

## Sierra Leone

### *Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor*<sup>3074</sup>

Working children, 5-14 years (%), 2005:	58.5
Working boys, 5-14 years (%), 2005:	59.0
Working girls, 5-14 years (%), 2005:	58.0
Working children by sector, 5-14 years (%):	
- Agriculture	-
- Manufacturing	-
- Services	-
- Other	-
Minimum age for work:	15
Compulsory education age:	15
Free public education:	Yes*
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2001:	79
Net primary enrollment rate (%):	-
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%), 2000:	42.7
Survival rate to grade 5 (%):	-
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No
* Must pay miscellaneous school expenses	

### **Incidence and Nature of Child Labor**

Working children in Sierra Leone are found mostly in the informal sector, in family businesses and on family subsistence farms. Children also engage in petty vending and domestic work.<sup>3075</sup> Street children are used by adults to sell various items, steal, and beg.<sup>3076</sup>

Children also work in alluvial diamond mining areas.<sup>3077</sup> The majority of children that work in the diamond mining areas engage in petty trade and perform supportive roles; are boys generally between the ages of 10 to 17; and work in the Koidu and Kono districts.<sup>3078</sup> Some children report being forced to work in diamond mining areas 6 to 7 days a week without pay, and report injury and illness due to the activities they perform.<sup>3079</sup>

Sierra Leone is a source, transit, and destination country for trafficking in children. Within Sierra Leone, children are trafficked to urban areas, where they work in domestic service or engage in

prostitution. Children are also trafficked to work in the diamond mines.<sup>3080</sup> There are also reports that children are trafficked internally for forced labor in agriculture and fishing. Children from Sierra Leone are also trafficked internationally, but there is insufficient evidence to identify specific destination countries.<sup>3081</sup>

### **Child Labor Laws and Enforcement**

The Child Right Act of 2007 sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years, although at 13 years children may perform “light” work, defined as work that is likely not to be harmful to a child or interfere with schooling. The Act also increased the age to which schooling is compulsory to 15 years, to equal the required age for entry into full-time employment.<sup>3082</sup> In addition, children must be 15 years or have completed basic education (whichever is later) before entering into an apprenticeship, including apprenticeships in the informal sector. Children are also prohibited from performing night work, defined as work between the hours of 8 PM to 6 AM.<sup>3083</sup> The minimum age for a child to engage in hazardous work is 18 years. Hazardous work is defined as work that is dangerous to a child’s health, safety, or morals, and includes activities such as going to sea; mining and quarrying; carrying heavy loads; manufacturing industries where chemicals are produced or used; work in places where machines are used; and work in places such as bars.<sup>3084</sup>

Forced or compulsory labor by children is prohibited by law.<sup>3085</sup> The law also prohibits commercial sexual exploitation of children under 18 years. Procuring or attempting to procure a girl for prostitution is punishable by up to 2 years in prison.<sup>3086</sup> The law also criminalizes all forms of human trafficking.<sup>3087</sup> The penalty for trafficking a person for labor or prostitution is up to 10 years in prison and restitution to the victim.<sup>3088</sup> The age for voluntary recruitment or conscription into the armed forces is 18 years.<sup>3089</sup>

Sierra Leone 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.<sup>3090</sup> 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.<sup>3091</sup>

The Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Industrial Relations is charged with administering labor laws and preventing the worst forms of child labor.<sup>3092</sup> In addition, the Ministry of Mineral Resources is charged with enforcing regulations against the use of child labor in mining activities. According to USDOS, the Government did not effectively enforce laws against child labor, including child labor in diamond mines. During 2007, the Special Court for Sierra Leone prosecuted a number of people for war crimes committed during the 11-year conflict that ended in 2002, including the forced recruitment of children for military service, and other acts.<sup>3093</sup>

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

On June 6, 2007, Parliament passed the Child Right Act, which strengthened provisions against child labor.<sup>3094</sup> Also in 2007, UNICEF, with Government participation created a street children's protection network.<sup>3095</sup> During the same year, the IOM provided shelter, medical care, and counseling to over 60 trafficking victims.<sup>3096</sup>

In partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone and with funding from USDOL, the International Rescue Committee is implementing a USD 6 million Child Labor Education Initiative project in Sierra Leone and Liberia. The project aims to withdraw a total of 8,243 children and prevent a total of 21,647 children from exploitive child labor by improving access to and quality of education.<sup>3097</sup> The Government of Sierra Leone also participates in the Community Based Innovations to Reduce Child Labor through Education (CIRCLE) global project funded by USDOL at USD 8.1 million and USAID at USD 500,000 and implemented by Winrock International and various community-based organizations.<sup>3098</sup>

---

<sup>3074</sup> 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 Sierra Leone, *Child Rights Act 2007*, (June 7, 2007), section 125; available from <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/2007-7p.pdf>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Sierra Leone," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2007*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2008, section 5; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/c25283.htm>.

<sup>3075</sup> International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, *Internationally Recognized Core Labour Standards in Sierra Leone: Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of Sierra Leone*, Geneva, 2005, sections III and IV; available from <http://www.icftu.org/www/pdf/clssierraleone2005.pdf>. See also UN, *Committee on the Rights of the Child: Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention: Sierra Leone second report*, CRC/C/SLE/2, Geneva, September 8, 2006, sections 88, 320, and 322; available from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/898586b1dc7b4043c1256a450044f331/0d28ce8b8d49b955c12572610029584b/\\$FILE/G0644130.pdf](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/898586b1dc7b4043c1256a450044f331/0d28ce8b8d49b955c12572610029584b/$FILE/G0644130.pdf).

