

Zimbabwe

The Government of Zimbabwe has a steering committee to address child labor issues. However, children work in a variety of the worst forms of child labor, including dangerous work in agriculture and diamond mining. The Government has not dedicated sufficient resources for labor inspections or enforced laws against child labor or child trafficking.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable



Prevalence and Sector Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Zimbabwe are engaged in the worst forms of child labor primarily in agriculture and diamond mining.⁶³²⁶ In agriculture, working children face occupational health and safety risks such as using potentially dangerous machinery and tools, carrying heavy loads and applying toxic pesticides.⁶³²⁷ Some children reportedly encounter these dangers working in the production of tea, cotton and tobacco.⁶³²⁸

There are reports of children working in diamond, gold, chrome and tin mines and extracting material from underground passages and quarries.⁶³²⁹ Children perform such work in the Marange diamond fields of Eastern Zimbabwe.⁶³³⁰





According to UNICEF, approximately 100,000 of Zimbabwe's 1.3 million orphans survive on their own in child-headed households, some working as street vendors.⁶³³¹ Children working on the streets may be exposed to many dangers including severe weather, vehicle accidents and criminal elements. Although information is limited, there are reports that children engage in other illicit activities, such as drug smuggling and gambling.⁶³³²

Children are trafficked within Zimbabwe to border towns and to neighboring countries where they suffer forced labor in agriculture, domestic service and commercial sexual exploitation.⁶³³³ Girls as young as age 12 are trafficked along the Zambezi River to the Mozambican port of Beira and to Central Mozambique. Children from Zimbabwe are sexually exploited by taxi and truck drivers in exchange for transportation to and across unofficial border crossings with South Africa.⁶³³⁴

Primary education is neither compulsory nor free in Zimbabwe.⁶³³⁵ Often prohibitively expensive school fees limit educational access.⁶³³⁶ In some instances, children in agricultural areas who need help paying their school fees may work for local plantations to earn credits towards school fees.⁶³³⁷ Such "earn-and-learn schemes," in which tuition credits are earned based on a child's ability to meet a production quota, are typically voluntary.⁶³³⁸ However, some abuse has been reported, as the model invites the exploitation of children who are unable to meet production quotas. These children work but do not receive tuition credits for their work and are thus unable to pay the fees to attend school.⁶³³⁹

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Labor Relations Act sets the minimum age for employment at 15.⁶³⁴⁰ However, a child as young as age 13 may work as an apprentice or perform work in a school or a technical or vocational institution.⁶³⁴¹ The Act prohibits employers from hiring a person younger than age 18 to perform hazardous work.⁶³⁴² Hazardous work is defined in the Children's Protection and Adoption Amendment Act of 2001 as any work that jeopardizes or interferes with the education of a child; involves contact with hazardous substances, electronically powered hand tools, cutting tools or grinding blades; involves underground mining; exposes a child to extreme heat, cold or noise; or requires a child to work at night.⁶³⁴³

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	No
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography	No
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	15
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	No
	Free Public Education	No

Zimbabwean law does not establish an age or period of study that is compulsory for all children.⁶³⁴⁴ This creates an increased risk that children may fall into the worst forms of child labor as they are not required to be in school but are not legally permitted to work.

Zimbabwe's Constitution prohibits forced labor, including forced child labor.⁶³⁴⁵

Provisions of the Sexual Offences Act, the Children's Act and the Censorship and Entertainment Control Act prohibit sexual offenses against children, such as child pornography, prostitution and other forms of child sexual abuse.⁶³⁴⁶ The Sexual Offences Act and Children's Act prohibit procuring an individual for prostitution either inside the country or transporting a person outside of the country with the intention of engaging them in prostitution.⁶³⁴⁷ The Criminal Code also prohibits sexual relations with children younger than age 16. Traffickers can be prosecuted under immigration laws or abduction laws.⁶³⁴⁸

The National Service Act of 1979 prohibits persons younger than under age 18 from compulsory and voluntary military service.⁶³⁴⁹

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Government has a steering committee chaired by the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare to lead efforts to address the worst forms of child labor. The committee includes several government ministries, civil society groups such as workers' and employers' organizations and international organizations.⁶³⁵⁰ In addition, the Government has an inter-ministerial task force on trafficking in persons.⁶³⁵¹

The Department of Social Welfare within the Ministry of Labor (MoL) is responsible for enforcing labor laws, including those regarding children. MoL employs approximately 170 labor inspectors for investigating labor-related violations and enforcing labor laws, including child labor laws.⁶³⁵² No evidence was found that MoL has trained inspectors to address child labor issues nor are there any inspectors assigned specifically to such issues. Some reports suggest that labor inspectors are not active at the district level.⁶³⁵³ Labor inspectors also lack the necessary resources to carry out inspections, such as office facilities, transportation and fuel.⁶³⁵⁴ To date, there have been no investigations or arrests in Zimbabwe for violations related to child labor.⁶³⁵⁵

The Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs (MoJ) oversees all courts, including labor courts. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) is responsible for enforcing laws against the worst forms of child labor that are criminal. MoJ and the ZRP share responsibility for enforcing criminal laws relating to child labor with MoL.⁶³⁵⁶

Information was not available to indicate whether actions were taken by MoJ and the ZRP to enforce criminal statutes on the worst forms of child labor or prosecute violators.⁶³⁵⁷

In 2010, there were no investigators, social workers or police officers dedicated to investigating child trafficking, and the Government did not prosecute any traffickers.⁶³⁵⁸ However, the newly formed Border Control Unit of the ZRP did participate in trainings on human trafficking to raise awareness before the 2010 World Cup soccer games in South Africa.⁶³⁵⁹

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government's steering committee to address child labor issued a national policy to serve as a guide for the subsequent implementation of action

programs.⁶³⁶⁰ The first phase included conducting a child labor study to inform the specific design of the action plan. MoL and ILO launched the findings of the study on June 29, 2011, and the steering committee presented a timebound action plan at the launch.⁶³⁶¹

The draft action plan for the second phase is pending resource allocation.⁶³⁶² The action plan reportedly includes activities aimed at strengthening the analysis of child labor issues and the creation of an entity to coordinate responses to the findings of the analysis.⁶³⁶³

Zimbabwe's United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2007-2011 specifically addresses child labor in its poverty reduction, education and other social policy objectives.⁶³⁶⁴ For example, child labor is a specific indicator for improving retention rates at all levels of the education system.⁶³⁶⁵

Social Programs to Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Research found no evidence of any programs to address child labor.

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the reduction of the worst forms of child labor in Zimbabwe:

IN THE AREA OF LAWS:

- Establish a minimum age or specified length of study for compulsory education.

IN THE AREA OF COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT:

- Conduct, analyze and disseminate information on the level and type of inspection activities to combat child labor.
- Assign and train staff, including labor inspectors and enforcement officials and provide adequate resources for child labor inspections.
- Dedicate additional personnel and resources to combat child trafficking and implement enforcement efforts.

IN THE AREA OF POLICY:

- Provide free education through at least the primary level.
- Allocate appropriate resources to implement the plan to combat child labor.

IN THE AREA OF PROGRAMS:

- Implement programs to address child labor.

⁶³²⁶ Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are not available from the data sources that are used in this report. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. For more information on sources used for these statistics, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the “Children’s Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions” section. See also U.S. Embassy- Harare, reporting, November 24, 2010.

⁶³²⁷ Caiphaz Chimhete, “Desperate Farmers Resort to Child Labour,” *Zim Standard* (Harare), February 6, 2006; available from http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/feb6_2006.html#Z16.

⁶³²⁸ U.S. Embassy- Harare, reporting, November 24, 2010. See also U.S. Department of State, “Zimbabwe,” in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2010*, Washington, DC, April 8, 2011, section 7d; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/160485.pdf>.

⁶³²⁹ U.S. Embassy- Harare, reporting, November 24, 2010. See also Tiseke Kasambala, *Blood Diamonds*, Human Rights Watch, February 1, 2010; available from <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/02/04/blood-diamond?print>. See also U.S. Embassy- Harare, reporting, November 24, 2010.

⁶³³⁰ Human Rights Watch, *Diamonds in The Rough- Human Rights Abuses in the Marange Diamond Fields of Zimbabwe*, June 26, 2009; available from <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2009/06/26/diamonds-rough?print>. See also Channel 4, *Unreported World: Zimbabwe’s Blood Diamonds*, prepared by Reporter Ramita Navai and Director Alex Nott, pursuant to Unreported World, October 29, 2010; available from <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/4od#3173959>. See also Human Rights Watch, *Exposing the Blood Diamond Trade*, online, May 21, 2010; available from <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/05/21/exposing-blood-diamond-trade>. See also Dan McDougall, “Undercover at the Chiadzwa diamond fields,” *kubatana.net*, September 21, 2009; available from http://www.kubatana.net/html/archive/econ/09092dmd.asp?spec_code=090816diamondsex§or=ECO.

⁶³³¹ UNICEF, *Humanitarian Action Report 2010- Eastern and Southern Africa Feature Story for Zimbabwe*, New York, 2010; available from http://www.unicef.org/har2010/index_zimbabwe_feature.html.

