



Presentation of Findings and Recommendations on Rapid Assessment of Child Labour for the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis

Presented by

Dr. Grace-Ann Cornwall

ILO External Collaborator, Social Development Specialist

July 3, 2024

Definition of Key Terms

Context and Objectives

Methodology

Key Contributors

Limitations to the Research

Main Findings

Conclusion and Key Recommendations



Child labour is defined as work:

- carried out by children under the age of 18
- demands too many hours and/or is performed by children who are too young.
- hazardous to a child's health and development
- impacts on their dignity and that impairs their physical and mental development and health
- usually interferes with a child's right to education and to play.



ILO Convention 138 –Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No.138)

Requires ratifying states to pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age for admission to employment or work. It is one of eight ILO Fundamental Conventions.

The Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis ratified the **ILO Minimum Age Convention No. 138** on June 3, 2005, and fixed the minimum age for full time employment at 16 years

ILO Convention 182 –Minimum Age Convention (No.182)

Article 3 of **ILO Convention No. 182** sets out the categories of the **Worst Forms of Child Labour(WFCL)**. These entail all forms of :

- Slavery or practices like slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict
- Use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, to produce pornography or for pornographic performances
- Use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties
- Work that, by its nature or circumstances, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

The Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis ratified **ILO Convention No. 182** on October 12, 2000.

Ratified International Labour Treaties for St. Kitts and Nevis

Treaties	Ratifications
C 029 Forced Labour Convention (No. 29)	October 12, 2000
C 105 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No. 105)	October 12, 2000
C138 Minimum Age Convention (No. 138)	June 3, 2005
C182 Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182)	October 12, 2000

Ratified International Treaties Supporting the Care and Wellbeing of Children and Families

Treaties	Ratification
<p>United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child</p> <p>There has been no ratification on the of <i>Optional Protocol to the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict</i> has not been ratified</p>	<p>July 24, 1990</p>
<p>Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</p> <p>Optional Protocol to CEDAW</p>	<p>April 25, 1985</p> <p>2006</p>

National Legislations and Policies Supporting Care, Protection and Wellbeing of Children and Families





ST CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS

CHAPTER 18.10

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN, YOUNG PERSONS AND CHILDREN ACT

Revised Edition



Education Act, 2005.

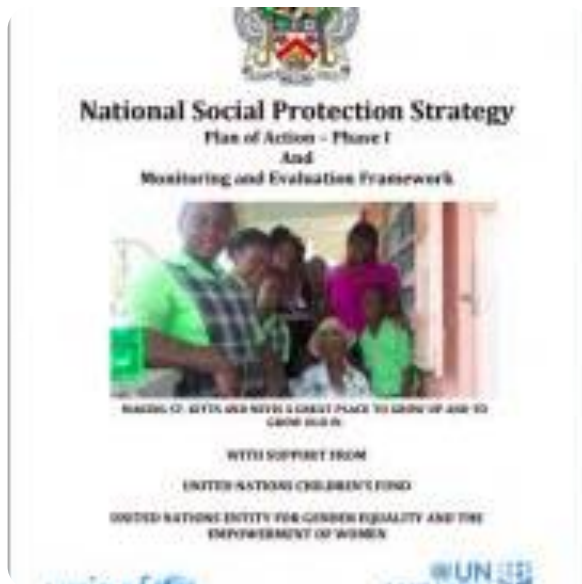
ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

PART 1 – PRELIMINARY

Short title and commencement.
Interpretation.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDUCATION ACT

- Social Security Act, 2017
- Minimum Wage Act, 2017
- Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act 2002
- The Education Act, 2005
- Ministry of Education 2017–2021 Education Sector Plan
- Revised National Youth Policy of Saint Kitts and Nevis 2022-2027
- National Household Registry (2014-2017)
- The National Social Protection Strategy (2013-2017)



Operational Gaps in ILO Convention 138, Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis

1. No list of dangerous work or regulations for protected adolescent work exist
2. No record of all workers under 16 years of age
3. There are no regulations for light work
4. Amendments to the Labour Code required



Operational Gaps in ILO Convention 182, Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis

There is an absence of:

- list of dangerous work where WFCL are included
- tripartite body to address or monitor the problems of the agreement
- action programmes

Adoption of specific provisions prohibiting using, recruiting or engaging of minors under 18 years of age for illicit activities



How Did We Get Here?



