

UNFPA-UNICEF GLOBAL PROGRAMME TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE ACCELERATOR

Ghana Country Report



The Gender-Transformative Accelerator Tool of the Global Programme to End Child Marriage was produced by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) at their headquarters in collaboration with Collective Impact. We would like to thank members of the internal reference group and colleagues in the countries where the tool was field-tested, for their constructive feedback in enriching the tool.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASRH	Adolescent sexual reproductive health
CSO	Civil society organization
CHPS	Community-based health planning and services
DoC	Department of Children
DoG	Department of Gender
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
DSWCD	Department of Social Welfare Community Development
GACA	Ghanaians Against Child Abuse
GBV	Gender-based violence
GES	Ghana Education Service
GHS	Ghana Health Service
GTA	Gender-Transformative Accelerator
Global Programme	Global Programme to End Child Marriage
HQ	Headquarters
INGH	International Needs Ghana
ISS	Integrated social services
ISSOPs	Intersectoral standard operating procedures for child protection and family welfare
ISS TWG	Integrated Social Services Technical Working Group
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
MESP	Minimum essential service package
MICS	Multiple indicator cluster surveys
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NORSAAC	Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre
OWOP	Our World and Our People
PASS programme	Promoting adolescents' safe space programme
RHE	Reproductive health education
RO	Regional office
SEM	Socioecological model
SHEP	School Health Education Programme
SOPs	Standard operating procedures
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
SWIMS	Social welfare information management systems
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

INTRODUCTION

The UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage has embraced gender-transformative approaches – interventions that create opportunities for individuals to actively challenge gender norms, promote positions of social and political influence for girls and women in communities, and address power inequities between persons of different genders. This is based on the evidence that child marriage is both a symptom and a result of deep-seated gender inequalities, restrictive gender norms and power dynamics.

Informed by the Global Programme's Phase I evaluation, Phase II launched a robust package of activities that includes a gender-transformative Theory of Change and Results Framework. Numerous evidence-based technical resources have been developed to demonstrate how to deliver gender-responsive and gender-transformative interventions, even in the context of COVID-19.

The Global Programme has also facilitated capacity-building through the GenderPro training and through an online course on adolescent girls' agency, safety and well-being. The Global Programme developed the Gender-Transformative Accelerator (GTA) to put gender-transformative programming into practice. Six countries (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, India, Mozambique, and Niger) field-tested this in three three-hour sessions. These were mainly virtual, with Ghana the first country to host a fully in-person workshop over the course of three days.

Gender-transformative approaches promote gender equality – including shared control over resources, power and decision-making – and are grounded in girls' and women's agency and empowerment. These approaches examine, question and change rigid gender norms and imbalances of power that disadvantage marginalized groups, such as those between men/boys and women/girls.

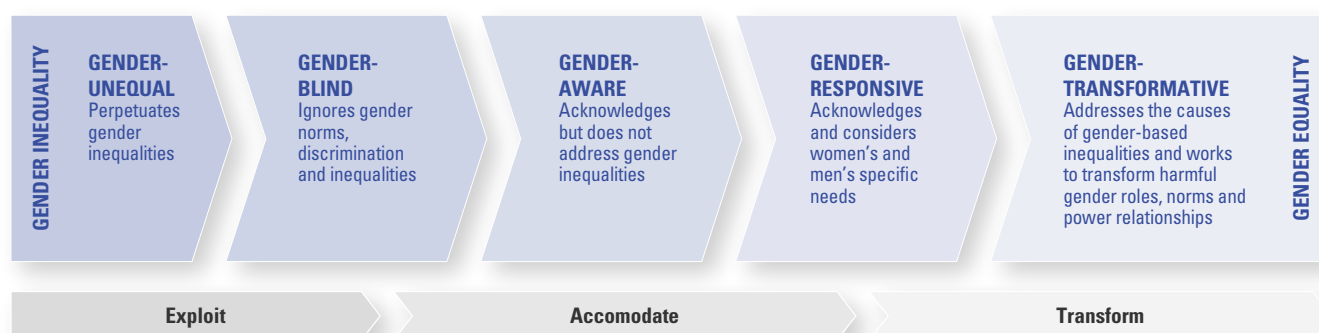
It is not easy to examine whether programme strategies or the design of measurement approaches/measurement initiatives are gender-transformative as these (and the context) are complex. Given this, there is a need for holistic or multisectoral

interventions which work across the socioecological model (SEM) to ensure truly gender-transformative approaches. The SEM is based on the principle that implementing change requires a combination of interventions at:

- **individual level** (adolescent girls and boys) by strengthening the knowledge, education, skills and attitudes that lead to agency and empowerment
- **interpersonal level** (families, friends and social networks) through behaviour and social change communication that influences shifts in gender norms
- **community level** (community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, community leaders, influencers, women's groups, girls' clubs, safe spaces and youth groups or movements) ensuring that communities, systems and social networks are aware and demonstrate investments in girls and positive gender norms
- **systems/institutions level** (service systems and social institutions), which is gender-responsive/gender-transformative and institutionalized in education, health, social welfare sectors, etc.
- **policies/legislative level** (national, subnational and local) ensuring gender-responsive/gender-transformative budgeting, laws, legal structures, social development sector-related policies and workplace gender equity, with men and boys engaged as allies at all levels.

