

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

The Government of Ethiopia is an associated country of ILO-IPEC.<sup>1664</sup> The government participated in a Child Labor Forum in 1999 initiated by the ILO regional office in Addis Ababa. The object of the forum was to combat the worst forms of child labor through the creation of an umbrella organization comprised of government ministries, UN agencies, trade unions and employer organizations, embassies, and NGOs.<sup>1665</sup> A SIMPOC study on child domestic workers in Addis Ababa was published in 2002.<sup>1666</sup> The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA), along with the Ethiopian Central Statistical Authority and ILO-IPEC's SIMPOC, conducted a national household survey on child labor in 2001.<sup>1667</sup> In March 2003, UNICEF hosted a 2-day workshop in Addis Ababa aimed at informing stakeholders from the international community, the Ethiopian Government, law enforcement officials, and welfare advocates about the issue of sexual abuse of women and children.<sup>1668</sup> UNICEF also released a book detailing the rights of children in May 2003. Some 5,000 copies of the book - translated in 5 languages - will be distributed to schools and clinics around the country.<sup>1669</sup>

With funding from the African Development Bank Group, the Government of Ethiopia is carrying out the Education III project, which consists of developing primary education, institutional development, and program management.<sup>1670</sup> The government plays a coordinating role with the WFP on a USDA funded school feeding program aimed at improving school children's nutrition, attendance and participation in school, and parental involvement in school activities. The Ministry of Education covers all import duties and taxes relating to any imported ingredients needed for school snacks.<sup>1671</sup> The Ethiopian Ministry of Education is collaborating with UNICEF to implement the government's Education Sector Plan and is supporting programs designed to promote girls' education.<sup>1672</sup> Another UNICEF campaign is devising strategies to get more girls in school in the regions of Gambella, Benishangul-Gomuz, Oromiya, the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region and Amhara.<sup>1673</sup>

<sup>1664</sup> ILO-IPEC, *All About IPEC: Programme Countries*, [online] [cited April 8, 2003]; available from [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/about/countries/t\\_country.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/about/countries/t_country.htm).

<sup>1665</sup> U.S. Embassy- Addis Ababa, *unclassified telegram no. 1343*, April 2000.

<sup>1666</sup> Abiy Kifle, Ph.D, *Ethiopia - Child Domestic Workers in Addis Ababa: A Rapid Assessment*, ILO-IPEC, Geneva, July 2002; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/ethiopia/ra/domestic.pdf>.

<sup>1667</sup> Central Statistical Authority, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, and International Labor Organization, *Ethiopia Child Labour Survey Report*, 2001; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/ethiopia/>.

<sup>1668</sup> AllAfrica.com, "Unicef Hosts Prevention Of Sexual Abuse And Exploitation Workshop", [online], March 13, 2003 [cited March 14, 2003]; available from <http://allafrica.com/stories/200303130894.html>.

<sup>1669</sup> UN Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Ethiopia: Book launched to explain child rights", [online], May 9, 2003 [cited May 9, 2003]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=34001>.

<sup>1670</sup> The African Development Bank Group, *Project Information Sheet, Education Project III*, [online] 2003 [cited May 12, 2003]; available from [http://www.afdb.org/projects/projects/education\\_III\\_Ethiopia.htm](http://www.afdb.org/projects/projects/education_III_Ethiopia.htm).

<sup>1671</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, *The Global Food for Education Pilot Program*, Report to the United States Congress, Washington D.C., 2003, Ethiopia; available from <http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/gfe/congress2003/africa.htm>.

<sup>1672</sup> UNICEF, "Girls' Education in Ethiopia", [online], July 24, 2002 [cited April 8, 2003]; available from <http://www.unicef.org/programme/girlseducation/action/cases/ethiopia.htm>. Education received approximately 14 percent of the government's budget in 2002. See Embassy of Ethiopia, *Ethiopia Pleased to Receive Fast-Track Status for New World Bank Education Initiative*, [online] June 12, 2002 [cited June 2, 2003]; available from <http://www.ethiopianembassy.org/pr061202.shtml>. See also UN Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Focus on Primary Education", [online], July 30, 2002 [cited June 2, 2003]; available from <http://allafrica.com/stories/200207300147.html>.

<sup>1673</sup> A workshop is being organized for educators that will address barriers for girls in school. See UN Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Focus on Primary Education".

