

THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN INTONGA

COUNTRY FACTSHEET: SEPTEMBER 2025

Factsheet on the situation of children in Tonga

Data Brief: September 2025

This country factsheet provides a snapshot of the situation of children, adolescents and youth in Tonga focusing on UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific regional accelerators.

The factsheet presents an overview of the most recent child-related statistics, drawing on internationally comparable indicators available through global databases. Indicators have been chosen based on the availability of historical data, and geographic coverage, with priority to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators.

Highlights

Tonga is an upper-middle income economy. The economy grew by 2.1% in 2023 and 1.4% in 2024. Forecasted growth is 2.5% in 2025.

Children represent 42% of the projected 103,700 population in 2025. Children between the ages of 0 to 4 years represent 11% of the population.

Tonga has one of the lowest rates of Under-5 stunting, wasting, and underweight in the Pacific. However, it has one of the highest rates of Under-5 obesity with 10% of children overweight compared to the global average of 5.6%.

Completion drops from 98% in primary to 44% in upper secondary. In 2021, 47% of Grade 4 students met minimum reading standards and 75% met numeracy benchmarks, with reading declining further by Grade 6 (30%).

5% of youth aged between 15 and 24 were unemployed in 2023, with females being more disadvantaged (6% vs. 4%).

The factsheet contains six sections:

- 1) Demographic and Economic Overview
- 2) Primary Health Care
- 3) Adolescent girls' and boys' skills, learning, and employability
- 4) Violence against children
- 5) National Social Protection Systems
- 6) Water, disaster, and climate vulnerability

Violent child discipline is common, with 87% of children aged 1-14 years experiencing violence.

Just over 10% of women between the ages of 20 to 24 were married before they turned 18 years old.

One in four children in Tonga are involved in child labour with boys more likely than girls.

Government sector budget as a percentage of the total budget for Education is 17%, Health 9%, and Social Protection 0.1%.

Around 28% of Tongans are covered by at least one social protection benefit. While specific social protection coverage for children is absent.

Households access to basic hygiene services is 81% compared to school coverage of 84%. Drinking water and sanitation coverage is in excess of 94% for both national level and schools.

Disclaimer

Links to non-UNICEF sites do not imply endorsement by UNICEF of the accuracy of the information contained therein or of the views expressed. The statements in this publication are the views of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the policies or the views of UNICEF. The designations in this publication do not imply an opinion on the legal status of any country or territory, or of its authorities.

Children in Tonga

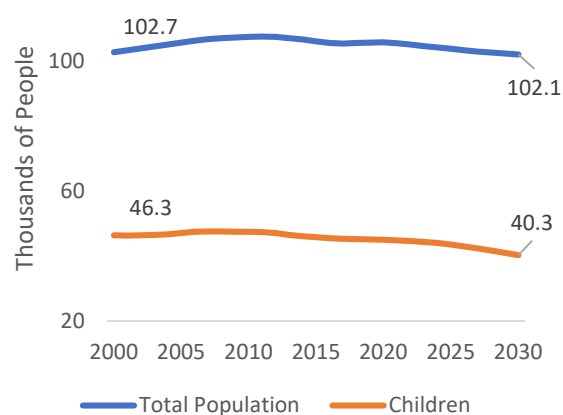


Demographic and Economic Overview

Demography¹

	Value	Year
Total Population (in thousands)	103.7	2025
% of Total population		
Children 0-4	11	2025
Children 0-17	42	2025
Children and Adolescents 0-19	46	2025
Number of births (in thousands)	2.4	2025
Population growth rate (% annual change)	-0.4	2025
Urban population (%)	23	2024
Rural population (%)	77	2024

Population Trends and Projections (2000-2030)



Economy²

	Value	Year
Classification of the economy by income	Upper-Middle-Income Economy	2025
GDP per capita nominal (in USD)	4,863.8	2023
Inflation (%)	8.0	2024

GDP Per Capita Growth (2000-2023)



