

# Ethiopia

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

The Ethiopian Central Statistics Authority estimated that 49.0 percent of children ages 5 to 14 in Ethiopia were working in 2001.<sup>1568</sup> About 16.4 percent of children 5 to 14 years who attend school engage in productive activities.<sup>1569</sup> The largest number of working children are found in agriculture.<sup>1570</sup> According to a child labor study in rural Ethiopia in 1999, children work on coffee, tea, sugarcane, and cotton plantations, and horticultural farms.<sup>1571</sup> In rural areas, children also engage in activities such as washing, cooking, fetching water, and herding animals, as well as work on family farms. These activities may require children to work long hours, involving excessive physical exertion, and interfering with school, particularly in the case of girls.<sup>1572</sup> In urban areas, children work predominantly in the informal sector in activities such as street peddling, messenger service, shoe-shining, portering, assisting taxi drivers, construction, mining, manufacturing, refuse disposal, and shop and market sales work.<sup>1573</sup> Children are found working in domestic service in both rural and urban areas.<sup>1574</sup> Many child domestics in Addis Ababa are orphans.<sup>1575</sup>

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<sup>1568</sup> The survey also found that 67.4 percent of children ages 15 to 17 were working. Children who are working are engaged in productive activities. 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. See 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>1569</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1570</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1571</sup> Children on these plantations and farms may work long hours with no meal breaks, may not use protective devices, may be exposed to pesticides that can be detrimental to their health, especially on cotton farms, and may suffer injuries and sickness at work. The cotton and sugarcane plantations are located in the *kolla* zone, where children tend to be at a higher risk for malaria, yellow fever and snakebites. Education opportunities are also limited on these plantations. See ILO/EAMAT, *A Study on Child Labour in Rural Ethiopia: working paper no. 1*, ILO/Eastern Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team, Addis Ababa, 1999, 4-9. See also U.S. Embassy- Addis Ababa, *unclassified telegram no. 1965*, June, 2000.

<sup>1572</sup> Embassy of Ethiopia, *Brief Report on Efforts Made by Ethiopia to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, October 2001, 3.

<sup>1573</sup> Central Statistical Authority, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, and International Labor Organization, *Ethiopia Child Labour Survey Report 2001*. 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 - 2003: Ethiopia*, U.S. Department of State, Washington D.C., February 25, 2004, Section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27727.htm>. See also Save the Children Denmark (SCD) Addis Ababa City Admin Social and NGO Affairs Office - SNGOA, and ANPPCAN-Ethiopia Chapter, *Study on the Worst Forms of Child Labour With Special Focus on Child Prostitution in Addis Ababa*, Addis Ababa, June, 2003, 3; available from [http://www.redbarnet.dk/Files/Filer/sexuelt\\_misbrug/ChildProstitutionStudy.doc](http://www.redbarnet.dk/Files/Filer/sexuelt_misbrug/ChildProstitutionStudy.doc).

<sup>1574</sup> Children working as domestic servants 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. See also Abiy Kifle, *Ethiopia - Child Domestic Workers in Addis Ababa: A Rapid Assessment*, ILO-IPEC, Geneva, July 2002, 1; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/ethiopia/ra/domestic.pdf>. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports - 2003: Ethiopia*, 6d.

<sup>1575</sup> The hours worked by child domestics may prevent regular attendance at school. Also, these children may not be able to voluntarily quit their job. See Abiy Kifle, *Child Domestic Workers in Addis Ababa: A Rapid Assessment*, 18, 19, 22.

According to reports, the commercial sexual exploitation of children is increasing in Ethiopia.<sup>1576</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>1577</sup> Ethiopia is a source country for children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced domestic and commercial labor. Children are also trafficked internally from rural to urban areas for domestic service, prostitution, and forced labor.<sup>1578</sup> Although there were no reports of international trafficking of Ethiopian children in 2004, there have been reports in the past that networks of persons working in tourism and trade have recruited young Ethiopian girls for overseas work and provided them with counterfeit work permits, birth certificates, and travel documents.<sup>1579</sup>

Primary education is compulsory and free, but there are not enough schools to accommodate students.<sup>1580</sup> Students in rural areas often have limited access to education<sup>1581</sup> and girls' enrollment in school remains lower than that of boys.<sup>1582</sup> In 2002, the gross primary enrollment rate was 61.6 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate in 2001 was 46.2 percent.<sup>1583</sup> 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 2000, the gross primary school attendance rate was 59.6 percent and the net primary attendance rate was 30.2 percent children were attending school.<sup>1584</sup> As of 2000, 61.3 percent of children who started primary school were likely to reach grade 5.<sup>1585</sup>