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In June 2002, Ethiopia was given “fast track” status in the World Bank’s Education for All Fast Track Initiative.<sup>1674</sup> USAID is funding a 6-year educational program that focuses on training new teachers, providing in-service training for existing teachers, providing radio instruction opportunities, strengthening community-government partnerships, and improving education management systems.<sup>1675</sup>

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

The Ethiopia Child Labor Survey Report reported that approximately 85 percent of children aged 5 to 17 were engaged in some form of productive or housekeeping activities in 2001.<sup>1676</sup> About 34 percent of children who attend school engage in productive and housekeeping activities.<sup>1677</sup> In urban areas, children work in domestic work, street peddling, construction, manufacturing, shop and market sales work, and as employees in private enterprises.<sup>1678</sup> According to a child labor study in rural Ethiopia in 1999, 30 percent of the workers surveyed on state-owned farms are children ages 7 to 14 years.<sup>1679</sup> Children work on commercial cotton, sugarcane, coffee, and tea farms.<sup>1680</sup> In rural areas, children also work on family farms. Household chores may require long hours and excessive physical exertion, and can interfere with school, particularly in the case of girls.<sup>1681</sup>

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is reported to be increasing in Ethiopia.<sup>1682</sup> Girls as young as 11 years old have been reportedly recruited to work in brothels. Girls also work as hotel workers, barmaids, and prostitutes in resort towns and rural truck stops.<sup>1683</sup> Children are trafficked internally in Ethiopia for forced labor

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<sup>1674</sup> World Bank, *World Bank Announces First Group Of Countries For ‘Education For All’ Fast Track*, (News Release No: 2002/345/S), [online] June 12, 2002 [cited April 8, 2003]; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20049839~menuPK:34463~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424,00.html>. See also Embassy of Ethiopia, *Ethiopia Pleased to Receive Fast-Track Status*.

<sup>1675</sup> USAID, *Ethiopia: Program Data Sheet 663-009*, [online] [cited April 8, 2003]; available from <http://www.usaid.gov/country/afr/et/663-009.html>.

<sup>1676</sup> This high percentage of working children is largely due to the fact of high levels of poverty. Productive activities refer to work that involves the production of goods and/or services for sale or exchange and production of certain products for own consumption. Household activities refer to personal services of a domestic nature provided by unpaid household child members in their own parents’, grandparents’, guardian’s or spouse’s household, and as such, are considered non-economic. See Central Statistical Authority, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, and International Labor Organization, *Ethiopia Child Labour Survey Report 2001*, xiii.

<sup>1677</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>1678</sup> *Ibid.* Children working as domestic servants, most of whom are girls, are sometimes victims of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, including rape. See ILO/EAMAT, *A Study on Child Labour in an Urban District of Addis Ababa: working paper on child labour no. 2*, ILO/Eastern Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team, Addis Ababa, 2000, 1-3. Street children are reported to live in urban areas and, in particular, Addis Ababa. Some of these children beg or work in the informal sector in order to survive. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, U.S. Department of State, Washington D.C., March 31, 2003, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2002/18203.htm>.

<sup>1679</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 6d. On the Bebeke Coffee Farm, an estimated 490 children ranging from 7 to 16 years were found to be working on the farm. See ILO/EAMAT, *A Study on Child Labour in Rural Ethiopia: working paper no. 1*, ILO/Eastern Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team, Addis Ababa, 1999, 4-10.

<sup>1680</sup> Children working on commercial farms are often exposed to environmental toxins that can be detrimental to their health, especially on cotton farms. The cotton farms are located in the *kolla* zone, where children tend to be at a higher risk for malaria, yellow fever and snakebites. See ILO/EAMAT, *Child Labour in Rural Ethiopia: working paper no. 1*, 3-10. See also U.S. Embassy- Addis Ababa, *unclassified telegram no. 1965*, June, 2000.

<sup>1681</sup> Embassy of Ethiopia, *Brief Report on Efforts Made by Ethiopia to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, October 2001, 3.

<sup>1682</sup> ECPAT International, *Ethiopia*, in ECPAT International, [database online] [cited April 8, 2003]; available from [http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat\\_inter/projects/monitoring/online\\_database](http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/projects/monitoring/online_database). See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 5.

<sup>1683</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 6f. Child prostitution is reportedly on the rise in Ethiopia and girls as young as 13 can be seen on the street soliciting clients. See ECPAT International, *Ethiopia*.

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and displaced persons are vulnerable and sometimes must exchange sexual services for food.<sup>1684</sup> There are reports that networks of persons working in tourism and trade recruit young Ethiopian girls for overseas work and provide them with counterfeit work permits.<sup>1685</sup> There are also reports that Ethiopian girls travel to the Middle East for work as domestic servants, where they are sometimes beaten and sexually exploited.<sup>1686</sup> Due to the lack of birth registrations, recruitment of children into the armed forces occurred, sometimes forcibly, during the 1998–2000 border conflict with Eritrea. There is no evidence that underage recruitment by the government is continuing.<sup>1687</sup> Children as young as 14 years old were reportedly allowed to join local militias.<sup>1688</sup>

Primary education is compulsory and free, but there are not enough schools to accommodate all students.<sup>1689</sup> Students in rural areas often have little access to education<sup>1690</sup> and girls' enrollment in school remains lower than that of boys.<sup>1691</sup> In 2000, the gross primary enrollment rate was 64.4 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 46.7 percent.<sup>1692</sup> In 2001, 38 percent of children were attending school.<sup>1693</sup> In 1999, 63.8 percent of children enrolled in primary school reached grade five.<sup>1694</sup> During the drought of 2003, large numbers of students dropped out of school, but returned when school lunches were instituted by USAID.<sup>1695</sup>

