

In 2021, Thailand made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. During the reporting period, the Government of Thailand approved the third National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor Phase III (2021–2022), which included the Ministry of Labor signing a memorandum of understanding with 13 business associations to prevent child and forced labor in the shrimp, fishing, sugarcane, and garment industries. The government also published statistics on the number of investigations conducted, violations found, and convictions secured for crimes related to the worst forms of child labor. Moreover, the Ministry of Education implemented a program in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor, the Office of the Ombudsman, and other related government agencies to provide education on labor rights, assist with vocational training, and share job vacancies to 1,127 student trainees. However, children in Thailand are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children, some as young as age 12, also participate for remuneration in Muay Thai competitions, an area of hazardous work in which there is evidence of serious head injuries. Thailand does not meet the international standard for the minimum age for work because the law does not grant protections to children working outside of formal employment relationships. Lastly, child labor law enforcement remains a challenge due to an insufficient number of inspectors and resources to physically inspect remote workplaces.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Thailand are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children, some as young as age 12, also participate for remuneration in Muay Thai competitions, an area of hazardous work in which there is evidence of serious head injuries. (I-16) Table I provides key indicators on children's work and education in Thailand.

Table I. 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 (%)		95.1

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2020, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022. (17)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3 (MICS 3), 2005–2006. (18)

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	Processing shrimp and seafood† (4,19-22)
	Fishing, including work performed in fisheries and on sea vessels† (4,20,23-25)
	Planting and harvesting sugarcane (19,26,27)
	Production of rubber (22,28)

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

Sector/Industry	Activity
Industry	Manufacturing, including garment production (4,25)
	Working in poultry factories, and working on pig farms (16,29)
	Construction, including transporting cement and bricks (4,16,19,22,30,31)
Services	Domestic work (28,32)
	Work in restaurants, motorcycle repair shops, and gas stations (4,16,19,22,25,33,34)
	Street work, including begging and vending (4,16,22,24,25,32,35)
	<i>Muay Thai</i> fighting (2-4,6-12,14,16,25,36,37)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Commercial sexual exploitation, including use in the production of pornography, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1,4,5,22,24,25,32,33,38,39)
	Forced labor in vending, begging, and domestic work (4,5,16,25,32)
	Forced labor in the production of garments, agriculture, and in shrimp and seafood processing (4,22,40)
	Forced labor in fishing, including fisheries (4,23,25,32,41)
	Use in the production and trafficking of drugs, including narcotics, amphetamines, kratom, and marijuana (4,22,25,28,40)

† 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, Laos, and Cambodia, 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 coerced to produce pornography and perform sexual acts. (4,5,24,25,32,33,38,42) Clients of child sex trafficking victims attempt to avoid law enforcement by arranging appointments in private residences, randomly changing venues, and paying children directly. The Thai government reported that some recruiters and traffickers are active or former child sex trafficking victims themselves. (25)

Incidents of child labor in the shrimp and seafood processing industry have decreased in recent years, but children, particularly migrants from the Greater Mekong Sub-region, continue to engage in hazardous work in this industry. (4,21,32,41,43) Children working in agriculture face health risks from lifting heavy loads, risk injury from operating dangerous machinery and using sharp equipment, and are exposed to pesticides, sun and heat, and long hours from very early in the morning until nighttime. (16,25,28) 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, and are not always enrolled in school. (4,25,30,31,44)




Children also participate in *Muay Thai* competitions, an area of work in which there is evidence of serious head injuries. Children receive remuneration in the form of prize money or wages, and research found that betting and illegal gambling on the outcome of children’s matches occurs often during *Muay Thai* competitions. (2,4,6,12,14,36) The Government of Thailand began drafting its Boxing Act Amendment in 2018, but the draft amendment to add a minimum age requirement for *Muay Thai* is still being considered by the Sport Committee at the House of Representatives. No changes had been enacted to the Thai Boxing Act as of December 2021. (4,16,25,37,45-47)

Thai law provides for 12 years of free education for all children in Thailand. (22,25,48) However, language barriers prevent some children, particularly migrants and ethnic minorities, from accessing basic education as school instruction and school applications are only available in Thai. (4,25,45,49) 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 that non-Thai students need to possess to enroll in school, which may be a barrier to education access. (25) Children identifying as LGBTQI+ and those experiencing poverty, drug addiction, family problems, and teen pregnancy, may have additional barriers to education access due to increased harassment and bullying, which may increase their risk of dropping out of school and engaging in child labor. (16,50,51)

