

In 2019, Thailand made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government increased its total number of labor inspections by six percent, and it worked to ensure migrant students educated at Migrant Learning Centers receive a government accredited certificate to allow them to pursue additional educational opportunities in Thailand or back in their native countries. The Ministry of Education issued a new regulation that allows non-Thai children to enroll in the formal school system and ensures that these children have access to free education and health services. The government also published the first nationally representative survey of working children in Thailand. Thailand was also the first country in Asia to ratify ILO Convention 188, which came into force in January; Thailand also passed the 2019 Fishery Workers Protection Act and drafted regulations in the high-risk fishing sector. However, children in Thailand are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children, including those under 12, also participate in Muay Thai competitions, an area of hazardous work in which there is evidence of serious head injuries. Although the government made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas during the reporting period, it does not meet the international standard for the minimum age for work because the law does not grant protections to children working outside a formal employment relationship. Enforcement of child labor laws remains a challenge due to an insufficient number of inspectors and resources to physically inspect remote workplaces in informal sectors.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Thailand are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also engage in dangerous tasks in *Muay Thai* fighting competitions for remuneration. (1-12) Thailand published the Thai language results of the *National Working Children Survey* of 2018, its first nationally representative survey of working children, conducted according to international standards in coordination with the ILO, which preliminarily found approximately 177,000 children engaged in child labor, of which a subset of 133,000 children are engaged in hazardous work. While the initial results demonstrate progress in the Government of Thailand's work to combat child labor, the CEACR noted the number of children engaged in child labor remains significant. (13, 14) An official English translation of the 2018 survey results has not yet been published, and the analysis is awaiting final validation by the ILO. (13, 15) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in Thailand.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	13.0 (1,302,267)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	96.3
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	14.4
Primary Completion Rate (%)		93.4

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2018, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020. (16)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3 (MICS 3), 2005–2006. (17)

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

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Processing shrimp and seafood† (4,13,18-20)
	Fishing, including work performed on sea vessels† (4,18,21)
	Planting and harvesting sugarcane (13,22)
	Production of rubber and pineapples (23)
Industry	Manufacturing, including garment production (4,24)
	Working in poultry factories, and working on pig farms (15,25,26)
	Construction, including transporting cement and bricks (4,13,27-29)
Services	Domestic work (23,30)
	Work in restaurants, motorcycle repair shops, and gas stations (4,13)
	Street work, including begging and vending (4,30,31)
	<i>Muay Thai</i> fighting (2-4,6-12)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, including use in the production of pornography, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1,4,5,32-36)
	Forced labor in vending, begging, and domestic work, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (4,5,24)
	Forced labor in the production of garments, in agriculture, and in shrimp and seafood processing (4,33)
	Fishing as a result of human trafficking (4,21,24,37)
	Use in the production and trafficking of drugs, including amphetamines, kratom, and marijuana (4,23,33)

† Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

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

Thai children and children from Burma, Cambodia, and Laos are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation in Thai massage parlors, bars, karaoke lounges, hotels, and private residences. In addition, children are increasingly being individually lured by predators online through social media and private chat rooms, and being coerced to produce pornography and perform sexual acts. (4,5,30,32,38,39)

Incidents of child labor in the shrimp and seafood processing industry have decreased in recent years, but children, particularly migrants from the Greater Mekong Subregion, continue to engage in hazardous work in this industry. (4,18,40,41) Children engaged in shrimp and seafood processing work late hours cleaning and lifting heavy loads of seafood and experience health problems such as physical injuries and chronic diseases. (20,42) Similarly, children working in agriculture face health risks from lifting heavy loads, risks of injury from operating dangerous machinery and using sharp equipment, exposure to pesticides, sun, and heat, and long hours from very early in the morning until nighttime. (23) Thai and migrant children who accompany their parents working in the construction sector are exposed to child labor at and around construction sites, including performing construction work or working as caretakers for younger children or as housekeepers. (4,28,29,43)

