



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

MINISTRY OF GENDER,  
CHILDREN AND SOCIAL  
PROTECTION

**RESOURCE  
GUIDE ON ENDING  
CHILD**

**MARRIAGE**

**IN GHANA**





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MINISTRY OF GENDER,  
CHILDREN AND SOCIAL  
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# RESOURCE GUIDE ON ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE IN GHANA



The UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme  
to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage in Ghana



Canada







## INTRODUCTION

This guide was developed as part of an existing partnership between the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) and UNICEF Ghana towards strengthening child protection system in Ghana and supporting the Ending Child Marriage Campaign.

The focus of the initiative which commenced in September 2014 is to eradicate child marriage in Ghana and to achieve the following key results:

1. Establish a **national strategic framework** and **coordinating mechanism** for eliminating the incidence of child marriage and its related consequences such as teenage pregnancy
2. **Increase preventive action by traditional leaders, religious bodies and communities**

The Resource Guide, Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be used for trainings, communications for stakeholders and service providers at public events, related workshops and other relevant sessions, and will be made available online. The documents are presented in a language for easy use by targeted audiences.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

**The purpose of this resource guide is to provide information to professionals and service providers whose work brings them into contact with children particularly in instances where there are cases of child marriage.** It aims at highlighting child marriage as a child protection concern; facilitate a coordinated response to child victims; and ultimately improve the safety, welfare and well-being of children faced with the abuses inherent in child marriages.

The Resource Guide is also intended to promote cooperation, information sharing, accountability and a coordinated approach across all institutions and service providers mandated by child care and protection laws in Ghana to promote and protect the rights of children. It is for use by any professional or service provider, who encounters a potential or actual child marriage victim in the course of work, including:

- # Health professionals
- # Teachers and educators
- # Social workers
- # Girls Education Officers
- # Counsellors
- # Legal Professionals
- # Law Enforcement Officers
- # Child Protection Officers
- # Consular and Immigration Officers





## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>ACHPR</b>	African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights
<b>ASRH</b>	Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>CHRAJ</b>	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
<b>CIAHT</b>	Centre for Initiative against Human Trafficking
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic Health Survey
<b>DOVVSU</b>	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>GAWW</b>	Ghana Association for Women's Welfare
<b>HRAC</b>	Human Rights Advocacy Centre
<b>ICCPR</b>	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
<b>MIC's</b>	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
<b>MoGCSP</b>	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
<b>NCCE</b>	National Commission for Civic Education
<b>NGO's</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NORSAAC</b>	Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre
<b>SDG's</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>WILDAF</b>	Women in Law and Development
<b>YWCA</b>	Young Women Christian Association



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# 01 DEFINITIONS

## 1.1 WHO IS A CHILD

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines a **'child'** as **"a person below the age of 18"**, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger.

The Children's Act of Ghana, Act 560 (1998 – Section 1) defines a child as 'a person below the age of eighteen (18) years.'

## 1.2 WHAT IS CHILD MARRIAGE

Child marriage occurs when one or both of parties involved in marriage are below the age of 18. Child Marriage in Ghana can be either 'formalized' through a customary or religious practice, but can also be an informal union. It is sometimes characterized by age gap difference as well as a marriage/union between teen-age peers.



**Child marriage** is a manifestation of violence against women, as well as socio-economic inequality.

## 02 PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGE

Global statistics according to data released by UNICEF in July 2014 indicates that each year, 15 million girls marry before their 18th birthday.<sup>1</sup> A breakdown reveals that each day 41,000 girls get married, every minute 28 girls get married and every two seconds a girl gets married.<sup>2</sup>

The research also indicates that more than 700 million women alive today were married or entered into union before their 18th birthday—this is equivalent to 10% of the world's population (approximately 7.25 billion) with around one in three (about 250 million) entering into the union before the age of 15.<sup>3</sup>

In analysing the data of child marriage across continents, UNICEF identifies South Asia and Africa as regions with the highest prevalence rates of child marriage. The projections in sub-Saharan Africa is even particularly alarming; due to rapid population growth, the devastating consequences of child marriage are likely to affect an even larger number of girls in Africa in the coming years. If nothing is significantly done to curb the situation, it is estimated that the number of child brides in Sub-Saharan Africa will double by 2050, and sub-Saharan Africa will overtake South Asia to become the region with the highest number of child brides in the world. The UNICEF research of July 2014 also shows that 156 million men alive today were married before the age of 18 while 33 million were married before the age of 15.

1 Source: United Nations Children's Fund, Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects, UNICEF, New York, 2014

2 Source: <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/GNB-factsheet-on-child-marriage-numbers-Oct-2014.pdf>

3 Source: <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/GNB-factsheet-on-child-marriage-numbers-Oct-2014.pdf>

Below is a ranking of the top ten countries with the highest rates of Child Marriage in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

### The 10 countries with the highest rate of child marriage<sup>4</sup>

Percentage of women aged 20 to 49 years who were married or in marital union before ages 15 and 18, in the 10 countries with the highest prevalence of child marriage

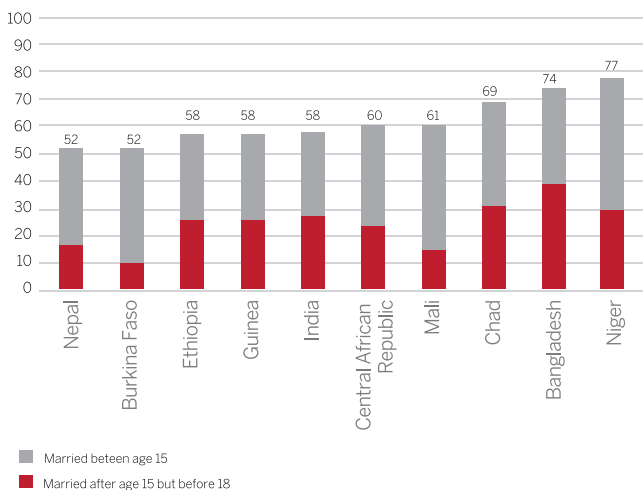


Figure 1: The 10 countries with the highest rate of child marriage

## 2.1 PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGE IN GHANA

Ghana's regions are recording high prevalence rates of child marriage. On average, 1 out of 5 girls in Ghana is married before their 18th birthday. In other words, the percentage of girls between **20-24 years** who were married or in a union<sup>5</sup> by the age 18 **is 21% nationally.**<sup>6</sup>

This amounts to approximately 260,000 affected girls in the country<sup>7</sup>. However, for girls living in the three Northern Regions of Ghana (Northern Region, Upper East and Upper West regions), this number increases to 1 out of 3 girls (34%). Marriage before age 15 does occur, although it is rarer for girls in Ghana (national prevalence 5%).<sup>8</sup>

Child marriage disproportionately affects girls over boys: among boys aged 20-24 years, only 2% were married before the age of 18, compared to 21% of girls according to DHS 2014 data.