Signatory to the Declaration establishing the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour (Regional Initiative) in **October 2018**



ILO-Brazil South-South Cooperation (SSC) Programme committed to providing targeted technical assistance in **2021**



Fieldwork conducted during December 3-8, 2023



Purposes of the Rapid Assessment

- **Provides :**
 - an opportunity to assess the current prevalence of child labour, and/or the levels of risk and vulnerability of children to child labour.
 - key information to support the country's further development of a Country Acceleration Action Plans (CAAP)
-

Rapid Assessment Objectives

General objective

The Rapid Assessment contribute to knowledge generation that supports public policies for Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour (PECL)

Specific objectives

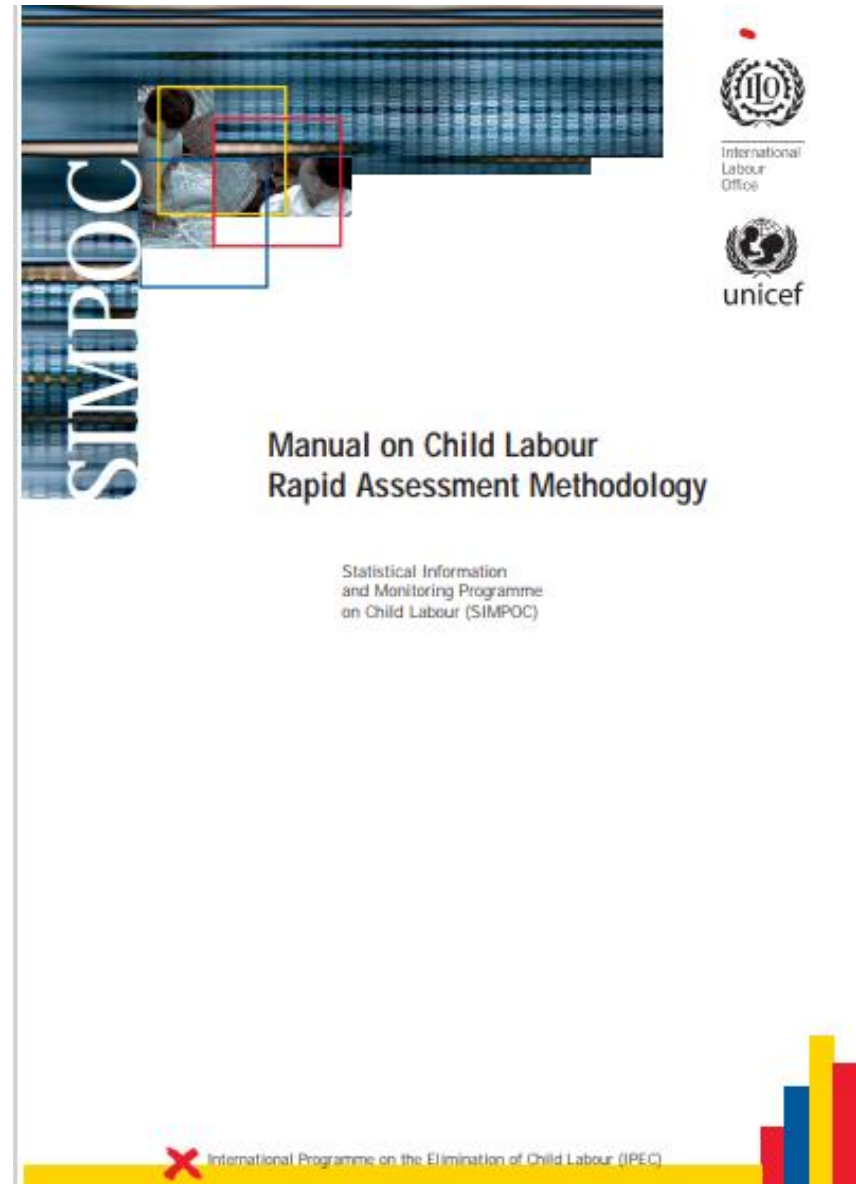
- a. provide evidence for the country on the existence and possible magnitude of child labour
- b. identify what are the main push and pull into child labour and forced labour
- c. identify protective factors against involvement in child labour
- d. highlight key results and their implications for policy and future research