Children, including those under 15, also participate for remuneration—in the form of prize money or wages—in *Muay Thai* competitions, an area of work in which there is evidence of serious head injuries, including brain hemorrhages and deteriorated nerve fibers around the brain stem. Additionally, research found that betting and illegal gambling on the outcome of children’s matches occurs often during *Muay Thai* competitions. (2-4,6-12) The Royal Thai Government has begun drafting its Boxing Act Amendment in 2018 in response to the death of a 13-year old boy participating in *Muay Thai*, but research has been unable to determine the types of changes the draft Boxing Act amendment proposes or what progress was made toward enacting this legislation in 2019. (4,44)

Although Order No. 28/2559 of the National Council for Peace and Order ensures 15 years of free education for all children in Thailand, language barriers cause some children, particularly migrants and ethnic minorities, to struggle to access basic education. (4,33,45) Although children without identity documents or a registered address cannot be denied enrollment in public schools, research found that there is a lack of clarity among school officials regarding the type of documentation non-Thai students need to possess to enroll in school, which may be a barrier to education access. (4,46,47) The government published an Education Ministerial Proclamation and the Guideline on Enrollment of Non-Thai Children to help clarify the rules and regulations pertaining to enrollment of children in school. (15,48,49) In addition, as school applications are only available in Thai, this may be a barrier for migrant and ethnic minority children’s access to education. (4,44)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Thailand 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	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The government has established laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Thailand's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including not meeting the international standard for the minimum age for work.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	No	15	Chapter 4, Section 44 of the Labor Protection Act; Section 148/1 of the Labor Protection Act (No. 5) (50,51)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Chapter 4, Sections 49–50 of the Labor Protection Act; Section 148/2 of the Labor Protection Act (No. 5); Chapter 2, Article 26(6) of the Child Protection Act; Chapter 4, Section 20 of the Home-based Worker Protection Act (50-53)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Chapter 4, Sections 49–50 of the Labor Protection Act; Clause 4 of the Ministerial Regulation concerning Labor Protection in Sea Fishery Work; Clause 2 of the Ministerial Regulation Identifying Tasks that may be Hazardous to the Health and Safety of Pregnant Women or Children Under the Age of Fifteen Years (50,54,55)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Sections 312 and 312 bis of the Penal Code; Section 6/1 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (No. 3) (56-59)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Sections 282–283 of the Penal Code; Section 6 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (No. 3) (56,58)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Section 8 of the Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act; Section 6 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (No. 3); Sections 282 and 285–287 of the Penal Code; Section 26 of the Child Protection Act; Amendment to the Penal Code Act No. 24 (52,56,57,60,61)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Section 26 of the Child Protection Act; Section 93 of the Narcotics Act; Section 84 of the Penal Code; Section 22 of the Beggar Control Act (52,62-64)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Section 25 of the Military Service Act (65)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Section 25 of the Military Service Act (65)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Section 17 of the National Education Act (66)
Free Public Education	Yes		Section 10 of the National Education Act (66)

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The Thai Government ratified ILO Convention 188 Work in Fishing Convention—the first country in Asia to do so—which came into force in January 2019 and requires that Thailand abide by international standards for work onboard fishing vessels, including child labor standards. Regulations related to the implementation of the 2019 Fishery Workers Protection Act have not yet been approved. (4,67,68) Further, an amendment to the 2008 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law that took effect in April, separately criminalizes forced labor, including forced child labor. (59) No cases were filed under the amendment by the end of 2019 as the implementing regulations had not yet been enacted. (4)

The minimum age for work does not comply with international standards because the law does not grant protections to children working outside of employment relationships. In addition, because the minimum age for work is lower than the compulsory education age, some children may be encouraged to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. (50,51,66)