⁶³³² U.S. Department of State, “Zimbabwe (Tier 3),” in *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010*, Washington, DC, June 14, 2010; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/142984.pdf>. See also U.S. Embassy- Harare, reporting, November 24, 2010.

⁶³³³ U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Zimbabwe.” See also U.S. Department of State, “Zimbabwe,” in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2009*, Washington, DC, March 11, 2010, section 6; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm>.

⁶³³⁴ Save the Children UK, *Visitors from Zimbabwe: A Preliminary Study Outlining the Risks and Vulnerabilities Facing Zimbabwean Children who have Crossed Illegally into Mozambique*, May 24, 2006, 7-8; available from http://images.savethechildren.it/IT/f/img_publicazioni/img88_b.pdf. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, “Mozambique: Exploitation and Abuse Awaits Zimbabwe’s Migrant Children,” IRINnews.org, [online], 2006 [cited May 5, 2011]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=59123>. See also Integrated Regional Information Networks, “South Africa-Zimbabwe: Undocumented kids alone in a new country,” IRINnews.org, [online], March 8, 2007 [cited May 5, 2011]; available from <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=70584>.

⁶³³⁵ U.S. Embassy- Harare official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, July 5, 2011. See also U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2010: Zimbabwe,” section 6.

⁶³³⁶ U.S. Embassy- Harare official, E-mail communication to USDOL official, November 19, 2010.

⁶³³⁷ Nadia Strakova and Pavel Vondra, *Stop Child Labour: Africa Tour 2008, Final Integrated Report*, Hivos/Stop Child Labour, The Hague, 2008; available from <http://www.stopchildlabour.eu/africatour2008/img/africatour2008-finalreport.pdf>.

⁶³³⁸ U.S. Embassy- Harare official, E-mail communication, November 19, 2010.

⁶³³⁹ Strakova and Vondra, *Stop Child Labour*. See also U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2010: Zimbabwe,” section 7d.

⁶³⁴⁰ Government of Zimbabwe, *Statute Law of Zimbabwe: Labour Act 2002*, 17/2002, (2002), (hard copy on file).

⁶³⁴¹ U.S. Department of State, “Zimbabwe,” in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2008*, Washington, DC, February 25, 2009, section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119032.htm>.

⁶³⁴² Government of Zimbabwe, *Labour Relations (Employment of Children and Young Persons) Regulations*, 72/1997, (1997), (hard copy on file).

⁶³⁴³ Government of Zimbabwe, *Children’s Protection and Adoption Amendment Act, 2001 (No. 23)*, (2001); available from http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home.

⁶³⁴⁴ U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2010: Zimbabwe,” section 6.

⁶³⁴⁵ Government of Zimbabwe, *Constitution of Zimbabwe*, (April 20, 2000); available from http://www.nca.org.zw/Downloads/zim_constitution.pdf [hard copy on file].

⁶³⁴⁶ Government of Zimbabwe, “Zimbabwe,” in *Legislation of Interpol Member States on Sexual Offences against Children*, 2006; available from <http://www.interpol.int/Public/Children/SexualAbuse/NationalLaws/Default.asp>.

⁶³⁴⁷ Government of Zimbabwe, *Sexual Offences Act*, 8/2001, (2001). See also U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports-2008: Zimbabwe.”

⁶³⁴⁸ U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, November 24, 2010.

⁶³⁴⁹ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, “Zimbabwe,” in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, London, 2008; available from http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/Zimbabwe.pdf.

⁶³⁵⁰ U.S. Embassy- Harare official, E-mail communication, November 19, 2010.

⁶³⁵¹ U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, March 3, 2009.

⁶³⁵² U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, November 24, 2010.

⁶³⁵³ Ibid.

⁶³⁵⁴ Ibid. See also U.S. Embassy- Harare official, E-mail communication, November 19, 2010.

⁶³⁵⁵ U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, November 24, 2010.

⁶³⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁶³⁵⁷ Ibid. See also U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports- 2009: Zimbabwe,” section 7.

⁶³⁵⁸ U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, February 23, 2010. See also U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, November 24, 2010. See also U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Zimbabwe.”

⁶³⁵⁹ U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report- 2010: Zimbabwe.”

⁶³⁶⁰ U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, February 23, 2010.

⁶³⁶¹ Ibid. See also U.S. Embassy- Harare official, E-mail communication, July 5, 2011. See also U.S. Embassy- Harare official, E-mail communication, November 19, 2010.

⁶³⁶² U.S. Embassy- Harare official, E-mail communication, July 5, 2011. See also U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, November 24, 2010.

⁶³⁶³ U.S. Embassy- Harare, *reporting*, November 24, 2010.

⁶³⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶³⁶⁵ Ibid.