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	Section 5 and Chapter 4, Section 44 of the Labor Protection Act; Section 148/1 of the Labor Protection Act (No. 5) (52,53)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Chapter 4, Sections 49 and 50 of the Labor Protection Act; Section 148/2 of the Labor Protection Act (No. 5); Section 4 and Chapter 2, Article 26(6) of the Child Protection Act; Chapter 4, Section 20 of the Home Workers Protection Act (52-55)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Chapter 4, Sections 49 and 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 (52,56,57)
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); Sections 1 and 2 of the Amendment of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (58-60)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Sections 282 and 283 of the Penal Code; Section 6 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (No. 3) (58,59)
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 (54,58,61,62)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Section 26(5) of the Child Protection Act; Section 93 of the Narcotics Act; Section 84 of the Penal Code; Section 22 of the Beggar Control Act (54,63-65)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Section 25 of the Military Service Act (66)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	Yes		Section 25 of the Military Service Act (66)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	No		
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16	Section 17 of the National Education Act (48)
Free Public Education	Yes		Section 10 of the National Education Act; Section 54 of the Thai Constitution (48,67)

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During the reporting period, the Government of Thailand began prosecuting cases under Section 6/1 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and began developing implementation guidelines, including a Standard Operating Procedure for referral and case management between agencies to include law enforcement, labor inspectors, and Port-In-Port-Out (PIPO) inspectors, in order to address gaps in investigating forced labor crimes. (68,69) The Anti-Human Trafficking Committee also approved a draft amendment to the Penal Code that would make online sexting and online grooming of children criminal offences, in line with Constitutional Standards and the UN CRC. The draft amendment will be sent to the Cabinet for approval. (68) Furthermore, the National Committee on Prevention of Official Complicity in Human Trafficking approved an amendment to the Office of the Prime Minister's Regulations on Management Measures in Preventing Official Complicity in Human Trafficking and sent it to the Cabinet for consideration. This amendment would allow law enforcement to take action against officials facilitating migrant smuggling, which may eventually lead to the individual being trafficked. (68) In addition, the Department of Labor Protection and Welfare (DLPW) began the process of amending the Home Worker Protection Act B.E. 2553 (2010) to raise the minimum age for home workers to age 15. (22)

However, the minimum age for work in Thailand 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, and the law does not require 15-year-olds to complete compulsory schooling before seeking work, some children may be encouraged to leave school before the completion of compulsory education. (48,52,53)

Moreover, although Thailand has identified fishing on sea vessels as a form of hazardous labor, the government is in the process of amending the Ministerial Regulation on Protection of Fishery Work 2014 to allow owners of fishing boats to employ relatives as young as age 16 as interns. (25,70) Research indicates that there is inadequate oversight of fishing vessels to ensure that youth workers are relatives of adult crew. (25)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established relevant institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5).

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. (28) Operates Hotline 1509 and staffs 86 DLPW offices in every province to answer questions about working conditions and receive complaints from the public about child labor. (4,45,71) During the reporting period, DLPW's Call Center received 257 calls and 223 complaints related to the violation of child labor laws. Most of these calls related to employment of children under the minimum age for work. (22,25) In 2021, DLPW's labor inspectors filed charges against 7 enterprises for employing children under the minimum age for work in violation of Thailand's child labor law. There were 20 suspects and 10 child labor victims in these cases, which took place in construction sites, fisheries, restaurants and markets. (25)
Anti-Human Trafficking Units	The Anti-Trafficking in Persons 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. (71) 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. (45,72,73) The Thailand Anti-Trafficking in Persons Task Force (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. (45,72,73) The Department of Special Investigation's (DSI) Bureau of Human Trafficking Crime is tasked with enforcing and investigating human trafficking cases. (4,44) During the reporting period, the RTP investigated 57 cases in which children were used, provided, or offered for prostitution and identified pornographic performances and materials involving 78 child victims. (22,25) The RTP also investigated 39 cases of child labor involving 57 children and removed 36 child victims from situations of exploitation and placed them in Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS)-run long-term shelters or NGO-run shelters. (25) DSI conducted a rescue operation of 18 Burmese migrant workers, which included 2 victims under the age of 18, who were being held against their will in a confectionary factory. (25) Moreover, DSI reported four prosecutions for human trafficking and child exploitation with one child labor victim. Between January 1 and September 30, 2021, OAG reported 72 victims associated with 43 ongoing cases related to sexual exploitation or prostitution. (25)

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement (Cont.)

