

Chad

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

UNICEF estimated that 65.5 percent of children ages 5 to 14 years were working in 2000.⁹²¹ Children work in agriculture and herding throughout the country, and as street vendors, manual laborers, and helpers in small shops.⁹²² There have been reports of children being contracted out to nomadic herders to tend their animals.⁹²³ Young girls also work as domestic servants, mainly in the capital.⁹²⁴ 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.⁹²⁵ A 2003 ECPAT study estimated that many Chadian children live in the streets and often fall victim to violence, including sexual exploitation.⁹²⁶

There are reports of child trafficking in Chad, mostly internally. There were also instances of families selling their children into forced labor in farming and herding, either directly or through intermediaries, and reports that *mahadjir* children, who attend Islamic schools, were forced by their teachers to beg for food and money.⁹²⁷

Although in 2003, UNICEF estimated that there were approximately 600 child soldiers serving in government security forces and armed groups in the country, the number of child soldiers was believed to have decreased during 2004, and there were no additional reports of recruitment of children for use as soldiers.

Articles 35 to 38 of the Constitution of March 31, 1996 declare that all citizens are entitled to free secular education and training.⁹²⁸ However, parents still must make considerable contributions toward school costs, such as books and uniforms.⁹²⁹ Education is compulsory for children starting at the age of 6 years for

⁹²¹ Government of the Republic of Chad, *Enquête par grappes à indicateurs multiples: Rapport complet*, January 2001; available from <http://www.childinfo.org/MICS2/newreports/chad/chad.htm>. For more information on the definition of working children, please see the section in the front of the report entitled *Statistical Definitions of Working Children*.

⁹²² U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2003: Chad*, Washington, D.C., February 25, 2004, Section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27719.htm>.

⁹²³ These children are often abused and poorly compensated. See *Ibid.*

⁹²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*, Section 5.

⁹²⁶ The global NGO, which works on child commercial sexual exploitation issues, estimated that approximately 11,000 children lived on the streets in the country. See ECPAT International, *Chad*, in ECPAT International, [database online] n.d. [cited March 18, 2004]; available from http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/projects/monitoring/online_database/countries.asp?arrCountryID=34&CountryProfile=facts,affiliation,humanrights&CSEC=Overview,Prostitution,Pronography,trafficking&Implementation=Coordination_cooperation,Prevention,Protection,Recovery,ChildParticipation&Nationalplans=National_plans_of_action&orgWorkCSEC=orgWorkCSEC&DisplayBy=optDisplayCountry.

⁹²⁷ *Ibid.* See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Chad*, Sections 5, 6d, 6f.

⁹²⁸ 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).

⁹²⁹ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Chad*, Section 5.

a period of 9 years, but it is not enforced.⁹³⁰ In 2001, the gross primary enrollment rate was 73.4 percent (89.9 percent for boys, 56.8 percent for girls), and the net primary enrollment rate was 58.3 percent (69.7 percent for boys, 46.8 percent for girls).⁹³¹ Gross and net enrollment ratios are based on the number of students formally registered in primary school and therefore do not necessarily reflect actual school attendance. In 1996-1997, the gross attendance rate was 54.9 percent, and the net attendance rate was 30.2 percent.⁹³² Educational opportunities for girls are limited, mainly due to cultural traditions; girls tend not to attend as many years of school as boys.⁹³³ As of 1999, 54 percent of children who started primary school were likely to reach grade 5.⁹³⁴

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Code sets the minimum age for employment in Chad at 14 years and the minimum age for apprenticeships at 13 years, but the law is not enforced due to lack of means.⁹³⁵ According to the labor law, children under 18 years are prohibited from doing work that is likely to harm their health, safety, or morals.⁹³⁶ Also, children younger than 18 years are prohibited from working at night.⁹³⁷ The Penal Code prohibits child trafficking and sexual exploitation,⁹³⁸ and procurement for the purposes of prostitution.⁹³⁹ The prostitution of children can result in a fine and imprisonment from 2 to 5 years.⁹⁴⁰ The Constitution and the Labor Code prohibit forced and bonded labor.⁹⁴¹ Children must be at least 18 years old to volunteer for the armed forces and 20 years to be conscripted.⁹⁴²

⁹³⁰ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Chad*, para.42. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Chad*, Section 5.