Before programme design and implementation, there is a need to identify and understand key concepts of gender, gender inequality, power and resource redistribution. Using the gender equity continuum (see Figure 1), programme implementers can map pathways of change from 'gender-blind' to 'gender-aware' to 'gender-responsive' with the goal of achieving transformative change.

Figure 1. Gender equity continuum¹





APPLICATION OF THE GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE ACCELERATOR (GTA) IN GHANA

The Global Programme has developed the GTA to facilitate interactive reflection and action-planning over three days:

Day 1 – core elements of a gender-transformative approach: a collective assessment of programme interventions while clarifying concepts through a consultative ranking process across the gender equity continuum – the journey from gender inequality to gender-transformative

Day 2 – deep dives: in-depth reflection and analysis, across the socioecological framework, of societal barriers and bottlenecks, and an exploration of opportunities, based on prioritization of programme interventions

Day 3 – road map of actions: articulating strategic actions, a time frame, support needed, the measures of success and assignment of responsibilities to team members.

As part of the Global Programme's commitment to put gender-transformative approaches into practice, UNFPA and UNICEF Ghana expressed an interest in implementing the GTA tool. They consulted with national partners, including the Government of Ghana and, based on their current priorities in Ghana, selected the following focus areas:

1. Adolescent girls' agency, skills and empowerment (see Section 1)

Promoting Adolescents' Safe Spaces (PASS) programme:

Since 2019, the PASS programme has been delivered by UNFPA and UNICEF and the two NGOs NORSAC and INGH, with support from the Global Programme. It aims to help the most marginalized adolescent girls make informed decisions and choices regarding marriage, education and sexual and reproductive health.

2. Engaging men and boys to develop positive masculinities (see Section 2)

Ghanaians Against Child Abuse (GACA) social drive/campaign:

UNICEF has been supporting the Department of Children under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), to coordinate with other Government, CSOs/NGOs and development partners in implementing the GACA social drive/campaign. GACA, launched in 2017, has mobilized national support, using digital and traditional media as well as community mobilization with the Child Protection Community Facilitation Toolkits. Since 2016, UNICEF has

partnered with the Government, CSO and NGO partners to implement the toolkits to promote positive attitudes and practices about child protection among communities, , including protection from child marriage.

Child Marriage Advocacy Toolkit: UNFPA supported the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to develop the toolkit in 2016, a guide for mobilizing support for ending child marriage. It was produced after wide consultations in three regions on factors that underpin gender inequality and power dynamics, including patriarchy, poverty, and lack of law enforcement. The toolkit is used to stimulate community dialogues and to encourage investment in girls and the promotion of positive gender norms.

National Framework for Engaging Traditional Leaders

National Framework and Toolkit for Engaging Men and Boys:

This outlines conceptual and practical approaches to engaging men and boys in helping design and implement programmes to mitigate the social vulnerabilities and disadvantages of women and girls.

3. Systems strengthening (see Section 4)

This is in order to respond to the needs of adolescent girls, ensuring they receive the care and support they need and helping to prevent child marriage. The systems include:

Integrated Social Services (ISS)

Safety Net

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Support Systems

(Government and CSOs): Access to justice for GBV survivors, led by the Ghana Police Service/the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU)/Justice Service of Ghana. UNICEF has been supporting the Ghana Police Service, especially the Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), and the Judicial Service of Ghana to improve access to justice for GBV survivors, including adolescent girls at risk of, and affected by, child marriage.

Minimum Essential Service Package for Women and Girls

Subject to Violence: UNFPA has worked with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to strengthen effective provision of minimum essential services for survivors of GBV in six regions.

UNFPA and UNICEF Ghana, in partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), then organized the GTA workshop between 13 and 15 September 2022 in Accra. This was addressed by the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection as well as UNFPA and UNICEF representatives. Around 40 representatives from the Government and NGO partners participated in planning a gender assessment with a focus on:

- adolescent girls' agency, skills and empowerment
- engagement of men and boys
- gender-responsive systems for adolescent girls.



