



ADVOCACY, CHILD PROTECTION AND GENDER

INTRODUCTION

World Vision Ghana is a child safe organisation with clear policies and standards to ensure that children in WV Programme Areas are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. World Vision supports communities to strengthen Child Protection mechanisms and child protection systems at all levels to reduce children's vulnerability and increase their well-being.

Background

The Ghana Shared Growth Development Agenda (GSGDA), which is the government's medium term plan being implemented acknowledges that, though Ghana has chalked some growth and successes towards its new lower middle income status, there are still challenges to overcome to sustain and spread the benefits of development. The challenges cover various aspects of human development such as; child survival, development and protection, education, health, social protection, disability, climate change and disaster mitigation, water, transparency and accountable governance. The government of Ghana has made significant progress in strengthening the legal framework for child protection, and has comprehensive national laws covering both children in need of protection and juvenile justice. However, there are wide disconnects between law and practice, and between law and community approaches to dealing with child protection issues. A number of key institutions have been put in place to promote child protection, including district-level professional welfare officers and probation officers, specialised police units, Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU), family tribunals and juvenile courts. However, the distribution of these institutions is uneven, and urban-centered with limited reach outside of district capitals. Numerous government agencies and NGOs are involved in advocacy and awareness; however they tend to act independently with no over-arching strategy. The government of Ghana has created a statutory ministry with cabinet ranking, Ministry for Gender, Children and Social Protection responsible for formulating and coordinating over-arching strategy and programmes for children's protection. Although Ghana's population is very

young with children under 15 years of age constituting 44% of the population with those above 65 years accounting for only 5% according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, children in Ghana are confronted with several challenges such as sexual abuse, child labour, child trafficking, maltreatment, harmful traditional practice, ritual servitude and engagement in hazardous work in the mining and agricultural sectors. Other challenges include Commercial sex and other forms of socio-economic exploitation due to poor shelter, child prostitution, domestic work, deprivation and irresponsible parenting. The table below provides a picture of child protection issues in Ghana.

TABLE

Child Protection Indicators	Year	Current Data	Source
No. of children (0 – 17 years) orphaned due to all causes	2012	1.1	State of the world children report ,2012
Child labor, 5 – 14 years (%)	2015	34	SOWCR ,2015
Child marriage, < 18 years (%)	2015	21%	SOWCR ,2015
Birth registration (%)	2015	63%	SOWCR ,2015
Estimated % of children living or working on the streets (Age 5-14 years)	2012/13	23.4	GLSS 6, 2012/2013, 1st to 3rd Cycle Data
Number of children living without parental care(*)	2010	33,000	Ghana CPS mapping
Female genital mutilation/cutting, 15 – 49 years, (%)	2014	4	MICS 2014
Attitude of women 15 – 49 years towards domestic violence (justifying) - %	2011	60%	MICS 2011
Child disability, 2 – 9 years with at least one disability (%)	2009	21%	Child protection report card ,UNICEF 2009
Child discipline, 2 – 14 years who experience any psychological or physical punishment	2009	64%	Child protection report card ,UNICEF 2009

The numerous child protection issues in Ghana therefore call for collaboration and a concerted effort to improve the well-being of children. World Vision Ghana is therefore positioned to partner and collaborate with government and development partners to put smiles on the faces of children across the country.

Our goal

World Vision's aspirations are for all children to be cared for and protected and this has been translated into a strategic objective in the 2016-2021 national strategic objectives for child protection.

Strategic objective: Strengthened child protection and participation systems through advocacy, programming and partnership. This objective seeks to focus on strengthening community based child protection mechanisms and national child protection systems in order to reduce child vulnerabilities in communities.

WORLD VISION'S CONTRIBUTION TO CHILD PROTECTION IN GHANA

• Laws/Policies

World Vision Ghana has been involved in the process of the development of the national child and family welfare policy, as a member of the technical committee on child protection. The policy has been adopted and approved by parliament

• Services

As part of strengthening capacities for improved child protection, WVG has organised trainings and carried out education on child protection, child rights as well as organised events to raise awareness on the rights and responsibilities of children. World Vision is working closely with the department of social welfare to ensure that vulnerable children are enrolled into the livelihood empowerment against poverty scheme. Mothers of vulnerable children are also introduced to the Savings Group and Loan scheme, an initiative of World Vision which is to ensure that such children are cared for, to ensure that vulnerable children get the best home visits, and community care model has been adopted. Also the Channel of Hope (COH) is integrated in Child Protection training.

• Capacities

World Vision has facilitated the training of community child protection committees as a means of improving community child protection mechanisms in WV Ghana's operational areas.

