



SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES FROM PREVIOUS UPR CYCLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE

Ghana should deepen efforts to prevent and sanction harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, the tradition known as trokosi, early forced marriage and accusations of witchcraft and polygamy, guaranteeing the protection and rehabilitation of victims. Additionally, Ghana should promptly ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The State should continue its efforts to deliver free education to all, ensure that women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups are at the forefront of its efforts and should make the Ending Child Marriage Unit operational within the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Following the adoption of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child by the United Nations on 5 February, 1990, Ghana was the first country in the world to ratify the treaty, thus committing to integrate it into national law. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, inspired by the Convention, was adopted by several African countries, including Ghana, in the 1990s and came into force in 1999. More specifically, the rights of the child are defined in the Ghanaian Constitution of 1992 and reinforced by the Children's Act 1998 (Act 560), thus providing a legal basis for working for the respect of children's rights in Ghana.

Despite the legal bases to protect children's rights and the progress made regarding infant mortality and education, significant obstacles still stand in the way of the accomplishment of children's rights. The hardships and difficulties faced by children in Ghana include slavery and forced labour, poverty, physical and moral violence, sexual abuse, poor quality education as well as certain ancestral rites. On average, 27% of girls (1 out of 4) between ages 20-49 years are married before their 18th birthday. For girls living in the three Northern Regions of Ghana, this percentage increases to 34% (1 out of 3 girls). Also, 20.9% of girls (1 out of 5) between ages 20-24 are married before 18 years. Recent data on child marriage in Ghana reveals that Upper East Region (39.2%), Western Region (36.7%), and Upper West Region (36.3%) have the highest prevalence rates in the country. The UNICEF (2020) budget brief on ending human trafficking and violence against women and children in Ghana showed that 38% of girls between 15 and 19 have experienced some form of sexual violence in Ghana and this must be attended to.

CURRENT ISSUES , CHALLENGES / IMPACT



It has been estimated that 21.8% of Ghanaian are child labourers with about 6 in 10 children doing hazardous work (Government of Ghana, 2017)



All children in Ghana aged 5 to 17 years, about 21 per cent are involved in child Labour and 14 per cent are engaged in hazardous forms of Labour as well are witnessing as twice as common in rural areas.



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# 2015

Further, a costing study conducted by Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in 2015 estimated that the cost to Ghana of child abuse is in the order of GH¢ 926 million to GH¢ 1.442 billion per year



In both Ghana-based studies, the highest cost resulted from the loss of productivity. Based on international research, it is estimated that abuse victims will, on average earn 5 per cent less than other children over their lives. (Ref UNICEF- Budget Brief Ending Human Trafficking & Violence Against Women and Children 2020).

## RECOMMENDATION

1. The government through the Department of Children should give priority to child sexual abuse cases, when seeking redress in the value chain of stakeholders so that evidence is not compromised on issues like child marriage, FGM and related gender-based violence.
2. The government must adequately increase budget allocation to cater for the vulnerable children who fall out of their families because of abuse and violence.
3. The government should provide alternative livelihoods and sources of income including social security and national trust fund to ensure sustainability flow of income to poor parents and intensify child rights education in schools and also to fast-track the Social Protection Bill by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection for submission to Parliament.
4. The Ministries of Education and Information should integrate cyber security education in all schools and put in place all safeguarding principles and monitoring mechanisms on the use of technology for the best interest of the child.

## ABOUT THIS FACTSHEET

This fact sheet was prepared under the auspices of the Ghana UPR Civil Society Platform by the following organisations:

Ghana NGOs Coalition on the Right of the Child, Resource Link Foundation, Youth Development and Voice Initiative, Youth Entrepreneurship and Social Advancement Centre, International Child Development Programs, Progressive Excellence Youth Organisation, KOMA Foundation, Women's Initiative For Self Empowerment (WISE), Defence for Children International, Ghana Section (DCI-Ghana), Reformation of Hope Foundation and Gender Centre For Empowering Development (GenCED).

## REFERENCE

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<https://www.humanium.org/en/ghana/>  
<https://bit.ly/3Ny5ldB>  
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