

## Madagascar



**Population:** 20,653,556 (July 2009 est.)  
**Population Growth Rate:** 3% (2009 est.)  
**Birth Rate:** 38.14 births/1,000 population (2009 est.)  
**Life Expectancy:** total population: 62.89 years; male: 60.93 years; female: 64.91 years (2009 est.)  
**Literacy Rate:** total population: 68.9%; male: 75.5%; female: 62.5% (2003 est.)  
**Net Migration Rate:** NA (2009 est.)  
**Unemployment Rate:** NA  
**Gross Domestic Product per Capita:** \$1,000 (2008 est.)  
**Religions:** indigenous beliefs 52%, Christian 41%, Muslim 7%  
**Languages:** English (official), French (official), Malagasy (official)  
**Ethnic Groups:** Malayo-Indonesian (Merina and related Betsileo), Cotiers (mixed African, Malayo-Indonesian, and Arab ancestry Betsimisaraka, Tsimihety, Antaisaka, Sakalava), French, Indian, Creole, Comoran  
**Capital:** Antananarivo<sup>1</sup>

### Trafficking Routes

Children from rural parts of Madagascar are regularly trafficked internally to tourist areas for the purposes of forced labor and sexual exploitation.<sup>2</sup> The practice of internally transporting children from rural to urban areas is the most widely reported form of trafficking. There have also been reports of women being trafficked between Madagascar and Mauritius and Reunion for prostitution.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> CIA World Factbook, *Madagascar*, available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/MA.html> (last visited July 14, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> IRIN Africa, *Madagascar: No welcome for sex tourism* (Oct. 7, 2008), available at <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80798>

<sup>3</sup> Trade Union Confederation, *Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of Madagascar* (2008), available at [http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:Qn6dYOT1yA8J:www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/MADAGASCAR\\_final.pdf+Madagascar+legislation,+forced+labor&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us](http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:Qn6dYOT1yA8J:www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/MADAGASCAR_final.pdf+Madagascar+legislation,+forced+labor&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us)

## Factors That Contribute to the Trafficking Infrastructure

Widespread poverty is a primary cause of trafficking, and Madagascar's poverty conditions have been aggravated by natural disaster. Since December 2007, Madagascar has suffered flooding caused by unusually heavy rains and severe cyclones. An estimated 332,391 persons have been affected by the destruction.<sup>4</sup> To offset the negative effects of impoverishment, children are often encouraged by their parents to join the labor force as a means of income,<sup>5</sup> or are sold to marriage brokers.<sup>6</sup>

A demand from visitors to Madagascar for child prostitutes is also a contributing factor to human trafficking. Adults arrive from such countries as France, Italy, Spain, Germany, and Switzerland to engage in sex with young girls and boys.<sup>7</sup>

Other cited reasons for the trafficking of children are "deep-rooted practices of gender discrimination, the weak enforcement of laws, and attitudes that held early sexual activity morally acceptable."<sup>8</sup>

## Forms of Trafficking

As stated above, sex tourism is a major problem within Madagascar; children are also trafficked for the purposes of forced labor, domestic servitude, and prostitution.<sup>9</sup> There have been reports of marriage brokers bribing parents to sell their children into forced marriage; children are then often exploited by the brokers in the sex trade.<sup>10</sup>

## Government Responses

Since 2007, Madagascan law has specifically forbidden human trafficking; however, other legislation is in place that supplements this prohibition.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> ReliefWeb, *USAID Southern Africa: Floods and Cyclones Fact Sheet #2 (FY) 2008*, United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, available at <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/KKAA-7E72KW?OpenDocument> (last visited July 15, 2009)

<sup>5</sup> IRIN Africa, *Madagascar: No welcome for sex tourism* (Oct. 7, 2008), available at <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80798>

<sup>6</sup> *UNICEF Congratulates the Government of Madagascar on Two New Laws to Reinforce Child Protection, Including Increasing the Legal Age of Marriage to Eighteen Years*, UNICEF, available at [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media\\_40159.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media_40159.html) (last visited July 14, 2009)

<sup>7</sup> IRIN Africa, *Madagascar: No welcome for sex tourism* (Oct. 7, 2008), available at <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80798>

<sup>8</sup> World Prout Assembly, *Madagascar: Law to curb widespread sexual exploitation of children*. (June 27, 2007), available at [http://www.worldproutassembly.org/archives/2007/06/madagascar\\_law.html](http://www.worldproutassembly.org/archives/2007/06/madagascar_law.html)

<sup>9</sup> IRIN Africa, *Madagascar: No welcome for sex tourism* (Oct. 7, 2008), available at <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80798>

<sup>10</sup> *UNICEF Congratulates the Government of Madagascar on Two New Laws to Reinforce Child Protection, Including Increasing the Legal Age of Marriage to Eighteen Years*, UNICEF, available at [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media\\_40159.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media_40159.html) (last visited July 14, 2009)