Research Methodology

An exploratory study using a mixed-methods approach closely guided by the ILO/UNICEF *Manual on Child Labour Rapid Assessment Methodology*.

Fieldwork implementation

During the week of **December 3-8, 2023**



Coordination and Logistical Arrangements



Ministry of Employment and Labour

- Astric Wyatt-Archibald and the support of Labour Officers namely Jeneve Mills, Snr; Jewel Wattlely; Annick Beckford; and Daren Richards

**Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs
as well as the Department of Community
Development and Social Services**



Methods of Data Collection

Methodologies

Quantitative

- Administrative data
- Desk research
- Surveys–Parents, Children and Public officials

Qualitative

- Key Informant Interviews
- Group discussions– CSOs, children and parents
- Site Visits– Irish Town, Newton and rural areas such as Challenger, Cayon and St. Paul

Desk Research

- Administrative data from the St. Christopher and Nevis Social Security Board
- Administrative data from the St. Kitts and Nevis Ministry of Education Early Warning System
- National Gross Domestic Product and expenditure on education data from Ministry of Sustainable Development (Statistics Department)
- **Government of St. Kitts and Nevis Legislation**
 - Social Security Act, 2017
 - Minimum Wage Act, 2017
 - Electronic Crimes Act 2009
 - Trafficking in Persons (Prevention) Act, 2008
 - The Education Act, 2005
 - Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act 2002
 - Apprenticeship and Qualifications of Tradesperson Act, 2002
 - Offences Against the Person Act 2002
 - Protection of Employment Act, 1986
 - **The Government of St. Kitts and Nevis Ministry of Education 2017–2021 Education Sector Plan**
 - National Household Registry (2014-2017)
 - The National Social Protection Strategy (2013-2017)
- **Government of St. Kitts and Nevis. 2023. Voluntary National Review of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in St. Kitts And Nevis**
- Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Ageism and Disabilities. Revised National Youth Policy of Saint Kitts and Nevis 2022-2027
- **Generation Unlimited: The Wellbeing of Young People in St. Kitts and Nevis (UNICEF 2021)**
- St. Kitts and Nevis Country Economic Review (Caribbean Development Bank. 2020.
- **Situation Analysis of Children in St. Kitts and Nevis (UNICEF 2017)**
- Child Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean Area (OECS and UNICEF 2017)
- **Country Gender Assessment (Caribbean Development Bank 2014).**
- **Country Poverty Assessment St. Kitts and Nevis 2007-2008 (Kari Consultants Limited 2009)**

23 Key Informants Interviews conducted with experts within the following organizations

1. St. Kitts and Nevis Trade and Labour Union
2. Ministry of Agriculture
3. Ministry of Education
4. Ministry of Employment and Labour
5. Ministry of Social Development and Gender
6. Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Ageing and Disabilities
7. Nevis Labour Department
8. St. Christopher and Nevis Social Security Board
9. Office of the Prime Minister
10. Statistics Department

LIMITATIONS

1. Absence of empirical data on child labour from national statistical databases and other administrative reports makes it difficult to ascertain the types of children labour and to measure the extent of the situation of child labour
2. Conducting the study at the end of the calendar year may have impacted on the availability of stakeholders within the public sector (Legal Department) and community
3. Few respondents who completed the three surveys issued which does not allow for generalization of the findings.