The types of hazardous work prohibited for children do not cover professional *Muay Thai* competitions, an area of work where there is evidence of exposure to serious physical injury. (2,4,6-12)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Labor (MOL) and criminal law enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
Department of Labor Protection and Welfare (DLPW) of the Ministry of Labor (MOL)	Enforces child labor laws through workplace inspections. (23) Operates Hotline 1509 and staffs 86 labor protection and welfare offices in every province to answer questions about working conditions and receive complaints from the public about child labor. (4,44,68) In 2019, DLPW inspectors identified 43 child labor violations, including employing children under the minimum age for work and minimum age for hazardous work. DLPW call centers also received 453 calls related to possible child labor violations. (4)
Anti-Human Trafficking Units	The Anti-Trafficking in Person Division of the Royal Thai Police (RTP) enforces laws related to forced labor, human trafficking, child pornography, and commercial sexual exploitation of children, and operates Hotline 191 to receive complaints on human trafficking and violence against children. (68,69) The Department of Trafficking in Persons Litigation under the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) investigates human trafficking offenses, including cases of labor, sex, and child trafficking, and monitors provincial human trafficking cases to improve the quality of prosecutions. In 2019, the OAG's Department of Trafficking in Persons Litigation collected data on child labor for the Royal Thai Government's (RTG) annual report on the worst forms of child labor. (4,15,43) The Thailand Anti-Trafficking in Persons Taskforce (TATIP) investigates and enforces laws against human trafficking in the sex trade and mainstream industries. TATIP teams comprise police officers, social workers, and selected NGO representatives. (44,70,71) In 2019, the RTP developed a mobile application ("Police I lert u") that will allow individuals to report possible human trafficking violations, including those related to the sexual exploitation of children, to a 24/7 operations center for analysis and on-site investigations. (4,5,15,70,72) The Department of Special Investigation's (DSI) Bureau of Human Trafficking Crime is tasked with enforcing and investigating human trafficking cases. In 2019, DSI's Bureau of Human Trafficking Crime was active and assisted with multiple investigations. (4,43)
Thailand Internet Crimes Against Children Taskforce (TICAC)	Investigates and enforces laws against child trafficking and the online sexual exploitation of children, including the distribution and production of child pornography. (4,5) Comprises police officers, DSI agents, social workers, and selected NGO representatives. In 2019, TICAC investigated 26 cases of internet-facilitated child sex trafficking and co-hosted a seminar on enhancing the effectiveness of anti-sex trafficking education provided to students in schools. (4,15,43,70,72)
Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS)	Enforces child protection laws through close collaboration with the RTP, DSI, DLPW, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; operates Hotline 1300, which receives human trafficking and child labor complaints. Operates 76 temporary shelters located in every province and 9 long-term shelters for human trafficking victims, including a shelter dedicated solely boys. (4,5,35,52,72) In 2019, MSDHS organized 5 victim identification trainings for 1,000 participants on victim identification, particularly in forced labor, in accordance with the 2019 Amendment of the Anti-TIP Act. (15,70)

Even though the incidence of child labor law violations has decreased in the shrimp and seafood processing sectors, Thailand continues to closely monitor the industry for child labor through 32 Port In-Port Out (PIPO)

Centers and 19 Forward Inspection Points (FIP) along the coasts. These Centers enforce laws related to fishing, forced labor, child labor, and human trafficking. (4,15,19,21,41,43)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2019, labor law enforcement agencies in Thailand took actions to combat child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the MOL that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including an insufficient number of labor inspectors.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$921,068 (44)	\$992,428 (4)
Number of Labor Inspectors	1,900 (44)	1,813 (4)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	Yes (50)	Yes (50)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	40,568 (44)	42,956 (4)
Number Conducted at Worksite	40,568 (44)	42,956 (4)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	83 (44)	360 (4)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	53 (44)	65 (15)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	53 (44)	16 (15)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (50)	Yes (50)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (44)	Yes (4)

In 2019, the government increased its labor inspectorate budget by more than \$70,000. The number of labor inspections also increased in 2019 despite employing fewer inspectors, which the government remarked was a result of using fewer inspectors from agencies outside the MOL. (4) The government also hired 2 additional interpreters to assist labor inspectors, for a total of 126 interpreters. All labor inspectors are authorized to inspect and enforce child labor laws. (4,44) Nonetheless, the number of labor inspectors is likely still insufficient for the size of Thailand's workforce, which includes approximately 38.45 million workers. According to the ILO's technical advice of a ratio approaching 1 inspector for every 15,000 workers in developing economies, Thailand would employ about 2,558 labor inspectors. (76,77) More than 94 percent of unannounced child labor inspections targeted high-risk worksites that employed children in the garment, shrimp and seafood processing, poultry and pig farming, services, auto repair, and construction sectors. In 2019, 32 child labor violations were found in high-risk worksites. (4) Inspectors who find a child labor violation must immediately assess a penalty on the employer and refer the case to the Royal Thai Police (RTP). (4) Research found that NGOs have recommended that the Royal Thai Government create a comprehensive standard operating procedure to refer and protect children rescued at night from child labor situations. NGOs suggest this standard operating procedure also include additional compensation for social workers providing care throughout the night. (4)