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<sup>1576</sup> ECPAT International, *Ethiopia*, in ECPAT International, [database online] [cited March 24, 2004]; 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 - 2003: Ethiopia*, Section 5, 6f. See also UN Integrated Regional Information Network, "Ethiopia: Child prostitution on the rise, report says", July 15, 2003; available from [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=35392&SelectRegion=Horn\\_of\\_Africa&SelectCountry=ETHIOPIA](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=35392&SelectRegion=Horn_of_Africa&SelectCountry=ETHIOPIA).

<sup>1577</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports - 2003: Ethiopia*, Section 6f. Girls as young as 13 have been seen on the street soliciting clients. See ECPAT International, *Ethiopia*.

<sup>1578</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports - 2003: Ethiopia*, 6f. See also U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2004: Ethiopia*, Washington, D.C., June 14, 2004; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2004/33189.htm>.

<sup>1579</sup> See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports - 2003: Ethiopia*, Section 6f.

<sup>1580</sup> *Ibid.*, Section 5.

<sup>1581</sup> *Ibid.* See also ILO/EAMAT, *Child Labour in Rural Ethiopia: working paper no. 1*. 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>1582</sup> The net primary enrollment rate in 2001 for boys was 51.5 percent, and 40.77 percent for girls. See World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2004* [CD-ROM], Washington, D.C., 2004.

<sup>1583</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1584</sup> USAID Development Indicators Service, *Global Education Database*, [online] [cited October 29, 2004]; available from <http://quesdb.cdie.org/ged/index.html>.

<sup>1585</sup> World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2004*.

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Ethiopia’s Labor Proclamation sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years.<sup>1586</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 prohibited activities include: transporting goods by air, land, or sea; working with electric power generation plants; and performing underground work.<sup>1587</sup> Young workers are 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>1588</sup> Article 36 of the Constitution also stipulates that children should not be subjected to exploitative work conditions that may be hazardous to their health or well-being.<sup>1589</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>1590</sup> The law also prohibits forced or bonded labor of children.<sup>1591</sup> The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is responsible for enforcement of child labor laws.<sup>1592</sup> However, insufficient resources for law enforcement and the judicial system prevent adequate enforcement.<sup>1593</sup>

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

The Government of Ethiopia through its Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) has held consultations with civil society and children in order to provide them with an opportunity to comment on the draft National Plan of Action for Children.<sup>1594</sup> The Children, Youth, and Family Affairs Department at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs chairs the National Steering Committee Against Sexual Exploitation of Children.<sup>1595</sup> A “Kids for Kids” postcard campaign was

Selected Child Labor Measures Adopted by Governments		
Ratified Convention 138	5/27/1999	✓
Ratified Convention 182	9/02/2003	✓
ILO-IPEC Associated Member		✓
National Plan for Children		
National Child Labor Action Plan		
Sector Action Plan		

<sup>1586</sup> Proclamation No. 42/1993, Negarit Gazeta of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Part Six, Chapter 2, Article 89, 295.

<sup>1587</sup> A “young worker” refers to those aged 14 to 18. Ibid., Part Six, Chapter Two, Articles 2, 3, 4, at 295.

<sup>1588</sup> Ibid., Part Six, Chapter 2, Articles 90, 91, at 295.

<sup>1589</sup> Embassy of Ethiopia, *Efforts Made by Ethiopia to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, 3.

<sup>1590</sup> *Penal Code of the Empire of Ethiopia*, (1957), 183, Article 605 a, b.

<sup>1591</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports - 2003: Ethiopia*, Section 6c. See also Getaneh Mitiku, Head, Ethiopian Department of Labor, Interview with USDOL Official, August 7, 2000.

<sup>1592</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports - 2003: Ethiopia*, Section 6d.

<sup>1593</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>1594</sup> *Children to give their ideas on the National Plan of Action for Children*, ReliefWeb, 2004 [cited May 25, 2004]; available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/0/1cf237d5d0fdbda85256e3f006efa3e?OpenDocument>. See also “Consulation Meeting on National Plan of Action,” *SCD - Ethiopia Programme Newsletter* 1, 1 (March, 2004); available from [http://www.redbarnet.dk/Files/Filer/Etiopien/newsletter\\_Ethiopia\\_2003.pdf](http://www.redbarnet.dk/Files/Filer/Etiopien/newsletter_Ethiopia_2003.pdf).

