

Seychelles

In 2011, Seychelles made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government published a study on prostitution in the country. It also launched the National Trust Fund for Early Childhood Care and Education and increased social security benefits to orphans and other needy children in the 2012 budget. However, the Government has not developed a comprehensive list of hazardous work prohibited to children, and laws do not protect boys from commercial sexual exploitation to the same extent as girls. Seychelles also did not investigate or prosecute any cases of child prostitution. Children in Seychelles reportedly engage in the worst forms of child labor in the commercial sex industry.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate		133.1

Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2010, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis.(2)

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Although evidence is limited, research suggests that children in Seychelles are engaged in the worst forms of child labor in the commercial sex industry.(3, 4) Based on anecdotal reports, children between ages 13 and 18, predominantly girls, may be driven into prostitution by peers, family members or pimps.(3) Foreign tourists are believed to contribute to the demand for commercial sex acts in Seychelles, some of which is fulfilled by children. Seychellois children engaged in prostitution are exploited in nightclubs, bars, guest houses, hotels, brothels and in the street.(3) According to NGOs, drug addicts under age 18 are at risk of being forced into prostitution.(4) In addition, an economic downturn may cause more youth to be sexually exploited.(5)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles sets the minimum age for work at 15 and provides for a higher minimum age for employment deemed dangerous, unhealthy or otherwise harmful to normal childhood development.(6) The Conditions of Employment Regulations, 1991, specify that children under age 18 are prohibited from night employment and work in the restaurant, tourism or entertainment industries. However, children ages 15 to 17 may work in these industries and at night with the written approval of a "competent officer," although a definition for "competent officer" is not provided in the legislation.(7) This provision is inconsistent with international standards, whereby the absolute minimum age for hazardous work is 16. In addition, children ages 16 and 17 should only perform work considered hazardous under exceptional circumstances. Therefore, it is unclear whether this provision meets international standards. Children ages 12 to 14 may engage in occasional, non-recurrent light work, provided it occurs outside of school hours.(7) Despite the above protections, the Government has not developed a comprehensive list of hazardous work prohibited to children under age 18.(8-10)

The International Trade Zone (Conditions of Employment) Order 17 governs employment conditions in international trade zones, prohibiting within them the employment of children under age 15.(11) However, it does not contain any provision prohibiting children ages 15 to 18 from engaging in hazardous work.

The Constitution provides for freedom from slavery, servitude, and forced or obligatory labor.(6) The Penal Code

of 1955 explicitly forbids forced labor, trafficking in slaves or kidnapping for the purposes of involuntary confinement, slavery or removal from Seychelles.(12) The 2005 Penal Code Act criminalizes the prostitution and sexual exploitation of children.(12) The Act's specific provisions prohibit, domestically and internationally, the procurement, recruitment or exploitation of girls under age 21 for the purposes of prostitution.(9, 12) The Act also prohibits the procurement or detainment of any girl against her will with the intent to engage in sexual conduct or for the purposes of prostitution. Because these specific provisions do not seem to cover boys, it is unclear if boys are afforded the same level of protection as girls.(12, 13) The Penal Code Act also prohibits involving any child under age 18 in the production, possession, or exhibition of indecent material.(13) In 2011, the Government drafted amendments to strengthen the existing Penal Code on child prostitution, but these had not been adopted by the end of the reporting period.(3)

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	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	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

Education is free and compulsory through grade 10, or approximately age 16.(6, 14) The Government also made secondary education free and available until age 18.(14)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Department of Social Development (DSD), part of the Ministry of Social Development and Culture, is the primary agency responsible for implementing anti-child prostitution policies.(3) The National Council for Children, a partially government-funded NGO, advocates for children's interests

and rights through awareness-raising activities and by providing training and counseling; the Council's training programs are targeted at both children and adults and include a module developed to explain the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).(4, 15, 16) The Council may also care for victims of sexual or labor exploitation.(4)

The Ministry of Employment and Human Resources is the primary agency responsible for enforcing child labor laws. During the reporting period, the Ministry reported no cases of child labor that required investigation; nor were any children found working in the agricultural, fishing, boat-building, tourism or processing sectors.(5) In order to ensure that children were attending school, the Ministry of Education carried out regular inspections.(5)

The DSD has established district task forces made up of both government and NGO partners to address issues of child prostitution. It is unknown whether these district task forces intervened in any child prostitution cases; but the Government made no efforts to identify and take legal action against exploiters of children in the commercial sex industry, nor did it provide protective services to victims.(3) However, during the reporting period, the DSD published a study on prostitution in Seychelles that was commissioned in 2010.(3) Research has been unable to find the results of the study.

Research found no evidence of an agency to coordinate government efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Research found no evidence of a government policy to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children. However, in response to growing concerns over increases in child prostitution, the DSD began to discuss proposals for the creation of organizations and processes, including the "Minor's Brigade," to combat the issue.(3) To date, no official government statistics have been released on human trafficking.(3, 4) Research did not find any evidence of an effort to collect data on all other worst forms of child labor.

Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government has implemented some social programs specifically aimed at improving the welfare of children.(17) The Government works to fund child welfare initiatives including the Children's Homes Foundation, which provides housing for orphans and for children whose families face financial difficulties.(18) It also continues funding a program

that subsidizes bus fares for needy students.(19) In 2011, the Government launched the National Trust Fund for Early Childhood Care and Education to support and promote early childhood development and education projects. In an effort to better protect vulnerable groups, the Government increased all social security benefits, including orphans' benefits, in the 2012 budget.(17) However, the question of whether these programs impact the worst forms of child labor has not been addressed.

Additionally, the DSD conducted two sensitization campaigns on three islands that were directed toward high school youth at risk of exploitation through prostitution and drug abuse.(3) However, research did not uncover whether the Government made efforts to identify and provide protective services to victims.(3)

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

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Eliminate legal provisions that potentially allow for children under age 16 to engage in hazardous labor if given the approval of a "competent officer."	2010, 2011
	Clarify that hazardous work that children ages 16 and 17 are allowed to perform is in compliance with international standards.	2011
	Develop a comprehensive list of hazardous employment prohibited to all children under age 18.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Amend International Trade Zone (Conditions of Employment) Order 17 to ensure that child labor laws for international trade zones are consistent with other international standards on the employment of children.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Clarify the Penal Code Act to specifically prohibit the trafficking of boys, and the procuring or detainment of boys for the purposes of prostitution.	2009, 2010, 2011
Coordination and Enforcement	Identify and enforce laws against exploiters of child prostitutes.	2011
	Establish a coordinating mechanism for government efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.	2011
Policies	Consider collecting data on all worst forms of child labor and trafficking.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Finalize and implement proposals for the creation of organizations and processes to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.	2011
Social Programs	Evaluate the impact of social security benefits on the worst forms of child labor and adjust efforts accordingly to better protect vulnerable groups.	2011
	Ensure children who are victims of sexual exploitation are identified and provided with protective services.	2011

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