Children in Tonga



Primary Health Care and Nutrition

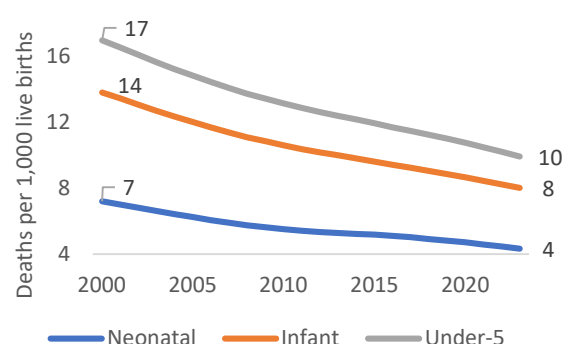
Mortality³

	Value	Year
Mortality rates (per 1,000 live births)		
Neonatal	4	2023
Infant	8	2023
Under-5	10	2023

Under-5 deaths	24	2023
-----------------------	----	------

Crude suicide rate per 100,000 population, among adolescents 15-19 years		
Total	5	2019
Female	4	2019
Male	6	2019

Trends in Mortality Rates

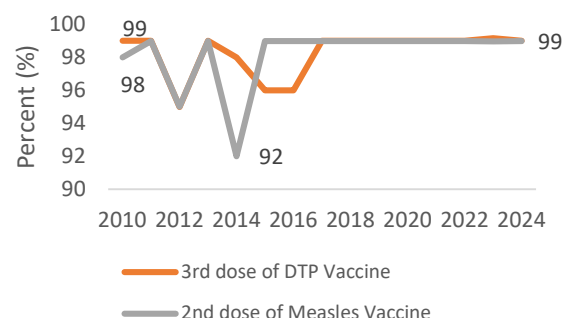


Maternal and Child Health⁴

	Value	Year
% of Women (15-49 years with a live birth in the last 2 years)		
(4+) Antenatal care visits	89	2019
Skilled attendant at birth	98	2019
Deliveries in health facilities	98	2019

% of Children (0-2 years)		
received 3 doses of DTP vaccine	99	2024
Received 2 doses of measles vaccine	99	2024

Trends in Immunization, by Vaccine



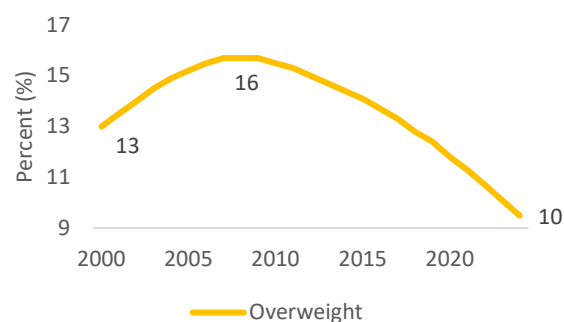
Nutrition⁴

	Value	Year
% of Children (under 5 years)		
Stunting	2	2024
Wasting	1	2019
Underweight	1	2019
Overweight	10	2024