Organization/Agency	Role
Thailand Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (TICAC)	Investigates and enforces laws against child trafficking and online commercial sexual exploitation of children, including the distribution and production of child pornography through the media. (4,5,22,24,25,74) Comprises police officers, DSI agents, social workers, and selected NGO representatives. (4,22,25,29,44,72,73) During the reporting period, TICAC partnered with NGOs such as HUG Project, Spring Project, and Freedom International Foundation to enhance the capacity of officials to provide child-centered and trauma-informed care and organized online campaigns and workshops to raise awareness of online sexual exploitation. (68,69) TICAC also investigated 79 cases of trafficking, sexual exploitation, child pornography and other abuses involving a total of 49 child victims. (68)
Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS)	Organizes trainings and enforces child protection and human trafficking laws through close collaboration with the RTP, DSI, DLPW, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Oversees Hotline 1300, which receives human trafficking and child labor complaints. Operates 77 temporary shelters located in every province and 9 long-term shelters for human trafficking survivors, including a shelter dedicated solely to boys. (4,5,22,25,32,54,75)

In 2021, the Office of the Attorney General's (OAG) newly established working group developed a Standard Operating Procedure for public prosecutors aimed at enhancing child-friendly justice and supporting a trauma-informed approach when helping child survivors through interviews and preparation for testimony. (68)

The Government of Thailand monitors the shrimp and fishing industries for child labor through 30 PIPO Centers and 21 Forward Inspection Points (FIP) along the coasts. These operations enforce laws related to fishing, forced labor, child labor, and human trafficking. (4,21,23,29,43,44) However, research finds that PIPO inspections are inadequate and inspectors did not identify any cases of trafficking in persons on fishing vessels during the reporting period. (68)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2021, labor law enforcement agencies in Thailand took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including insufficient human resource allocation.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$1,135,774 (16)	\$1,006,683 (25)
Number of Labor Inspectors	1,889 (16)	1,889 (22)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (52)	Yes (52)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	39,729 (76)	22,890 (22)
Number Conducted at Worksite	39,723 (16)	22,890 (22)
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	10 (16)	31 (22)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	10 (16)	13 (22)
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	10 (16)	Unknown (22)
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (52)	Yes (52)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (16)	Yes (22)

During the reporting period, there were 31 violations related to child labor laws involving 70 offenders. Of these cases, 7 cases included hiring children younger than the legal working age. (22)

In 2021, the DLPW organized a special team responsible for child labor inspections. (25) The inspectorate prioritized employment and working conditions with the aim of eliminating the worst forms of child labor;

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however, the number of labor inspectors is insufficient for the size of Thailand's workforce, which includes approximately 38.1 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 2,540 labor inspectors. (77) In addition, there are anecdotal reports of child labor inspections in informal sectors being insufficient due to labor inspectors' inability to access remote work places and safety concerns for inspectors. (16,25) Pandemic-related restrictions on movements also inhibited inspections in the formal and informal sectors. (16)

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Labor (MOL), Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS), and Royal Thai Police sent 115 officers and 433 labor inspectors and other relevant officers to participate in 3 workshops run by the U.S. Department of Labor-funded ATLAS Project. The workshops focused on building capacity for human trafficking and forced labor investigations. (25) DLPW also organized a training on laws related to forced labor and labor trafficking that was attended by 93 law enforcement officials and a training on enhanced law enforcement skills and screening for victims of labor trafficking that was attended by 100 labor inspectors. (25)

The Thai Maritime Enforcement Command Center has authority over the Command Center for Combating Illegal Fishing's (CCCIF) PIPO and FIP operations and the 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. (4,5,16,22,29,71,78) During 2021, 135 integrated inspections of fishing vessels at sea were conducted, involving 716 fishing vessels and 8,532 workers. (22) However, NGOs report that inspections and efforts to enforce the Work in Fishing Convention No. 188 and the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention (P29) to identify victims on fishing vessels are inadequate. (24,25)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2021, criminal law enforcement agencies in Thailand took actions to address child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of the criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including lack of training for criminal investigators.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2020	2021
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Refresher Courses Provided	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Number of Investigations	Unknown (16)	39 (22)
Number of Violations Found	Unknown (16)	Unknown (76)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	26 (16)	30 (22)
Number of Convictions	Unknown (16)	Unknown (22)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (16)	Yes (22)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (16)	Yes (22,25)

