

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

The Government of Chad and UNICEF are collaborating on a campaign against the worst forms of child labor in Chad.⁹²⁰ In 2003, the government and UNICEF continued a series of workshops, seminars, and radio broadcasts to raise awareness of child labor issues.⁹²¹ In an effort to combat child trafficking, the government has also sponsored media campaigns designed to advise parents on how to instruct children about the danger of trusting strangers.⁹²² In 1997, a mediation body was created in the office of the Prime Minister to prevent the use of child soldiers by the opposition forces.⁹²³ The Chadian Ministry of Justice has established programs to demobilize child soldiers and reintegrate them in civilian life.⁹²⁴

In April 2003, UNICEF trained representatives from over 35 NGOs to work with herders, parents, and schools to ensure that these children have access to free education.⁹²⁵ UNICEF has also launched a set of programs intended to increase access to education, especially for girls. Measures taken to improve girls' attendance rates include providing grants that reduce the domestic workload for girls, and providing grants that offset schooling costs for families.⁹²⁶ In March 2003, the World Bank also approved a loan to fund Chad's Education Sector Reform Project.⁹²⁷ The project's main objectives for improving basic education are to promote gender and geographic equity; empower communities to repair school infrastructure; enhance quality of teaching and the educational environment; and create programs for literacy, early childhood development, school health and nutrition, non-formal education, bilingual education, and interactive radio instruction.⁹²⁸

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, UNICEF estimated that 65.5 percent of children ages 5 to 14 years in Chad were working.⁹²⁹ In southern Chad, children are contracted to nomadic herders to tend animals. These children are often abused and

⁹²⁰ As part of this project, a baseline study was conducted, and various materials, including pamphlets, were produced to raise awareness of the problem of child herders. See U.S. Embassy- N'Djamena, *unclassified telegram no. 1795*, November 2001.

⁹²¹ U.S. Embassy - N'djamena, electronic communication to USDOL official, February 13, 2004.

⁹²² U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2002: Chad*, Washington, D.C., March 31, 2003, Section 6f; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2002/18175.htm>.

⁹²³ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Chad," in *Child Soldiers Global Report*, London, 2001; available from <http://www.child-soldiers.org/report2001/countries/chad.html>. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child found that the government has demonstrated awareness and political will regarding the problems of children in armed conflict. However, the committee reported that the government lacks the resources to support the rehabilitation and social reintegration of children withdrawn from armed conflict. See 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: Chad*, CRC/C/15/Add.107, United Nations, Geneva, August 1999, para. 35; available from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CRC.C.15.Add.107.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CRC.C.15.Add.107.En?OpenDocument).

⁹²⁴ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Child Soldiers- Chad," 1.

⁹²⁵ U.S. Embassy-N'Djamena, *unclassified telegram no. 1398*, August 13, 2003.

⁹²⁶ UNICEF, *Girls' Education in Chad*, [online] [cited August 18, 2003]; available from <http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/Chadfinal.pdf>.

⁹²⁷ World Bank, *Education Sector Reform Project*, August 8, 2003 [cited August 14, 2003]; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=104231&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P000527>.

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹²⁹ 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 4 hours of housekeeping chores in the household, or who have performed other family work. See Government of the Republic of Chad, *Enquete par grappes a indicateurs multiples, Rapport complet*, UNICEF, N'Djaména, 2001; available from http://www.childinfo.org/MICS2/natlMICSrepz/Chad/Chad_MICS_Report.pdf. In 2001, the ILO estimated that approximately 36.3 percent of children between ages 10 and 14 in Chad were working. See World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2003* [CD-ROM], Washington, D.C., 2003.

provided little monetary compensation for their work.⁹³⁰ Children also work for little compensation as domestic servants in the households of relatives.⁹³¹ In cities, some children work in petty commerce.⁹³² Some families arrange marriages for daughters as young as 12 or 13 years. Once married, many of these girls are obligated to work long hours in the fields or in the home for their husbands.⁹³³ There are allegations that, in isolated instances, local authorities force children to work in the rural sector.⁹³⁴ Other reports indicate that some children are trafficked for forced labor.⁹³⁵

Despite periodic demobilizations of underage soldiers, there are reports that children continue to work in military installations in the north. Children under 13 years old from the Zaghawa ethnic group have been forcibly recruited into the army. UNICEF estimates 600 child soldiers to be in the country, despite the fact that the practice is prohibited by law.⁹³⁶

Articles 35–38 of the Constitution of March 31, 1996 declare that all citizens are entitled to free non-religious education and training.⁹³⁷ However, parents still make considerable contributions toward school costs.⁹³⁸ Education is compulsory for children starting at the age of 6 years for a period of nine years.⁹³⁹ In 2000, the gross primary enrollment rate was 73.2 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 58.2 percent.⁹⁴⁰ Educational opportunities for girls are limited, mainly because of tradition, and girls tend not to attend as many years of school as boys.⁹⁴¹ In 1996–1997, the gross primary school attendance rate was 54.9 percent, and the net primary attendance rate was 30.2 percent.⁹⁴² In 2003, 54.0 percent of the population reached grade five.