In Ghana, girls from rural areas are twice more likely to become child brides than those in urban areas.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, girls from poorer households are four times more likely to marry than those from the richest households. Furthermore, across Ghana, uneducated young women are twice as likely to have married in childhood compared to those who attended secondary school or higher<sup>10</sup>.

Global consensus has been recently reached on the relevance of relying on data on women **20-24** when reporting on the prevalence of child marriage. This is because the age group 20-49 years is less 'sensitive' to changes in trends occurred over recent years. It includes older women who were married decades ago when the risk of getting married was far higher.

4 United Nations Children's Fund, Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects, UNICEF, New York, 2014

5 The term "in a union" is used because in Ghana many marriages are not formally registered but are actually informal unions or customary marriages.

6 Ghana DHS 2014

7 This is based on the 2010 Census and the DHS 2014

8 DHS 2014.

9 Note that this data is available for the 15-49 age group only in MICS.

10 DHS 2014



The national prevalence rate of child marriage stands at

21%

Regrettably, MICS and DHS population samples for the age group 20-24 years in Ghana are currently not big enough to provide statistical evidence for regional breakdowns, therefore the current need to rely on the 20-49 age group for regional-level prevalence breakdowns. Future Household Surveys (including MICS and DHS) will ensure that relevant sample size for the age-group 20-24 (more sensitive to changes in recent years) will be collected and analyzed to become statistically representative also at sub-national level.

Child marriage is becoming less common in Ghana. 1 in 5 young women today were married before 18, compared to 1 in 3 in the early 1990s. If observed trends continue, the prevalence of child marriage in Ghana could halve by 2050. With an acceleration of progress, these values could be even lower.

However, since Ghana has a growing population, the prevalence will need to continue to decline in order to keep the number of child brides from growing. If the prevalence remains at the levels seen today (21%), there will be more child brides married each year as the population grows. This is exactly why an acceleration of progress involving concerted efforts by all stakeholders is critical for Ghana.

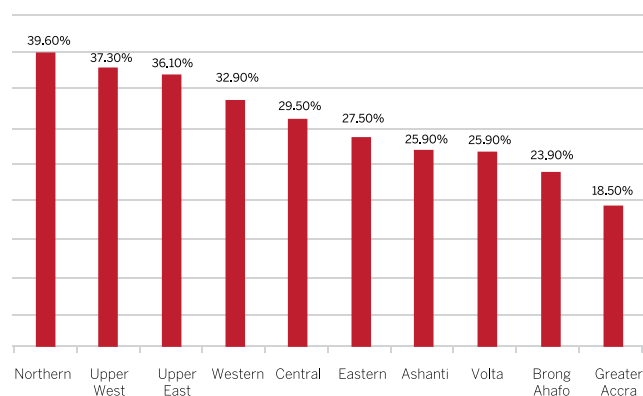


Figure 2: Prevalence Rates of the various Regions in Ghana (DHS 2014 for ages 20-49 married or in a union by age 18).



## 03 CAUSES OF CHILD MARRIAGE

In Ghana, many factors account for the prevalence of child marriages. Though these factors may differ across regions, they collectively serve as the key drivers of child marriages in Ghana.

### **3.1 POVERTY**

Poverty is an issue in Ghana. The inability of families to raise substantive income for their economic wellbeing leads to the practice of child marriage. Presentation of gifts to families is sometimes used to incentivize parents to give out their underage daughters for marriage. Some parents also demand exorbitant bride prices to generate income to support their families.

### 3.2 TRADITION AND RELIGION

Most Ghanaian communities are governed by strong codes of traditional and religious beliefs which tend to encourage stereotypical behavior and harmful practices that contribute to child marriage. The Ghanaian traditional setting and religious society both share the belief that pregnancy before marriage is a disgrace to the family. Teenage pregnancy is seen as a result of either poor parenting or misbehavior of the child. Thus, under the warped thought of safeguarding the female child against immoral behavior and avoiding disgrace, some traditions wrongly support child marriage. No specific religious group in Ghana is associated dominantly with child marriage.<sup>11</sup>

### 3.3 TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Teenage pregnancy is strongly linked to child marriage. In 2012 alone, there were 750,000 pregnant teenage girls between the ages of 15 and 19.<sup>12</sup> To avoid the shame that comes with teenage pregnancies, some families force the children involved to marry as an escape and to avoid the extra cost of the unborn child.

### 3.4 LOW LEVEL OF AWARENESS

In many communities where child marriage is rampant, there is a low level of awareness of the effects and the legal ramifications of the practice.

### 3.5 WEAK ENFORCEMENT OF LAW

Statistics from Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) show a low arrest rate, and an even lower prosecution rate for perpetrators of crimes such as forced marriage and defilement. Failure to fully implement laws designed to protect children undermines Ghana's legal system, provides little deterrence to perpetrators, and leaves victims with little to no protection.

### 3.6 GENDER INEQUALITY

Gender inequality is still a major concern within Ghanaian society. Because women and girls occupy a relatively lower status in society, abuse, or mistreatment of a female tends to be justified and treated as normal. Eradicating gender inequality is therefore key to ending child marriage in Ghana.

Lack of alternative opportunities for girls (particularly in a context of school retention and education completion); teen choices and peer-pressure; family breakdowns and parenting challenges also drive **child marriage**

<sup>11</sup> The distribution of child marriage shows 29.8 % for Traditional households, 26.1 % for Muslim households and 24.4% for Catholic households (MIC 2011)

<sup>12</sup> Ghana Health Service, 2012





Girls who face **child marriage** often become academically disadvantaged as they have to stay home to take care of their family

## 04 EFFECTS OF CHILD MARRIAGE

**The effects of child marriage are adverse;** they do not only affect the girl-child and the families involved but the community and the nation as a whole.

