

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT

In 2015, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government approved the National Plan of Action Against Human Trafficking, which establishes procedures to eradicate human trafficking. However, although the problem does not appear to be widespread, children are engaged in child labor, including in domestic work, and in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation. Gaps remain in the legal framework; the minimum age for hazardous work falls below international standards and there is no law to prohibit the use of children in the production of drugs.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Although the problem does not appear to be widespread, children are engaged in child labor, including in domestic work, and in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.(1, 2) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate (%)		100.5

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2014, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015.(3) Data were unavailable from Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis, 2015.(4)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Domestic work* and begging* (5-7)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation* (8, 9) Production of marijuana* (8)


* Evidence of this activity is limited and/or the extent of the problem is unknown.

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor *per se* under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).


Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓

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Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor (cont)

Convention	Ratification
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The Government has established laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	14	Part II, Article 8 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (10)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	14	Schedule, Article 2 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (10)
Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children	Yes		Part I, Sections 3 and 4; Schedule Part, Articles 1 and 2 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (10)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Part I, Article 2 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (11)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Part II, Articles 5–8 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (11)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Part II, Article 7 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (11)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		Part II, Articles 5 and 8 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (11)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*†		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	19	Part I, Article 6 of the Police Act (12, 13)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Part I, Article 2 of the Education Act (14)
Free Public Education	Yes		Part III, Articles 14–16 of the Education Act (14)

† No standing military (13)

* No conscription (12, 13)

The minimum age of 14 for hazardous work is not in compliance with international standards. Furthermore, laws related to illicit activities are not sufficient as the use of children in the production of drugs is not criminally prohibited.(11, 15)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Ministry of Labor	Enforce child labor laws and refer victims to appropriate social services.(2)
Royal Police Force	Make criminal arrests, including those involving the worst forms of child labor; specifically address human trafficking through the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit; and refer victims to appropriate social services.(2)
Ministry of Social Development	Maintain Child Protection Unit, which includes Child Protection Officers who report cases of child abuse.(6)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2015, labor law enforcement agencies in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2014	2015
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown (1)	Unknown* (7)
Number of Labor Inspectors	7 (6)	5 (7)

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Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2014	2015
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Unknown (6)	Yes (7)
Training for Labor Inspectors		
■ Initial Training for New Employees	Unknown* (1)	Unknown
■ Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A	N/A
■ Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (16)	Yes (17)
Number of Labor Inspections	Unknown	Unknown
■ Number Conducted at Worksite	0 (6)	Unknown
■ Number Conducted by Desk Reviews	0 (6)	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	0 (2)	0 (7)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	N/A	N/A
■ Number of Penalties Imposed That Were Collected	N/A	N/A
Routine Inspections Conducted	No (6)	Yes (7)
■ Routine Inspections Targeted	No (6)	No (7)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Unknown (1)	Yes (7)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	No (6)	Yes (7)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (6)	Yes (7)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (6)	Yes (7)

*The Government does not make this information publicly available.

In 2015, inspectors indicated that the labor inspectorate's resources were inadequate.(7) Ministry of Labor employees, including labor inspectors, were trained on human trafficking issues by the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit (ATIPU).(17)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2015, criminal law enforcement agencies in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms (Table 7).

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2014	2015
Training for Investigators		
■ Initial Training for New Employees	Unknown	Yes (17)
■ Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A	N/A
■ Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (16)	Yes (7)
Number of Investigations	Unknown	3 (17)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown	1 (17)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown	1 (17)
Number of Convictions	Unknown	0 (17)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (6)	Yes (7)

In 2015, ATIPU trained 120 officials in the police department and other related agencies on human trafficking issues.(17) A source indicates that ATIPU employed three or four people in 2015.(7) The Government also employed a social worker to be the primary liaison among the various agencies that enforce anti-trafficking laws.(17)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Although the Government has established a coordination mechanism on trafficking, research found no evidence of mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including all its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons	Develop a national plan to address human trafficking, coordinate the collection of data among government agencies, establish policies to enable government agencies to work with NGOs to prevent trafficking and assist victims, and provide training to all relevant government officials and authority figures. Chaired by the Prime Minister.(2, 11, 18)

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V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 9).

Table 9. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Person (2016–2018)†	Establishes procedures to eradicate human trafficking. Administered by the National Task Force Against Human Trafficking in Persons, which is chaired by the Prime Minister.(7)

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

Although the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has adopted the National Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, research found no evidence of a policy on other worst forms of child labor.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2015, the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines funded and participated in programs that may contribute to the prevention or elimination of child labor (Table 10).

Table 10. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Community Capacity-Building Program and Village Integrated Development Program†	Ministry of Social Development program that reduces poverty in rural areas.(2)
Multi-Country Program (2012–2016)	UNICEF program to address children's rights in the Eastern Caribbean. Ensures that governments comply with Convention reporting requirements on children's rights, and assists governments with developing policies and laws to protect all children, especially vulnerable children.(19) Includes preschool and other educational opportunities for vulnerable children.(19)
Supplementary Feeding Program†	Government program that provides free meals to preschool and primary school students from low-income families.(2, 20)
Education Sector Development Plan†	Government program that aims to increase access to and improve the quality of education for all.(21)
Book Loan Program†	Government program that subsidizes textbooks for children from low-income families.(5, 7, 22)
Street Children Rehabilitation Program†	Government program that returns children living or working on the streets to school.(2, 5, 22)
Children Against Poverty Program†	Government program that addresses gaps in the school system and aims to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.(5, 22, 23)
Crisis Center Shelter†	Government program that provides short-term shelter, which may also be used to house human trafficking victims, including children. The number of children assisted by this shelter is unknown.(2, 24)
Foster Care Program†	Government program that provides meals, transportation to school, and school fees for 140 school children.(6)

† Program is funded by the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (Table 8).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including Its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that the minimum age for hazardous work is 18.	2009 – 2015
	Ensure that laws prohibit the use, procuring or offering of a child for the production of illicit drugs.	2011 – 2015

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Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including Its Worst Forms (cont)

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Make publicly available information regarding labor inspectorate funding, the number of labor inspections conducted, and the number of inspections conducted at worksites and by desk reviews.	2014 – 2015
	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by providing sufficient resources to conduct adequate labor inspections.	2015
	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by initiating targeted inspections based on analysis of data related to risk-prone sectors and patterns of serious incidents.	2015
Coordination	Establish a coordinating mechanism to combat child labor, including its worst forms.	2009 – 2015
Government Policies	Adopt a policy that addresses all worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation.	2009 – 2015

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