

Swaziland

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

In 1992,³⁴²⁵ the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland announced a National Program of Action for children for 1993 to 2000. The program involved the formation of government committees on children's issues.³⁴²⁶ The program addressed most articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child except free and compulsory education, which the government cannot ensure due to financial constraints.³⁴²⁷ In 2002, the government established a Children's Unit to promote and protect child rights. The unit collaborates with law enforcement on child protections issues, has developed guidelines for management of child abuse cases and has established professional networks through cooperation with the government's legal branch and NGOs.³⁴²⁸

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, the ILO estimated that 12.3 percent of children ages 10 to 14 years were working.³⁴²⁹ Children work in agriculture (particularly in the cotton-growing region), and as domestics, herders and street workers.³⁴³⁰ There are reports that Mozambican girls have been involved in child prostitution in Swaziland.³⁴³¹

Education is neither free nor compulsory in Swaziland. The Ministry of Education pays teacher salaries, while student fees and money raised from the community pay for costs such as building upkeep and teacher housing.³⁴³² In 1998, the gross primary school enrollment rate was 117.4

³⁴²⁵ UNICEF and Government of Swaziland Ministry of Education, "The National Programme of Action for the Children of Swaziland 1993-2000," in *Common Country Assessment- Swaziland*, ed. M.D. McDermott Mbabane: Environmental Consulting Services, 1997, Chapter 4 [cited August 30, 2002]; available from http://www.ecs.co.sz/cca/cca_4.htm.

³⁴²⁶ The Honorable Dr. Phetsile Dlamini, Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Statement at the United Nations Special Session on Children, May 10, 2002, [cited December 18, 2002]; available from <http://www.un.org/ga/children/swazilandE.htm>.

³⁴²⁷ UNICEF and Government of Swaziland Ministry of Education, "The National Programme of Action."

³⁴²⁸ Statement at the United Nations Special Session on Children.

³⁴²⁹ World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002* [CD-ROM], Washington, D.C., 2002. See also UNICEF, *Statistics*, [cited August 30, 2002]; available from <http://www.childinfo.org/eddb/work/edu1.htm>. See Government of Swaziland, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Model: Full Report*, 2000, 25.

³⁴³⁰ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2001: Swaziland*, Washington, D.C., March 4, 2002, 665-68, Sections 5 and 6d [cited December 18, 2002]; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/af/8406.htm>. See also UNICEF and Government of Swaziland Ministry of Education, "The National Programme of Action."

³⁴³¹ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Swaziland*, 666-68, Section 6d.

³⁴³² *Ibid.*, 665-66, Section 5.

percent, and the net primary school enrollment rate was 76.8 percent.³⁴³³ In 1996, Swaziland spent 8.6 percent of GDP per capita on primary education.³⁴³⁴ The government pays teachers' salaries but families must pay for books, building upkeep and teacher housing.³⁴³⁵

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Employment Act of 1980 sets the minimum age of employment at 15 years for non-hazardous industrial work, although children may work in the commercial sector beginning at age 13.³⁴³⁶ Employment of children under 18 years is not permitted in mines, quarries or underground work, or in any sector that is dangerous to their safety or health.³⁴³⁷ The law allows children under 15 to work in family industrial enterprises or in technical schools under supervision, and limits children to six hours of work per day and 33 hours per week.³⁴³⁸ The Ministry of Labor is responsible for enforcing child labor laws, but its effectiveness is limited by a lack of personnel.³⁴³⁹

The Criminal Code prohibits the procurement of a child for purposes of prostitution.³⁴⁴⁰ There is no law prohibiting trafficking in persons.³⁴⁴¹

The Government of Swaziland ratified ILO Convention 138 and ILO Convention 182 on October 23, 2002.³⁴⁴²

³⁴³³ World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*. In 1996 the government reported a 90.6 percent primary school attendance rate. See also Government of Swaziland, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey*, 11.

³⁴³⁴ Government of Swaziland, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey*.

³⁴³⁵ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Swaziland*, 665-66, Section 5.

³⁴³⁶ ILO-IPEC, *Child Labour: Targeting the Intolerable*, Geneva, 1998, Report VI(1) [cited August 30, 2002]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/comp/child/publ/target/target.pdf>.

³⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁴³⁸ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Swaziland*, 666-68, Section 6d.

³⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁴⁰ Protection Project, "Swaziland," in *Human Rights Report on the Trafficking of Persons, Especially Women and Children*, March 2002, [cited August 30, 2002]; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org>.

³⁴⁴¹ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2001: Swaziland*, 666-68, Section 6f.

³⁴⁴² ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, in ILOLEX, [database online] [cited November 18, 2002]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.