



International  
Labour  
Office

# BELIZE CHILD LABOUR DATA COUNTRY BRIEF

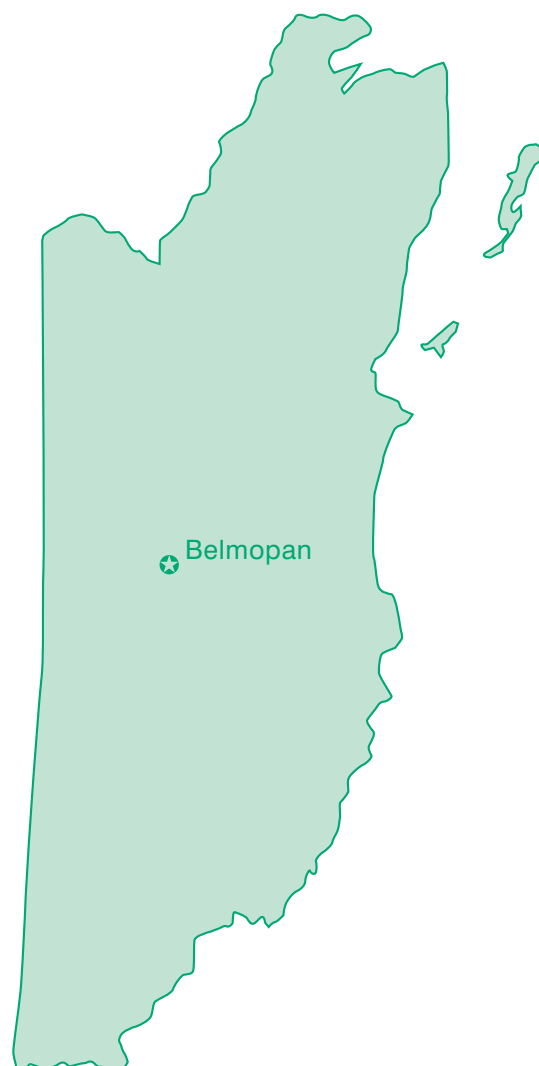


International  
Programme on  
the Elimination  
of Child Labour  
(IPEC)

## SELECTED SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

Population (millions)	0.3
Population under 15 years (percentage of total)	37.3
Literacy rate (percentage of people ages 15 and above)	84.2
Net primary school enrolment ratio (2002/3)	95
GDP per capita, PPP	\$6,747
Human Development Index Value	0.751
HDI ranking	95/177

Source: 2004 data from UNDP Human Development Report 2006  
Human Development Indicators 2001



# I. Legislative Framework

## RATIFIED CONVENTIONS RELATING TO CHILD LABOUR

Convention	Ratification	Entry into force
The Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) (minimum age specified: 14 years)	06-03-2000	06-03-2001
The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182)	06-03-2000	06-03-2001
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	02-05-1990	02-09-1990

## RELEVANT NATIONAL LEISLATION

- The Constitution of Belize (Act No. 14 of 1981), Revised Edition 2000;
- Labour Act (Chapter 297), Revised Edition 2000;
- Shops Act (Chapter 287), Revised Edition 2000;
- Shops Ordinance, 1959;
- Families and Children Act (No. 17 of 1998), Revised Edition 2000.

## REGULATION OF WORK FOR PERSONS BELOW 18 YEARS

Regulation of work for persons below 18 years	Age	Legislation
General minimum age for admission to employment or work	12 years	Section 169 (a) of the Labour Act
Specific sectors:		
Industry	14 years	Section 164 of the Labour Act
Maritime employment	15 years	Section 165 of the Labour Act
Employment in or around any shop	14 years	Section 3 of the Shops Act
Admission to light work activities	No minimum age for light work specified	
Admission to hazardous work	18 years	Section 7 of the Families and Children Act Types of hazardous work not yet determined

## II. Child Labour Indicators

Key child labour indicators can be derived from the Belize Child Activity Survey (BCAS), conducted by the Central Statistical Office in 2001. The survey was carried out within the framework of the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme (SIMPOC) of the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). The BCAS was an independent survey intended to collect information on the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of boys and girls aged 5 to 17 years and their households.