RANKING OF GTA ELEMENTS

To support a gender-transformative approach, the GTA focuses on six elements for assessment across the gender equity continuum. Five of these are independent:

- girls' skills, agency and empowerment
- addressing positive masculinities and engaging men and boys
- enabling environment: community mobilization

- information and services
- structural change: institutional partnerships.

The sixth element, which cuts across all the others, is 'gender norms'. An example of how the gender equity continuum can be used to assess the stage of one of these elements is given in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Snippet of GTA Tool²

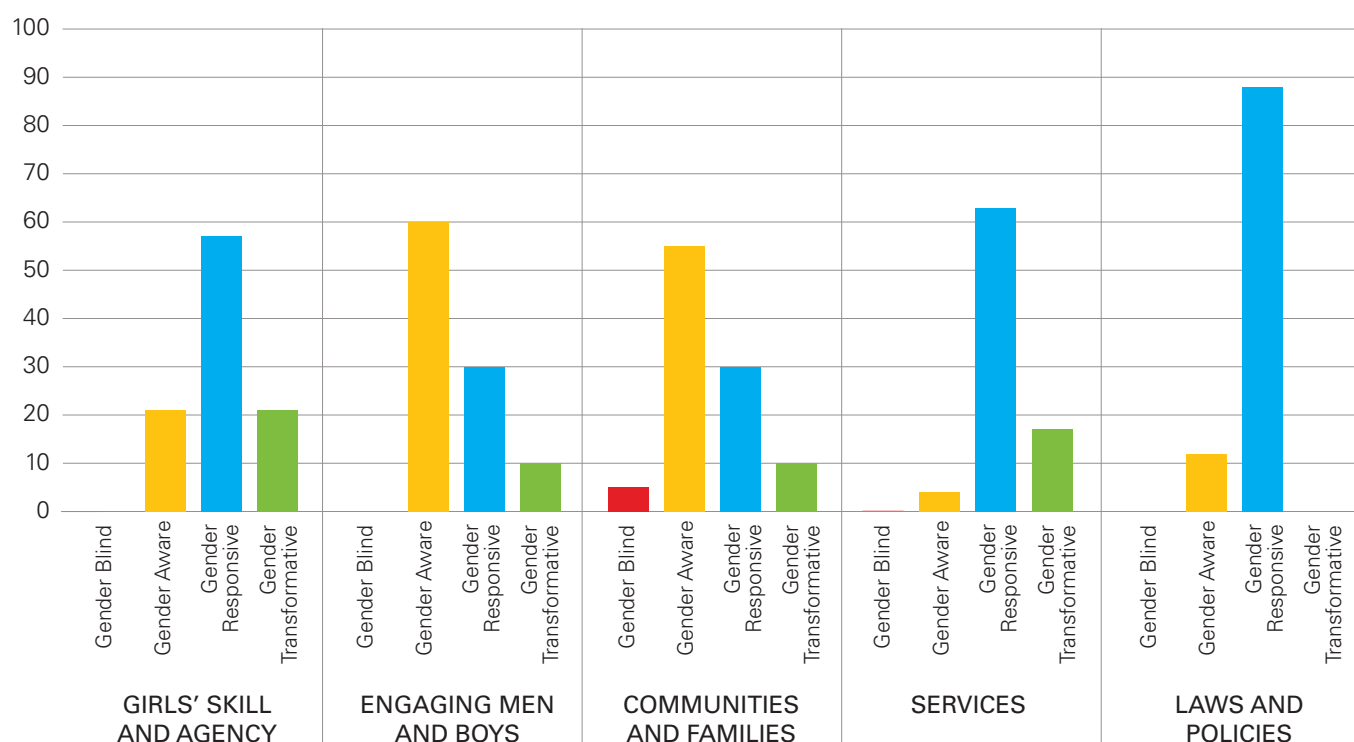
Adolescent girls' skills, agency and empowerment		Please provide a brief explanation for why you chose this level.
Enter an x in the box on the right for the option that applies; only select one option.		
Gender-Blind	Programmes make choices for adolescent girls and focus on expanding their skills based on existing roles and life choices as defined by the social and gender norms in their context.	
Gender-Aware	Programmes aim to expand choices, skills and opportunities for adolescent girls and to address barriers to participation in education, the workforce, and community decision-making in the interest of marginalized adolescent girls. However, few investments are made to influence systems and communities in support of skilling and equipping adolescent girls in non-traditional roles, e.g., science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).	
Gender-Responsive	Programmes work to expand choices, skills and opportunities for marginalized adolescent girls through promoting skills that are not usually associated with traditional gender roles, such as girls' STEM education or boys' caretaking, and to address barriers to participation in education, the workforce, and community decision-making for marginalized adolescent girls.	
Gender-Transformative	Programmes equip marginalized adolescent girls with social, health, cognitive and economic assets and promote autonomy and control over their bodies, sexuality, and life choices. Programmes work actively to engage marginalized adolescent girls as change-makers at individual, community, and structural levels to challenge norms and restrictions. Programmes make tailored investments to rectify basic inequities between adolescent girls and boys, by removing barriers and expanding choices, and opportunities, and improving access to skill-building and comprehensive sexuality education for all, including through tailored efforts to challenge norms and restrictions for adolescents.	

