

Bhutan

Selected Statistics and Indicators on Child Labor³⁵⁰

Working children, 10-14 years (%), 2003:	19.6
Working boys, 10-14 years (%), 2003:	16.1
Working girls, 10-14 years (%), 2003:	22.7
Working children by sector, 10-14 years (%), 2003:	
- Agriculture	92.2
- Manufacturing	0.1
- Services	1.9
- Other	5.9
Minimum age for work:	18
Compulsory education age:	17
Free public education:	Yes
Gross primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	97
Net primary enrollment rate (%), 2005:	74
School attendance, children 5-14 years (%), 2003:	69
Survival rate to grade 5 (%), 2000:	91
ILO-IPEC participating country:	No

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Children in Bhutan work in agriculture, primarily on family farms, and in shops after school and on weekends.³⁵¹ Migrant children as young as 11 years are found working in road construction.³⁵² Children also work in automobile shops, as doma sellers, street vendors, domestic workers, and in restaurants.³⁵³ According to UNICEF, they are also involved in commercial sexual exploitation.³⁵⁴

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The law states that the minimum age for employment is 18 years. However, children between 13 and 17 years are allowed to perform certain forms of light work.³⁵⁵ Bhutanese law requires employers to maintain a register of all child employees, describing the hours and nature of work undertaken.³⁵⁶ According to Bhutanese law, the penalty for infringing child labor laws is five to nine years of imprisonment.³⁵⁷ The law states that it is a crime to subject a child to

economic exploitation or any work that is likely to be hazardous.³⁵⁸ The 2007 Labor and Employment Act prohibits the worst forms of child labor and defines them to include trafficking, forced or compulsory labor, children in armed conflict, sexual exploitation, work in illicit activities, and work in particularly difficult conditions or which could be harmful to the health, safety, or morals of a child.³⁵⁹ The Ministry of Labor reportedly conducts 10 to 15 inspections per week, most of which are in the construction sector.³⁶⁰ Forced labor is prohibited by Bhutanese law.³⁶¹ Bhutanese law also criminalizes sex crimes and offenses against children.³⁶² According to the law, child trafficking has a minimum penalty of three years.³⁶³ Trafficking a child for prostitution is a felony with penalties varying according to the age of the child.³⁶⁴ Children are permitted to enlist in the Armed Forces at 18 years.³⁶⁵

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

The judiciary has started a campaign in schools to promote awareness of the penal code among children and youth called, "Know Your Law to Protect Your Rights."³⁶⁶

³⁵⁰ 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 Bhutan, *Rules and Regulations on Employment of Bhutanese Nationals in the Private Sector*, (1997). See also Government of Bhutan, *Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007*, (2007), article 170; available from <http://www.molhr.gov.bt/labouract.pdf>. See also International Association of Universities, *Bhutan- Education System*, accessed March 19, 2008 available from <http://www.unesco.org/iau/onlinedatabases/index.html>. See also U.S. Department of State, "Bhutan," 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/2007/100613.htm>.

³⁵¹ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Bhutan," section 6d.

³⁵² U.S. Embassy- New Delhi, *reporting* September 17, 2004.

³⁵³ UNICEF, *A Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Bhutan*, National Commission for Women and Children, Thimphu, 2006, 69; available from http://www.ncwcbhutan.org/ncwc/publications/SITAN_Bhutan-2006.pdf. See also UNICEF, *Report on Assessment of Protection Factors of Children in Bhutan*, Ministry of Health, Thimphu, 2004, 65. See also UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Second Periodic Reports of States Parties due in 1997: Bhutan*, March 21, 2007, section 406; available from <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G07/430/93/PDF/G0743093.pdf?OpenElement>.

³⁵⁴ UNICEF, *Report of Assessment of Protection*, 65.

³⁵⁵ Government of Bhutan, *Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007*, articles 170, 171. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Bhutan," section 6d. See also US Embassy Delhi, E-mail communication USDOL official, March 10, 2007.

³⁵⁶ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Second Periodic Reports of States Parties due in 1997: Bhutan*, section 408.

³⁵⁷ Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, *Offences and Penal Provisions under the Labour and Employment Act 2007*, 2007; available from <http://www.molhr.gov.bt/penalcode.htm>.

³⁵⁸ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Second Periodic Reports of States Parties due in 1997: Bhutan*, section 395.

³⁵⁹ Government of Bhutan, *Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007*, article 9.

³⁶⁰ U.S. Embassy- New Delhi, *reporting* September 17, 2004.

³⁶¹ Government of Bhutan, *Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007*, article 6. See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports- 2007: Bhutan," section 6c.

³⁶² U.S. Embassy- New Delhi, *reporting* September 17, 2004.

³⁶³ Government of Bhutan, *Penal Code of Bhutan*, (August 11, 2004), par. 3(a), sections 228, 230.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, para 380.

³⁶⁵ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Bhutan," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, London, 2004; available from <http://www.child-soldiers.org/document/get?id=846>.

³⁶⁶ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Second Periodic Reports of States Parties due in 1997: Bhutan*, section 31.

Bolivia

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In Bolivia, many children work with their families in subsistence agriculture. Children can also be found working in the production of sugar cane and Brazil nuts, especially in Santa Cruz and Tarija.³⁶⁷ Children engage in activities such as street vending, shining shoes, and assisting transport operators.³⁶⁸ Additionally, children work in industry, construction, small business, personal services, hotels and restaurants, and small-scale mining.³⁶⁹ Children are also being used to transport drugs.³⁷⁰ Some children are brought or sent by their family members from rural to urban areas to work as domestic servants or "criaditos" for higher-income families, often in situations that amount to indentured servitude.³⁷¹

The commercial sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, is a problem in Bolivia,

particularly in the Chapare region and in urban areas.³⁷² The internal trafficking of children for the purposes of prostitution, domestic service, mining, and agricultural labor, particularly on sugar cane and Brazil nut plantations, also occurs.³⁷³ Children are also trafficked to neighboring countries for forced labor.³⁷⁴ A study sponsored by IOM and the OAS found that there were girls from Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia working as prostitutes in urban centers in Bolivia.³⁷⁵

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Bolivian law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years.³⁷⁶ Apprenticeship for children ages 12 to 14 years is permitted with