“Children were made to learn not earn”

FINDINGS

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Public Officials
(n=10)



Parents (n=6)



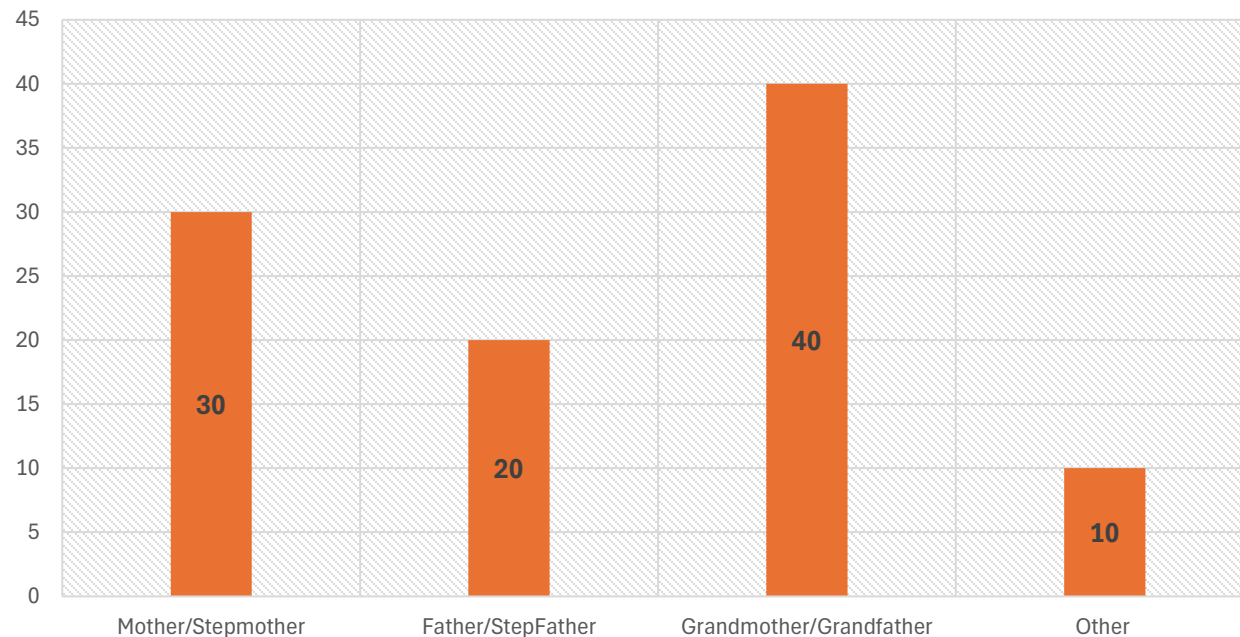
Children
(n=10)

Profile of children



Characteristics	Percentage
Sex	100.00
Male	40.0
Female	60.0
Country of birth	100.0
St. Kitts and Nevis	40.0
Barbados	10.0
Canada	10.0
Jamaica	10.0
USA	20.0
Other	10.0
Do you have a job	
No	100.0

Mainbreadwinner of the household



- **100% of children attend school**
- **100% of children attend school 5 days per week**

Voices of Children on Child Labour

“Working under 18 years for money. It is physical work”

What is child labour?

“Children under the peak of their physical development working”

“Children under the peak of their physical development working”

“Working without your own consent. “Forcing children to do more than enough work.”