In 2021, the Thai Department of Juvenile Observation and Protection (DJOP) reported 2,872 cases of children involved in the production and trade of narcotics. Child victims involved in criminal activities were taken to DJOP facilities, where they received rehabilitation services and other social services during the judicial process. (25) The Government of Thailand also reported the rescue of 57 child victims of commercial sexual exploitation and 5 child victims of human trafficking. (22)

During the reporting period, 1,257 police investigators and administrators were trained on policies, laws, and techniques to conduct criminal investigations and prosecutions related to the worst forms of child labor and human trafficking crimes through training conducted by the government and donors. (25) The OAG also organized 5 trainings on trafficking in persons prosecution for 279 newly assigned public prosecutors in provincial offices to enhance expertise on child trafficking and online sexual exploitation of children, using a victim-centered and trauma-informed care approach. (68) However, research indicates that human trafficking

may be underreported due to inconsistencies in the identification process and enforcement training gaps, including understanding the gravity of human trafficking crimes and victim identification training amongst police, prosecutors, and judges. (24,47,79) This includes a lack of understanding of the use of male children in commercial sexual exploitation among some provincial government and court officials due to the notion that boys should be able to defend themselves against perpetrators. (5,29)

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 MOL, with representation from other government agencies, employer and worker associations, and civil society groups. (22,25) Oversees two subcommittees responsible for monitoring the National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor. (40) Held one meeting during the reporting period. At this meeting, the Committee discussed the results of the government of Thailand's efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor and upcoming national policies and plans related to child labor, including World Day Against Child Labor and the "Prevention and Correction of Child and Forced Labor" MOU. (22,25) Participants also discussed a draft report on the government's efforts to address child labor in 2021 and a draft amendment to the occupations considered to be hazardous for children. (22,25)
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. (22,54) Led by MSDHS with participation from DLPW and the Ministries of Education and Public Health. (44) During the reporting period, the committee held three meetings. Activities included approving the Local Performance Assessment on Child and Youth Development budget for 2022, and requesting that the Ministry of Interior (MOI) develop a capacity-building plan for the Department of Local Administration officers responsible for protecting and caring for children. (76)
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 MOL. (4,22,40) The Provincial Coordination Center for Sea Fishery Workers (operated jointly by 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 survivors. (29) The Thai Maritime Enforcement Command Center 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. (22) The Department of Fisheries operates 30 Port-In-Port-Out (PIPO) Centers and 21 Forward Inspection Points (FIP), which are located in every coastal province. (22,29,71,78) Carries out inspections in the fishing industry. (22,78,80) 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, the Marine Department, DLPW, Department of Employment, and interpreters. (22,29,45) During the reporting period, PIPO Centers investigated 14,265 fishing vessels. (22)
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. (40) Provides assistance and welfare protection to survivors of human trafficking. (22) 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 MSDHS. (5,25,40) During the reporting period, held a training for officials from 76 provinces on screening for and assisting survivors of human trafficking and forced labor, and a training for officials working in protective shelters on innovative therapy methods to prevent psychological trauma in survivors of human trafficking. (25)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including a lack of efficacy in accomplishing mandates.

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Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor Phase III (2021–2022)†	Seeks to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in Thailand in accordance with international labor standards. Focused on (1) preventing the worst forms of child labor, (2) rescuing, protecting, and rehabilitating children from the worst forms of child labor, (3) integrating systems and mechanisms for the elimination of the worst forms of child labor, and (4) communicating with the public. (22) During the reporting period, commemorated World Day Against Child Labor (June 12) by publishing resources about child labor and hosting online events with 219 participants from the public and private sectors, civil society, and students. In addition, in March 2021, the MOL and 13 business associations in the shrimp, fish, sugarcane, and garment industries signed an MOU titled "Prevention and Correction of Child and Forced Labor" to prevent child labor and forced labor by applying Good Labor Practices to these industries. (22) MOL plans to hold trainings for member associations on labor practices and laws, and to conduct audits to ensure compliance with the MOU. (22)
Cyber Tipline Remote Access Policy	Seeks to eliminate 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. (22,80-83) In 2021, the network of cooperation was expanded to cover two more areas in Chiang Rai, led by ECPAT, and in Bangkok, led by Spring Program under the Education Foundation for Life and Society. (76)
National Strategic Plan (2018–2037)	Seeks 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. (4,22,84) Research could not determine what activities were held within the reporting period.

