

Budget Brief

Ending Human Trafficking & Violence Against Women and Children

October 2020

Key messages:

1. Over 38 per cent of girls aged 15–19 years, reported having experienced at least one act of sexual violence compared to 18.8 per cent of women aged 50–60 years
2. Consider creating a sub-programme under Programme 3 of MINTER's PBB for DOVVSU and ATHU with specific objectives that are linked to Medium-Term Development Policy Framework (MTDPF) objectives related to prevention and response to violence against children and women including SGBV and human trafficking. The subsequent budget estimates should have dedicated and specific codes for DOVVSU and ATHU that show precise allocations. The results statement should have specific indicators with targets for DOVVSU and ATHU to be achieved during 2021.
3. Consider linking the expenditure of DOVVSU and ATHU in GIFMIS to specific codes in Standard Charts of Accounts that correspond to the relevant SDG targets and MTDPF Policy objectives related human trafficking, violence against women and children including SGBV.

A. The situation of sexual violence and human trafficking

Violence against girls, women and boys takes many forms, including physical, sexual, gender-based, domestic, and emotional abuse, and may involve neglect or deprivation. Violence occurs in many settings, including the home, school, community and over the Internet. Similarly, a wide range of perpetrators commit violence against children and women, such as family members, intimate partners, teachers, neighbours and strangers. Such violence not only inflicts harm, pain and humiliation on women and children; it also kills. All women and children have the right to protection from violence, regardless of the nature or severity of the act. Without addressing violence against girls, women and boys and eliminating human trafficking, Ghana will not achieve some of the SDG targets related to gender equality mostly SDG 5.2, 5.3, 16.2.

Examining national patterns of human trafficking, violence against women and children in Ghana sheds light on an issue that has remained mostly under-reported.

1. Ghana Police Service (and DOVVSU) registers on average 15,000 cases every year involving child victims of crimes.¹ Based on the details of the cases available from 2013 to 2019, it is estimated that close to 36 per cent cases during this period were related to physical violence and assault against children; over 30 per cent were related to neglect and non-payment of maintenance; over 11 per cent were related to child sexual abuse and exploitation (including incest); and the remaining cases were related to child marriages, child trafficking, child labour, kidnapping and abduction.²
2. Over 38 per cent of girls aged 15–19 years, reported having experienced at least one act of sexual violence compared to 18.8 per cent of women aged 50–60 years.³ Further, about 32 per cent of

¹ Department of Children. 2018. [Children Need Rights, Not Rites: Data Gallery 2017](#), and Annual Report from Ghana Police Service for the year 2013 to 2017 available on its website and 2017 and 2018 Annual Statistical Report of DOVVSU.

² Annual Statistics Report DOVVSU - 2017-2019; GPS Annual Report 2014 to 2019.

³ Ghana Statistical Service and MoGCSP. 2016. [Domestic Violence In Ghana](#).

women and girls, aged 15-24, think that wife-beating can be justified based on their understanding of socio-cultural norms and stereotypes.⁴

3. In 2019, the Ghana Police Service reported having managed 1720 cases of child sexual abuse (defilement) and 504 cases of rape.⁵ In 2018, the Ghana Police Service recorded 1889 and 580 cases of child sexual abuse (defilement) and rape.⁶
4. There are over 130,000 victims of trafficking in Ghana,⁷ with over 20,000 trafficked children engaged in the fishing sector on Lake Volta.⁸ Ghana's government reported identifying 348 potential victims of trafficking (252 children) in 2019 compared to 579 potential victims identified in 2018.⁹
5. One in five Ghanaian girls is married and in informal unions (cohabitation) before 18 years.¹⁰

B. Cost of violence including SGBV to Ghana's economy

The adverse effects of violence, including SGBV against women and children, are devastating for survivors of violence and their families and entail high social and economic costs. A study by the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) of the University of Ghana, revealed that Ghana lost \$18.9 million (GHC73.5 million) as economic costs of violence against women and girls in 2016. 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.

C. Role of DOVVSU and ATHU

The Ministry of Interior and its departments and agencies like the Ghana Police Service play a crucial role in preventing and responding to violence against women and children and eliminating all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery. They save millions of GHCs in cost as estimated above. The efforts of Ghana Police Service and its two units; Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) and Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHRU) contributes extensively towards three Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets (see the table below)

DOVVSU is mandated to respond to acts of violence against women, children and men in the domestic setting. As of 2020, the Unit employs around 831 staff, including 46 senior police officers. It has 112 offices across the country with Ashanti and Eastern regions having the largest number of locations, 22 and 19 respectively.