Impact of Child Labour–Perspectives of Children

“It will be physically draining for children working in construction and children should not be lifting heavy bricks”

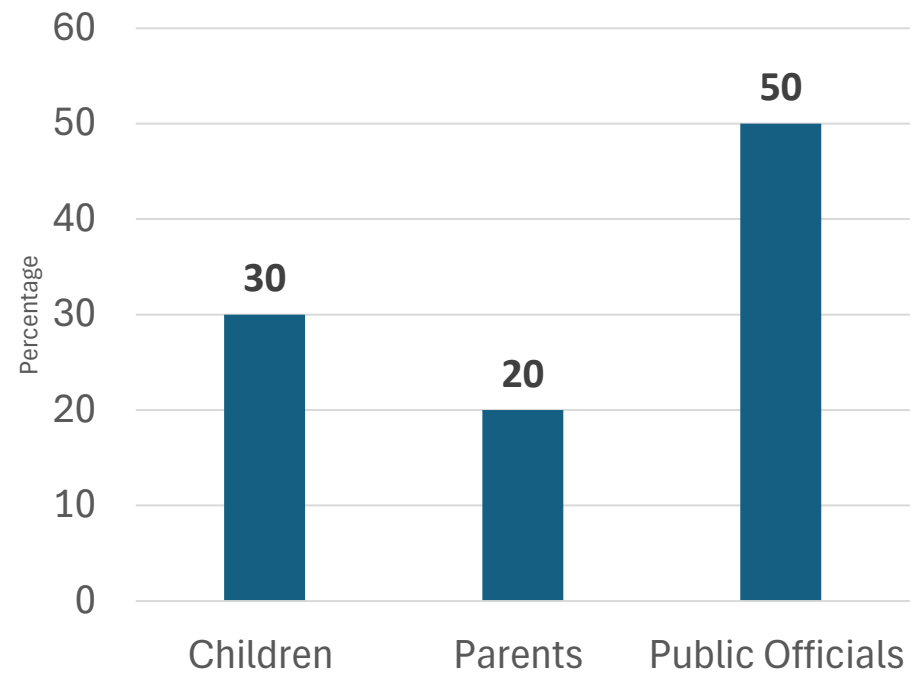
“The oil substances are bad for children who work in mechanic shops.”

“ Child labour impacts children differently at various ages”

“Children at 11 years and younger are affected by stunted growth, stress and their minds are not ready for the world of work.”

Children 12-17 years display more maturity, but you must do School Based Assessments, and this requires time. Work will only make matters confusing.