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Article 36 of the Constitution also stipulates that children are not to be subjected to hazardous work or exploitative practices that may be hazardous to their health.<sup>1696</sup> Ethiopia's Labor Proclamation sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years.<sup>1697</sup> Under the Proclamation, employers are forbidden to employ "young workers" when the nature of the job or the conditions under which it is carried out may endanger the life or health of the children. Some activities that are prohibited are transporting goods by air, land, or sea; working with electric power generation plants; and performing underground work (e.g., quarrying in mines).<sup>1698</sup> Young workers are

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<sup>1684</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2003: Ethiopia*, Washington, D.C., June 11, 2003; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2003/21275.htm>. See also ECPAT International, *Ethiopia*.

<sup>1685</sup> Reports of this type of abuse have decreased since the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs began reviewing work contracts of prospective domestic workers. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 6f.

<sup>1686</sup> *Ibid.*, Section 6c. See also U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2003: Saudi Arabia*, Washington D.C., June 11, 2003; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2003/21277.htm>.

<sup>1687</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 5. See also Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Ethiopia," in *Global Report 2000*; available from <http://www.child-soldiers.org/cs/childsoldiers.nsf/3f922f75125fc21980256b20003951fc/142ed7b620e86cb880256b1d006c2efd?OpenDocument>.

<sup>1688</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 6d.

<sup>1689</sup> *Ibid.*, Section 5.

<sup>1690</sup> ILO/EAMAT, *Child Labour in Rural Ethiopia: working paper no. 1*, 1. See also UN Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Focus on Primary Education".

<sup>1691</sup> The net primary enrollment rate in 2000 for boys was 40.8 percent, and 29.8 percent for girls. See World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2003* [CD-ROM], Washington, D.C., 2003.

<sup>1692</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1693</sup> Central Statistical Authority, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, and International Labor Organization, *Ethiopia Child Labour Survey Report 2001*, 42.

<sup>1694</sup> World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2003*.

<sup>1695</sup> U.S. Embassy- Addis Ababa, electronic communication to USDOL official, February 18, 2004.

<sup>1696</sup> Embassy of Ethiopia, *Efforts Made by Ethiopia to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, 3.

<sup>1697</sup> *Proclamation No. 42/1993*, Negarit Gazeta of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Part Six, Chapter 2, Article 89, 295.

<sup>1698</sup> A "young worker" refers to those aged 14 to 18. *Ibid.*, Part Six, Chapter Two, Articles 2, 3, 4, at 295.

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prohibited from working over 7 hours per day; overtime; between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.; during weekly rest days; and on public holidays.<sup>1699</sup> Ethiopia's Penal Code specifically prohibits child trafficking which is punishable by imprisonment of up to 5 years and a fine of up to USD 10,000.<sup>1700</sup> The law also prohibits forced or bonded labor of children.<sup>1701</sup>

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is responsible for enforcement of child labor laws<sup>1702</sup> however, resources for law enforcement and the judicial system are small.<sup>1703</sup> Ten police stations in and around Addis Ababa, in coordination with the Forum On Street Children – Ethiopia, a domestic NGO working with disadvantaged children in Ethiopia, have implemented Child Protection Units staffed by two officers who are trained in children's rights and one social worker.<sup>1704</sup>

The Government of Ethiopia ratified ILO Convention 138 on May 27, 1999 and ILO Convention 182 on September 2, 2003.<sup>1705</sup>

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<sup>1699</sup> Ibid., Part Six, Chapter 2, Articles 90, 91, at 295.

<sup>1700</sup> *Penal Code of the Empire of Ethiopia*, (1957), 183, Article 605 a, b. See also Tilahun Teshome, Dean of the Faculty of Law, Addis Ababa University, interview with USDOL official, August 10, 2000.

<sup>1701</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 6c. See also Getaneh Mitiku, Head, Ethiopian Department of Labor, interview with USDOL Official, August 7, 2000.

<sup>1702</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 6d.

<sup>1703</sup> U.S. Embassy- Addis Ababa, *unclassified telegram no. 3394*, November 9, 2001. See also U.S. Embassy- Addis Ababa, *unclassified telegram no. 1965*.

<sup>1704</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002: Ethiopia*, Section 5. See also ECPAT International, *Good Practices in Combating CSEC*, [online] [cited June 2, 2003]; available from [http://www.ecpat.net/eng/CSEC/good\\_practices/protection\\_ethiopia.asp](http://www.ecpat.net/eng/CSEC/good_practices/protection_ethiopia.asp).

<sup>1705</sup> ILO, *Ratifications of the Fundamental human rights Conventions by country in Africa*, in ILOLEX, [database online] [cited October 2, 2003]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/docs/declAF.htm>.