### Children's activities

Results from the Belize Child Activity Survey indicate that 8.2 per cent (2,577) of boys and 4.5 per cent (1,443) of girls in the age group 5-14 work, resulting in 6.3 per cent (4,020) of all children aged 5-14 years working. Approximately 1 per cent (649) of children ages 5-14 participate in the labour force without attending school. The percentage is higher for boys (1.2 per cent) than for girls (0.8 per cent). Children in rural areas are more likely to work without attending school than those in urban areas (1.4 per cent vs. 0.5 per cent). While there is a gender gap between working children not attending school in rural areas (0.6 percentage points, i.e. boys: 1.7 per cent vs. girls: 1.1 per cent), such a gap does is not observed in urban areas.

### CHILDREN AGED 5–14, BY SEX, TYPE OF ACTIVITY AND RESIDENCE

Sex	Activity	Urban		Rural		Total	
		%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Male	Work only <sup>a</sup>	0.5	66	1.7	320	1.2	385
	Study only <sup>b</sup>	90.9	11,376	84.3	16,025	86.9	27,402
	Work and study <sup>c</sup>	4.1	518	8.8	1,674	7.0	2,192
	Total work*	4.6	584	10.5	1,994	8.2	2,577
	Total study**	95.0	11,894	93.1	17,699	93.9	29,594
	Neither	4.5	558	5.3	1,001	4.9	1,560
Female	Work only <sup>a</sup>	0.5	72	1.1	191	0.8	264
	Study only <sup>b</sup>	94.1	12,898	85.6	15,225	89.3	28,122
	Work and study <sup>c</sup>	1.6	222	5.4	957	3.7	1,179
	Total work*	2.1	294	6.5	1,148	4.5	1,443
	Total study**	95.7	13,120	91.0	16,182	93.0	29,301
	Neither	3.7	510	7.9	1,413	6.1	1,923
Total	Work only <sup>a</sup>	0.5	138	1.4	511	1.0	649
	Study only <sup>b</sup>	92.6	24,274	84.9	31,250	88.1	55,524
	Work and study <sup>c</sup>	2.8	740	7.1	2,631	5.3	3,371
	Total work*	3.3	878	8.5	3,142	6.3	4,020
	Total study**	95.4	25,014	92.0	33,881	93.4	58,895
	Neither	4.1	1,068	6.6	2,414	5.5	3,483

\* "Total work" refers to children that work only and children that work and study, i.e. a+c.

\*\* "Total study" refers to children that study only and children that work and study, i.e. b+c.

More than 70 per cent of all children, either male or female, 5-14 years of age, are involved in household chores.

#### PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN INVOLVED IN HOUSEHOLD CHORES\*, BY AGE AND SEX

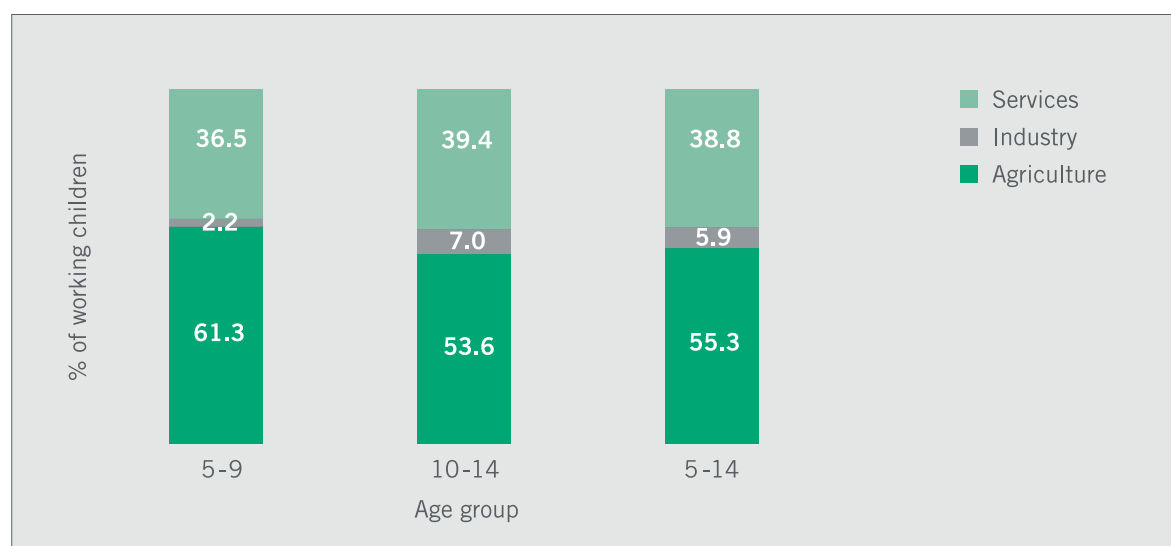
Age	Male	Female	Total
5	40.2	41.7	41
6	52.4	56.2	54.2
7	67.6	63.2	65.4
8	73.9	78.8	76.4
9	70.4	79.1	74.8
10	84.6	79.3	81.9
11	79.3	88.4	83.7
12	84.6	90.9	87.6
13	83.6	86.6	85.2
14	84.5	88.9	86.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.6</b>	<b>75.6</b>	<b>74.1</b>

