

Government Policies and Programs to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Tuvalu began a review of national education policy in 2002 in order to address concerns regarding the quality of education in the country.⁴⁴⁵⁰ UNDP provides technical assistance to strengthen the capacities of local governments in Tuvalu and involve youth in decision making,⁴⁴⁵¹ and implements basic education, non-formal education, and poverty strategy initiatives in the Pacific region, including Tuvalu.⁴⁴⁵² UNICEF works with the Ministry of Health, other government agencies, and NGOs to address children's health and youth development.⁴⁴⁵³ ADB is providing financing for vocational training to address the low rates of secondary school enrollment in the country.⁴⁴⁵⁴ The EU provides funds for education-related projects,⁴⁴⁵⁵ and AusAID is funding an 8-year project to improve the management and administration of the education system at the primary and secondary levels.⁴⁴⁵⁶

Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Statistics on the number of working children under the age of 15 in Tuvalu are unavailable. Reportedly, children are rarely employed outside traditional subsistence farming and fishing.⁴⁴⁵⁷

Under Tuvalu's Education for Life program,⁴⁴⁵⁸ education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 15 years, and free until the age of 13.⁴⁴⁵⁹ In 1998, the gross and net primary enrollment rates were both 100 percent.⁴⁴⁶⁰ Primary school attendance rates are unavailable for Tuvalu. While enrollment rates indicate a level of commitment to education, they do not always reflect children's participation in school.⁴⁴⁶¹ Although Tuvalu has achieved almost universal primary education, secondary enrollment rates are much lower.⁴⁴⁶²

⁴⁴⁵⁰ Dr. Alesana K. Seluka, Minister of Education and Sports and Minister of Health, statement at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, New York: May 10, 2002; available from <http://www.un.org/ga/children/tuvaluE.htm>. See also Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, *Tuvalu: United Nations Development Assistance Framework*, United Nations, Suva, Fiji, May 2002, 9; available from http://www.undp.org.fj/documents/UNDAF_TUVALU%20May%202002.doc.

⁴⁴⁵¹ Youth at the United Nations, *Country Profiles on the Situation of Youth: Tuvalu*, [online] [cited July 11, 2003]; available from <http://esa.un.org/socdev/ynyin/countrya.asp?countrycode=tv>.

⁴⁴⁵² UNDP, *Tuvalu*, [previously online] [cited November 8, 2002]; available from <http://www.undp.org.fj/tuv/tuvaluprog.htm> [hard copy on file].

⁴⁴⁵³ UNICEF, *UNICEF's Programme of Assistance to Pacific Island Countries*, [online] [cited July 11, 2003]; available from http://www.undp.org.fj/un/UNICEF/UNICEF_PIC.htm.

⁴⁴⁵⁴ ADB, *Millennium Development Goals in the Pacific: Relevance and Progress*, Manila, March 2003, 51-52; available from http://www.adb.org/documents/books/MDG_Pacific/mdg.pdf#page=48.

⁴⁴⁵⁵ Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, *Tuvalu: UN Development Assistance Framework*, A 8.

⁴⁴⁵⁶ Australian Agency for International Development, *Country Brief Tuvalu*, AusAID.gov, [online] [cited July 11, 2003]; available from http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/cbrief.cfm?DCon=5241_4447_7119_7336_4068&CountryId=22. See also Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, *Tuvalu: UN Development Assistance Framework*, A 11.

⁴⁴⁵⁷ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2002: Tuvalu*, Washington, D.C., March 31, 2003, Section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2002/18268pf.htm>.

⁴⁴⁵⁸ Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, *Tuvalu: UN Development Assistance Framework*, 9.

⁴⁴⁵⁹ Primary education, which is free, is required for children ages 6 through 13. See UNESCO, *Education for All 2000 Assessment: Country Reports-Tuvalu*, prepared by Department of Education, pursuant to UN General Assembly Resolution 52/84, 2000, Section 6.2; available from <http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/tuvalu/contents.html>.

⁴⁴⁶⁰ More recent data on enrollment rates are not available. See UNESCO, *Education for All: Year 2000 Assessment* [CD-ROM], Paris, 2000.

⁴⁴⁶¹ For a more detailed discussion on the relationship between education statistics and work, see the preface to this report.

⁴⁴⁶² ADB, *Millennium Development Goals in the Pacific*, 50-51.

Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

Tuvaluan law sets the minimum age of employment at 14 years, and a child must be 18 years old to sign a formal work contract.⁴⁴⁶³ The law prohibits industrial labor or work on ships by children less than 15 years of age.⁴⁴⁶⁴ In addition, the Constitution and the Penal Code prohibit forced labor.⁴⁴⁶⁵ The Penal Code criminalizes the procurement of a child less than 18 years of age for prostitution.⁴⁴⁶⁶ While the Penal Code does not specifically address trafficking in children, the kidnapping or abducting of children is prohibited.⁴⁴⁶⁷ There is no information available on the enforcement of labor laws, but there were no reports of trafficking in persons, including children during 2002.⁴⁴⁶⁸

The Government of Tuvalu is not a member of the ILO, and as such has not ratified ILO Convention 138 or ILO Convention 182.⁴⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁴⁶³ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Tuvalu*, Section 6d.

⁴⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶⁵ *Constitution of Tuvalu*, Article 17, (1978); available from http://vanuatu.usp.ac.fj/paclawmat/Tuvalu_legislation/Tuvalu_Constitution.html. See also Government of Tuvalu, *Penal Code*, (1978), Article 249 [cited August 15, 2002]; available from http://vanuatu.usp.ac.fj/Paclawmat/Tuvalu_legislation/Consolidation_1978/Tuvalu_Penal_Code.html.

⁴⁴⁶⁶ *Penal Code*, Articles 136, 38-39.

⁴⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., Articles 131-32, 241-42, 46-47.

⁴⁴⁶⁸ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Tuvalu*, Section 6f.

⁴⁴⁶⁹ ILO, *Alphabetical list of ILO member countries*, [cited July 11, 2003]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/country.htm>.