⁹³¹ World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2004* [CD-ROM], Washington, D.C., 2004.

⁹³² USAID Development Indicators Service, *Global Education Database*, [online] [cited October 13, 2004]; available from <http://quesdb.cdie.org/ged/index.html>.

⁹³³ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Chad*, Section 5.

⁹³⁴ World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2004*.

⁹³⁵ *Code du travail tchadien*, Loi No. 038/PR/96, (December 11, 1996), Articles 18, 52; available from <http://www.cefod.org/Fichiers%20web/Code%20du%20travail%20tchadien.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Chad*, Section 6d.

⁹³⁶ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Chad*, Section 6d. 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.

⁹³⁷ The Labor Code also stipulates that workers under 18 get a break of at least 12 consecutive hours daily, and that they, as well as apprentices, are entitled to Sundays off. See *Code du travail tchadien*, Livre III, Titre I, Chapitre II, Articles 206, 08 and 10.

⁹³⁸ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Initial Reports of States Parties: Chad*, para. 200. See also 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>. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Chad*, Section 6f.

⁹³⁹ *Penal Code*, as cited in The Protection Project Legal Library, [database online], Articles 279-82; available from <http://209.190.246.239/protectionproject/statutesPDF/CHAD.pdf>.

⁹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Articles 279-80.

⁹⁴¹ *Code du travail tchadien*, Livre I, Article 5. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2003: Chad*, Section 6c.

⁹⁴² Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Child Soldiers- Chad."

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

The Government of Chad is working with UNICEF to implement a project for children who need special protection, including victims of commercial sexual exploitation,⁹⁴³ and to develop a program to reduce the prevalence of young children working in domestic service.⁹⁴⁴ The government, UNICEF and NGOs continue to conduct campaigns against child labor,⁹⁴⁵ and UNICEF is implementing a set of programs to promote education, especially for girls.⁹⁴⁶

| Selected Child Labor Measures Adopted by Governments | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| Ratified Convention 138 | | |
| Ratified Convention 182 | 11/6/2000 | ✓ |
| ILO-IPEC Member | | |
| National Plan for Children | | ✓ |
| National Child Labor Action Plan | | |
| Sector Action Plan | | |

In January 2004, representatives from Chad participated in a regional workshop on children's rights. The workshop addressed topics including international legal standards, recruitment of children by armed groups, and unaccompanied and separated children.⁹⁴⁷ In June 2004, Chad participated in a meeting in Nairobi that focused on ways to scale up good practices in girls' education in Africa.⁹⁴⁸

With support from the World Bank, the government is implementing an Education Sector Reform Project. 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.⁹⁴⁹ The government also has a National Action Plan for Education For All that includes among its objectives ensuring free and compulsory primary education for all children, particularly girls, by 2015, and eliminating gender disparities in education.⁹⁵⁰

⁹⁴³ ECPAT International, *Chad*.

⁹⁴⁴ U.S. Embassy- N'Djamena, *unclassified telegram no. 1343*, August 2004.

⁹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁶ The measures also focus on early childhood development and literacy training for adults, particularly women. See UNICEF, *At a glance: Chad*, in UNICEF, [online] n.d. [cited March 25, 2004]; available from <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/chad.html>.

⁹⁴⁷ Integrated Regional Information Networks, "DRC: Interview with Christina Linner, UNHCR Senior Coordinator for Refugee Children", IRINnews.org, [online], March 11, 2004 [cited March 12, 2004]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=39983>.

⁹⁴⁸ UNICEF, *Ministers of Education and technical experts meet in Nairobi to discuss scaling up what works for girls' education in sub-Saharan Africa*, press release, June 24, 2004; available from http://www.unicef.org/media/media_21926.html.

⁹⁴⁹ The 4-year project was funded in March 2003. See World Bank, *Education Sector Reform Project*, [cited April 1, 2004]; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=104231&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P000527>.

⁹⁵⁰ Republique du Tchad, *Plan d'Action National de l'Education Pour Tous (PAN/EPT) à l'An 2015*, N'Djamena, September 2002; available from http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/file_download.php/4fd50d0a00ae2dd01bdfc15af720eb17PNAEPT_CHAD.doc.