### 4.1 THE GIRL CHILD

**Termination or delay of education:** Girls who face child marriage often become academically disadvantaged because they would have to stay home to take care of their family. This results in the girl child either having to delay or cut short their education due to early pregnancy and motherhood.

**Verbal and physical abuse:** Verbal and physical abuse of the younger spouse is usually frequent in cases of child marriage. However, victims often do not report the abuse because they are reliant on their 'abusers' for their survival. Even where they might be in the position to escape, they are discouraged for fear that the spouse may claim a refund of the bride price.

**Health complications:** Early pregnancies are linked with birth complications and higher maternal mortality rate. This is because children below 18 years do not have the capacity to carry a child to term. Even more, polygamy is an accepted traditional practice in some Ghanaian communities and so persons who marry young are often at greater risk of sexually transmitted diseases when the older spouse has more than one partner.

**Poverty:** Girls involved in child marriage tend to have no career or vocational skills and hence a lower income. This places the younger spouse in a precarious position of dependency on the older spouse and perpetuates a vicious cycle of poverty.

**Burden of Motherhood:** The premature initiation of children into marriage leads to an unprepared experience of motherhood. The young child who can barely fend for herself has the additional responsibility of caring for her offspring. Where the child bride has multiple births, there are serious financial and health challenges to be endured.

**Divorce:** In cases where the man is not pleased with his “child-wife”, he divorces the girl with usually no form of compensation. The reasoning is that the younger spouse would not have contributed substantially to the acquisition of property in the course of the marriage. Unfortunately, many of these marriages are not registered because they are illegal, hence leaving the child brides with no legal recourse.

**Early widowhood:** Where there is the early demise of the older spouse, child brides become early widows and are forced to experience dehumanizing widowhood rites. The girls in such situations experience poverty and find it difficult to fend for themselves and their children.

**Limited social skills:** Child brides are often isolated from their friends, families and society, resulting in less avenues to socialize and network.

#### 4.2 FAMILY

**Death of members:** Child marriage can result in death. Families that give off their girl-child stand the risk of losing her to death through abuse, health complications among other means.

**Family disputes:** In child marriage cases where the man has more than one spouse, the rivalry that springs up among the wives can disrupt the peace and harmony in the family. Disputes also frequently border on the distribution of property which is usually shared in accordance with age.

**Health of newborn babies:** Babies born to adolescent mothers are more likely to die than those born to mothers over 20 years of age. They are likely to have lower birth weights, weak immune systems, and become malnourished. The death of these babies can have psychological effect on the teenage mother as well.

**Inter-generational cycle of poverty,** with many teen-agers breaking their unions early and therefore becoming family burdens (with their young children) to their families of origin marriage is not a sustainable solution to take families out of poverty

#### 4.3 NATION

**Illiteracy:** Child marriage deprives many girls of proper and quality education and this goes to decrease the number of literates in any country. In light that females form 50 percent or more of most populations, an increase in child marriage will have negative effect on national development.

**Poverty:** Child marriage stalls national development because the victims lose out on the chance to be educated and earn a skill. They invariably end up as burden on society.

**Limited Human Resource:** Children born to teenage mothers tend not to have the best start in life and with little or no opportunity to improve their lives. They end up living and operating from the periphery of society and are unable to do much to enhance development. Death caused by child marriage either through child birth or abuse makes the country lose out on human resource.

**Health Risks:** The practice of child marriage puts a nation at risk of high infant and maternal mortality. The consequent health complications that comes with child marriage increases the nation's cost of providing quality health services for the victims of child marriage and their children.





## 05 OVERVIEW OF LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON CHILD MARRIAGE

The right of a child to be free from marriage is codified in a number of international and regional conventions, as well as Ghana's laws. These laws reflect the belief that children and adolescents under the age of 18 do not have the maturity and mental capacity necessary to make informed decisions about entering into a legally binding relationship such as marriage. Further underlying these laws is a reflection of the belief, codified in the Convention on the Rights of the Child that the 'best interest of the child' should remain the 'primary concern' in any action or decision that relates to children.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, given the multiple physical, economic and psychological consequences that child marriages comes with, the practise is in contravention to the 'best interest' principle.

### 5.1 INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND CONVENTIONS:

International treaties and conventions establish a universal norm against child and forced marriage, setting 18 years as the internationally accepted age for consent to marriage for both boys and girls.

<sup>13</sup> UN General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, article 3(1).



## THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW) (1980)

### Article 16

State parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women.

1. (b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;
2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

This prohibition of child marriage outlined in CEDAW is further strengthened by General Recommendation No. 21 (13th Session, 1994),<sup>14</sup> by the CEDAW Committee, the UN Committee mandated with monitoring the implementation of the Convention and providing further insight into the intended operation of the various articles including the one above.

General Recommendation No. 21 clearly defines any marriage under the age of 18 as being contrary to the Convention, regardless of a State's customs and traditions, and gives recognition to the fact that child marriage has serious detrimental consequences on children's health, education and economic autonomy.

The recommendation also clearly states that any betrothal of a child is a clear violation of one's right to choose a spouse and enter into a marriage with full and free consent. Further, the CEDAW Committee has continued to be highly critical of States which still have presence of child marriage. For example, in the concluding comments handed down by the CEDAW committee on the combined third, fourth and fifth reports on Ghana covering the period 1993 to 2003, concern was explicitly expressed about the on-going prevalence of child marriages in the country:

**“The Committee is... concerned that, even though the Children’s Act 1998 (Act 560) sets the minimum age of marriage at 18 years, customary practices still lead to child betrothals and child marriages...The Committee urges the State party to harmonize civil, religious and customary law with article 16 of the Convention, and to effectively implement the Children’s Act 1998 (Act 560) prohibiting child marriages.”<sup>15</sup>**

14 UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), CEDAW General Recommendation No. 21: Equality in Marriage and Family Relations, 1994, retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/48abd52c0.html> [accessed 2 October 2014]

15 UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Concluding Comments, Ghana, 25 August 2006, CEDAW/C/GHA/CO/5, retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/453778188.html> [accessed 2 October 2014], pp 246 - 247



## CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (1990) (CRC)

### **Article 1:**

A child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

### **Article 3:**

In all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child shall be primary consideration.