Supportive of children < 16 years working



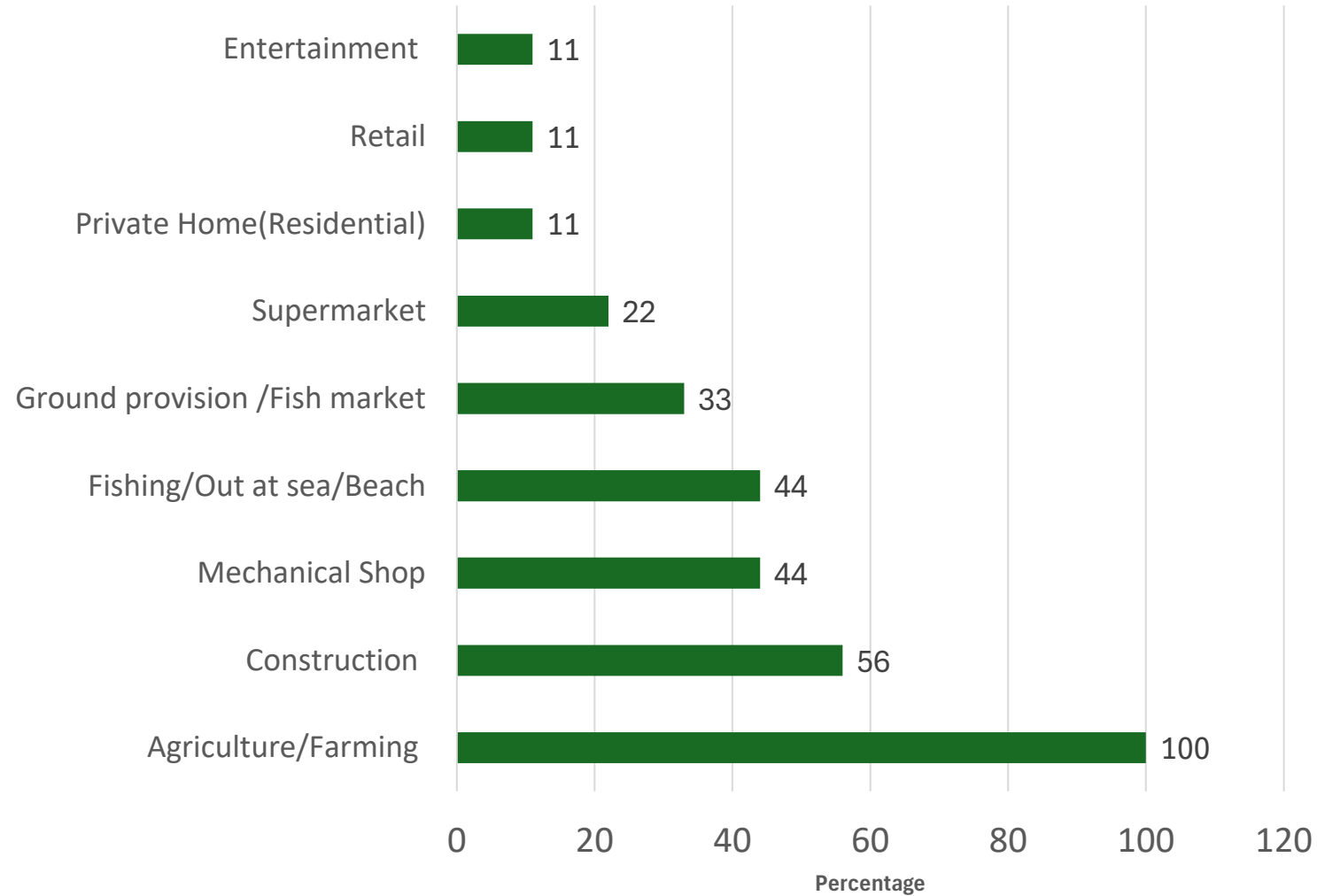
Perceptions about the Occurrence of Child Labour-Public Officials

60% reported that SKN does not have a problem with child labour

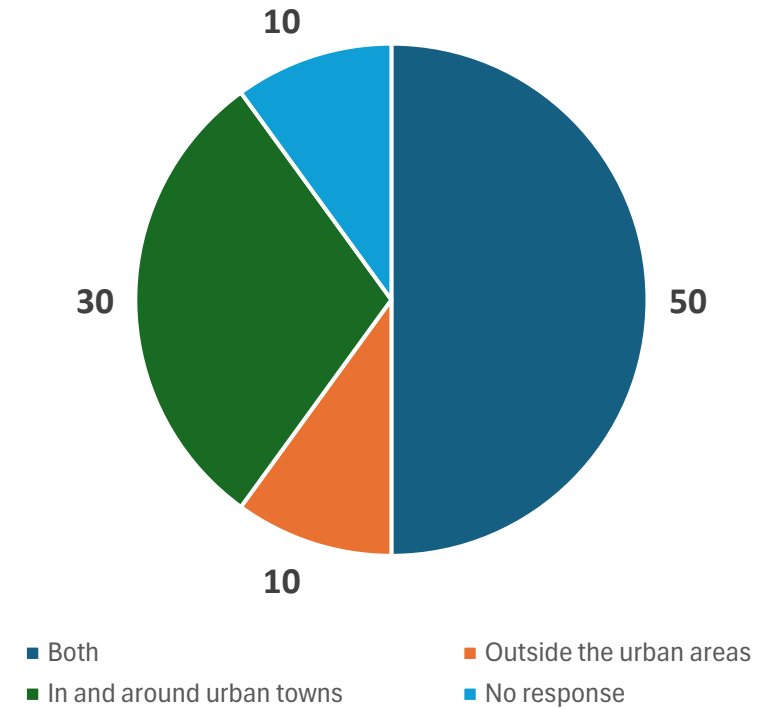
80% stated that economic challenges in the home resulted in child labour