• Accountability

World Vision Ghana serves in a number of child protection technical committees that engage the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) to develop and enforce guidelines and standards on alternative corrective measures in schools, guidelines and standards for care facilities and child labour. World Vision Ghana has initiated discussions with the MoGCSP and its agencies (Department of Children and Department of Social Welfare) and UNICEF to foster partnership but more importantly ensure ac-

countability. The Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection engaged a consultant to collate all budget allocations for CP services from all state and non-state agencies and NGOs and this was a land mark development .

Children's resilience

World Vision Ghana is involved in building the resilience of children through various programmes such as; formation and training of Children's Clubs, Young Ambassadors and Child Parliament. 30 young ambassadors were trained in advocacy and public speaking and received certificates of participation. Child parliaments are formed and trained in Kintampo South, Anyama Mansie and Tolon ADP. Children's Clubs are trained in Kadjebi, Diaso and Savelugu ADP. Community Welfare Supervisors (CWS) are also trained in Karaga, Tolon, Savelgu, kadjebi and Mphor Wasa East ADP.

Other child focused interventions include creating platforms for child led advocacy. WVG supported 30 children to participate in the national children consultation on the review of the national child and family welfare policy, Ghana progress report on the rights of the child and violence against children. 250 children participated in the national children's day celebration held in Tamale. Children play a key role in World Vision Ghana's programmes and have been involved in national events such as the celebration of the, National Children's Day, Day of the African Child, WVG 35th anniversary, CHN launch, thanks giving service as well as the national day of prayer. Children are also engaged in programmes that raise the awareness of other children on their rights and responsibilities in communities and schools in the ADPs. World Vision Ghana supported children to participate in the Universal Periodic Review Report of Ghana's performance in the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at Geneva.

WV Ghana has supported over 3000 vulnerable children orphaned by HIV/AIDS with formal education, health insurance, educational materials as well as apprenticeship, vocational and technical education.

Child rights clubs have been engaging parents and traditional leaders on harmful cultural practices and child participation in decision making in the best interest of the child.

Significant Outcomes

- Expansion of livelihood empowerment against poverty programme to cover orphans and vulnerable children
- Finalisation and adoption of the National Child and Family Welfare Policy
- Finalisation of child protection communication for development strategy
- Finalisation and pre-testing of child protection communication for development tool kit

- Finalization of child protection training manual
- The enforcement of Ghana Education Service's (GHS) policy on the return to school by teenage mothers and sanctioning of heads of schools who expel pregnant teenagers from schools
- Engagement of Parliamentary Select Committee on Gender, Children and Social Protection to input and support the adoption of the child and family welfare policy.

WORLD VISION GHANA'S CURRENT FOCUS ON CHILD PROTECTION

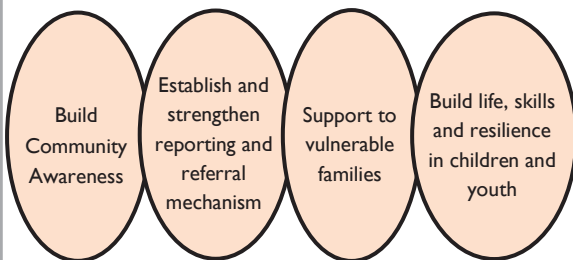
The priority for the national strategy will be on the following child protection elements across all programmes.

- National laws, policies, standards and regulations.
- Services and service delivery mechanisms which provide protection for children (Birth registration services, Child Panels, or justice for minors, etc.)
- Accountability mechanisms through national and local level advocacy (Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) for child protection, Child Protection and Advocacy (CPA), Channels of Hope etc.
- Children's resilience, life skills and participation: Children's Parliament, National Law on Child Participation, Implementation of the National Youth Policy, etc.

Our approach

World Vision Ghana's approach to child protection is through the CPA framework. Central to this model is building the life skills and resilience of children through Article 15 "Children have the right to meet together and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights" to improve their well-being.

Other models that can be employed include; Channels of Hope (COH) and the CVA for empowering communities, improving services and ensuring accountability for the protection of children.



Contact:

Gregory Lierfu Dery

Child Protection and Advocacy Manager

Phone: +233 (0) 246 054 880 / +233 (0) 302 227 216

Email: Gregory_Dery@wvi.org

Skype: derylierfu

World Vision Ghana,
No. 3 Kotei Robertson Street,
North Industrial Area, North Kaneshie,
PMB, Accra, Ghana

Phone: +233 302 226 643

Website: www.wvi.org/ghana

Facebook: World Vision Ghana

Twitter: @WorldVisionGH