

Somalia

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

Somalia has no national government and therefore no national policy or programs on child labor or education.³²⁹³ Since 1996 the international effort to improve education in Somalia has been coordinated by the Education Sectoral Committee of the Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB), made up of UN agencies, donors, and international NGOs.³²⁹⁴ The SACB has emphasized as its major goals improving access to education, improving learning conditions, enhancing teacher training, and creating a financially viable management capacity.³²⁹⁵ UNICEF provides in-service training of teachers, develops curricula, and supplies textbooks and other necessary educational material.³²⁹⁶ UNICEF, UNESCO and some NGOs have also distributed sets of textbooks and other instructional materials to a small number of Koranic schools in Somalia and have created a program to try to make Koranic schools supplement or substitute for formal primary education.³²⁹⁷ In 1999, the Somaliland authority drafted guidelines for its comprehensive education policy; however, no action had been taken on the policy by the end of 2001.³²⁹⁸

³²⁹³ The Transitional National Government, based in Mogadishu, represents Somalia in the United Nations and other international organizations. It has yet to establish its authority over most of the country and has little control over most government services, which are administered by provincial governments, if at all. See U.S. Department of State, *Background Note: Somalia*, April 2002, [cited September 19, 2002]; available from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2863.htm>. See also UN Somalia, *Somalia History*, United Nations, [cited September 19, 2002]; available from <http://www.unsomalia.org/infocenter/history.htm>.

³²⁹⁴ Somalia Aid Coordination Body, *The Somalia Aid Coordination Body on the Net*, [cited September 23, 2002]; available from http://www.sacb.info/main_intro.htm.

³²⁹⁵ Somalia Aid Coordination Body, *SACB Education Sectoral Strategy*, [cited September 23, 2002]; available from <http://www.sacb.info/committees/education/SACB%20EDUCATION%20SECTORAL%20STRATEGY.doc>.

³²⁹⁶ *UNICEF Somalia Review Aug [sic] 2002*, ReliefWeb, 2002 [cited September 13, 2002]; available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/9ca65951ee22658ec125663300408599/b950cdab2144fb76c1256c31003dfa39?OpenDocument>.

³²⁹⁷ UNESCO, *Education for All 2000 Assessment: Country Reports- Somalia*, pursuant to UN General Assembly Resolution 52/84, 1999, [cited September 19, 2002]; available from http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/somalia/rapport_2.html.

³²⁹⁸ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2001: Somalia*, Washington, D.C., March 4, 2002, 597-98, Section 5 [cited December 17, 2002]; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/af/8403.htm>.

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 1999, UNICEF estimated that 41.9 percent of children ages 5 to 14 years were working in Somalia.³²⁹⁹ Children are engaged in herding, agriculture and domestic labor.³³⁰⁰ In addition, children under age 15 have been recruited by militias, with boys as young as 10 years old serving as bodyguards for faction leaders.³³⁰¹ There also are reports of Somali children being trafficked for the purpose of forced labor.³³⁰²

Primary education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 14 years.³³⁰³ The Transitional National Charter guarantees a free basic education up to secondary school;³³⁰⁴ however, 62 percent of schools in Somalia require families to pay fees, averaging USD 15.60 per year for each child.³³⁰⁵ In addition, many schools lack textbooks and running water.³³⁰⁶ In 1999, the gross primary enrollment rate was 9 percent, with 11.8 percent for boys and 6.3 percent for girls.³³⁰⁷ In 1999 UNICEF estimated that 58.4 percent of primary school-age children attended school, and 72.5 percent of children who had entered first grade actually reached the fifth grade.³³⁰⁸ Also according to UNICEF, only an estimated 10 percent of children aged 6 to 14 have access to formal

³²⁹⁹ Children who are working in some capacity include children who have performed any paid or unpaid work for someone who is not a member of the household, who have performed more than four hours of housekeeping chores in the household, or who have performed other family work. See Government of Somalia, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2 (MICS2)*, UNICEF, [cited December 17, 2002]; available from <http://www.ucw-project.org>. See also UNICEF, *Somalia: List of Tables*, [online] [cited December 17, 2002]; available from <http://www.childinfo.org/MICS2/natlMICSrepz/Somalia/TablesFinal150101.pdf>.

³³⁰⁰ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Somalia*, 598-99, Section 6d.

³³⁰¹ *Ibid.*

³³⁰² *Ibid.*

³³⁰³ UNESCO, *Somalia- Education System*, [cited September 12, 2002]; available from <http://www.unesco.org/iau/cd-data/so.rtf>.

³³⁰⁴ *Transitional National Charter*, Article 14, Section 3.

³³⁰⁵ UNESCO, *EFA 2000 Assessment: Somalia*.

³³⁰⁶ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Somalia*, 597-98, Section 5.

³³⁰⁷ The enrollment figures came from responses to questionnaires for UNICEF's 1998-99 school survey data. In this study UNESCO defines a primary school as one for children ages 6 to 14. See UNESCO, *EFA 2000 Assessment: Somalia*.

³³⁰⁸ UNICEF's MICS2 study looked at children ages five and older in regard to education. According to UNICEF, 77 percent of children in the central-south of Somalia who entered grade one reached grade five as did 74 percent in the northeast and 80 percent in the northwest. See UNICEF, *Somalia: List of Tables*. See also Government of Somalia, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2*. NetAid, an NGO, estimates that "four out of every five children have no access to any schooling whatsoever." See NetAid, *Somalia- Concern*, NetAid.org, [online] [cited December 17, 2002]; available from http://www.netaid.org/projects/project_index.pt?project_id=10231. The U.S. Department of State's Human Rights Report also cites the 10-20 percent enrollment figure. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Somalia*, 597-98, Section 5.

schooling.³³⁰⁹ Many students attend Koranic schools, though these schools do not provide broad-based education.³³¹⁰

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Somalia has no national government and has no means for enforcing labor laws.³³¹¹ Somalia is not a member of the ILO and has therefore not ratified ILO Convention 138 or ILO Convention 182.³³¹²

³³⁰⁹ UNICEF, *Girls' Education in Somalia*, [online] [cited September 12, 2002]; available from <http://www.unicef.org/programme/girlseducation/action/cases/somalia.htm>.

³³¹⁰ *Emergency Updates- Somalia*, Save the Children- UK, 2002 [cited September 12, 2002]; available from http://savethechildren.org.uk/emer_updates/Somalia.html. Two studies conducted by UNICEF in the late 1990s found that 59 percent of the children in the North West zones and 39 percent of the children in the North East zone attended Koranic school for two to two and one-half hours per day, usually for up to two years, between the ages of 4 and 10. See UNESCO, *EFA 2000 Assessment: Somalia*.

³³¹¹ U.S. Department of State, *Background Note: Somalia*. See also UN Somalia, *Somalia History*.

³³¹² ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, in ILOLEX, [database online]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.