

[previously online] [cited December 14, 2007], articles 322, 323, and 324; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org> [hard copy on file].

⁸³⁹ Government of Comoros, *Code du Travail*, article 2.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, article 237.

⁸⁴¹ Union des Comores, *Loi Relative à l'Organisation Transitoire des Juridictions pour Mineurs*, (December 31, 2005), article 1.

⁸⁴² Ministère de l'Economie de l'Union des Comores

official, Interview, Ministère de l'Economie, April 21, 2007. See also Ministère de la Sante official, Interview with USDOL consultant, April 24, 2007.

⁸⁴³ Ministère de la Fonction Publique et du Travail de l'Union des Comores official, Interview, Ministère de la Fonction Publique et du Travail, May 1, 2007.

⁸⁴⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Comoros," section 5 and 6d. See also U.S. Embassy-Antananarivo, *reporting, December 3, 2007*, para 3b.

Congo, Democratic Republic of the

<i>Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor</i> ⁸⁴⁵	
Working children, 10-14 years (%), 2000:	39.8
Working boys, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	39.9
Working girls, 5-14 years (%), 2000:	39.8
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%):	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	15
Compulsory education age:	Not compulsory
Free public education:	No
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2003:	61
Net primary enrollment rate (%):	-
School attendance, children 10-14 years (%), 2000:	65
Survival rate to grade 5 (%):	-
ILO-IPEC participating country:	Associated

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) work in subsistence agriculture and have been used as forced laborers in the mining of natural resources such as gold and diamonds.⁸⁴⁶ According to Global Witness, children dig holes

and wash, sort, and carry minerals near copper and cobalt mines.⁸⁴⁷ Children also work as dishwashers, guards, and grave diggers.⁸⁴⁸

During the reporting period, children continued to be involved with armed groups in the Ituri district, the two Kivu provinces, and other areas within the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.⁸⁴⁹ Children associated with these groups are sexually exploited and forced to work as combatants, porters, and domestic laborers.⁸⁵⁰

Children are trafficked within the DRC for forced labor and sexual exploitation.⁸⁵¹ Armed groups continue to abduct Congolese children in Rwanda for military service in the eastern DRC.⁸⁵²

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years.⁸⁵³ Children between 15 and 18 years may be employed with the permission of a parent or guardian. Children under 16 years, however, may work no more than 4 hours per day.⁸⁵⁴ The law defines and prohibits the worst forms of child labor, and the penalty is imprisonment for a maximum of 6 months and a fine. The law bans forced or bonded labor, the recruitment of anyone under 18 years into the Armed Forces, and the use of children in hostilities.⁸⁵⁵ The law also makes illegal the use of children as a means for trafficking drugs or engaging in other illicit activities such as prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.⁸⁵⁶ According to USDOS, the enforcement of child labor laws, particularly in the mining sector, is inadequate.⁸⁵⁷

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

In 2007, the Government continued to implement a national plan for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of combatants, including children supported by UNICEF and the World Bank.⁸⁵⁸ With the Government's support, UNICEF and the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo advocated for the release of all children associated with armed forces and groups.⁸⁵⁹ UNICEF also managed a program to provide children working in mines with psychosocial support and access to education.⁸⁶⁰ The Government also participated in a global USDOL-funded USD 7 million project implemented by ILO-IPEC to prevent the involvement of children in armed conflict and support the rehabilitation of former child soldiers. The project withdrew 4,335 children from child soldiering and prevented 4,560 children from involvement with armed groups in seven countries, including the DRC.⁸⁶¹ In 2007, USDOL awarded a 4-year USD 5.5 million grant to Save the Children UK and the American Center for International Labor Solidarity to combat the worst forms of child labor and reintegrate war-affected children in the DRC.⁸⁶² The project targets 8,000 children for withdrawal and 4,000 children for prevention from entering exploitive child labor.⁸⁶³ In 2007, the Government also participated in a USD 1.28 million project implemented by ILO-IPEC and funded by the Government of Norway to prevent the involvement of children in armed conflict and support the rehabilitation of former child soldiers in the DRC and Burundi.⁸⁶⁴

The DRC was 1 of 24 countries to adopt the Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the Joint Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central African Regions.⁸⁶⁵ As part of the Multilateral Cooperation Agreement, the governments agreed to use the child trafficking monitoring system developed by the USDOL-funded ILO-IPEC LUTRENA project; to assist each other in the investigation, arrest, and prosecution of trafficking offenders; and to protect, rehabilitate, and reintegrate trafficking victims.⁸⁶⁶

⁸⁴⁵ For statistical data not cited here, see the Data Sources and Definitions section. For data on ratifications and ILO-IPEC membership, see the Executive Summary. For minimum age for admission to work, age to which education is compulsory, and free public education, see Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, *Loi no. 015/2002 du 16 Octobre 2002 portant Code du Travail*, article 133; available from <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/SERIAL/62645/52447/F1638018233/COD-62645.pdf>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Democratic Republic of the Congo," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices-2007* Washington, DC, March 11, 2008, sections 5 and 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100475.htm>.

