

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

In 2016, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government invested in poverty reduction initiatives benefitting children by initiating the Zero Hunger Trust Fund and expanding funding for the Supplementary Feeding program. Under the National Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, the Government also participated in the IOM's Baseline Assessment to determine how to best build capacity to eliminate human trafficking, including of children. However, although research is limited, there is evidence that children in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines perform dangerous tasks in domestic work and begging. Limited research also suggests that children engage 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 research is limited, there is evidence that children in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines perform dangerous tasks in domestic work and begging, and engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation.(1-3) 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 to 14	Unavailable
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	Unavailable
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate (%)		98.2

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2015, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016.(4) Data were unavailable from Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis, 2016.(5)

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 (6-8)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor [‡]	Commercial sexual exploitation (9, 10)

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

Limited research suggests that some children in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation, including by their relatives, in exchange for money or goods.(11, 12) In 2016, local authorities did not identify any new cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children.(12)

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).



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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, including its worst forms (Table 4). However, gaps exist in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' legal framework to adequately protect children from child labor.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards: 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 (13)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	No	14	Articles 1 and 2 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (13)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Part I, Sections 3 and 4; and Articles 1 and 2 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (13)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Part I, Article 2 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (14)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Part II, Articles 5–8 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (14)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Part II, Article 7 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (14)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		Part II, Articles 5 and 8 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (14)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*†		
State Compulsory	N/A†		
State Voluntary	N/A†		
Non-State Compulsory	No		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	19	Part I, Article 6 of the Police Act (15)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Part I, Article 2 of the Education Act (16)
Free Public Education	Yes		Part III, Articles 14–16 of the Education Act (16)

† No standing military (17)

* No conscription (15)

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.(14, 18)

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). However, gaps in labor law enforcement remain and some enforcement information is not available.

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 (ATIPU); and refer victims to appropriate social services and fund financial requests made by the ATIPU.(2, 19)
Ministry of Social Development	Maintain Child Protection Unit, which includes Child Protection Officers who report cases of child abuse.(7)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2016, 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	2015	2016
Labor Inspectorate Funding	Unknown* (8)	\$421,308 (3)
Number of Labor Inspectors	5 (8)	4 (3)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	No (20)	No (3)
Training for Labor Inspectors		
Initial Training for New Employees	Unknown	N/A
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	N/A	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (21)	Yes (12)
Number of Labor Inspections	Unknown	Unknown
Number Conducted at Worksite	Unknown	Unknown
Number Conducted by Desk Reviews	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	0 (8)	0 (3)
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	Yes (8)	Yes (3)
Routine Inspections Targeted	No (8)	Unknown
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (8)	Yes (3)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (8)	Yes (3)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (8)	Yes (3)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (8)	Yes (3)

*The Government does not publish this information.

A lack of adequate resources, such as computers and training, hamper the labor inspectorate's enforcement of child labor laws.(3, 19)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2016, 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	2015	2016
Training for Investigators		
Initial Training for New Employees	Yes (21)	N/A
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	N/A	N/A
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (8)	Yes (3)
Number of Investigations	3 (21)	0 (3)
Number of Violations Found	1 (21)	0 (3)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	1 (21)	0 (3)

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

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2015	2016
Number of Convictions	0 (21)	0 (3)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (8)	Yes (3)

In 2016, the Government trained law enforcement officers and 90 percent of its overseas diplomatic and consular staff on how to combat human trafficking.(20) The Government also provided training to faith-based organizations and NGOs on human trafficking.(20)

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

The Government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Key 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 human trafficking and assist victims, and provide training to all relevant government officials and authority figures. Chaired by the Prime Minister.(2, 14, 22) Comprises representatives of the Police, Immigration, Public Prosecutions, Social Services, Gender Affairs, and the Labor Department.(12)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established policies related to child labor, including all its worst forms (Table 9).

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons (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.(8) In 2016, the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a Baseline Assessment to determine the capacity building and institutional strengthening necessary to combat human trafficking.(19)

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

Although the Government adopted the National Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, the Plan does not articulate tasks to achieve its goals, identify stakeholders' involvement, or establish estimated timeframes for execution.(19) Additionally, there is no evidence of policies on other worst forms of child labor.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2016, the Government funded and participated in programs that may contribute to the prevention or elimination of child labor (Table 10).

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor†

Program	Description
Government-funded educational programs‡	In 2016, the Government expanded the Supplementary Feeding Program, which provides free meals to students from low-income families(23, 24), and continued to fund other programs such as the Book Loan Program (6, 21); the Street Children Rehabilitation Program (6, 23); and the Foster Care Program(7).
Zero Hunger Trust Fund*†	Provides meals, materials and uniforms to children in need.(3)

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

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

‡ The Government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms. (6, 12, 23, 25-27)

In 2016, the Government trained 454 students and 44 teachers on human trafficking issues, and conducted presentations on child trafficking and child labor.(12)

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 11).

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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 – 2016
	Ensure that laws prohibit using, procuring or offering of a child for the production of illicit drugs.	2011 – 2016
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under 18 into non-state armed groups.	2016
Enforcement	Publish information regarding the number of labor inspections conducted, including the number of inspections conducted at worksites and by desk reviews.	2014 – 2016
	Authorize the labor inspectorate to assess penalties for labor law violations	2016
	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by providing sufficient resources, including training, to conduct labor inspections.	2015 – 2016
	Strengthen the labor inspectorate by initiating targeted inspections based on analysis of data related to risk-prone sectors and patterns of serious incidents.	2015 – 2016
Government Policies	Define and assign tasks, stakeholder involvement, and execution of deliverables under the National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.	2016
	Adopt a policy that addresses all worst forms of child labor, including commercial sexual exploitation.	2009 – 2016

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