Given that the participants came from a wide variety of government agencies and civil society organizations, there were differing opinions about where current programming lies on the gender equity continuum. Perspectives were shared from stakeholders working across national, regional, district and community levels. Even though it was difficult to rank the whole country collectively at a specific stage, participants agreed that it is important to aim to reach the gender-transformative level.

The results in Ghana were (see Figure 3 for more details):

- girls' skills and agency: **gender-responsive**
- engaging men and boys: **gender-aware**
- communities and families: **gender-aware**
- systems and services: **gender-responsive**
- laws and policies: **gender-responsive.**

Figure 3: Rankings of core elements on the gender equity continuum based on participants' assessment



1. Adolescent girls' skills, agency and empowerment: Gender-responsive

The majority (56 per cent) of participants assessed current efforts focused on adolescent girls to be at the gender-responsive level. Participants agreed they have been targeting adolescent girls through a variety of activities, but suggested they could do more to ensure they are promoting girls' leadership, building their knowledge and skills and amplifying their voices. The importance of education for adolescent girls was emphasized, not only in delivering information but also in nurturing their ambitions and enabling them to choose to pursue roles beyond traditional gendered expectations, such as motherhood. Some participants mentioned that this has already begun with some young women moving into traditionally male-dominated areas such as engineering, building cars or working as mechanics.

The Promoting Adolescent Safe Space (PASS) initiative is a flagship programme promoting the empowerment of adolescent girls, especially for the most marginalized, such as those who are out of school. Every week, adolescent girls have a session on life skills and reproductive health enabling them, in safe spaces, to discuss issues affecting their lives, including child marriage. The curriculum has been designed and contextualized based on global and regional resources, to be age and gender-appropriate and it involves a minimum of 31 total contact hours to enhance the girls' knowledge, skills and awareness of their rights. The programme also works with families through the Gender Model Households (another activity under the PASS initiative) as well as adolescent boys and wider communities, and refers any cases of child marriage and GBV to integrated social services, such as Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health (ASRH), social welfare and education.

There was a consensus that Ghana is closer to being gender-transformative overall, in terms of policies because

there are already transformative structures and policies related to gender, as well as those linked to ending child marriage and adolescent pregnancy. However, most communities are not aware of gender policies, and their cultural norms and individual beliefs cause programmes to be mostly gender-responsive at community level. Participants acknowledged that transformation does not happen immediately, and more resources are required to implement a long-term approach and extension at national level.

2. Promoting positive masculinities and engaging men and boys: Gender-aware

Participants recounted how most of the work promoting gender equality has focused on women and girls and many gender activists have been hesitant to divert attention and resources to men and boys. Many of the participants (60 per cent) felt programming is currently at the gender-aware level. Women's and girls' lives are intertwined with men and boys, so more should be done to engage them in promoting gender-equal relationships, roles and attitudes.

The Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre (NORSAAC) described its progression from being gender-blind to gender-responsive. When it started the PASS programme in 2018 in two districts, it focused only on adolescent girls, which seems gender-blind in terms of men's and boys' engagement. NORSAAC included boys in its programmes when it expanded to four more districts (gender-aware level). Similarly, International Needs Ghana (INGH) started a PASS programme in the central region during 2018–2020 just with adolescent girls. Now it is including girls and boys in a pilot programme to discuss issues, see their perspectives and provide information. At regional level, the Department of Gender uses the men's and boys' engagement guidelines to redefine masculinity through the engagement of boys in or out of school.³

The National Framework and Toolkit for Engaging Men and Boys is being developed. This represents a strategic opportunity to advocate for a standardized approach, and its content should also be reviewed to ensure it aligns with gender-transformative approaches.

Participants discussed how they could strengthen their engagement with men and boys, so the focus can shift from how many boys they are reaching to how they can reinforce positive masculinities. To do this, the dynamics of specific contexts need to be considered, e.g., in some areas child marriage benefits a girl's family because of money or goods given to them by the groom's family.

3. Enabling environment, family and community mobilization: Gender-aware

Community mobilization was ranked in a very similar manner to male engagement. Half of the participants selected gender-aware, about a third (30 per cent) gender-responsive, and 15 per cent gender-transformative. This reveals a similar trend that families and communities are being engaged in activities, but more can be done beyond raising awareness about the importance of preventing child marriage, to foster enabling environments that support girls to pursue more gender-equal relationships and opportunities.