### **Article 24:**

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

While marriage is not addressed directly in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), child marriage is linked to other rights, such as the right to expression, the right to protection from all forms of abuse, and the right to be protected from harmful traditional practices, and these are frequently addressed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.<sup>16</sup>

This view is affirmed by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the mandated body, in its General Comment No.4, which directly addresses the issue of child marriage. With this, the Committee clearly recognises early marriage as a harmful practice, which has significant negative effect on those affected including “health problems related to sexual and reproductive health, HIV,”<sup>17</sup> and non-health-related concerns such as loss of academic opportunity and social marginalisation. The Committee, thus, “strongly recommends that State parties review and, where necessary, reform their legislation and practice to increase the minimum age for marriage with and without parental consent to 18 years, for both girls and boys.”

This approach towards child marriage is further reflected in the recommendations to individual countries by the CRC Committee. As an example, the CRC’s concluding observations on Ghana in both 1997 and 2006 have raised concerns over the persistence of the harmful practice of child marriage within the State,<sup>18</sup> and led the Committee, in 2006, to call on the “State party to introduce sensitization programmes for practitioners and the general public to encourage change in traditional attitudes and prohibit harmful practices (such as child marriage), and engage with the extended family as well as with traditional and religious leaders.”<sup>19</sup> Also, the June 2015 CRC Concluding Observations on the combined 3rd, 4th and 5th periodic reports on Ghana urged the State Party to:

“(a) Take firm measures to prevent and eliminate forced and early marriage of children and implement the existing legislation;

16 Other articles contained in the CRC that relate to child marriage include: Articles 2, 6, 12, 19, 24, 28, 29, 35, and 36

17 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), CRC General Comment No. 4: Adolescent Health and Development in the Context of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1 July 2003, CRC/GC/2003/4, retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4538834f0.html> [accessed 1 October 2014], p 16

18 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: Concluding Observations: Ghana, 18 June 1997, CRC/C/15/Add.73, retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6af5b48.html> [accessed 1 October 2014], pp 21 and 42 and UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: Concluding Observations, Ghana, 17 March 2006, CRC/C/GHA/CO/2, retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/45377ed30.html> [accessed 1 October 2014], pp 55-56

19 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: Concluding Observations, Ghana, 17 March 2006, CRC/C/GHA/CO/2, retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/45377ed30.html> [accessed 1 October 2014], 56



- (b) Raise awareness and sensitization of families, traditional and religious leaders, teachers and the public in general on the negative consequences of child marriage and FGM and the importance of education;
- (f) Establish protective mechanisms and services to safeguard children, especially girls, at risk of being subject to forced and early marriage and FGM”.

### THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (1948):

#### **Article 16:**

(a) Men and women of full age....have the right to marry and found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(b) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending parties. Similar provisions are included in 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

### INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (1966):

#### **Article 23**

3. No marriage shall be entered into without the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

The Human Rights Committee’s General Comment 28 further elaborates on the obligation of the State in terms of equality of rights between men and women (article three), particularly with regards to potentially harmful traditional and cultural practices stating:

**“Inequality in the enjoyment of rights by women is deeply embedded in tradition, history, and culture including religious attitudes. States parties should ensure that traditional, historical, religious and cultural attitudes are not used to justify violations of women’s right to equality before the law and to equal enjoyment of all Covenant rights.”<sup>20</sup>**

<sup>20</sup> Human Rights Committee, General Comment 28, Equality of rights between men and women (article 3), U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.10 (2000), p 5.





## CONVENTION ON CONSENT TO MARRIAGE, MINIMUM AGE FOR MARRIAGE AND REGISTRATION OF MARRIAGE (1964)

### **Article 1**

No Marriage shall be legally entered into without the full and free consent of both parties.

### **Article 2**

State parties to the present convention shall take legislative action to specify a minimum age for marriage. No marriage shall be legally entered into by any person under this age, except where a competent authority has granted a dispensation as to age for serious reasons in the interest of the intending parties.

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS (1966):

### **Article 10**

1. Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses.

Further to the above:

- ✦ Unique opportunities are arising as part of the discussions on the Post 2015 Dialogue and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Presently, there is a specific Goal (Goal 5) to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” and a specific target to “Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation”
- ✦ In September 2013, Ghana joined 109 countries to co-sponsor a UN resolution [A/HRC/24/L/34] that seeks to strengthen efforts in the prevention and elimination of child marriage..

## 5.2 REGIONAL TREATIES:

Important regional treaties within Africa also establish a need to protect children from child marriage.



## AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD (1990)

### **Article 2:**

For the purposes of this Charter, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years.

### **Article 21: Protection against Harmful Social and Cultural Practices**

1. States Parties to the present Charter shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate harmful social and cultural practices affecting the welfare, dignity, normal growth and development of the child and in particular:

- (a) Those customs and practices prejudicial to the health or life of the child; and
- (b) Those customs and practices discriminatory to the child on the grounds of sex or other status.

2. Child marriage and the betrothal of girls and boys shall be prohibited and effective action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify the minimum age of marriage to be 18 years and make registration of all marriages in an official registry compulsory.

### **Article 27: Sexual Exploitation**

1. States Parties to the present Charter shall undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and shall in particular take measures to prevent:

- (a) The inducement, coercion or encouragement of a child to engage in any sexual activity...

## PROTOCOL TO THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLE'S RIGHTS ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA (1995)

### **Article 5: Elimination of Harmful Practices**

States Parties shall prohibit and condemn all forms of harmful practices which negatively affect the human rights of women and which are contrary to recognised international standards.

### **Article 6 Marriage:**

State Parties shall ensure that women and men enjoy equal rights and are regarded as equal partners in marriage. They shall enact appropriate national legislative measures to guarantee that:

- # No marriage shall take place without the free and full consent of both parties;
- # The minimum age of marriage for women shall be 18 years.



