

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT

In 2013, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government made limited enforcements efforts, which included incorporating information on trafficking in persons into the training for new police recruits and developing guides for officials to help identify victims of trafficking. The Government also continued to implement social programs that target children that may be vulnerable to child labor. However, although the country does not appear to have a widespread child labor problem, some children are engaged in domestic service and agriculture. Gaps remain in the legal framework. The minimum age for hazardous work falls below international standards, and although the use of children for the trafficking of drugs is prohibited, there is no law to prohibit the use of children in the production of drugs.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are engaged child labor in domestic service and agriculture.(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 (%)		98.9

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.(3)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis, 2014.(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
Agriculture	Cultivation of marijuana* (1, 5, 6)
Services	Domestic service* (2, 7)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation* (6, 8) Used in the trade of marijuana* (1, 5)

* 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

Limited evidence suggests that children are involved the cultivation of marijuana.(1) There have also been reports of adults exploiting children in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines through commercial sexual exploitation.(6, 8) However, the Government has acknowledged that due to the lack of data on the prevalence of child labor, especially the sexual exploitation of children, the full extent of the problem is unknown.(9)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON 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 relevant laws and regulations related to child labor (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	14	Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (10)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	14	Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act (10)
List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children	No		
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Constitution (11)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (12, 13)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (12, 13)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (12, 13)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	19	Police Act (14, 15)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Education Act (16)
Free Public Education	Yes		Education Act (16)

*No conscription or no standing military.

The minimum age for hazardous work is 14. There are no regulations defining or prohibiting hazardous occupations or conditions for children under the age of 18 beyond prohibitions against working at night and in any industrial undertaking.(2, 9, 17) The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act prohibits the use of a child in the trafficking of illicit goods, but not the use of children in the production of illicit drugs.(9, 12, 13)

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. 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 and human trafficking; specifically address human trafficking through an anti-trafficking unit; refer victims to appropriate social services.(2)

Law enforcement agencies in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms.

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2013, the Ministry of Labor employed four inspectors who conducted 50 inspections, an increase from 14 in 2012.(2) As there were no complaints of child labor violations, there were no inspections conducted specifically targeting child labor. The budget for the Ministry of Labor for 2013 is not publicly available, but a Ministry official indicated that the amount is adequate.(2) Labor inspectors did not receive training on child labor and its worst forms in 2013.(2)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2013, the Government incorporated information on trafficking in persons into the training for new police recruits and developed guides for officials to help identify victims of trafficking. The anti-trafficking in persons unit within the Royal Police Force conducted training seminars on child labor and forced labor for 8,000 students and 500 teachers, and also held similar seminars for members of Government and civil society.(2)

The number of police investigators responsible for enforcing criminal laws on the worst forms of child labor is not available. There were no investigations or prosecutions involving the worst forms of child labor in 2013, and thus no citations issued or children removed from child labor as a result of investigations.(2)

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

Research found no evidence that the Government has established a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including its worst forms. However, the Government has another mechanism that may have an impact on child labor (Table 6).

Table 6. 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 trafficking, coordinate the collection of data amongst government agencies, establish policies to enable government agencies to work with nongovernmental organizations to prevent trafficking and assist victims, and coordinate and provide training for all relevant government officials and authority figures; chaired by the Prime Minister (2, 12, 18)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Research found no evidence of any policies to address child labor, including its worst forms.

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Research found no evidence of programs to specifically address child labor in domestic service, commercial sexual exploitation, or illicit activities. However, the Government has funded other programs that may have an impact on child labor (Table 7).

Table 7. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Community Capacity Building Program and Village Integrated Development Program*‡	Designed to reduce poverty in rural areas.(2)
Supplementary Feeding Program*‡	Provides free meals to preschool and primary school students from low-income families.(2, 19)
Education Sector Development Plan*‡	Aims to increase access to and improve quality of education for all.(20)
Book Loan Program*‡	Subsidizes textbooks for children from low-income families.(7, 21)
Street Children Rehabilitation Program*‡	Returns children living on the street or at risk of living on the street to schools and trains and assists families of these children.(7, 21)
Children Against Poverty Program*‡	Holds annual 2-week program to address gaps in the schooling system and break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.(5, 7, 21)
Crisis Center Shelter*‡	Maintains short-term shelter that may also be used to house trafficking victims, including children.(2, 8)

* The impact of this program on child labor does not appear to have been studied.

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

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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 8. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Laws	Amend the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act to make 18 the minimum age for hazardous work.	2009 – 2013
	Develop a list of hazardous occupations and working conditions prohibited for children under age 18.	2009 – 2013
	Draft and adopt legislation to prohibit procuring or offering a child for the production of illicit drugs.	2011 – 2013
Enforcement	Provide training to inspectors on child labor and its worst forms.	2011 – 2013
Coordination	Establish a coordinating mechanism to combat all worst forms of child labor.	2009 – 2013
Government Policies	Develop a national plan of action to address the worst forms of child labor, particularly for children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation and in illicit activities.	2009 – 2013
Social Programs	Assess the impact that existing programs may have on addressing the worst forms of child labor.	2009 – 2013
	Conduct a national child labor study to assess whether evidence of the worst forms of child labor is indicative of a small or hidden problem that requires further action.	2009 – 2013

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