In 2019, the Command Center for Combating Illegal Fishing (CCCIF) organized a training for 184 new labor inspectors that included preventing child labor in the fishing industry. (4) The National Marine Preservation Act took effect in 2019, which established the Thai Maritime Enforcement Command Center (Thai-MECC) and granted Thai-MECC oversight authority over the CCCIF's PIPO and FIP operations. Thai-MECC has the authority and mandate to enforce Thai labor laws on fishing vessels—including stopping, searching, detaining, and arresting violators on vessels—within Thai waters or those fleeing to international waters. (4,5,15,68,78) The Department of Labor Protection and Welfare (DLPW) continued to use mobile inspection teams that consisted

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of labor inspectors, a legal affairs officer, interpreters, and sometimes employees from the Departments of Special Investigation; Employment; and Fisheries. These teams conducted targeted monthly child labor inspections using information shared by NGOs and child protection networks, and they are authorized to file criminal lawsuits when child labor violations are found. (23,45) In 2019, mobile inspection teams found 24 child labor violations, all of which were issued citations. (15) Although the CCCIF and the DLPW have made efforts to actively exchange information with NGOs, it is reported that the CCCIF and the DLPW have not made efforts to reach out to migrant community NGOs or networks to exchange information on high-risk workplaces or provide training on child labor issues. (23,44) The number of labor inspections conducted in agricultural and domestic work was insufficient due to labor inspectors' inability to physically access remote work places and inspector safety. (4,15)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2019, criminal law enforcement agencies in Thailand took actions to combat child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including fully reporting criminal enforcement data.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2018	2019
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Number of Investigations	2,582† (44,35)	Unknown (4)
Number of Violations Found	205† (44)	2,425 (4)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	172† (44)	71 (4)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (44)	Unknown (4)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (44)	Yes (4)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (44)	Yes (4)

† Data are from October 1, 2017, to September 30, 2018.

In 2019, the RTP investigated 100, and public prosecutors issued indictments in 71 cases against 66 alleged suspects for violations involving the worst forms of child labor. The RTP Anti-Trafficking in Person Division found 111 victims of child trafficking for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and production of child pornography, and an additional 141 individuals were prosecuted for other child labor-related crimes. (4,15,68) The Department of Juvenile Observations and Protection reported 2,314 cases of children involved in the narcotic production and trade. (4,68) During the reporting period, 343 RTP police investigators were trained on polices and laws and criminal investigative and prosecutorial techniques related to the worst forms of child labor. The Thailand Internet Crimes Against Children Taskforce and the Thailand Anti-Trafficking in Persons Taskforce collaborated closely with international law enforcement agencies and NGOs, including the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to identify and arrest suspects engaged in online child commercial sexual exploitation. (4,44,43)

Research indicates that there is a lack of understanding of the use of male children in commercial sexual exploitation among some provincial government and court officials due to the preconceived notion that boys are stronger than girls and should be able to defend themselves against perpetrators. In addition, there is no training provided to officials specifically covering victim assistance for boys. (15) Research found that some law enforcement officials may underreport human trafficking incidences for fear that reporting them would demonstrate law enforcement deficiencies. (5)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8).

Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Committee to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Coordinates the implementation of child labor policies, facilitates cooperation among relevant ministries, and reports annually to the Thai Cabinet on child labor issues. Chaired by the MOL, with representation from other government agencies, employer and worker associations, and civil society groups. (77) Oversees a subcommittee responsible for monitoring the National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor. (33,79) In 2019, the committee met to restructure its subcommittees' monitoring efforts to eliminate the use of child labor from the production of four goods (garments, pornography, shrimp, and sugarcane) on USDOL's <i>List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor</i> . (4)
National and Provincial Committees on Child Protection	Coordinate with government agencies and private sector representatives to monitor and protect children's social welfare and safety, including monitoring public and private workplaces for child labor violations. (52) Led by the MSDHS with participation from the DLPW and the ministries of Education and Public Health. (43) In 2019, the committees reviewed current guidelines used to monitor the rights of the child and violations of children's rights. They also developed new guidelines to enhance current monitoring and child protection practices at the local provincial and village levels. (4)
Fishing Regulatory Units	The National Policy Committee on Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing coordinates anti-trafficking in persons policies and activities and oversees five subcommittees, including the Subcommittee on Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Migrant Workers. Chaired by the MOL. (33) The Provincial Coordination Center for Sea Fishery Workers (operated jointly by the MOL, Marine Police, Provincial Administration, and Fishers' Association) compiles registration records and information on work permits for migrants working on fishing vessels, and works with vessel owners to ensure that undocumented migrant workers are registered. Also monitors and coordinates inspections of working conditions on fishing vessels, provides trainings on labor protection, receives human trafficking complaints, and coordinates with other agencies to provide assistance, remedy, and rehabilitation services for victims. (15,69) The Thai Maritime Enforcement Command Center (Thai-MECC), which is replacing the Command Center for Combating Illegal Fishing, oversees government efforts to combat illegal fishing and human trafficking in the fishing industry, including searching, investigating, and arresting vessel operators who are suspected of using illegal labor onboard; the Department of Fisheries operates 32 Port In-Port Out (PIPO) Centers and 19 Forward Inspection Points (FIP) in every coastal province. (15,68,69,78) Carries out inspections in the fishing industry. (78,80) PIPO Centers enforce laws related to fishing and labor, including child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking, through inspections at ports and at sea. PIPO Centers are staffed by officers from the Department of Fisheries, Marine Department, DLPW, Department of Employment, and interpreters. (15,44) In 2019, PIPO Centers inspected 72,939 fishing vessels for child labor violations. DLPW also provided training to 60 fishing industry workers on Thai labor standards. (4)
Division of Anti-Trafficking in Persons	Coordinates anti-trafficking activities, including those involving forced child labor, child trafficking, and commercial sexual exploitation. Monitors 76 Provincial Operation Centers for the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking. (33,69) Acts as the secretariat for both the Anti-trafficking in Persons Committee and the Coordinating and Monitoring of Anti-Trafficking in Persons Committee. Operates under the MSDHS. (5,33) This division was active in 2019. (5)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies that are consistent with relevant international standards on child labor (Table 9).

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor Phase II (2015–2020)	Seeks to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in Thailand in accordance with international labor standards. Focuses on (a) preventing the worst forms of child labor, (b) rescuing and protecting children from the worst forms of child labor, (c) developing and enforcing relevant laws, (d) enhancing inter-agency cooperation, and (e) developing management and monitoring systems. (79) In 2019, held training workshops to enhance care and protection quality provided to child labor victims. It also assisted with the development of the 2019 Fishery Workers Protection Act, including enhancing laws and implementation regulations in the fishing industry. (4)
Cyber Tipline Remote Access Policy	Seeks to combat the online sexual exploitation of children in Thailand by partnering with the U.S. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Supports TICAC by permitting the RTP to request warrants to search the residences and electronic equipment of individuals for child pornography and initiate criminal prosecution. (80-83) In 2019, 2 seminars trained 146 participants from TICAC, TATIP, NGOs, and social workers on improving victim-centric and forensic interview techniques regarding investigating and prosecuting commercial sexual exploitation of children online. (4)
National Strategic Plan (2018–2037)†	Aims to improve education access, particularly for vulnerable and poor children in remote areas, by increasing transportation to school, reforming the school subsidy program for poor families, and providing scholarships for children who stay in school. (4,84)

† Policy was approved during the reporting year.

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (23,85,86)

