

# Suriname

a look at child labour



Suriname is a sovereign state on the northeastern Atlantic coast of South America. It is bordered by French Guiana to the east, Guyana to the west and Brazil to the south.

Suriname has potential for tourism, boasting rainforests, abundant wildlife and colonial architecture in the capital. But the sector is undeveloped, hampered by the inaccessibility of the interior and the lack of infrastructure. So, Suriname depends heavily on mining and processing its declining reserves of bauxite and is vulnerable to falls in commodity prices.

Suriname's Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2013 is 0.705—which is in the high human development category—[positioning the country at 100 out of 187 countries and territories](#). Between 2005 and 2013, Suriname's HDI value increased from 0.672 to 0.705, an increase of 4.9% or an average annual increase of about 0.60%.

However, Suriname faces many social problems. One of these is unequal access to education and health, especially in the poorer areas. About 35% of the population does not have health insurance or coverage.

**541.638**

POPULATION (MDG Report, 2014)



G D P

**US\$ 15.112.17** (UNDP, 2014)



**POVERTY RATE 7.58%** (UNDP, 2014)

## Employment



**21.512**

(MDG Report)

Unemployment rate:

**8.633**  
male

**13.003**  
female

**16%**

(2013)

Youth unemployment rate:

**11%**  
male

**25%**  
female

(MDG Report 2014, P36)

## Education

ATTENDANCE  
rate



INTRA-ANNUAL  
DESERTION  
rate

PRIMARY

**92.8%**

(UNICEF, 2008-2011)

**92.4%**  
male

**93.3%**  
female

PRIMARY

**9.65%**

(UNDP, 2014)

%  
male

%  
female

## The situation of child labour

### Legal framework regarding child labour



#### Ratified International Standards

- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 01/03/1993.
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 09/05/2002.
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 18/05/2012.
- ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), 12/04/2006.
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 27/05/2007.



#### National Legislation

- Constitution 1987 with Reforms of 1992, arts. 5, 15.
- Revised Labour Code: Section 6 (Prohibition of Child Labour) and section 7 (Labour prohibitions concerning young persons).
- Labour Code (Section 7 includes provisions regarding the prohibition of child labour).
- Law on Basic Education.
- Decree on Hazardous Labor for Youth, 2010.
- Decree National Commission on the Abolition of Child Labour, 2008.
- Penal Code (Book 2, Title XIV, Acts of Indecency: articles 291, 292, 293, 297, 298, 307, 311).
- Penal Code (revised 2006). Revision made regarding acts of indecency such as youth prostitution and pornography and child pornography (cybercrime) and give up children below the age of twelve years.

## Child labour characteristics

**Child labour (5-14 years):** 9.6% (MICS4, 2010)

**5.4/5.6%**  
urban

**16.9/16.4%**  
rural

**Child labour below minimum age (15)  
for admission to employment:**

**6.671**

6.4% (UCW, 2010)

#### By economic sector:

##### 4-17 years Type of work activity

36.5%	Agriculture, fisheries, timber, mining
19.8%	Vending of products
24.0%	Service

(Source: M. Schalkwijk and W. van den Berg, The Situation of Children in Mining, Agriculture and other Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Rapid Assessment, Port of Spain, ILO, 2003, p. 2, p.30)

#### Combine work and school

(%)

**Only work**  
(%)

Below minimum  
age for admission  
to employment  
**6.671 (24 %)**

Below minimum  
age for admission  
to employment  
(ages 7-14)  
**(6.6 %)**

## Causes of Child Labour

**Poverty:** Suriname is recovering from a long period of political and economic instability. The work of children helps as an extra income for the families.