10 % reported that child labour goes undetected

Areas of work for child labourers



Main geographic location for child labour



**Multiple responses allowed. Percentage values do not add up to 100%*



Factors Influencing Child Labour Practices

Characteristics of Poverty

- **17.1%** of the population classified as poor in 2018
(Source: Voluntary National Review of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in St. Kitts And Nevis. 2023)
- Poverty is concentrated in female-headed households and in households with higher number of children.
- **40%** of all households are headed by females
- Female headed households represent **57%** of all households living in poverty.
- Child poverty rate in St Kitts and Nevis was **31.2%** less than the ECA average of 32.7% (Source: *Child Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean Area* Report, UNICEF 2017)



Household Poverty

The current minimum wage in St. Kitts and Nevis is XCD 360.00 per week (USD133.00) and does not adequately sustain households. Young children from poor households fall victims of desiring to assist their families economically:

“Children get exploited at a young age... at 12 and 13 it is age where you do not know the consequences of what you are doing, they take on work for XCD 20.00 it can buy the family some food for the day.” **Key Informant Ministry of Employment and Labour**

Care Work and Extended Household Chores

There is a link between the economics of the home and sibling care. Some workplaces have not made provision for time off and absence from work for unforeseen circumstances. This is an ongoing situation for single female headed households.

“There are workplaces which treat their workers like slaves, they may lose their pay or their jobs if they stay home to take care of the baby...so you find that the older sibling must miss school to stay home and give care so the single mother can make a salary...Mothers are forced to sacrifice the education of their children to secure their work.” **Key Informant Office of the Prime Minister**

Teenagers are engaged in family agriculture to sustain their livelihood:

“They are planting provisions, pumpkin seeds and sad to say they are planting marijuana. This one is for their personal use to make a pay day... it leads back to the poverty in the home. You will find younger children engaging themselves in the activity even if they are attending schools. Some of them make it their business before school to go to the mountains...that is where they plant everything. This is where the ground [land] is situated.”

Value of Education

The perceived lack of interest in the formal education system and its impacts on children leaving school before the compulsory period ending secondary education:

“If the children show no interest in education the parents believe they are wasting their money sending them to school. Some parents believe that they leave to go to school but do not arrive at school.”

Challenges with content assimilation

“You wouldn't find some schools that would offer maybe plumbing, electrical work, welding and these types of things and there are some students who are more hands on...they do get frustrated because if you have difficulties reading or understanding or doing math... if you're struggling you wouldn't want to be in school. You may go to school to socialize but in terms of the classes and the session, they have problems assimilating”.

Mechanisms Monitoring Child Labour

- St. Christopher and Nevis Social Security Board
- Ministry of Employment and Labour -St. Kitts
- Nevis Labour Department
- Ministry of Education
- Employment Federations and Unions