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VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2019, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the adequacy of programs to address child labor in high-risk sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Government Welfare Protection Centers for Victims of Trafficking†	Operates nine long-term human trafficking shelters that offer medical care, psychosocial services, education, and life skills education. (87,88) In 2019, Save the Children and the Thailand Association of Social Workers provided training for shelter staff and case managers on how to provide support to child trafficking victims and decrease their risk of being re-victimized during the judicial processes. (5)
Combating Unacceptable Forms of Work in the Thai Fishing and Seafood Industry (2016–2019)	3.5 year, EU- and ILO-funded Ship to Shore Rights project implemented by ILO, the government of Thailand, and other stakeholders to prevent and reduce forced labor and child labor in the Thai fishing and seafood processing sectors, including by withdrawing children engaged in the worst forms of child labor and enhancing their access to support services. (89,90) In 2019, a joint training between the ILO and the MOL taught 180 newly recruited labor inspectors about child labor and child protection laws. (68)
Migrant Learning Centers (MLCs)†	NGO and government-operated centers that provide basic education, life skill training, and vocational training to children in migrant communities along Thailand's borders. In 2019, the Ministry of Education partnered with UNICEF and NGOs to improve MLC standards and provide government accreditation certificates to MLC students, which will help them continue their education in Thailand or pursue education opportunities in their native countries. (4,44,69)
Child Advocacy Centers (CAC)†	Provide social, legal, and repatriation services to children who are survivors or vulnerable to human trafficking, including children trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. (35,92) In 2019, all five CACs were operational and provided services for 104 child survivors in 80 investigations. (5)
USDOL-Funded Projects	USDOL projects in Thailand that aim to eliminate child labor in its worst forms by improving the capacity of the national government in its criminal investigations and carrying out child labor research. These projects include From Protocol to Practice: A Bridge to Global Action on Forced Labor (2015–2019), a global project implemented by ILO to support global and national efforts to combat the forced labor of adults and children under the 2014 ILO Protocol and supporting Recommendation to ILO C.29 on Forced Labor. (93) In 2019, USDOL continued to fund ILO technical support for the questionnaire and survey design, as well as the analysis, of the <i>National Working Child Survey 2018</i> . (15,33,94) The second project is Attaining Lasting Change for Better Enforcement of Labor and Criminal Law to Address Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (ATLAS)*, implemented by Winrock International. (4,95) For additional information, please see the USDOL website.

* Project was launched during the reporting year.

† Program is funded by the Government of Thailand.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (44,68,79,91,92,96)

The lack of available research and data on the prevalence of child labor in high-risk sectors, such as agriculture, garment manufacturing, domestic work, and construction, makes it difficult for the Government of Thailand to design appropriate programs to address these issues. Migrant children are not eligible for Equal Education Fund—scholarships to support disadvantaged children's access to education—distributions, which increases their vulnerability to labor exploitation. (4,44,68) While access to education for migrant children has increased, some Migrant Learning Centers (MLCs) lack accreditation. (4,43,85) In 2019, the Ministry of Health launched the Health Service System Development to Rescue and Protect Against the Worst Forms of Child Labor training program. This training program helps educate public health workers to identify and refer child labor victims to the appropriate authorities and rehabilitation services. (4)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Thailand (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that the minimum age for work applies to children working outside of employment relationships.	2017 – 2019
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2019
	Raise the minimum age for work to the age up to which education is compulsory.	2018 – 2019
	Ensure that the hazardous occupations and activities prohibited for children are comprehensive and include sectors in which child labor is known to occur, including paid participation in <i>Muay Thai</i> , in which there is evidence that children are exposed to physical dangers.	2018 – 2019
Enforcement	Increase the number of labor inspectors responsible for enforcing laws related to child labor to meet the ILO's technical guidance.	2015 – 2019
	Collect and publish comprehensive data on the number of investigations conducted and convictions for all crimes related to child labor, including the worst forms of child labor.	2015 – 2019
	Ensure provincial government and court officials are provided adequate training on human trafficking issues—specifically in cases of male children in commercial sexual exploitation—to afford boys the same protections as girls.	2018 – 2019
	Ensure law enforcement officials report all human trafficking incidences.	2019
	Ensure labor inspectors are provided training necessary to conduct inspections at remote informal sector workplaces.	2019
Social Programs	Improve access to education, especially for ethnic minority and migrant children, including by clarifying to school officials, either under the Ministry of Education or local governments, the necessary documents non-Thai students need to submit for enrollment, raising awareness of migrant children's right to education, and addressing language barriers for non-Thai speaking students, including on public school applications.	2012 – 2019
	Conduct research and data prevalence surveys to ensure that there are sufficient social programs to address child labor in the agriculture, garment manufacturing, domestic work, and construction sectors.	2016 – 2019
	Ensure that there are sufficient social programs to assist children from vulnerable groups, such as migrant children, who are at high risk of the worst forms of child labor.	2016 – 2019
	Ensure migrant learning centers are accredited.	2018 – 2019

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