**Family size:** children need to work in order to support themselves and help their families. Large household size.

**Lack of educational opportunities:** access to education remains as a developmental challenge.

**Composition of household:** matrifocal households.

**Urbanization:** necessity for income during the period of transition when parents are seeking employment.

**Attitude of parents towards education**

**Culture**

**Limited supply of labor at the job market**

**Friction unemployment**



## The country's response to child labour

### Social protection policies and programs

General Child Benefit (2012), (2015)

General Pension Law (2014)

Basic Health Insurance Law (2014)

Minimum Hour Wage Law (2014)

School Uniform Program

Bromki Fu Tamara-- Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programme

### Education Policies and Programs

Several actions have been undertaken on the area of education that may have impact on the reduction of child labour. Some of these actions are

National After school programme for primary (basic) education, introduced since 2012 and includes (School) Breakfast feeding programme (cereal or custard meal).

Basic Insurance including infants and children from 0 age up till sixteen years (secondary education level) launched in July 2013.

Accident Insurance for all children

New schools and or expansion of the number of classrooms with existing schools

Improvement Teachers programmes

Introduction of ICT in education programme

Parent participation programme

Revision of the Basic Education Law, including to upgrade the compulsory age from 12 up till sixteen years. The draft law was submitted to the Council of Ministers in 2013.

Second BEIP (Basic Education Improvement Programme) includes the following components: ICT in Education, Infrastructure, Curriculum, Strengthening Management within education institutions.

## The country's response to child labour



### National Decent Work Program

The Decent Work Country programme was adopted and signed by the social partners and the representative of ILO in January 2015.

One of the actions in said document is the ratification of the remaining ILO core conventions, namely C100, C111 and C 138 by the Republic of Suriname. C138 is dealing with the minimum age for admission for work. A draft law concerning C138 has been submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval.

### Children and adolescent policy

- National Children's Action Plan

### Strategy for prevention and eradication of child labour

- Roadmap to Combat Human Trafficking in Suriname, 2014
- Development Plan 2012-2016
- Integrated Policy Plan for Children and Adolescents, 2013

### Themes/sectors prioritized in the strategy for prevention and eradication of child labour

1. Legislative measures and enforcement
2. Education
3. Social measures
4. Research and Data Collection
5. Awareness and Partnership(s)
6. Monitor and Finance



## Accomplishments

1. Child and Youth Hotline, runned by the government and provides advice to children in need.
2. Surinam is developing a National Action Plan against child labour.

## Development Cooperation

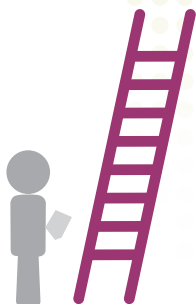
### Unites States Department of Labor (USDOL)

- Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor Project (CLEAR, 2014-2017).

### Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

- The regional project for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, 2001-2008.
- Strengthening national capacities of CARICOM country members, 2006.
- Regional Initiative (2014) Child Labour Free Latin America and the Caribbean.

## Challenges to face child labour



1. Limited institutional capacity, lack of specialized and trained personnel and the lack of appropriate legislation to protect children from the worst forms of child labour.
2. Legal requirement for the monitoring of child labour is laid down in Decree National Commission on the Abolition of Child Labour. According to article 3, paragraph c, the National Commission on the Abolition of Child Labour is responsible for the coordination and monitor of the implementation of the developed national action plan.
3. Child labour issues need to be mainstreamed in all institutions that deal with the protection of children.
4. Children in Suriname continue to engage in child labor in mining and in the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation.
5. Draft revised Basic Education Law submitted to the Council of Ministers (2013).
6. Rapid assessment on the situation of Child Labour (2003).

With the introduction of LIS (CARICOM, 2014), the Labour Inspection will be able to address issue concerning data on child labour.

Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) 2, 3 (2006), 4 (2013) implemented by the ministry of Social Affairs in collaboration with UNICEF also address child labour in accordance with article 32 of the CRC. (now in process MICS 5).

Set up the Child Protection System that shall deal with child rights violations including child labour (in process).

One of the actions of CLEAR Suriname project (2014-2017) is to conduct a study or survey concerning child labour.

7. Introduction of Basic Health Insurance (BZR) that includes/covers also infants, children and adolescents (from 0 up till 16 years) and elderly (persons) above 59 years.

New schools and or expansion of the number of classrooms with existing schools.

## Sources

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<http://www.undpsuriname.org/images/publications/mdg%20201420web%2000%2010.pdf>