<sup>11</sup> International Trade Union Confederation, *Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of Madagascar* (2008), available at [http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:Qn6dYOT1yA8J:www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/MADAGASCAR\\_final.pdf+Madagascar+legislation,+forced+labor&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us](http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:Qn6dYOT1yA8J:www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/MADAGASCAR_final.pdf+Madagascar+legislation,+forced+labor&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us)

In June 2007, the Parliament approved two laws relevant to the protection of children. One bill broadly aims to ensure increased protection for vulnerable children; the other bill increases the legal age of marriage from 14 years for girls and 17 years for boys to 18 years for both girls and boys. A judge's approval is necessary in exceptional cases in which parents agree to the marriage of children between 14 and 18 years of age.<sup>12</sup> Because of the widespread problem of trafficking in children for forced labor and prostitution, the minimum age for employment is 15 years, as prescribed by law. In addition, children may not work more than eight hours per day, and may not be employed in locations that are detrimental to their health or morals.<sup>13</sup>

## **Nongovernmental and International Organizations Responses**

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Madagascar offers humanitarian aid in times of crisis and works to promote human rights in general. Several goals of CRS include ensuring the rights of at-risk groups, such as workers, women, and children; increasing citizens' involvement in civic affairs; and promoting democratic processes.<sup>14</sup>

## **Multilateral Initiatives**

In 2006, USAID/Madagascar and CRS established a two-year, \$400,000 commitment to work on the Fight Against Trafficking and Abuse (FITIA) program, focusing on the problem of human trafficking in three key areas of Madagascar: Nosy Be, Toamasina, and Toliary. Goals of the project included raising public awareness about the causes, conditions, and prevention of trafficking; promoting legal action concerning trafficking; and facilitating the provision of services to victims and their families through local organizations.<sup>15</sup>

In September 2006, Orange/France Telecom and UNICEF committed to a \$20,000 two-year partnership to support girls' education in Madagascar. The funding targeted areas of high dropout rates—areas where schools are relatively inaccessible, where girls are sent off to work as domestic servants, or where they are married early or become pregnant. A UNICEF-Madagascar government mentorship program used the funding in its Girl-to-Girl program, in which older girls take their younger counterparts to school and help them with homework. Orange/France Telecom monies also support activities to promote sports and literacy skills in schools identified by the Girl-to-Girl program.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> UNICEF *Congratulates the Government of Madagascar on Two New Laws to Reinforce Child Protection, Including Increasing the Legal Age of Marriage to Eighteen Years*, UNICEF, available at [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media\\_40159.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media_40159.html) (last visited July 14, 2009)

<sup>13</sup> International Trade Union Confederation, *Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of Madagascar* (2008), available at [http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:Qn6dY0T1yA8J:www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/MADAGASCAR\\_final.pdf+Madagascar+legislation,+forced+labor&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us](http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:Qn6dY0T1yA8J:www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/MADAGASCAR_final.pdf+Madagascar+legislation,+forced+labor&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us)

<sup>14</sup> Catholic Relief Services, *CRS Work in Madagascar*, available at <http://crs.org/madagascar/projects.cfm> (last visited July 14, 2009)

<sup>15</sup> USAID, *USAID Anti-Trafficking in Persons Programs in Africa: A Review* (2007), available at [http://74.125.113.132/search?q=cache:engzCknmSIAJ:www.humantrafficking.org/uploads/publications/USAID\\_anti-trafficking\\_in\\_Africa\\_PDACJ521.pdf+anti-trafficking,+Madagascar&cd=9&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us](http://74.125.113.132/search?q=cache:engzCknmSIAJ:www.humantrafficking.org/uploads/publications/USAID_anti-trafficking_in_Africa_PDACJ521.pdf+anti-trafficking,+Madagascar&cd=9&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us)

<sup>16</sup> Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Good Initiative with Private Sponsor Involvement: Orange, France Telecom and UNICEF Unite for Girls Education in Madagascar*, United Nations, available at <http://esaconf.un.org/wb/default.asp?action=9&boardid=51&read=2912&fid=517&style=WebBoard> (last visited October 15, 2008)

In 2006, the Madagascan government and the International Labor Organization co-sponsored a “red card” campaign; cards were disseminated among educators, students, and the general public describing the negative aspects of child labor.<sup>17</sup>

Madagascar is a party to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, and ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in 2005.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> International Trade Union Confederation, *Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of Madagascar* (2008), available at [http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:Qn6dY0T1yA8J:www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/MADAGASCAR\\_final.pdf+Madagascar+legislation,+forced+labor&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us](http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:Qn6dY0T1yA8J:www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/MADAGASCAR_final.pdf+Madagascar+legislation,+forced+labor&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us)

<sup>18</sup> U.N. General Assembly, A/61/893 (May 4, 2007), available at <http://docs.google.com/gview?a=v&q=cache:hZicLw93dckJ:www.reformtheun.org/index.php%3Fmodule%3Duploads%26func%3Ddownload%26fileId%3D2356+U.N.+General+Assembly,+A/61/893&hl=en&gl=us>