### 5.3 NATIONAL LAW:

In line with international jurisprudence, Ghana has legislated to outlaw the marriage of persons under the age of 18 years.

#### CHILDREN'S ACT, 1998 (ACT 560)

##### **Section 14: Right to refuse betrothal and marriage**

- 1) No person shall force a child
  - a. to be betrothed
  - b. to be subject of a dowry transaction; or
  - c. to be married
- 2) The minimum age of marriage of whatever kind shall be 18 years

##### **Section 15: Penalty**

Any person who contravenes a provision of this sub-part commits an offence and is liable on a summary conviction to a fine not exceeding c 5 million (Ghc 500) or a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year or both

#### THE CRIMINAL CODE, 1960 (ACT 29)

##### **Section 109 - Compulsion of Marriage**

Whoever by duress causes a person to marry against his or her will shall be guilty of a misdemeanour.

#### THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FORTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA (1992)

##### **Article 28.**

- (4) No child shall be deprived by any other person of medical treatment, education or any other social or economic benefit by reason only of religious or other beliefs.
- (5) For the purposes of this article, "child" means a person below the age of eighteen years.









For **some girls**, early **marriage** is viewed as an **escape** from **poverty, violence at home and lack of support at home**.

## 06 APPROACH TO ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE IN GHANA

Some Ghanaian communities perceive child marriage as being in the best interest of girls and their families. The practise is seen as a viable means for families to access wealth through the traditional payment of dowries and other gifts. Child marriage is also viewed as a way to protect girls from pre-marital sex and unwanted pregnancy. For some girls, early marriage may also be the only way to escape poverty or violence in the home. However, the reality is far from this. Girls who marry young do not have adequate educational training to enable them earn a living for themselves and their families.

Child marriage is acknowledged as a serious human right concern in Ghana. It constrains the social, educational, health, security, and economic advancement of victims, their families, and communities. Failure to combat child marriage has serious implications on the development of the country. It is therefore imperative to work towards ending child marriage in Ghana. A number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have initiated advocacy programmes including the production of resource documents to guide and educate others in their fight against child marriage. There are also a number of on-going initiatives implemented or funded by local and international organizations to address aspects of child marriage. However, these efforts tend to be uncoordinated and limited in scope.

In light of these shortfalls, many women and girls continue to struggle with the often demoralizing and long-lasting effects of child marriage.

A harmonized and focused effort is thus required to stimulate gender-equitable standards and practices through targeted and improved socio-cultural, educational, health and economic resources. Immediate and long-term measures need to be taken to protect girls and boys from this harmful practice and ensure protection of their human rights.

A comprehensive and coordinated approach set in a National Strategic Framework will ensure meaningful progress by government, its agencies, and development partners in ending child marriage in Ghana. The strategies should include legal reforms and programmatic initiatives that address the causes and effects of child marriage.

Based on global evidence, the following have been identified as **key strategies** in eliminating child marriage:

**a) Increase resources for adolescent girls at risk or affected by child marriage**

- # Invest in girl child education (primary and secondary education) by empowering them with information, skills, safe spaces and support networks to prevent them from succumbing or falling prey to child marriage.
- # Enhance girls' access to school and improve on the quality of their education. Additionally, retention mechanisms must be established and implemented.
- # Invest in vocational training and employment opportunities for girls.
- # Offer economic support and incentives for girls and families in need.
- # Create support mechanisms to financially assist divorcees or escapees (brides leaving in fear from in-laws, their families and communities).
- # Establish learning mechanisms to better understand girls' specific needs and the opportunities to reduce their health-related risks and social vulnerabilities.
- # Embark on sensitization programmes on the benefits of delaying marriage and the choice of alternative paths for girls.



**b) Identify strategies that will address or modify customs that negatively affect girls**

- # Social Norms and Action - Increase social action and work towards changing social expectations relating to girls. This can be done by creating awareness of the harmful impact of child marriage, and of alternative roles for girls and women, so that families and communities prefer not to marry their daughters as children.
- # Develop gender transformative programmes that would work with gatekeepers in communities (individuals whose opinions on girls' schooling, domestic roles, safety, religious practice, sexual relationships and place in society determine the timing and nature of those girls' marriages). This could include focusing on girls and gatekeepers, educating and mobilizing parents of potential brides and grooms, engaging men and boys, including fathers and religious leaders.

**c) Advocate for policy implementation**

- # Laws on the minimum age of marriage (18) must be enforced.
- # Strengthen civil registration systems which record births and marriages.

- # Government policy frameworks must define roles and responsibilities and dedicate sufficient resources across relevant ministries to expand opportunities and services for girls at risk and affected by child marriage.
- # Laws ensuring girls' right to school even when pregnant, as well as protection from violence should be established and enforced.
- # Develop, implement and evaluate policies that will address child marriage and reflect an emphasis on redress and punishment after marriage has occurred

**d) Enhance systems and services across sectors that are responsive to the needs of adolescent girls who are at risk of or are affected by child marriage.**

Such services include health, education, social welfare, justice, civil registration, social protection and economic empowerment measures and other services. Structural barriers that push girls into child marriage and prevent them from accessing support within marriage should be removed.

- # **Increase generation and use of data** on adolescent girls for advocacy, programming, learning and tracking progress.









Training programs on strategies to curb the practice of **child marriage** should be included in **teacher training curricular**

## 07 STRATEGIES FOR THE PREVENTION AND ELIMINATION OF CHILD MARRIAGE IN GHANA<sup>21</sup>

### 7.1 GOVERNMENT

- a) A National Strategic Framework which defines the goals, objectives and key strategies to tackle child marriage in Ghana in terms of prevention and response, including the roles of different stakeholders should be developed.
- b) The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) should collaborate with the Ministry of Education to implement policies that would increase enrolment and retention of girls in schools. The two ministries in conjunction with Ghana Education Service should enforce the implementation of directives and policies which will improve girls' access to quality education. Training programs on strategies to
- c) curb the practice of child marriage should be included in teacher training curricular also.
- c) The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection should work closely with the Ministry of Justice and Attorney-Generals' Department to build the capacity of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies in the application of laws that clearly outlaw child marriage. This should support the effective implementation and enforcement of the law and other related legislation which will lead to an increase in prosecution of such cases.

