

In 2013, Saint Kitts and Nevis made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government continued to fund social programs that target those vulnerable to child labor. However, while the extent of the problem is unknown, children in Saint Kitts and Nevis are reported to engage in the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation and drug trafficking. The law does not protect all children ages 16 to 18 from hazardous work, and the Government has not yet adopted a hazardous work list.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Though the extent of the problem is unknown, children in Saint Kitts and Nevis are reported to engage in the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation and drug trafficking.(1-5) Table 1 provides key indicators on children’s work and education in Saint Kitts and Nevis. 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 (%)		92.6

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2012, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014.(6)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children’s Work Project’s analysis, 2014.(7)

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 service* (8)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation* (1, 2)
	Use of children in illegal drug and small arms trafficking* (3-5)

* 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.

Some reports indicate that mothers or caregivers allow the sexual exploitation of children under their care by men who give them monetary or other benefits in return.(2)

There is no recent data on the number of children who are engaged in economic activities in the country. A National Census was conducted in 2011, and it is expected to contain such information.(9) Research was not able to determine whether the results from this Census have been published.




II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Saint Kitts and Nevis has ratified most 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, 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	16	Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act, 2002 (10)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	16	Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act, 2002 (10)
List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited for Children	No		
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Constitution (11)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Trafficking in Persons (Prevention) Act, 2008 (12)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Trafficking in Persons (Prevention) Act, 2008; Electronic Crimes Act, 2009 (12, 13)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	No		
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	N/A*		
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	Yes	18	Defence Force Act, 1997 (14)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Education Act, 2005 (15)
Free Public Education	Yes		Education Act, 2005 (15)

*No conscription or no standing military.

The Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act sets the minimum age for hazardous work at 16.(10) This leaves children between the ages of 16 to 18 vulnerable to hazardous work.(9, 16) A comprehensive list of hazardous occupations prohibited to children has not been established.(16-18)

Research found no evidence of laws that prohibit the use, procurement, or offering of a child for the production or trafficking of drugs.(17)

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 (MOL)	Enforce child labor laws, in particular through its Department of Labor. Work closely with the Ministry of Social and Community Development, Culture, and Gender Affairs to help refer cases of child abuse.(19)
Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force	Lead criminal investigations, in part through its Special Victims Unit, which was created in conjunction with Child Protective Services. Work closely with the Department of Gender Affairs and Child Welfare Services to assist child victims.(19)

Law enforcement agencies in Saint Kitts and Nevis took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms.

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2013, the Ministry of Labor (MOL) employed six labor officers who also served as labor inspectors. The labor officers are responsible for investigating all labor violations, including those related to children.(19, 20) During the reporting period, labor officers received training on inspections from the ILO. While the number of labor inspections conducted during the reporting period was deemed sufficient given the scope of the problem, the exact number of inspections is unknown.(19) The MOL did not report any child labor violations.(19)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2013, there were no criminal investigations related to child labor conducted by the Police Force, including its Special Victims Unit, as there were no reports of such cases made. While some investigators received training on domestic violence and sexual offences, there was no training on how to investigate the worst forms of child labor during the reporting period.(19)

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 6).

Table 6. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
National Advisory Board for the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labor (NABEHCL)	Review, implement, and propose legislation to eradicate hazardous child labor. Chaired by the Labor Commissioner and comprised of the Chief Labor Inspector, the Chief Education Officer, the Crown Counsel, a Child Welfare and Probation Officer, a Gender Officer, a Police Inspector, an ILO Desk Officer, workers' and employers' representatives, and other civil society partners.(19, 20)

In 2013, the National Advisory Board for the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labor (NABEHCL) continued to review labor legislation and worked on drafting a new labor code that would reconcile existing laws and comply with international standards, including ratified ILO conventions. The statutes that deal with child labor, including its worst forms, are under consideration.(19) The new legislation is undergoing review by the ILO, and is slated to come before the National Assembly in 2014. The legislation calls for a Tripartite Plus Board to develop policies on all forms of child labor and to establish a hazardous work list.(19)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 7).

Table 7. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
Education Development Policy (2009-2019)*	Seeks to improve access to education for all children and improve its quality. Implemented by the Ministry of Education as part of the Government's development goals.(21)

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

In 2013, the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis continued to consult with the ILO on developing national policies to combat child labor, including its worst forms.(19) In November, the Government participated in the XVIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor to foster continued dialogue and cooperation on labor issues throughout the Americas. The joint declaration of the Conference promotes social dialogue to address child labor and reaffirms country participants' commitment to work with civil society organizations to advance efforts toward the eradication of child labor.(22)

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

In 2013, the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis funded programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Operation Future‡	Police Force program that prevents children from engaging in drug trafficking and gang violence. Involves at-risk youth in alternative activities, and introduces participants to imprisoned gang members to teach them about the negative effects of criminal and illicit activities.(3, 23)
People Empowerment Program‡	Government initiatives that provide job training and economic opportunities to youth. Launched in 2011 and funded in part by the Sugar Industry Diversification Fund.(24, 25)
Social and educational assistance programs*‡	Ministry of Education, Social, and Community Development program that coordinates with the Ministry of Child Welfare to keep children in school by providing school supplies, uniforms, textbooks, and school meals.(19, 26, 27)
Project Viola*‡	Government assistance program that helps teenage mothers pursue higher education.(20, 26)

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

‡ Program is funded by the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

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 Kitts and Nevis (Table 9).

Table 9. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Laws	Amend current laws to increase the minimum age for hazardous employment to 18.	2009 – 2013
	Adopt a comprehensive list of hazardous work prohibited for children.	2009 – 2013
	Draft and adopt legislation to prohibit the use, procuring, or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs.	2012 – 2013
Enforcement	Make publicly available the number of labor inspections conducted by the Ministry of Labor.	2013
	Provide training to criminal law investigators on the worst forms of child labor.	2013
Government Policies	Assess the impact that the Education Development Policy may have on child labor.	2013
Social Programs	Publish the results for the 2011 National Census to assess the prevalence of child labor and its worst forms.	2012 – 2013
	Assess the impact that social and educational assistance programs have on child labor.	2010 – 2013

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