<sup>3076</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Sierra Leone," section 6d. See also UN, *Committee on the Rights of the Child: Consideration of Report: Sierra Leone*, sections 88, 320, and 322. See also International Rescue Committee, *Countering Youth and Child Labour through Education (CYCLE)*, Project Document, New York, August 2007, 8.

<sup>3077</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Sierra Leone," section 6d. See also A. Hatløy M. Bøås, *Living in a material world*, Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science, Oslo, 2006, 49; available from <http://www.faf.no/pub/rapp/515/515.pdf>. See also L. Gberie, *War and Peace in Sierra Leone: Diamonds, Corruption and the Lebanese Connection*, Partnership Africa Canada, Ottawa, November 2002, 20; available from [http://action.web.ca/home/pac/attach/sierraleone2002\\_e.pdf](http://action.web.ca/home/pac/attach/sierraleone2002_e.pdf). See also UN, *Committee on the Rights of the Child: Consideration of Report: Sierra Leone*, articles 88, 320, and 322.

<sup>3078</sup> M. Bøås, *Living in a material world*, 50, 63. See also Office of the UN Secretary General, *Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/58/546, Geneva, October 30, 2003, section 40; available from [http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story\\_id/000161.pdf](http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/000161.pdf).

<sup>3079</sup> M. Bøås, *Living in a material world*, 56-59, 61-63, 65. See also International Rescue Committee, *Child Labor and Education in Sierra Leone: Needs and Resource Assessment in Targeted Communities*, New York, June 2006, 12. See also

---

UN, *Economic and Social Council: Advisory Services and Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights*, E/CN.4/2006/106, February 15, 2006, section 10; available from [hard copy on file].

<sup>3080</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Sierra Leone," section 5. See also U.S. Embassy-Freetown, *reporting*, January 5, 2007, para 2.

<sup>3081</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Sierra Leone (Tier 2)," in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007*, Washington, DC, June 12, 2007; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/82902.pdf>.

<sup>3082</sup> Government of Sierra Leone, *Child Rights Act 2007*, sections 125-127, 128, 134-135.

<sup>3083</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3084</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3085</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Sierra Leone," section 6c.

<sup>3086</sup> Government of Sierra Leone, *Child Rights Act 2007*, section 2. See also Government of Sierra Leone, *Prevention of Cruelty to Children Ordinance*, (1926), part I (article 2) and part II (articles 6-13); available from <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/preventionofcrueltytochildren.html>.

<sup>3087</sup> Government of Sierra Leone, *The Anti-Human Trafficking Act*, Vol CXXXVI, No 44, (August 18, 2005), Part II 2.1.

<sup>3088</sup> U.S. Embassy- Freetown, *reporting*, March 7, 2008, para 5b and 5c.

<sup>3089</sup> Government of Sierra Leone, *Child Rights Act 2007*, section 28.

<sup>3090</sup> 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, Geneva, September 1, 2006, 2.

<sup>3091</sup> 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, *LUTRENA, Technical Progress Report*, 10-11.

<sup>3092</sup> Government of Sierra Leone, *MLIRSS State of the*

*Nation Report*, Freetown, 2002; available from [http://www.daco-sl.org/encyclopedia/1\\_gov/1\\_2/MLIRSS/MLIRSS\\_state\\_of\\_nation.pdf](http://www.daco-sl.org/encyclopedia/1_gov/1_2/MLIRSS/MLIRSS_state_of_nation.pdf).

<sup>3093</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Sierra Leone," section 4, 6c, 6d. See also Special Court for Sierra Leone, *Guilty Verdicts in the Trial of the AFRC Accused*, Press release, Press and Public Affairs Office, Freetown, June 30, 2007; available from [http://www.child-soldiers.org/document\\_get.php?id=1214](http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=1214).

See also Human Rights Watch, *Sierra Leone: Landmark Convictions for Use of Child Soldiers*, [2007] [cited December 5, 2007]; available from <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/06/20/sierra16214.htm>.

<sup>3094</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Sierra Leone," section 6d. See also International Rescue Committee official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, June 14, 2007. See also International Rescue Committee, *Countering Youth and Child Labour through Education (CYCLE)*, Technical Progress Report, New York, September 2007, 4, 22. See also U.S. Embassy-Freetown official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, November 16, 2008.

<sup>3095</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report- 2007: Sierra Leone".

<sup>3096</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Sierra Leone," section 5.

<sup>3097</sup> International Rescue Committee, *CYCLE, Project Document*, 1-2, 23.

<sup>3098</sup> Winrock International, *Project Fact Sheet: Reducing Child labor through Education (CIRCLE 1)*; available from <http://www.winrock.org/fact/facts.asp?CC=5411&bu=.> See also Winrock International, *Project Fact Sheet: Reducing Child Labor through Education (CIRCLE 2)*, [online] [cited March 18, 2008]; available from <http://www.winrock.org/fact/facts.asp?CC=5519&bu=.> See also U.S. Department of Labor, *Community Based Innovations to Combat Child Labor through Education I and II (CIRCLE I and II)*, Project Summary, Washington, DC, 2008.

## Solomon Islands

### Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Anecdotal evidence suggests that children, both boys and girls, are engaged in commercial sexual

exploitation in the logging, tourism, and fishing industries near logging camps; fishing ports; and in Honiara, the capital city.<sup>3099</sup> Anecdotal evidence also suggests that children work in logging camps