⁹³⁰ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*, Section 6d.

⁹³¹ *Ibid.* See also U.S. Embassy- N'Djamena, *unclassified telegram no. 1982*, May 1997.

⁹³² U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*, Section 6d.

⁹³³ *Ibid.*, Sections 5 and 6c. See also U.S. Embassy- N'Djamena, *unclassified telegram no. 1982*.

⁹³⁴ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*, Section 6c.

⁹³⁵ *Ibid.*, Section 6f.

⁹³⁶ Their responsibilities include detecting landmines on the frontlines. In 2001, families in conflict zones reported that they were forced to either provide one of their children to the armed forces as a recruit, or give money a substitute. The Ministry of Justice has also reported that the opposition has recruited child soldiers by force. Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, “Child Soldiers- Chad.” See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*, Section 6c.

⁹³⁷ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of State Parties due in 1992: Chad*, CRC/C/3/Add.50, prepared by Government of the Republic of Chad, pursuant to Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, July 1997, para.42, 155; available from [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CRC.C.3.Add.50.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CRC.C.3.Add.50.En?OpenDocument).

⁹³⁸ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Chad*, Section 5.

⁹³⁹ The Government of Chad has not enforced compulsory education. The Constitution does not indicate until what age education is compulsory. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that education is compulsory from age six for 9 years. UNESCO notes that education is compulsory from ages 6 to 12 years. See UNESCO, *National Education Systems*, [online database] [cited August 13, 2003]; available from http://www.uis.unesco.org/statsen/statistics/yearbook/tables/Table3_1.html. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*, Section 5. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Chad*, para.42.

⁹⁴⁰ World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2003*.

⁹⁴¹ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*, Section 5.

⁹⁴² From 1996 to 1997, the gross primary attendance rate remained much higher for boys than for girls; 72.3 percent for boys and 38.1 percent for girls. The net attendance rate was 36.6 percent for boys and 24 percent for girls. See World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2003*.

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Code set the minimum age for employment in Chad at 14 years.⁹⁴³ According to a 1969 government decree, individuals must be 18 years or older to perform hazardous work. Also, children younger than 18 years are prohibited from working at night.⁹⁴⁴ The Penal Code protects children from sexual exploitation,⁹⁴⁵ and from procurement for the purposes of prostitution.⁹⁴⁶ The trafficking and prostitution of children can result in a fine and imprisonment from 2 to 5 years.⁹⁴⁷ The Constitution and the Labor Code prohibit forced and bonded labor.⁹⁴⁸ The Labor Inspection unit of the Ministry of Labor and Public Affairs is responsible for enforcing child labor laws.⁹⁴⁹

Chad ratified ILO Convention 182 on November 6, 2000, but has not ratified ILO Convention 138.⁹⁵⁰

⁹⁴³ A 1996 amendment to the Labor Code changed the minimum working age from 12 to 14 years. See U.S. Embassy-N'Djamena, *unclassified cable 1398*. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*, Section 6d.

⁹⁴⁴ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Chad*, para. 197. See also “Code du Travail,” *Livre III, Titre I, Chapitre II*, Law no 38/PR/96, (December 11, 1996); available from <http://natlex.ilo.org/txt/F96TCD01.htm>. The minimum age for dangerous work is set at 18 years under Decree No. 55/PR.MTJS/DTMOPS. See UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Chad*, para. 197.

⁹⁴⁵ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Chad*, para. 200. Chad has specific laws, such as Ordinance No. 27/PR/68, that prohibit the production and distribution of child pornography. See The Protection Project, “Chad,” in *Human Rights Report on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children: A Country-by-Country Report on a Contemporary Form of Slavery*, March 2002; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org/main1.htm>.

⁹⁴⁶ *Criminal Code of Chad*, as cited in The Protection Project Legal Library, [database online], Articles 279–82; available from <http://209.190.246.239/protectionproject/statutesPDF/CHAD.pdf>. See also ECPAT International, *Chad*, in ECPAT International, [database online] 2002 [cited August 19, 2003]; available from http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/projects/monitoring/online_database/index.asp.

⁹⁴⁷ *Criminal Code*, Articles 279–80.

⁹⁴⁸ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Chad*, Section 6c.

⁹⁴⁹ ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, *CEACR: Individual Observation concerning Convention No. 81, Labour Inspection, 1947 Chad (Ratification: 1965)*, Geneva, August 19, 2002; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newcountryframeE.htm>. The Labor Inspection Office claims that it investigates 10 to 15 child labor allegations per year; however, because of the complex nature of mechanisms for investigating, these statistics are not reliable. See U.S. Embassy- N'Djamena, *unclassified telegram no. 1795*.

⁹⁵⁰ ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, in ILOLEX, [database online] [cited August 19, 2003]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.