A few of the initiatives discussed build on existing programmes that are already engaging with community initiatives such as kids' clubs and mother-to-mother peer groups. There are hopes

that continuing engagement with religious leaders as well as traditional leaders such as queen mothers (who play a powerful role in ritual and specific political decisions as they are the foundation of the matrilineal kinship system) will persuade them to challenge gender stereotypes and become role models for transformative change. Some participants explained that social and behaviour change interventions, such as the GACA social drive/campaign, are more likely to be gender-transformative in the integrated way they address protection issues. The child protection community engagement toolkits and the child marriage advocacy toolkits were also highlighted as other potentially supportive programmes. These could strengthen the capacity of community facilitators as well as increase support for mentors and gender focal persons in schools and districts, helping them to engage adolescents. Another programme addressing gender dynamics at community level is the PASS programme, especially its gender model household/community/parent advocacy support groups. Some encouraging examples of using community by-laws were also shared.

Participants noted that it is also important to ensure that activities are targeted to meet communities' specific needs and ensure they reach the most marginalized groups. For instance, in some communities, adolescent pregnancy is frowned upon and adolescent girls are compelled to hide their pregnancies. In other areas, giving birth is considered a blessing and celebrated regardless of the age of the mother. These sorts of societal beliefs prevail in the southern region and also interlink with GBV. In order to be transformative the work with families



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and communities should include their active participation and mobilisation in matters that affect them, including the elimination of child marriage as a harmful practice which violates human rights.

4. Systems and services: Gender-responsive

Participants expressed a clear consensus that strengthening relevant sectoral systems is a key priority to help children and adolescents affected by child marriage, both in terms of prevention and response. The element of systems and services was rated as gender-responsive overall (63 per cent), though several participants shared varying assessments of their particular sectors.

Participants stated they were between gender-aware and gender-responsive, although some school textbooks may include gender stereotypes (showing, for example, that mothers are supposed to teach girls how to cook, and fathers are responsible for paying school fees). Supported by the Global Programme, the Department of Gender under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) and Ghana Education Service (GES) need to collaborate on a curriculum review to address this issue.

The Safety Net programme was described as one of the flagship programmes to provide information and services on ASRH for adolescent girls at risk of, or affected by, child marriage and adolescent pregnancy. It also aims to strengthen referrals to other service providers, such as those dealing with education, social welfare and law enforcement. Similarly, participants agreed that the programme 'Time with Grandma', which focuses on preventing adolescent pregnancy, should be strengthened and extended. Participants also agreed the health sector's programmes should address the links between child marriage and teenage pregnancy, as they are still sometimes approached through separate programmes.

The health sector assessed the Safety Net programme as being at the transformative stage, because of its community-based activities and counselling services. However, some adolescents still struggle to find transportation to take part in these. Questions arose about how school and health systems identify young people in need and refer them to the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit and social welfare officers.

The justice sector mentioned that 18 child-friendly courts and 2 juvenile justice courts have been established and refurbished nationally to make justice services more accessible for GBV survivors, including those affected by child marriage. The number of cases brought to each court varies significantly depending on the location and norms of the community, including the traditional views of GBV, domestic violence and child marriage. In some areas, child marriage is not viewed as problematic and/or GBV is normalized to the extent that few cases are brought to court. These courts are an important way of getting justice for survivors of GBV and child marriage. However, there is a need to strengthen existing informal community-based mechanisms and structures (e.g., through traditional, religious and community leaders) and strengthen links between informal and formal mechanisms and structures to promote the identification, reporting and referrals of cases of GBV and child marriage. Community mobilization, capacity-building for social

service providers across sectors, and referrals between services remain a challenge and require additional investment and more targeted interventions, especially in the regions showing slower progress.

The ISS approach has been implemented by seven ministries, departments and agencies since 2019/2020. This aims to strengthen service delivery and link service providers at a decentralized level across sectors such as social welfare, health, child protection, GBV and social protection. Child marriage and adolescent pregnancy have been integrated into this approach, especially through:

- intersectoral standard operating procedures for child protection and family welfare and its referral pathways
- case management standard operating procedures for children in need of care and protection
- social welfare information management systems (SWIMS).

However, the number of high-risk child protection cases, such as those involving GBV and child marriage, reported and recorded in SWIMS remains low in comparison to low-risk child protection cases, such as custody and child maintenance. There is a need to strengthen the implementation of SWIMS at the decentralized level⁴ and to further strengthen referrals among sectors, by enhancing collaboration between SWIMS and other information management systems, e.g., the Education Information Management System, District Health Information Management System and Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation System.