Minimum dietary diversity (6-23 months)	54	2019
--	----	------

Exclusive Breastfeeding (first 6 months)	40	2019
---	----	------

Trends in Nutrition



Children in Tonga

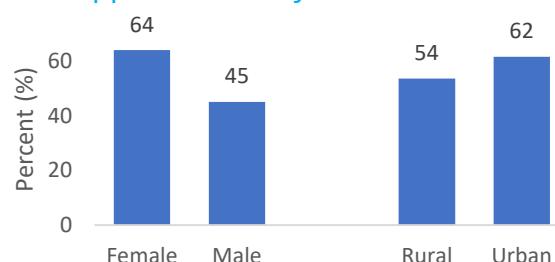


Learning, Skills, and Employability

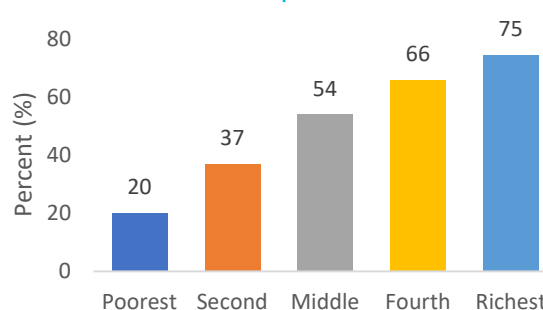
Learning⁵

	Value	Year
School net attendance (% of children of the relevant age groups for the education level)		
Pre-Primary	97	2019
Primary	96	2019
Lower Secondary	89	2019
Upper Secondary	65	2019
School completion (% of children of the relevant age groups for the education level)		
Primary	98	2019
Lower Secondary	92	2019
Upper Secondary	44	2019
Out-of-school children (% of children of the relevant age groups for the education level)		
Primary	4	2019
Lower Secondary	8	2019
Upper Secondary	32	2019
Educational Attainment (% of students who are meeting the minimum expected standard)		
Grade 4 Numeracy	75	2021
Grade 4 Reading	47	2021
Grade 6 Numeracy	87	2021
Grade 6 Reading	30	2021

Upper Secondary Net Attendance



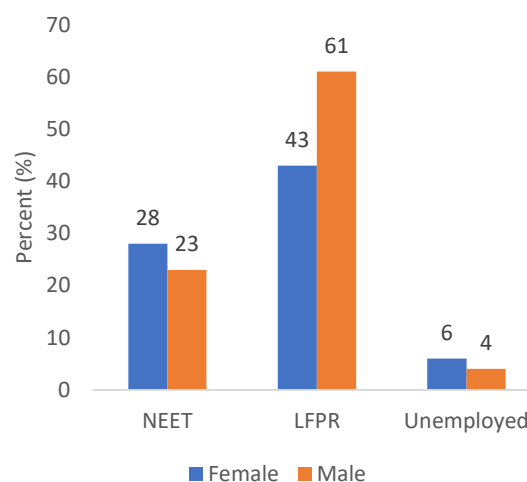
Income Inequalities in Upper Secondary School Completion Rates



Employment, Education and Training⁶

	Value	Year
Not in education, employment, or training (NEET) (15-19 years)		
Female	28	2023
Male	23	2023
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) (15+)		
Female	43	2023
Male	61	2023
Youth Unemployment rate (15-24 years)		
Female	6	2023
Male	4	2023

NEET, LFPR, and Youth Unemployment



Children in Tonga



Violence Against Children

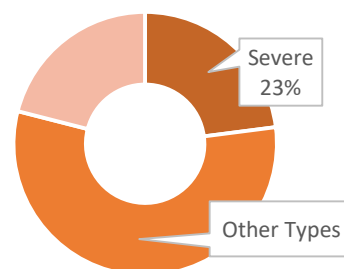
Violence⁷

	Value	Year
Violent child discipline (% of Children aged 1-14)		
Any form of violent discipline	87	2019
Female	84	2019
Male	89	2019

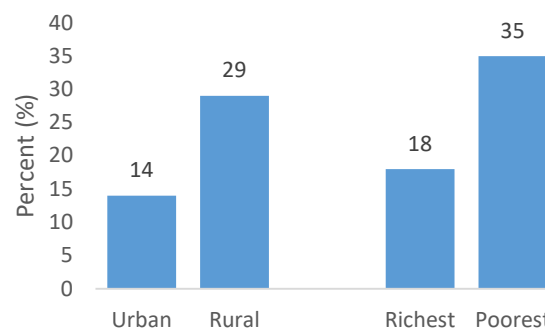
Child marriage (% of women and men aged 20-24)		
Women –		
Married before 18	10	2019
Married before 15	0.4	2019
Men –		
Married before 18	3	2019

Child labour (% of Children aged 5-14)		
Total	26	2019
Female	19	2019
Male	33	2019