<sup>21</sup> National Domestic Violence Policy and Plan of Action to Implement Domestic Violence Act, 2007(Act 732) published by the Domestic Violence Secretariat; Ending Child Marriage (2006)

- d) In collaboration with the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection should create awareness and sensitize religious and traditional authorities on the laws, charters and protocols that speak against the practice across all ten regions particularly those with a high prevalence rate.
- e) The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection should work with the Local Government to establish an effective inter-departmental collaboration and coordination at the district level. The Ministry should partner with other actors in the field to establish complaint mechanisms in the various regions. The Ministry should as well strengthen its collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (Community Development) in the area of community engagement and social mobilization, particularly in terms of prevention efforts.
- f) The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection should develop and disseminate information materials on child marriage with particular emphasis on the legislation and complaint mechanisms using various media channels and languages.
- g) Government should focus on provision of ASRH information and services, increased budget allocation for delivery of child protection and welfare services reaching families and children, address poverty through social protection and economic empowerment programmes, support vocational training and employability avenues for out of school adolescents.

## 7.2 TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES

Traditional and religious authorities have key roles to play to end child marriage. In Ghana, religious and traditions are held in high regard- they are therefore uniquely placed to be advocates against child marriage. The following are recommendations to be considered:

- a) Properly assessing customs and traditions which condone the act of child marriage and dialoguing with government and relevant stakeholders to help eliminate them.
- b) Introduce stringent measures and sanctions within their jurisdiction to serve as a deterrent to potential perpetrators.
- c) Publicly speaking against child marriage is another way of eliminating the practice. Through constant education and community dialogue, attitudes towards the practice can be changed.
- d) Traditional and religious leaders should also refuse to perform marital ceremonies that involve children, instead, they should help the victims and seek support.
- e) Religious leaders can use their gatherings as platforms to open up discussions on ending violence against children particularly child marriage.
- f) They have a role to play in championing girls education, challenging gender and social norms that restrict opportunities for girls and supporting alternatives for girls.

Traditional and religious leaders should refuse to perform **marital ceremonies** that involve **children**



### 7.3 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Civil Society Organisations or actors complement the effort of government in implementation of development policies and programmes.

- a) CSO's can furnish relevant stakeholders with data on prevalence rates, key drivers of child marriage in communities, documentation of lessons learnt and approaches that were effective in addressing the practice.
- b) CSO's can embark on advocacy campaigns that targets policy makers to strengthen laws and policies that particularly protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation. Additionally, they can advocate on the need to ratify and implement protocols that protect children and women.
- c) CSO's can create awareness on harmful effects of the child marriage on girls and the larger society.

### 7.4 THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY

- a) Families need to invest in the education of the girl child so they become economically independent rather than dependent housewives. Ensuring that girls are enrolled and retained in school is an important way of preventing child marriage and securing a better future for girls. Educated girls are assured of a higher income and are therefore able to support family income generation.<sup>22</sup>
- b) Irrespective of a family's economic status, they must be encouraged not to regard the girl-child as an "asset to secure and maintain and develop the family's honor and wealth".<sup>23</sup> Families must realize that early marriage is not a way of securing a girl's future, or a source of added revenue for the family through bride price.<sup>24</sup>

22 New Insights on Preventing Child Marriage: A Global Analysis of Factors and Programs. (2007). A publication by USAID; written for International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) on behalf of Pact Inc.

23 Stop the Betrothal (2007). A speech read by Anni Hole, Director General of the Ministry of Children and Equality, Norway.

24 Available at <http://www.vitalvoices.org/node/2720>

- c) A positive family relation is another way through which families can combat child marriage. A family that relates with one another positively is most unlikely to give off children in early marriage. Such families have better communication systems and the views of each member are respected and considered. Under such environment, girls can freely voice out their concerns (on child marriage) without fear of any form of hostility from parents or the extended family.

### 7.5 THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

On the individual level, each person can contribute to ending the practice of child marriage:

#### JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

Currently, there are several campaign activities led by NGOs, religious groups, community groups and school clubs aimed at eliminating the practice of child marriage in Ghana. Everyone should be encouraged to reach out in their own local contexts and participate.

#### AWARENESS CREATION

Child marriage victims or survivors can participate in educational campaigns or volunteer as ambassadors of change. One of such is Nigeria's child bride activist Zainab Oussman, (19 years old) from Kwassaw village. At age 14, she refused to marry, stayed in school and now advocates against child marriages.<sup>25</sup> Examples like these are inspiring for young girls who do not want to be forced into early marriage.



Zainab Oussman

25 <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/sep/02/nigeria-child-brides-religion> (Last Accessed January 2016)



## 7.6 THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

The media has great influence to shape public opinion and to cause behavioural change:

- a) It is important that the media improves on coverage and reporting of child rights stories. Often, media reporting tends to blame victims of abuse, poke fun and even accuse victims of inciting the acts perpetrated against them. This practice has the undesired effect of strengthening the confidence of perpetrators.<sup>26</sup> Management of media houses must therefore ensure adequate training of staff to enable them report in a human right and gender sensitive manner.
- b) The media can share with the general public, information on child marriage. Victims or escapees of child marriage can be called on to share their experiences. This will ward off potential perpetrators of child marriage.
- c) Media houses can embark on child marriage awareness campaigns in collaboration with CSO's and pressure groups.
- d) Music is an essential part of our daily life and an influential tool in our society. The use of music which disseminates positive message of education and girls' empowerment should be promoted.<sup>27</sup>
- e) Ghanaians appreciate the art of theatre, and through this medium, the adverse effect child marriage can be spread to those who may be less aware of the practice.
- f) The media should request accountability for delivery of quality services by Government; support in portraying complex nature and various drivers of child marriage in Ghana through their narratives.
- g) The media should promote positive role-modeling and give visibility to individuals, families and communities that are already championing the cause and supporting increased development opportunities for adolescent girls in Ghana



26 Communication Strategy for the implementation of the National Policy and Plan of Action of the Domestic Violence Act 2007(Act 732) Published by the Domestic Violence Secretariat of the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection, Ghana.