⁸⁴⁶ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: DRC," section 6d. See also Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *Struggling to Survive: Children in Armed Conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, New York, April 2006, 6, 36; available from http://www.watchlist.org/reports/dr_congo.report.20060426.pdf. See also Human Rights Watch, *DR Congo: Army Abducts Civilians for Forced Labor*, New York, 2006; available from <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/10/13/congo14387.htm>.

⁸⁴⁷ Global Witness, *Digging in Corruption*, Washington DC, July 2006, 32-33; available from http://www.globalwitness.org/media_library_detail.php/154/en/digging_in_corruption.

⁸⁴⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: DRC," section 6d.

⁸⁴⁹ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Priorities for Children Associated with Armed Forces and Groups*, London, July, 2007, 1; available from http://www.child-soldiers.org/Priorities_for_Child_Soldiers_in_DRC_-_briefing_to_UN_August_2007.pdf. See also UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, New York, June 28, 2007, para 17; available from <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/39/0/16/PDF/N0739016.pdf?OpenElement>.

⁸⁵⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: DRC," section 5, 6d. See also United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, New York, June 28, 2007, para 11, 26-27; available from <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/39/0/16/PDF/N0739016.pdf?OpenElement>. See also Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Priorities for Children*, 6-7.

⁸⁵¹ U.S. Department of State, "Democratic Republic of the Congo (Tier 2 Watch List)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007*, Washington, DC, June 12, 2007; available from

<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/82805.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports-2007: DRC," section 5.

⁸⁵² UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict* para 22-23. See also Human Rights Watch, *Renewed Crisis in North Kivu*, New York, 2007, 49; available from <http://hrw.org/reports/2007/drc1007/drc1007web.pdf>.

⁸⁵³ Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, *Code du Travail*, article 133.

⁸⁵⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: DRC," section 6d.

⁸⁵⁵ Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, *Public Comments based on response to Federal Register Notice*, Kinshasa, January 7, 2005. See also U.S. Embassy- Kinshasa, *reporting*, March 1, 2007, para A.

See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports-2007: DRC," section 6d, 6c.

⁸⁵⁶ Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, *Public Comments, January 7, 2005*, section 3a, 3d.

⁸⁵⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: DRC," section 6d. See also U.S. Embassy- Kinshasa, *reporting*, December 15, 2006, para 3-4.

⁸⁵⁸ Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program, *MDRP Democratic Republic of the Congo Activities at a Glance*, [online] [cited December 14, 2007]; available from http://www.mdrp.org/drc_main.htm. See also Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program, *Status of the MDRP in the Democratic Republic of the Congo - July 2007*, [online] [cited December 14, 2007]; available from

http://www.mdrp.org/PDFs/DRC_PartCom_300707_en.pdf. See also United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict* para 64.

⁸⁵⁹ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict* para 61.

⁸⁶⁰ UNICEF, *UNICEF - Congo, Democratic Republic of the - The big picture*, [online] 2007 [cited November 26, 2007]; available from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/drcongo_636.html.

⁸⁶¹ ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflict: an Inter Regional Program*, Technical Progress Report, Geneva, March, 2007, 46.

⁸⁶² U.S. Department of Labor, *Notice of Award: Cooperative Agreement*, Washington DC, September 27, 2007. See also USDOL-ILAB, *U.S. Department of Labor awards more than \$54 million to eliminate exploitive child labor around the world*, Press Release, October 1, 2007; available from <http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/ilab/ILAB20071498.htm>.

⁸⁶³ U.S. Department of Labor, *Notice of Award*.

⁸⁶⁴ ILO-IPEC, E-mail communication to USDOL official, December 12, 2007.

⁸⁶⁵ Catholic Relief Services official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, October 2, 2006. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (LUTRENA)*, Technical Progress Report, Washington, DC, September 1, 2006, 2.

⁸⁶⁶ ECOWAS and ECCAS, *Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central Africa*, Abuja, July 7, 2006, 5-7. See also ILO-IPEC, *Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (LUTRENA)*, *Technical progress Report*, 10-11.

Congo, Republic of the

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in the Republic of the Congo work with their families on farms or in informal business activities.⁸⁶⁷ In Brazzaville and other urban centers, there are significant numbers of street children, primarily from the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), who engage in street vending and begging as well as cleaning sewers and latrines by hand.⁸⁶⁸ Children, many of them from West Africa, reportedly work as domestic servants, fishermen, shop workers, and street

sellers.⁸⁶⁹ Isolated cases of children involved in commercial sexual exploitation occurred, which included trafficking victims from the DRC.⁸⁷⁰ Children from Benin are trafficked to Pointe-Noire for forced labor in trading and domestic service.⁸⁷¹ There are unconfirmed accounts that child trafficking into the Republic of the Congo has been perpetrated by family members of immigrants from West African nations, primarily Benin but also Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, Senegal, and Togo.⁸⁷²

Although reports of violence in the Pool region