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (22)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2021, 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 inadequacy of programs to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Government Welfare Protection Centers for Victims of Trafficking†	MSDHS-operated human trafficking shelters, including 77 short-term and 9 long-term shelters that offer medical care, psychosocial services, education, and life skills education. (25) While reported to be active during 2021, research could not determine what activities were held during the reporting period. (76)
Migrant Learning Centers†	NGO- and government-operated centers that provide basic education, life skills training, and vocational training to children in migrant communities along Thailand's borders. (4,22,25,45) During the reporting period, the Centers disseminated a document on "Measures for Educational Institutions to Prevent and Control the Spread of COVID-19"; however, no in-person activities were held. (76)
Child Advocacy Centers (CAC)†	Provide child-friendly spaces to conduct social, legal (including forensic interviews), and repatriation services to children who are survivors or vulnerable to human trafficking, including children trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. (22,32,75,85) Between January–October 2021, 5 CACs provided services to 60 child victims in 45 investigations. (22)
Attaining Lasting Change for Better Enforcement of Labor and Criminal Law to Address Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (ATLAS)	USDOL-funded project implemented by Winrock International to build host governments' capacity to address child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking by strengthening their laws and regulations, enforcement, and coordination. During the reporting period, the project hosted 8 workshops attended by a total of 362 government officials from MOL, MOI, MSDHS, Ministry of Justice, and RTP on child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking investigations. (22,76) Additional information is available on the USDOL website. (4,16,24,86)
UN Programs	Accelerating Progress towards an Integrated and Modernized Social Protection System for All in Thailand: (2020–2022), \$ 2,661,815 funded by the Joint SDG Fund, 2-year project implemented by ILO, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), IOM, and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN) to improve social protection coverage, including by increasing the number of children covered under the Child Support Grant to 2 million children. (22,87)

† 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. (22,45,71,85,88)

During the reporting period, the MSDHS established the Child Protection Funds and Occupational Funds to support low-income and homeless families. The Ministry of Education also implemented a program in cooperation with MOL, Office of the Ombudsman, and other related government agencies to provide education on labor rights, assist with vocational training, and share job vacancies to 1,127 trainees who were identified as low-income, above the age for compulsory education, and were no longer continuing their studies. (22,25)

However, 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. In addition, while access to education for migrant children has increased, some Migrant Learning Centers lack accreditation. (4,44,89)

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 – 2021
	Ensure that the law criminally prohibits the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2021
	Raise the minimum age for work to match the age up to which education is compulsory.	2018 – 2021
	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 Muay Thai, in which there is evidence that children are exposed to physical dangers.	2018 – 2021
Enforcement	Increase the number of labor inspectors to meet the ILO's technical advice.	2015 – 2021
	Collect and publish comprehensive data on the number of violations found, convictions, and penalties that are collected for all crimes related to child labor, including the worst forms of child labor.	2015 – 2021
	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 and victim assistance as girls.	2018 – 2021
	Ensure law enforcement officials report all human trafficking incidences.	2019 – 2021
	Ensure labor inspectors are provided training and resources necessary to conduct inspections at remote informal sector workplaces, including in agriculture and domestic work.	2019 – 2021
	Ensure Port-In-Port-Out centers are able to carry out their mandate, including by improving training and inspection capacity, and that the Work in Fishing Convention No. 188 and the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention (P29) are enforced so that victims of trafficking in persons on fishing vessels can be effectively identified.	2021
Coordination	Publish activities undertaken by coordination bodies, including the National and Provincial Committees on Child Protection.	2021
Government Policies	Publish activities undertaken to implement key policies related to child labor, including the National Strategic Plan (2018–2037).	2021
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, and ensure Migrant Learning Centers are accredited. Ensure that there are sufficient social programs to assist children from vulnerable groups, such as LGBTQI+ children, who face additional barriers to education that may increase their risk of dropping out of school and engaging in child labor.	2012 – 2021
	Publish activities undertaken to implement key programs related to child labor, including the Government Welfare Protection Centers for Victims of Trafficking.	2021
	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 – 2021
	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 – 2021

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