27 Women Leaders Combating Child Marriage: Perspectives from Liberia and Pakistan; Written by Danielle Bradford and Casey Rubinoff. Available at [www.vitalvoices.org/node/2720](http://www.vitalvoices.org/node/2720)



08 AGENCIES  
/ SERVICE  
PROVIDERS





NAME OF INSTITUTION	SERVICE OFFERED	CONTACT NUMBER	POSTAL ADDRESS	EMAIL/ URL
<b>Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD)</b>	The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development works towards the development of a vibrant and well-resourced decentralized system of local government for the people of Ghana.	0302 664763 0302 663668 0302 682008	P.O Box M50, Accra	info@mlgrdghanagov.com www.mlgrdghanagov.com
<b>Ministry of Interior</b>	Ministry of Interior ensures internal security, as well as the maintenance of law and order in the country.	0302 684421 0302 684407 0302 684400	P.O Box M42, Accra	info@mint.gov.gh www.mint.gov.gh
<b>Ministry of Health (MOH)</b>	Ministry of Health is responsible for promoting the health and vitality of Ghanaians through access to quality healthcare.	0302 665651	P.O Box M44, Accra	info@moh.gov.gh www.moh-ghana.org
<b>Commission On Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)</b>	CHRAJ is responsible for the protection of human rights of the Ghana through public education, awareness creation and adjudication. The commission also investigates complaints of human rights violations and corruption	0302 662150 0302 664267 0302 664561 0302 668839	Box AC 489, Accra-Ghana	info@chrajghana.com
<b>National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE)</b>	NCCE works towards promoting and sustaining democracy, the awareness of civic rights and obligations, through civic education	0302 222995	Ridge (PMB Ministries Post Office, Accra	info@nccegh.org www.nccegh.org
<b>Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU)</b>	DOVVSU provides security and legal support to women and children. They also investigate reported cases of abuse and works with other organizations that may be able to offer assistance and specialized help to victims.	0302 666285	P.O. Box M681 Accra Ghana	www.ghanapolice.info/dovvsu.htm
<b>Ghana Health Service (GHS)</b>	GHS is in charge of administration of public sector provision of medical services throughout the country.	03021 68427 03021 684310		info@ghsmai.org www.ghanahealthservice.org



<b>Ghana Education Service (GES)</b>	GES oversees the administration of formal education in Ghana.	0302662977		www.ges.gov.gh
<b>Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre (GSHRDC)</b>	GSHRDC works to create a knowledge base through research, advocacy and allied activities on issues of critical importance to women for the purpose of protecting women's rights and promoting their full development.	0302 760688/7	P. O. Box AN6192,  Accra North, Ghana.	info@gendercentreghana.org gendcent@yahoo.com
<b>Moremi Initiative for Women's Welfare</b>	Moremi Initiative for Women's Welfare engages, equip young women and girls with skills, support and networks, required to lead and advance their rights	0302770 736 0242 901 222		partners@moremiinitiative.org www.moremiinitiative.org
<b>International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA)</b>	FIDA provides free legal aid especially to women. They also work to:  Address discriminatory practices in society.  Promote and protect the rights of women and children in Ghana through Awareness-raising and capacity-building.	0302 229283	P.O. Box 16502,  Adabraka, Accra Ghana	info@fidaghana.org www.fidaghana.org
<b>Ghanaian Association for Women's Welfare (GAWW)</b>	GAWW advocates for the elimination of traditional practices that affect the health of women and children such as FGM, early and forced marriages, and widowhood rites.	0302 773151	P.O. Box M.273, Accra, Ghana	gaww@gh.com
<b>Centre for Initiative Against Human Trafficking (CIAHT)</b>	CIAHT educates children and communities about human trafficking, human rights and early and forced marriage. CIAHT also runs livelihood programmes to enable survivors of human trafficking and early and forced marriage to generate income.	0233-07124742 0244 155200	P.O. Box 2212, Tamale, Ghana	E-mail@ciahtghana.org www.ciahtghana.org
<b>Youth Harvest Foundation</b>	Youth Harvest Foundation supports young people on their way to a self-reliant, self-sufficient and self-determined life.	03820 23415	P.O. Box 656 Bolgatanga - Upper East Region, Ghana	info@yhfg.org www.yhfg.org

<b>CMG Empowerment Ghana</b>	CMG Empowerment Ghana aims to make a positive contribution to the lives of Ghana's youth in the terms of health, education, leadership and personal development.	0203 442401	P.O. Box SR 107, Spintex - Accra, Ghana	
<b>Northern Sector Action on Awareness Center (NORSAAC)</b>	NORSAAC addresses Women's Rights and Governance and Reproductive Health issues through advocacy and campaigning, networking and partnership, awareness creation and sensitization, strengthening capacity and community mobilization in schools and communities.	0372 027029 0243 415938	P.O. Box TL 2425  Tamale, Ghana	www.norsaac.org info@norsaac.org
<b>Human Rights Advocacy Centre (HRAC)</b>	HRAC aims to advance human rights in Ghana and promotes human rights awareness through advocacy and research.	0302 768 733 0266 191 054	P.O. Box OS 134, Accra, Ghana	info@hracghana.org www.hracghana.org
<b>Young Women Christian Association (YWCA)</b>	YWCA provides shelters for battered women. In addition the organization supports children in crisis and conducts advocacy and outreach activities on issues related to women and children.	021 221944 0302 220567	P.O. Box 1504 Accra, Ghana	
<b>AFRIKIDS</b>	AFRIKIDS designs and implements programs in Northern Ghana to ensure that children's rights are better met and they have a greater prospect of fulfilling secured futures	0382 023829	P. O. Box 166 Bolgatanga U/E Region Ghana	
<b>Community Development Alliance</b>	Community Development Alliance promotes community development through the implementation of innovative programs that adequately address the development challenges of local communities.	020 844 6939	P. O. Box 490 WA-Ghana	cda.ghoffice@yahoo.com cdaghoffice@gmail.com