<sup>1595</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports - 2003: Ethiopia*, Section 6f. The Steering Committee coordinates activities to combat the sexual abuse and exploitation of children. See Addis Ababa City Admin Social and NGO Affairs Office - SNGOA, *Study on the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, 5.

organized by the ILO, MOLSA, Save the Children-Sweden, ANPPCAN Ethiopian Chapter and various children on the third World Day Against Child Labor. Children wrote their opinions concerning child domestic labor and sent them to the media.<sup>1596</sup>

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs collaborated with the IOM to hold a workshop for government officials, NGO's, the private sector, and civil society on trafficking of women and children.<sup>1597</sup> The IOM is also working with the Ministry of Education on an anti-trafficking and HIV/AIDS project.<sup>1598</sup> With funding from USAID, the Good Samaritan Association opened a rehabilitation and reintegration center in Addis Ababa for victims of trafficking.<sup>1599</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>1600</sup>

The government works with the WFP on a U.S. Department of Agriculture-funded school feeding program aimed at improving school children's nutrition, attendance and participation in school, and increase parental involvement in school activities.<sup>1601</sup> UNICEF collaborates with the Ethiopian Government on education and child protection activities.<sup>1602</sup> Another UNICEF campaign focuses on improving education for girls by training female teachers and head teachers, broadcasting radio messages on girls' education, establishing girl-friendly learning environments, development of gender-sensitive instructional materials, and improving school governance and management.<sup>1603</sup>

The Ministry of Education is implementing the World Bank-funded Education Sector Development Project. The project is intended to improve basic and secondary education, link vocational and technical education with the private sector and the job market, expand teacher-training institutes, expand higher education,

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<sup>1596</sup> *Ethiopia - World Day Against Child Labour*, (583), CRINMAIL, [online] June 15, 2004 [cited June 15, 2004].

<sup>1597</sup> "Ethiopia - Workshop on Trafficking in Women and Children," (March 2, 2004); available from <http://www.iom.int/en/news/PBN020304.shtml>.

<sup>1598</sup> One activity that the project is implementing this year is a nationwide school contest to raise awareness on the issues of HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, and girls' education. See *Ethiopia - School Contest on Trafficking, HIV/AIDS and Girls Education*, International Organization for Migration, 2004 [cited April 27, 2004]; available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/0/c132142eb9035391c1256e7f002f5368?OpenDocument>.

<sup>1599</sup> UN Wire, "First Center For Trafficking Victims Opens in Ethiopia", June 29, 2004; available from [http://www.unwire.org/UNWire/20040629/449\\_25369.asp](http://www.unwire.org/UNWire/20040629/449_25369.asp).

<sup>1600</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports - 2003: Ethiopia*, Section 5. See also ECPAT International, *Good Practices in Combating CSEC*, [online] [cited March 26, 2004]; 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>1601</sup> The Ministry of Education covers all import duties and taxes relating to any imported ingredients needed for school snacks. See U.S. Department of Agriculture, *The Global Food for Education Pilot Program*, Report to the United States Congress, Washington D.C., February, 2003; available from <http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/FFE/gfe/congress2003/countryreports.htm>.

<sup>1602</sup> *At a glance: Ethiopia*, UNICEF, 2004; available from <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia.html>.

<sup>1603</sup> UNICEF, *Girls' Education in Ethiopia*, June 2004 [cited July 13, 2004]; available from <http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/Ethiopia16june.doc>.

and improve capacity of the Ministry of Education and other agencies.<sup>1604</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>1605</sup>

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<sup>1604</sup> *Education Sector Development Project*, World Bank, May 24, 2004 [cited May 24, 2004]; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=104231&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P000732>. In June 2002, the Government of Ethiopia became eligible to receive funding from the World Bank and other donors under the Education for All Fast Track Initiative, which aims to provide all children with a primary school education by the year 2015. See 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>.

<sup>1605</sup> USAID, *Ethiopia: Program Data Sheet 663-009*, [online] [cited May 27, 2004]; available from <http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/cbj2003/afr/et/663-009.html>.