

COSTA RICA

MEET A CHILD

Sejo, a young man currently undergoing drug rehabilitation in Puerto Limon, had been addicted to glue, heroine, cocaine and later crack since the age of eight; in other words, for 17 years. From the age of 12, he had been living on the streets. He was sexually abused by drug dealers who also 'sold' him to 'respectable' Costa Rican men and later he prostituted himself independently to support his habit. Jose claimed that most of the clients of drug addicted children are local men or sailors...

TOTAL POPULATION 4,220,000
CHILD POPULATION 1,266,000

Population Reference Bureau - 2004

TOTAL CHILD LABOUR

An estimated 50%* of children between 5-14 are involved in child labor as per UNICEF

State of World's Children 2005 (UNICEF)
State of World's Children 2005, UNICEF

In 2002, the National Survey on Child and Adolescent Labor reported that 11.4 percent of children ages 5 to 17 were economically active.

The US Dept.of Labour 2003 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

World Bank estimated that 4 percent of children ages 10 to 14 years in Costa Rica were working.

ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

For the year 2000, the economically active population was 1,629,000 out of which 18,000 were in the age group 10-14yrs. It is estimated that by 2010, the total number of economically active children in this age group would be reduced to 5,000 constituting 1.1% of child population in that age group

ILO, Bureau of Statistics, Economically Active Population

GENDER RATIO

980 females for 1000 males

CIA, factbook-2005 (Fig is an estimate for 2005)

CHILDREN OUT SCHOOL

In 2001, 47,900 primary school aged children between 6-11 were out of school

UNESCO's EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005

PROGRESS ON PRIMARY EDUCATION MDG

The EDI for Costa Rica is 0.948 suggesting that the country's progress towards achieving education for all by 2015 is medium

UNESCO's EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005

CHILD SLAVERY

The Constitution prohibits forced or compulsory labor, including by children, and there were no reports that such practices occurred.

Men, women, and children are trafficked internally for forced labor as domestics, agriculture workers, and workers in the fishing industry.

CHILD TRAFFICKING

Costa Rica is a country of source, transit, and destination for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of labor and sexual exploitation.

CHILD PROSTITUTION

Costa Rica also serves as a transit point for individuals trafficked to the United States, Mexico, Canada, Japan, and Europe for sexual exploitation. Women and children are trafficked within the country for sexual exploitation.

Child sex tourism is a major problem in the country.

The prostitution of children is a continuing problem in Costa Rica, and is often associated with the country's sex tourism industry.

CHILDREN USED IN CRIME

No Confirmed Data

CHILD SOLDIERS

The armed forces were abolished by the 1949 constitution. Reforms in 2001 reduced the previously military character of the police. And the minimum age for recruitment to the police is 18.

CHILDREN IN UNORGANISED SECTOR

In rural areas, children work in agriculture and cattle-raising, primarily on family-owned farms.

US Dept. of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2004, February 2005

US Dept. of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2005

US Dept. of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2005

US Dept. of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2005

The US Dept.of Labor's 2003 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

CSUCS, Global Report on Child Soldiers, 2004

The US Dept.of Labor's 2003 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Costa Rican children traditionally help harvest coffee beans and sugar cane, although Nicaraguan immigrants, including children, are also found working on farms. Child labor in agriculture and the service sector continues to be prevalent in the Cartago, Limón, and Brunca regions of the country.

Some children work as domestic servants, and others may be involved in construction, carpentry, furniture making, baking, sewing and the small-scale production of handicrafts. Children also bag groceries at supermarkets, sell goods on streets or highways, and watch over parked vehicles

*: The figure is for a section of the population as per the UNICEF report