<b>Seek to Save Foundation</b>	Seek to Save Foundation builds capacity of women to make them economically and socially active to improve the well-being of their families.	0243784516 0242966322	P. O. Box 389, keta -V/R  Location Opposite Ghana Commercial Bank	info@seektosavefoundation.org  seektosavefoundation@yahoo.com
<b>International Needs Ghana</b>	International Needs Ghana works to reach many communities in Ghana with various developmental projects, bringing hope to individuals and families by providing skills and empowering the most vulnerable to make the most of the little they have.	Head Office (+233 30) 2300 222 or 2300224  Volta Region Office Telephone: (+233 28) 9226620	Head Office A53 / 21, 7th Drive,  SSNIT Flats, Dansoman, Accra.  P.O. Box DS 690, Accra	info@internationalneedsgh.org  www.internationalneedsgh.org
<b>Action Aid Ghana</b>	Action Aid Ghana works with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice	030 2764931/2 0302 224788	P.O. Box AN 7286, Accra, Ghana  Location: No.1Tebu Street, East Cantonment, Accra, Ghana	www.actionaid.org/ghana
<b>Ghana Coalition of NGO's in Health</b>	Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Health works to positively influence health policy as well as practice and empower member organizations to ensure quality health for all people living in Ghana.	0541180325 0289601433	P. O. Box AC 42, Accra	healthcoalition2000@yahoo.co.uk  info@ghanahealthngos.net  www.ghanahealthngos.net
<b>Girls Not Brides Ghana</b>	Girls Not Bride works to strengthen capacity and increase impact through interaction, peer learning and exchange of best practices as we work together to end child marriage and ensure girls can live their full potential.	Northern Region 0244155200  Greater Accra 0201333545 0271446818  Ashanti Region 0262191950  Upper West 0207504005  Brong Ahafo 0244544172  Volta Region 0247234515  Upper East 0509095932		

<b>United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)</b>	UNICEF works in the areas of child survival and development, HIV/AIDS and children, basic education and gender equality, child protection, policy advocacy and partnership.	0302777972	Rangoon Close, Cantonments P.O Box 5051 Accra North	accra@unicef.org www.unicef.org/ghana
<b>United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)</b>	UNFPA advocates for the rights of young people especially adolescent girls.  Provides technical guidance, training and support to empower partners.	0302 746746	7th Rangoon Close, Cantonments  P.O. Box GP 1423 Accra, Ghana	ghana.info@unfpa.org www.ghana.unfpa.org/
<b>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR Ghana)</b>	UNHCR leads and co-ordinates international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide.	0302 760536 0302 783406	Labone Drive, 4th Dade Walk North LaboneUNHCR, PMB, KIA	ghaac@unhcr.org
<b>Centre for Development Initiative</b>	Centre for Development Initiative works to tackle the root causes of poverty through research, community and groups' mobilization, awareness campaigns, and action on self-help initiatives.	0244 298754 0277 873834	P. O. Box SK 235, Sakumono - Tema,  Location: Behind Cocoa Clinic Kaneshie Accra	www.cdighana.org
<b>Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC)</b>	GNECC Advocates for and monitors the quality of education offered in Ghana.  Campaigns, advocates and where possible, facilitates access to education.	021 521650	P. O. Box KA PMB 50 Accra, Ghana	info@gnecc.org www.gnecc.org
<b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs is mandated to promote and protect the interest of Ghana and its citizens abroad and safeguard Ghana's security and prosperity through the promotion of friendly and productive relations with all counties	0302 999636	P.O Box M53, Ministries, Accra  Location: 1 Augustino Neto Road, Airport Junction, Accra	info@mfa.gov.gh/ ipab@mfa.gov.gh www.mfa.gov.gh



<b>Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's Department</b>	Ministry of Justice and Attorney General Department handles all state prosecutions	0302 665051  0302 682530	P. O Box M60, Accra	
<b>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)</b>	UNDP supports national efforts to eradicate pockets of extreme poverty, improve gender equality, reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, promote and protect human rights and enhance environmental management by providing ideas for strategic development projects and capacity building.	0302 215670 0302 215683  Fax: +233 302 773899	House No. 7 Ring Road East, Near Fire Service Headquarters Accra	registry.gh@undp.org
<b>United Nations Programme On HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)</b>	UNAIDS leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths.	0302 771575  Fax: +23321254595		
<b>United Nations Women</b>	United Nations Women supports inter-governmental bodies in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms on gender responsive issues.	0302 785400  Fax: +233 302 762325	No. 7, 7th Rangoon Close Cantonments – Accra Ghana	
<b>Advocates And Trainers For Children And Women's Advancement And Rights (ATCWAR)</b>	ATCWAR provides support on issues of welfare, advancement and rights of women and children in Ghana	027 433 33 13 020 834 25 15	P.O Box TD 1256, Takoradi, Ghana.	atwwar@yahoo.com
<b>Care International Ghana</b>	CARE supports rural, vulnerable and poor women through livelihood empowerment, poverty reduction, women's empowerment, health and education programs	030 701 2993		www.careinternational.org caregog@co.care.org
<b>Child Rights International</b>	Child Rights International advocates for the rights of children in Ghana and for the full implementation of policies that protect and promote children's rights and welfare.	0244 406151	Location: Near Fiesta Royale Hotel, Dzorwulu	www.cri-ghana.org/index.html

<b>Ministry of Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs</b>	Ministry of Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs is responsible for the preservation and integration of Ghanaian regal, traditional, cultural values and practices	0302 685012 0302 685013 0302 662171	P.O. Box 1627, State House  Location: behind State House	info@mcta.gov.gh  www.mcta.gov.gh.
<b>Ministry of Education</b>	Ministry of Education is responsible for the formulation of and implementation of policies that would ensure quality and accessible education to all.	0302 683627	P.O Box M45, Accra	pro@moe.gov.gh  www.moe.gov.gh
<b>Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP)</b>	MoGCSP promotes the rights and welfare of children, the vulnerable, excluded, aged, and persons with disabilities. The ministry also works to promote gender equality.	0302 255411 0302 688181	P.O. Box MBO 180, Accra	www.mogcsp.gov.gh
<b>Plan Ghana</b>	Plan Ghana contributes to effective national and community level child protection systems by supporting initiatives that address weak institutional capacity to enforce laws and implement programmes.	030-277 8039		ghana.co@planinternational.org  www.plan-international.org











The UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme  
to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage in Ghana



Canada



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