\* Children performing household chores for at least one hour per day

### Characteristics and conditions of child labour

Among working children aged 5-14 years, approximately 55.3 per cent are employed in the agricultural sector, 5.9 per cent are employed in the industrial sector and the remaining 38.8 per cent work in services. This breakdown by industry is similar among working children in the 10-14 year age bracket. However, among children 5-9 years of age, 61.3 per cent are employed in the agricultural sector, 2.2 per cent are employed in the industrial sector while the remaining 36.5 per cent work in services. Boys are more likely than girls to be employed in the agricultural sector (59.9 per cent vs. 47.1 per cent) and less likely to be employed in the services sector (32.2 per cent vs. 50.5 per cent).

#### DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING CHILDREN AGED 5-14 BY INDUSTRY AND AGE GROUP

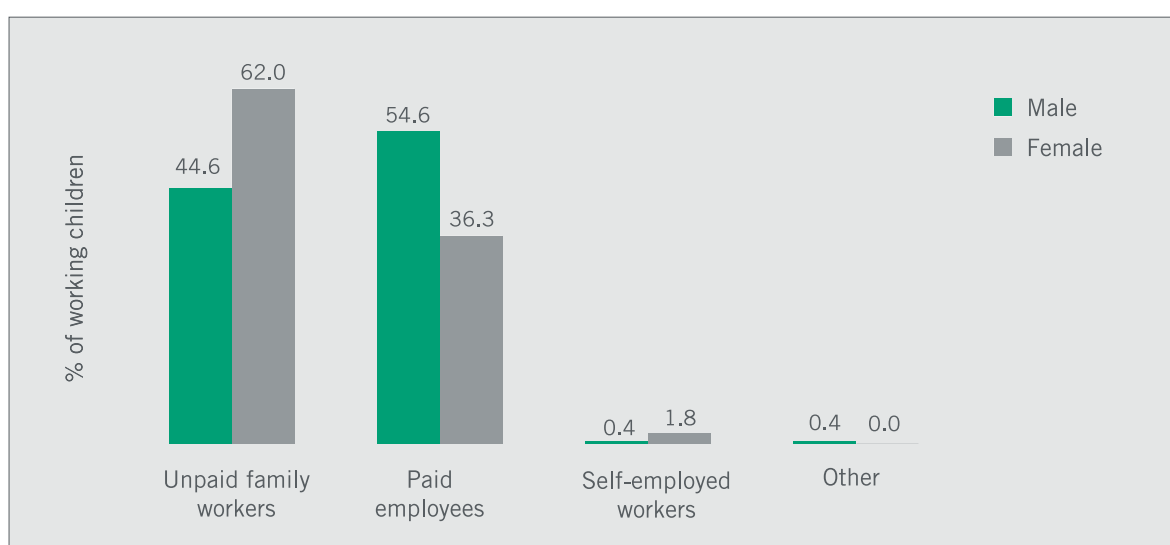


## DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING CHILDREN AGED 5-14 BY INDUSTRY AND SEX



A significant percentage of working children 5-14 years of age are employed as unpaid family workers (44.6 per cent in the case of boys and 62.0 per cent in the case of girls). Boys are more likely than girls to work as paid employees (54.6 per cent vs. 36.3 per cent) while girls tend to be more involved in self-employment (0.4 per cent vs. 1.8 per cent).