Physical Punishment



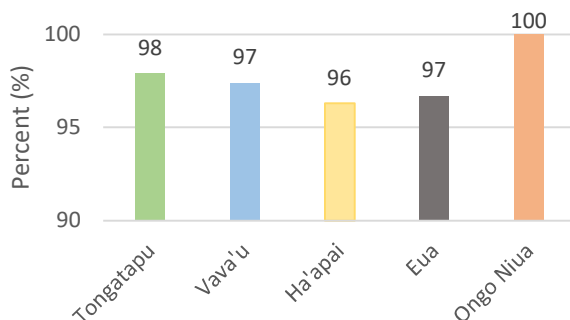
Disaggregated Child Labour



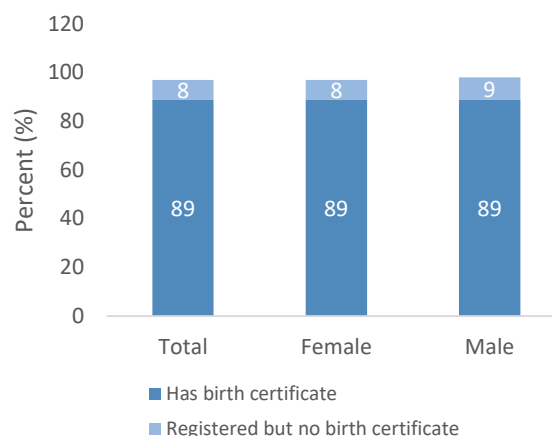
Birth Registration⁷

	Value	Year
Birth registration (% of Children under 5 years)		
Total	98	2021
Female	97	2021
Male	98	2021

Birth Registration by Division



Birth Registration by Gender



Children in Tonga

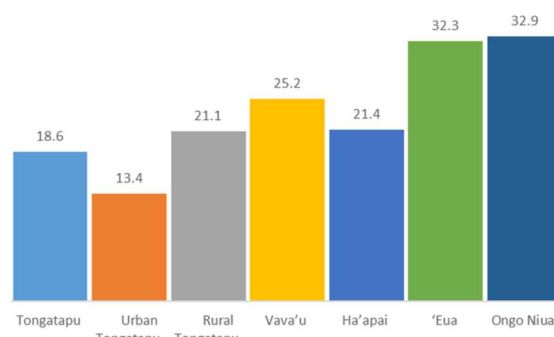


Social Protection Systems

Poverty⁸

	Value	Year
Monetary Poverty		
International extreme poverty line \$3.00/day	0.4	2021
National Poverty Rate		
	20.6	2021
National Multidimensional Poverty Rate		
	24.0	2021
National Child Multidimensional Poverty Rate	28.0	2021
Multidimensional Child Poverty (MODA)		
	25.3	2025

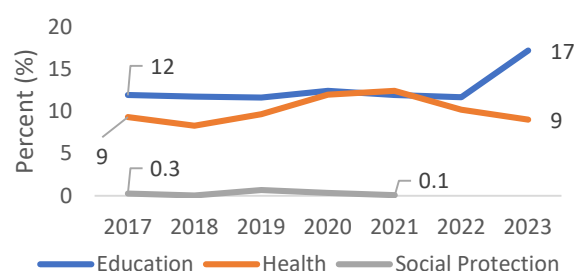
National Poverty by Region (%)



Public Expenditure on Essential Services⁹

	Value	Year
Public Expenditure as % of GDP		
Education	12	2023
Health	7	2023
Social Protection	0.04	2021

