developed national plans of action covering the prevention of child trafficking, controlling and monitoring child trafficking, and repatriating and rehabilitating children who have been trafficked.<sup>2273</sup> In 1998, the government developed a plan to include *marabouts*, Koranic teachers, some of whom reportedly employ students as beggars, in the campaign against child begging.<sup>2274</sup>

Following the World Declaration on Education for All (1990), the Government of Mali developed a New Education System (NES), which is the foundation of the basic education system in Mali.<sup>2275</sup> The goals of the NES are to retain the Malian cultural identity and to make education more relevant

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<sup>2268</sup> ILO-IPEC, *All About IPEC: Program Countries*, [online] [cited August 29, 2002]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/about/countries/index.htm>.

<sup>2269</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labor Exploitation in West and Central Africa (Phase II): Country Annex VII: Mali*, project document, RAF/01/P53/USA, Geneva, July 2001.

<sup>2270</sup> The regional child trafficking project now covers Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, and Togo. See *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>2271</sup> ILO-IPEC, *ILO Waves "Red Card" at Child Labor*, ILO-IPEC, [online] January 15, 2002 [cited August 29, 2002]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2002/1.htm>.

<sup>2272</sup> ILO official, electronic communication to USDOL official, August 28, 2002.

<sup>2273</sup> ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children (Phase II)*, project document, 8

<sup>2274</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Mali*, CRC/C/15/Add.113, November 1999, para. 33 [cited December 13, 2002]; available from [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CRC.C.15.Add.113.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CRC.C.15.Add.113.En?OpenDocument).

<sup>2275</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties due in 1992: Mali*, CRC/C/3/Add.53, prepared by Republic of Mali, pursuant to Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, September 1997, para. 144-45 [cited December 13, 2002]; available from <http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord1999/documentation/tbodies/crc-c-3-add53.htm>.

by linking schooling to life skills, and democratizing the school system.<sup>2276</sup> Working with international donors, the Primary Education Support Fund, and other partners, the Government of Mali undertook tasks to help equip and renovate classrooms, recruit teachers, and produce new teaching materials.<sup>2277</sup>

## **Incidence and Nature of Child Labor**

In 2000, the ILO estimated that 51.1 percent of children ages 10 to 14 years in Mali were working.<sup>2278</sup> Children work in the agricultural sector, in mining and gold washing, and as domestic servants in urban areas.<sup>2279</sup> In some cases, children work as street beggars for *marabouts* as part of their education at Koranic schools.<sup>2280</sup>

Mali is a source of trafficked children, most of whom are sold into forced labor in Côte d'Ivoire to work on coffee, cotton, and cocoa farms or to work as domestic servants.<sup>2281</sup> Organized networks of traffickers, promising parents that they will provide paid employment for their children, reportedly sell the children to commercial farm owners for between 14,500 to 29,000 CFA (USD 22 to 43).<sup>2282</sup>

Primary education is compulsory and free until the age of 13; however, students must pay for their own uniforms and school supplies to attend public schools.<sup>2283</sup> In 1998, the gross primary enrollment rate was 53.1 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 41.7 percent.<sup>2284</sup> In 1996, the gross primary attendance rate was 40.6 percent and the net primary attendance rate was

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<sup>2276</sup> Ibid., para. 146.

<sup>2277</sup> Between 1993 and 1995, the Government of Mali built and equipped 880 classrooms, renovated 1773, and equipped 1847 classrooms Ibid., para. 149.

<sup>2278</sup> World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002* [CD-ROM], Washington, D.C., 2002.

<sup>2279</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Mali*, para. 32. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children (Phase II)*, project document, Country Annex VII.

<sup>2280</sup> Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *Addendum to the Fourteenth Periodic Report of States Parties due in 2001*, CERD/C/407/Add.2, prepared by Government of Mali, pursuant to Article 9 of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, February 2002, para. 49 [cited December 13, 2002]; available from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/898586b1dc7b4043c1256a450044f331/b9dfff8e90ea9ca2c1256c0e004b0b2b/\\$FILE/G0242546.doc](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/898586b1dc7b4043c1256a450044f331/b9dfff8e90ea9ca2c1256c0e004b0b2b/$FILE/G0242546.doc).

<sup>2281</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2001: Mali*, Washington, D.C., March 4, 2002, 434-36, Section 6f [cited December 13, 2002]; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/af/8391.htm>.

<sup>2282</sup> Ibid., 434-36, Section 6f. For currency conversion see FX Converter, [online] [cited October 16, 2002]; available from <http://www.carosta.de/frames/convert.htm>.

<sup>2283</sup> Higher Education Systems Database, *Mali*, International Association of Universities/UNESCO International Centre on Higher Education, [online] 2001 [cited October 16, 2002]; available from <http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/global/wwcu/background/Mali.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Mali*, 432-34, Section 5.

<sup>2284</sup> World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*.

29.4 percent.<sup>2285</sup> A significant gender disparity exists for primary school students; in 1996, the gross primary attendance rate was 47.6 percent for boys and 33.7 percent for girls.<sup>2286</sup>

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Article 187 of Labor Code sets the minimum age for employment and apprenticeship at 14 years.<sup>2287</sup> However, children ages 12 to 14 may work up to two hours per day during school vacations with parental approval. Children ages 14 to 16 years may work up to four and a half hours per day with the permission of the labor inspectorate (but not during nights, holidays, or on Sundays) and children ages 16 to 18 years may work in jobs that are not physically demanding.<sup>2288</sup> The Constitution prohibits forced labor by children.<sup>2289</sup> Articles 189 and 190 of the Criminal Code establish penalties for the sale, trafficking and abduction of children.<sup>2290</sup> Article 183 of the Criminal Code establishes penalties for the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.<sup>2291</sup> Labor inspectors conduct surprise and complaint-based inspections but operate only in the formal sector and lack resources to effectively monitor child labor.<sup>2292</sup> The frontier police, Interpol, and territorial and security authorities are responsible for enforcing the cooperative agreement to curb cross-border trafficking signed between Côte d'Ivoire and Mali.<sup>2293</sup> By the end of 2001, 10 traffickers, who were arrested in Sikasso, were in detention awaiting trial for trafficking children.<sup>2294</sup>

The Government of Mali ratified ILO Convention 138 on March 11, 2002 and ILO Convention 182 on July 14, 2000.<sup>2295</sup>

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<sup>2285</sup> USAID, *Demographic and Health Survey: Mali (1995/6)* Washington, D.C., 2002; available from <http://www.measureprogram.org/africa.html>.

<sup>2286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2287</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Mali*, para. 168.

<sup>2288</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Mali*, 434-36, Section 6d.

<sup>2289</sup> Ibid., 434-36, Section 6c.

<sup>2290</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Mali*, para. 176.

<sup>2291</sup> Ibid., para. 168. See also Government of Mali, *Criminal Code, Section V: Offenses Against Public Morals Public Offenses Against Decency*, [cited December 13, 2002]; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org/main1.htm>.

<sup>2292</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Mali*, 434-36, Section 6d.

<sup>2293</sup> ILO-Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, *Individual Observation Concerning Convention no. 29, Forced Labor, 1930 Mali (ratification: 1960)*, Geneva, 2002.

<sup>2294</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Mali*, 434-36, Section 6f.

<sup>2295</sup> ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, in ILOLEX, [database online] [cited December 13, 2002]; available from <http://iloex.ilo.ch:1567/english/newratframeE.htm>.