In 2007, the Inspector General of Police set up the *Anti-Human Trafficking Unit* (ATHU) within the Ghana Police Service to rescue victims, arrest and prosecute perpetrators under the Human Trafficking Act, 2005. The Unit also deals with the cases of child trafficking. Its headquarters are in Accra, and there are ten regional offices with a total staff of 78.

⁴ Ghana Statistical Service. 2014. Ghana Demographic and Health Survey.

⁵ Ghana Police Service. 2020. Annual Statistical Report 2019.

⁶ Ghana Police Service. 2019. Annual Statistical Report 2018.

⁷ Participatory Development Associates. 2020. [The State of Child Protection in Ghana](#); and other sources quoted in this reported including ILO/Walk Free Foundation, Free the Slaves and IJM

⁸ International Justice Mission. 2016. [Child Trafficking into Forced Labor on Lake Volta, Ghana](#)

⁹ US Department of State.(2019) [Trafficking in Persons Report: Ghana](#)

¹⁰ Ghana Statistical Service. 2020. [MICS 2017/2018](#)

D. MTDPF and DOVVSU and ATHU

Here is a table showing the link of DOVVSU and ATHU to the specific MTDPF, SDG Targets and indicators.

| MTDPF Policy Objective | SDG Target | SDG Indicators | GPS Unit |
|---|---|---|----------|
| Ensure the rights and entitlements of children Note: This is flagged as one of the policy objectives in the MINTER PBB estimates of 2020 | SDG 5.2 eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation | Indicator 5.2.1: Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age | DOVVSU |
| | | Indicator 5.2.2: Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence | DOVVSU |
| | SDG 5.3 eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations | Indicator 5.3.1: Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18 | DOVVSU |
| | SDG 16.2 end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children | Indicator 16.2.2: Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation | ATHU |
| Indicator 16.2.3: Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18 | | DOVVSU | |

E. What is the Problem?

The current Programme Based Budget estimate of the Ministry of Interior does not link the contribution of DOVVSU and ATHU to the any of the MTDPF Policy Objective linked to prevention and response to human trafficking, violence against children and women or SDGs. As of 2020 PBB estimates, the contribution of DOVVSU and ATHU is hidden under the Sub-programme 3.2 Maintaining Law, Order and Crime Prevention. The specific objectives and programme description for this sub-programme 3.2 do not mention DOVVSU and ATHU and their contribution towards MTDPF.

The subsequent budget allocation in the PBB estimates for sub-programme 3.2 for these two units is also not visible. It is part of the overall budget of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). Further, the sub-programme 3.2 results statement does not reflect the cases being managed by DOVVSU and ATHU related to violence against women, children and trafficking. Based on the above and without having specific budget codes for the DOVVSU and ATHU, the budget does not show how much funding is being allocated to address violence against women and children and human trafficking from MINTER. Furthermore, having no clear budget codes for these units means their expenditures can't be tracked and linked to their contribution towards specific SDG targets.

Further, DOVVSU has a presence only in 112 locations across the country. This leaves a large part of the country without having any presence of this specialist unit of GPS to deal with violence against women and children, including SGBV. Their services in 112 location are making a massive difference in the lives of victims and survivors. ATHU has a presence in only ten regions. The new six regions don't have ATHU offices affecting the overall efforts to fight human trafficking and modern slavery.

F. What can be improved for 2021-2022 budget cycle?

The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Finance should;

- A. Consider creating a sub-programme under Programme 3 of MINTER's PBB for DOVVSU and ATHU with specific objectives that are linked to MTDPF policy objectives related to prevention and response to violence against children and women including SGBV and human trafficking. The subsequent budget estimates should have dedicated and specific codes for DOVVSU and ATHU that show precise allocations. The results statement should have specific indicators with targets for DOVVSU and ATHU to be achieved during 2021.
- B. Consider linking the expenditure of DOVVSU and ATHU in GIFMIS to specific codes in Standard Charts of Accounts that correspond to the relevant SDG targets and MTDPF Policy objectives related human trafficking, violence against women and children including SGBV.
- C. Consider allocating adequate resources for DOVVSU and ATHU to expand their services to other parts of the country that are not covered. The additional allocation should allow Ghana Police Service to go beyond 112 offices for DOVVSU and 11 regional offices for ATHU. This will help to improve services for victims and survivors of violence and human trafficking, including sexual and gender-based violence.

For more information:

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