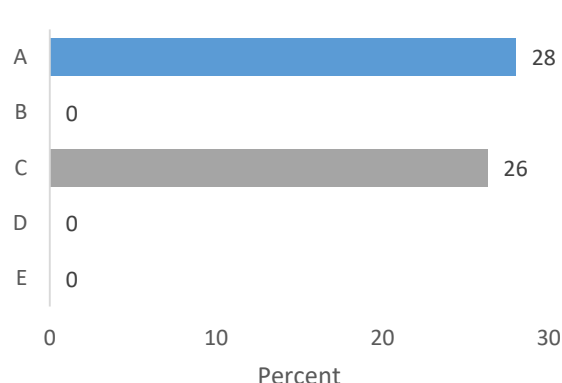
Sector as Percent of National Budget



Social Protection Coverage⁹

	Value	Year
% Coverage		
Population covered by at least one benefit (A)	28	2022
Proportion of children covered by social protection (B)	0	2023
Mothers with newborns receiving cash benefit (C)	26	2023
Children/HHs receiving Child/Family cash benefits (D)	0	2022
Proportion of Poor Population receiving Social Assistance Cash Benefit (E)	0	2022
Persons with severe disabilities receiving benefits (F)	Data Not Available	

Social Protection Coverage



Children in Tonga

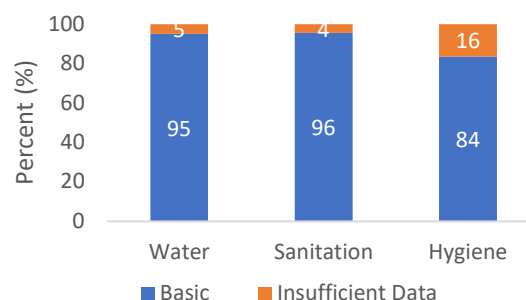


Water Security and Climate

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene¹⁰

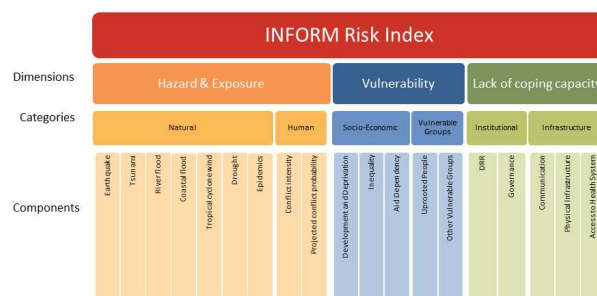
	Value	Year
Household Coverage (%)		
Basic drinking water	99	2024
Basic sanitation	94	2024
Basic hygiene	81	2024
School Coverage (%)		
Basic drinking water	95	2023
Basic sanitation	96	2023
Basic hygiene	84	2023

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene School Coverage



Disaster and Climate Vulnerability¹¹

	Value	Year
INFORM Risk Index*	3.3	2025
Risk Class	Medium	2025
Country Rank	96 th	2025
Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI)**	Data Not Available	



Child-sensitive climate policies

- 1) Tonga Climate Change Policy - A Resilient Tonga by 2035
- 2) Tongan Low Emission Development Strategy 2021-2050

**The INFORM Risk Index identifies countries that are at a high risk of humanitarian crisis and therefore more likely to require international assistance. Released in 2024. **The CCRI ranks countries based on children's exposure to climate and environmental shocks.*

Data Sources

- 1 Demography Data: UN Population Div, World Bank Data 2025
- 2 Economic Data: ADB Outlook September 2025, World Bank Data, and Brief 2025
- 3 Mortality Data: UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, and WHO Data 2025
- 4 Maternal, Child Health, & Nutrition Data: UNICEF Data 2025
- 5 Learning/ Education Data: UNICEF Data 2025
- 6 Employment Data: ILO Country Profile for Tonga, and World Bank Data 2025
- 7 VAC Data: UNICEF Data 2025, and National Sources
- 8 Poverty Data: Tonga Statistics Department, UNDP Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, World Bank Data, and ADB Data 2025
- 9 Essential Services and Social Protection Coverage Data: ADB Key Indicators, and UNICEF Data 2025
- 10 Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene Data: WHO/UNICEF JMP Data 2025
- 11 Climate Vulnerability: Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC), UNICEF Data, and National Sources 2025

For more information please visit
UNICEF data (data.unicef.org) or contact:
Martin Nabola | Social Policy Specialist | Tel: +679-948-7340 | Email: mnabola@unicef.org