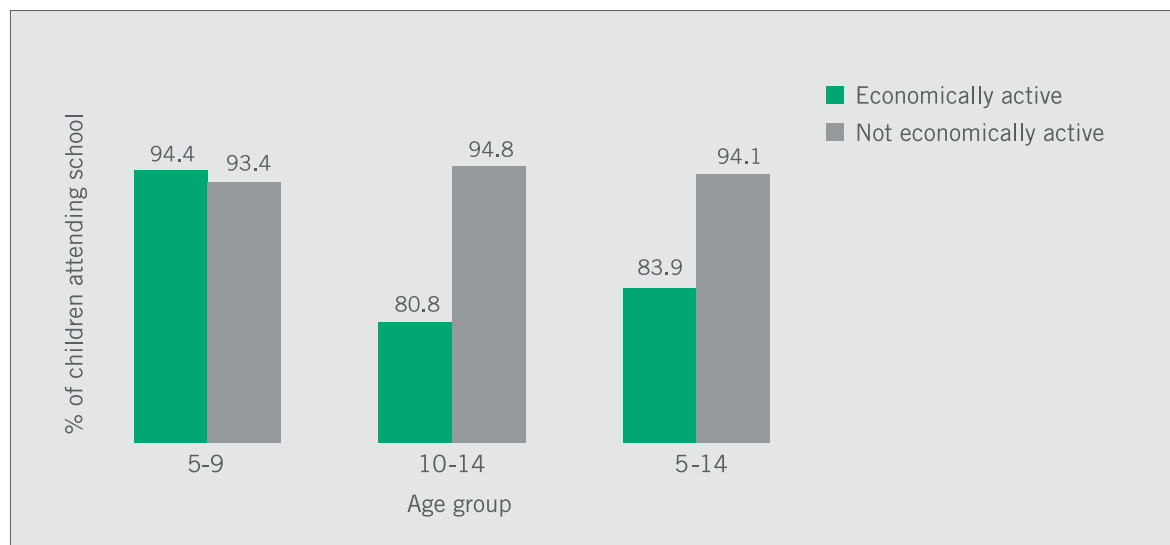
## DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING CHILDREN AGED 5-14 BY STATUS IN EMPLOYMENT AND SEX



## Child labour and children's education

Economically active children are less likely to attend school than non-working children (83.9 per cent vs. 94.8 per cent). This relationship holds for children in the 10-14 age group. However, among children 5-9 years, those involved in economic activity have a slightly higher probability of attending school (94.4 per cent vs. 93.4 per cent).

### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: CHILDREN IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY VERSUS CHILDREN NOT IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY



## Children's activity status and household income\* level

Children from the poorest households are more likely to be engaged in the labour force without attending school than children in households with the highest levels of per capita expenditure (1.6 vs. 0.2). These findings are consistent among both boys (1.5 vs. 0.4 per cent) and girls (1.6 vs. 0.0 per cent). 78.8 per cent of children from lowest expenditure households attend school without participating in the labour force, as compared to 94.6 per cent in the richest households.

### PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN AGED 5-14, BY PER CAPITA INCOME QUINTILES\*\*, SEX, AND TYPE OF ACTIVITY

Sex	Type of activity	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5
Male	Work only	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.1	0.4
	Study only	78.5	86.0	87.0	90.6	92.2
	Work and study	12.2	7.7	7.0	5.9	3.3
	Neither	7.8	4.5	4.4	2.4	4.1
Female	Work only	1.6	1.5	0.8	0.6	0.0
	Study only	79.1	86.3	89.9	92.7	96.8
	Work and study	9.4	3.4	3.1	2.5	1.6
	Neither	9.8	8.8	6.2	4.2	1.7
Total	Work only	1.6	1.7	1.2	0.9	0.2
	Study only	78.8	86.2	88.5	91.6	94.6
	Work and study	10.8	5.7	5.1	4.2	2.4
	Neither	8.9	6.5	5.3	3.3	2.9

Note: Totals may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

\* The household expenditure is used as a proxy for income.

\*\* "Quintile1" represents lowest expenditure category and "Quintile 5" the highest

# III. Information on the worst forms of child labour

## RATIFICATION OF SPECIFIC TREATIES

Convention	Ratification	Entry into force
Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	01-12-2003	01-01-2004
Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict	01-12-2003	01-01-2004
United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC)	26-09-2003	26-10-2003
Human Trafficking Protocol, supplementing the CTOC	26-09-2003	25-12-2003
Smuggling of Migrants Protocol, supplementing the CTOC	not ratified	
The ILO Forced Labour Convention (No. 29)	15-12-1983	15-12-1984

## SIMPOC STUDIES

- National Report on the Results of the Child Activity Survey in Belize, ILO-IPEC, 2004.
- Qualitative Analysis of Child Work and Education in Belize, ILO-IPEC, 2004.
- In-Depth Analysis of Child Work and Education in Belize, ILO-IPEC, 2004.

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