Different systems and services across sectors (such as health, child protection, education, etc.) are assessed differently on the gender equality continuum, with a need for speedier targeted interventions to ensure that, overall, they become gender-responsive and gender-transformative.

5. Laws and policies: Gender-responsive

It is clear that Ghana has some very good policies to address gender inequality and GBV including child marriage. The vast majority (88 per cent) of participants ranked this element as gender-responsive. However, despite having good policies, the challenge for Ghana is inadequate coordination and implementation. This is why many communities are unaware of these policies and why there is uneven implementation. Funding and a lack of resources also affect the sustainability of activities and their extension. It is also critical to engage local communities, traditional and religious leaders in the implementation of laws and policies.

It is difficult to coordinate all the government entities involved in issues related to child marriage across national, regional and local levels. Three forms of decentralization exist (political, physical, and administrative) which are hard to coordinate. The national ministries work with regional coordinating councils which reside under the local government services. So local government service is notified when national ministries send funding to the regional coordinating councils. It is challenging to coordinate and track spending to ensure that funding trickles down to local level. The coordination of funding should also be strengthened among donors. The United Nations aims to integrate the efforts of the various agencies under its overall coordination as part of the 'Delivering as One' concept.



ROAD MAP

Agreed points during the workshop are spelled out in the road map of actions, while key ones will be incorporated into the National Strategic Framework for Ending Child Marriage Operational Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2023–2024, which was validated in December 2022. The progress will be tracked during meetings every six months by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) which coordinates the implementation of the National Strategic Framework with relevant Government and NGO partners.

It is projected that there might be an increase in the prevalence of child marriages reported in the next Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) due to the negative

impact of COVID-19 which might have pushed more girls into marriage, so it is imperative to continue to respond to the needs of young married girls as well as to prevent child marriages. It is also projected that the number of girls married in childhood is affected by both the prevalence of child marriage and by the number of girls in this country. As 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 per cent), there will be more child brides each year as the population grows.

See Annex 1 for the full action plan.



ANNEX 1 - ACTION PLAN

AREA	ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUPPORT NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE FOCAL POINT
Adolescent girls' skills, agency and empowerment	<p>Ensuring scalability and sustainability of the programmes for the empowerment of adolescent girls:</p> <p>Establish national guidelines that can be used to scale up good quality safe space/mentorship programmes,⁵ integrating content from PASS, Dept. of Gender, and other resources</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) map existing resources and international standards 2) collect and share evidence to advocate for a national programme for girls' empowerment 3) document best practices, develop a compendium of evidence and case studies, and develop an advocacy brief 4) standardize safe-space methodologies for different levels of engagement (i.e., short term (1 day), medium term (6 weeks to 3 months), and long term (8 to 12 months). These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adopting a guide to mentoring • standardized monitoring and evaluation tools • strengthening the contents on vocational training, financial literacy and livelihood options to address poverty, one of the root causes of gender inequality 5) establish or strengthen mechanisms to facilitate linkages between NGO/CSO-led and government-led programmes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life skills education and vocational training (GES) • return to school (GES) • ASRH services (Ghana Health Service) • social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes (MoGCSP) • social welfare and child protection case management services (Department of Social Welfare) 6) Finalize and validate national guidelines 	<p>National guidelines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) by Q3 2023 2) by Q1 2024 3) by Q2 2024 	<p>UNFPA and UNICEF HQ will share good practices from other countries (Mozambique and Niger) to collaborate with NGO partners for scale up; HQ will support resource mobilization to recruit a consultant to develop and finalize the national guidelines; HQ/RO will provide technical support to assure the guidelines' quality</p>	<p>The Department of Gender and Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protections; Ghana Education Service; Ghana Health Service; NGOs/CSOs; UNFPA and UNICEF</p>
Addressing masculinities and engaging boys and men	<p>Promoting positive masculinities for boys by expanding community mobilization and safe space programmes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) review existing content, including the toolkit for engaging men and boys being developed by the Department of Gender. 2) compile a resource package on positive masculinities 3) integrate it into the PASS programme, the Child Protection Community Engagement Toolkits and any other relevant programmes 4) roll out the package and expand safe spaces for the most marginalized boys <p>Men and boys' movement building: Strengthening a coalition for male engagement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) establish a national platform of organizations working with men and boys for gender equality 2) promote structured and sustained engagement of traditional and faith-based authorities to support positive masculinities 3) mobilize a movement of male champions to promote gender equality through a variety of media including entertainment, sports, entrepreneurship, community intergenerational dialogues, and media (e.g., He for She, GACA, etc.). <p>Develop and implement relevant policies and legal frameworks to promote positive masculinities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) incorporate more actions and measures for positive masculinities in the National Operational Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for Ending Child Marriage 2023–2024 2) incorporate more actions and measures for positive masculinities into the Child Marriage information and data portal 3) finalize and roll out a "National Framework to engage traditional authorities and faith-based leaders." 4) finalize and implement the National Framework for Engaging Men and Boys to address positive masculinities 	<p>Community mobilization and safe spaces:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) by Q3 2023 2) by Q1 2024 3) by Q2 2024 4) by Q4 2024 <p>Movement building:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) by Q3 2023 2) Ongoing 3) by Q4 2024 <p>Policies and legal frameworks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) by Q1 2023 2) by Q4 2024 3) by Q4 2023 4) by Q4 2023 	<p>HQ will support resource mobilization to recruit a consultant to develop and finalize the package on positive masculinities; RO will provide technical support for quality assurance HQ will connect with Men Engage and share resources about men and boys' engagement programmes; UNFPA and UNICEF HQ/ regional offices will support movement building by increasing visibility and amplify messages in the region and globally</p>	<p>Department of Gender and Department of Children, MoGCSP; CSO/ NGOs; UNFPA; UNICEF</p>

