



# TUVALU

## MINIMAL ADVANCEMENT

In 2023, Tuvalu made minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government established the Tuvalu Australia Partnership for Quality Education to provide training for schoolteachers. It also drafted the Child Safe Policy Act, Inclusive Education Policy, and Protection for All Children in Educational Institutions Policy to support children's access to education. However, the government has not specified the types of hazardous work prohibited for children, leaving them vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor. In addition, Tuvalu does not publish information about its labor law and criminal law enforcement efforts.



## PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

### Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent of Population
Working	5 to 14	8.5% (Unavailable)
Hazardous Work by Children	15 to 17	Unavailable
Attending School	5 to 14	79.4%
Combining Work and School	7 to 14	8.9%

Although research is limited, there is evidence that children in Tuvalu engage in child labor in domestic work.

### Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity



#### Services

Domestic work.



## SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

The suggested government actions below would close gaps USDOL has identified in Tuvalu's implementation of its international commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

### Legal Framework

Ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict.

Ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography.

Ratify the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons.

Determine by national law or regulation the types of hazardous work prohibited for all children, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations.

Establish by law free public education.

### Enforcement

Publish labor law enforcement information, including labor inspectorate funding, number of labor inspections conducted at worksites, number of child labor violations found, number of child labor violations for which penalties were imposed, number of child labor penalties imposed that were collected, whether routine inspections were conducted, and whether unannounced inspections were conducted.

**Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor (Cont.)**

Establish a mechanism to assess civil penalties.

Institutionalize training for labor inspectors, including training for new labor inspectors at the beginning of their employment.

Strengthen the labor inspectorate by initiating targeted inspections based on analysis of data related to risk-prone sectors and patterns of serious incidents.

Publish information on criminal law enforcement efforts, including whether training was provided for criminal investigators, the number of investigations, the number of prosecutions initiated, number of penalties imposed, and number of convictions for violations related to the worst forms of child labor.

**Government Policies**

Provide technical assistance and support to ensure that the Child Protection Work Plan (2017) is fully implemented.

**Social Programs**

Conduct a comprehensive study of children’s activities to determine whether they are engaged in or at risk for involvement in child labor.

Institute programs to address child labor in domestic work.






**LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR**

Tuvalu has not ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict; the UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography; or the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons. In addition, Tuvalu’s laws do not meet international standards on identification of hazardous occupations or activities prohibited for children and on free public education.

Child Labor Laws and Regulations	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work, <b>15 Years</b>	✓	Article 42 of the Labor and Employment Relations Act
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work, <b>18 Years</b>	✓	Article 44 of the Labor and Employment Relations Act
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	✗	
Prohibition of Slavery, Debt Bondage, and Forced Labor	✓	Articles 3 and 68 of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime Act; Articles 46–48 of the Labor and Employment Relations Act; Article 249 of the Penal Code; Article 18 of the Constitution of Tuvalu
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	✓	Articles 3 and 68 of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime Act; Article 136 of the Penal Code
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	✓	Article 46 of the Labor and Employment Relations Act; Articles 136 and 140–143 of the Penal Code
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	✓	Article 46 of the Labor and Employment Relations Act; Articles 141 and 142 of the Penal Code
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	N/A†	

### Legal Framework for Child Labor (Cont.)

Child Labor Laws and Regulations	Meets International Standards	Legislation
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A†	
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups		Section 46 of the Labor and Employment Relations Act
Compulsory Education Age, <b>15 Years</b>		Article 3(1)(b) of the Compulsory Education Order
Free Public Education		Article 33 of the Education Act

† Country has no standing military

In 2023, the Government of Tuvalu reviewed the Childcare and Welfare Bill, which includes provisions for issues related to rights, protection, and welfare of children in accordance with the UN CRC. However, the Government of Tuvalu has not specified, by national law or regulation, the types of hazardous work prohibited for children; previous provisions applied only to males under age 18 in the industrial, mining, and fishing sectors. Additionally, while education is free in practice for children ages 6 to 18, the Education Act allows the government to charge fees for education.



### ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

Enforcement agencies in Tuvalu took no documented actions to address child labor in 2023.

#### Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

**Ministry of Public Works, Infrastructure, Environment, Labor, Meteorology and Disaster:** Enforces labor laws, including those related to child labor.

**Tuvalu Police Force:** Investigates and enforces criminal violations regarding child labor, child trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, and the use of children in illicit activities.

#### Enforcement Mechanisms and Efforts

Has a Labor Inspectorate	Yes	Has a Complaint Mechanism	Yes
Able to Assess Civil Penalties	No	Imposed Penalties for Child Labor Violations	Unknown
Routinely Conducted Worksite Inspections	Unknown	Conducted Criminal Investigations for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	Unknown
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes	Imposed Penalties for Worst Forms of Child Labor Crimes	N/A

In 2023, **4** labor inspectors conducted an **unknown** number of worksite inspections, finding an **unknown** number of child labor violations. It is **unknown** whether investigations into suspected cases of the worst forms of child labor were conducted, prosecutions were initiated, or perpetrators were convicted.



## COORDINATION, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

<p><b>Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor</b></p> <p>Tuvalu established a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor.</p>	<p><b>Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MEYS):</b> The lead coordinating agency for children's issues. During the reporting period, MEYS reviewed and completed draft legislation including the Child Safe Schools Policy, the Inclusive Education Policy, and the Protection for All Children in Educational Institutions in Tuvalu Policy.</p>
<p><b>Key Policies Related to Child Labor</b></p> <p>Tuvalu established a policy related to child labor. However, full implementation of the Child Protection Work Plan is hindered by lack of technical support.</p> <p><i>‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor.</i></p>	<p><b>Child Protection Work Plan (2017):</b> The work plan includes baseline research into child protection and public relations activities, such as awareness raising and advocacy. During the reporting period, the government continued to support the plan's implementation, although progress was restricted by a lack of technical assistance.</p>
<p><b>Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor</b></p> <p>Tuvalu participated in programs that may contribute to preventing child labor. However, these social programs are inadequate because they fail to address the problem in all sectors, including in domestic work.</p> <p><i>* Established during the reporting period.</i></p>	<p><b>Tuvalu Australia Partnership for Quality Education (TAPQE) (2022–2027):*</b> A 5-year initiative implemented during the reporting period that provides training to primary and secondary school teachers to strengthen their skills, with a focus on improving education quality for students, including those with disabilities.</p> <p><b>Tuvalu Learning Project (2020–2025):</b> Prepares children entering first grade and increases the literacy of children in elementary school. Subcomponents include a study on student absenteeism, a gender analysis to understand why boys are dropping out of school more than girls, and trainings on child protection, gender-based violence, and disability inclusion. Implemented by MEYS and funded by the World Bank. During the reporting period, Tuvalu completed and published a mid-term review of the project and is using its findings to inform future efforts.</p>

For information about USDOL's projects to address child labor around the world, visit [dol.gov/ILABprojects](https://dol.gov/ILABprojects)  
 For references, please visit [dol.gov/ChildLaborReports](https://dol.gov/ChildLaborReports)