Gaps in Monitoring Child Labour

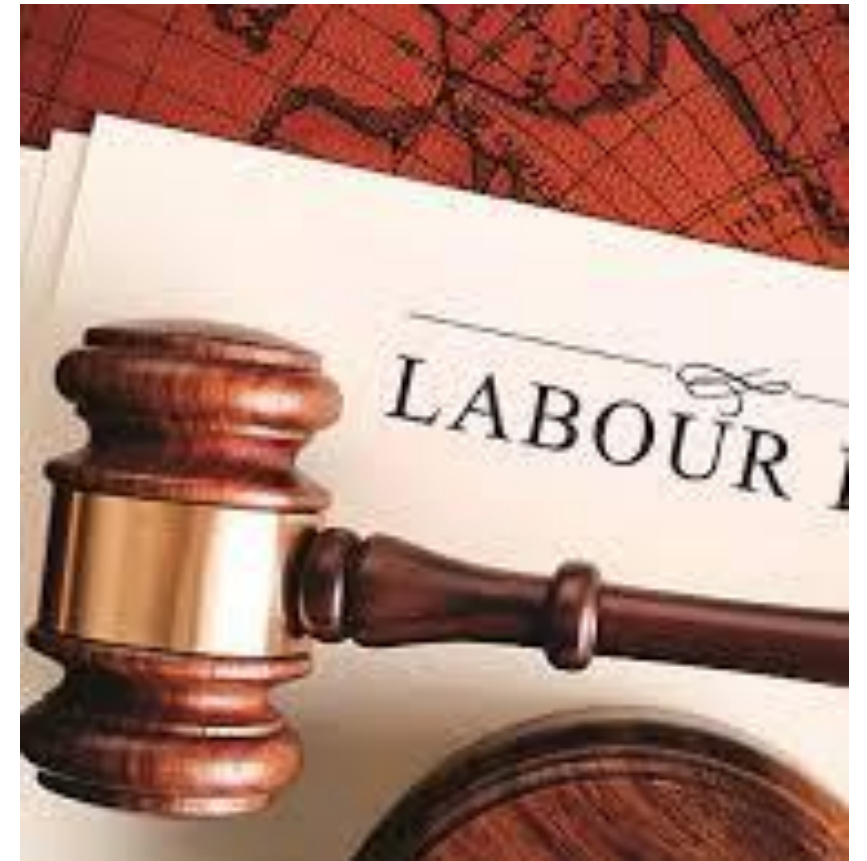
Cultural Differences and Inclusive Nature of Foreign Business Operations

- Foreigners are unaware of national legislation against child labour.
- The customs and traditions of foreign nationals usually encourage the involvement of children in the family business at an early age



Adjustment of the Labour Code

- Ensuring shock responsiveness
- Implementing stronger penalties
- Addressing operational gaps (C138 and C182)
- Amending labour laws



Amendments to Labour Laws

- Protection of Employment Act
- Protection of Wages Act
- Holiday with Pay Act
- Equal Pay Act
- Employment of Women and Young Persons Act 2002
- Labour Act Chapter 18.18
- Accidents and Occupational Diseases Chapter 9.01
- Factories Act Chapter 18.12
- Trade Disputes (Arbitrary and Inquiry Act) Chapter 18.25
- Trade Union Chapter 18.36
- Recruitment of Workers Act Chapter 6.5
- Minimum Wages Act Chapter 18.19

Data and Information Gaps



- There is no national repository monitoring the extent of the of child labour
- Lack of surveillance of the Labour Unions in the tourism and construction sectors to acquire data on possible workers 16 years and below



CONCLUSION

- The prevalence of child labour in St. Kitts and Nevis is negligible but it is a growing social issue and without the necessary economic and social support system it may become worse.
- The pathways into child labour have been highlighted as weak parental practices; prolonged school absenteeism; household poverty; child maltreatment as well as the education system not meeting the needs of its students

TARGET

8.7



**END MODERN SLAVERY,
TRAFFICKING AND
CHILD LABOUR**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Undertaking adjustments to critical legislation such as the Labour Code and Education Act

Implementing reformed social protection, social services, education, and labour market programming

Implementing national public awareness campaign on child labour.

Upskilling and increasing the number of human resources with the requisite expertise to support children and vulnerable households

Updating poverty and vulnerability diagnostics as monitoring data systems

TARGET

8-7



**END MODERN SLAVERY,
TRAFFICKING AND
CHILD LABOUR**

THANK YOU ALL FOR ACTIVELY LISTENING