AREA	ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUPPORT NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE FOCAL POINT
Systems and services (multi-sectoral: education, health, justice, social welfare, child protection)	<p>Strengthen relevant sectoral systems to enhance the quality of multi-sectoral service delivery and increase access to services for ending child marriage</p> <p>Capacity-building of service providers on gender equality and gender-transformative approaches</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> develop a GTA checklist for service providers training on GTA including addressing internally held stereotypes and gender bias for a wide variety of service providers, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementers of community engagement toolkits in-service training for teachers, administrators, school authorities, selected GES officials at national and district levels and facilitators of life skills programmes for girls on gender-transformative approaches engage and train parents and traditional and religious leaders/bodies to support reproductive health education (RHE) for young people in communities recruit and train young people as community facilitators and peer educators. build the capacity of teachers on RHE and GBV <p>Strengthen multisectoral referral pathways</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> map and harmonize referral pathways across sectors: education, child protection, health, law enforcement/policing, justice, and social welfare as well as NGO/CSOs.⁶ strengthen links between the education and health sectors to address child marriage and adolescent pregnancy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourage health service providers/systems to refer cases of adolescent pregnancy to District Education Offices so girls are supported to go back/stay in school facilitate more referrals to health service delivery points for sexual and reproductive health and GBV services support the training for the School Health Education Programme (SHEP) officers at the District Education Offices, SHEP coordinator at the school level and the health officers at the Community-based health planning and services (CHPS) compound Establish and ensure effective referral pathways for out-of-school young people including young mothers, pregnant school girls, girls with disabilities to access to reproductive health and GBV services <p>Strengthen service delivery mechanisms to respond to the needs of adolescent girls⁷</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Child and social protection and social welfare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen capacity-building on the Minimum Essential Service Package (MESP) on GBV and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse through the ISS strengthen data-collection and management on GBV cases, including child marriage, in SWIMS. strengthen existing community-based interventions, including the Child Marriage Free Community Alert Campaign, to improve identification, reporting and referrals leverage the social protection programmes (e.g., Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) cash transfer programme), including possible expansion of the programme coverage, to reach the most marginalized adolescent girls at risk of, or experiencing, child marriage. 	<p>Capacity-building:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> by Q4 2023 by Q4 2024 <p>Referral pathways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> by Q4 2023 by Q4 2024 <p>Service delivery mechanism:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> by Q4 2024 by Q4 2024 by Q4 2024 by Q4 2024 	<p>HQ will share a GTA checklist and support adaptation to the Ghana's context; RO to provide technical input to the adaptation of the checklist</p> <p>RO will provide technical support to strengthen service delivery mechanisms where necessary</p>	<p>Capacity-building:</p> <p>Department of Gender (DoG), DSW and Department of Children (DoC), MoGCSP; OHLGS; GES; GHS; Judicial Service: Ghana Police Service/Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit; UNFPA and UNICEF</p> <p>Referral pathways:</p> <p>Integrated Social Service Technical Working Group; GES; Judicial Service: Ghana Police Service/DOVVSU; UNFPA and UNICEF</p> <p>Service delivery mechanisms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ISS TWG; UNICEF with support from UNFPA Domestic Violence Secretariat, MoGCSP; DOVVSU; CSO/NGOs; UNFPA with support from UNICEF GES; UNFPA and UNICEF GHS; UNFPA and UNICEF

AREA	ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUPPORT NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE FOCAL POINT
Systems and services (multi-sectoral: education, health, justice, social welfare, child protection)	2) GBV: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> map GBV services increase awareness of, and reach of, GBV Support Systems (Orange Call Centre, BoaMe app, Wawaba platform, DOVVSU Mini and Main One Stop Shops, Helpline of Hope and shelters) so people can call in and get referrals to services. Strengthen the alignment in flow of referrals among these platforms/systems, in line with the ISSOPs and best practice. 3) Education, including life skills and reproductive health education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop, review and strengthen existing in-service teacher training manuals on life skills, RHE and GBV review and strengthen the current guidelines on prevention of pregnancy among school girls and re-entry for young mothers into school after childbirth integrate child marriage and adolescent pregnancy into the GES safe school initiative addressing corporal punishment, bullying and sexual harassment, so it can address violence in a more comprehensive way. 4) Health, including ASRH – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> harmonize/strengthen youth-friendly health services, such as My Future Sake and Safety Net programmes evidence generation to strengthen implementation of the Safety Net programme, including ensuring technical and operational alignment with the ISS. My Future Sake (“Medaakye nti”) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> review programme content expand online counselling scale up programme to north and other regions contextualize to local gender norms and use names from local languages 			
Policy and structural change through institutional partnerships (coordination)	Improve coordination of efforts and resources to strengthen the national agenda on ending child marriage. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> support the DV Secretariat to strengthen national coordination through the implementation of the National Framework for Ending Child Marriage 2017–2026. strengthen the child marriage information and data portal to monitor the implementation of the framework support the Department of Gender to advocate for other ministries to integrate a stronger focus on gender and coordinate efforts of existing programmes that could help reduce child marriage, through implementing the National Gender Policy map services and programmes implemented by civil society, to identify overlap and opportunities for collaboration⁸ and, where appropriate, conduct a gender analysis to make these services and programmes more gender-transformative. strengthen public finance management (programme-based budgeting) for ending child marriage 	1) Ongoing 2) by Q4 2023 3) Ongoing 4) by Q4 2023 5) by Q4 2024	RO will provide technical support to strengthen public finance management for ending child marriage	Domestic Violence Secretariat and DoG, MoGCSP; Ministry of Finance; CSO/NGOs; UNFPA and UNICEF



ANNEX 2 – PARTICIPANT LIST

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Saphia Tamimu	Programme Officer	DVS under MoGCSP
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Josephine Sackey	CEO	Social Serve Ghana (SSG)
Emmanuel Kwafo Mintah	Executive Director	ARK Development Organization (ADO)
Mavis N.K. Aryee	Programmes Officer	Curious Minds/Curious Minds

ENDNOTES

- 1 See: United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Children's Fund, Technical Note on Gender-Transformative Approaches: A summary for practitioners, January 2020, <www.unfpa.org/resources/technical-note-gender-transformative-approaches-summary-practitioners>.
- 2 United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Children's Fund, Gender-transformative accelerator tool, October 2021, <www.unicef.org/media/108881/file/Gender-transformative-accelerator-brief-2021.pdf>.
- 3 United Nations Population Fund, Engaging Men and Boys in Sustainable Development: Guidelines for Engagement, UNFPA, Accra, 2019, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nW9dw5_GGorY1LUlvpQ1bnoNb4C-5iT4/view>.
- 4 UNICEF will continue its support to the Government of Ghana to ensure there is adequate technical coaching and monitoring to help DSWCDs address key challenges, including: understaffing; high rate of attrition/transfers between ISS and non-ISS districts; internet connectivity; IT skills. In addition, a study is being conducted to better understand whether there are barriers, both from the supply and demand sides, to reporting, referral and identification of high-risk child protection cases, such as GBV and child marriage. Evidence will help strengthen the implementation of the ISS and SWIMS.
- 5 The process of developing national guidelines for Ghana will be informed by relevant global guidelines including United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, International technical guidance on sexuality education, UNESCO, Paris, 2018.
- 6 See Ghana, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and United Nations Children's Fund, Inter-Sectoral Standard Operating Procedures for Child Protection and Family Welfare, August 2020.

Consider using these, including multi-sectoral referral pathways for the prevention and response to child marriage, as a starting point. It can be done through cross-district or regional learning workshops to convene service providers across sectors, share the best practices and lessons learnt and identify key bottlenecks hindering access to multi-sectoral services, including referrals.
- 7 All capacity building activities for service providers shall consider, where appropriate, a Training of Trainers (ToT) component, including regional and district-level service providers, in order to ensure trained service providers will be available across levels so that they can provide cascade training to reach more service providers.
- 8 Mapping exercise will use links from Ghana, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Social Welfare Service Directory, <<http://directory.mogcsp.gov.gh>>, accessed 10 April 2023.



UNFPA-UNICEF GLOBAL PROGRAMME TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE ACCELERATOR

Ghana Country Report

