

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF GHANA'S NATIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE



SEMINAR FOR AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARIANS ON ENDING CFM

**ACCRA, GHANA
2ND MARCH, 2016**

Child marriage refers to **any marriage** of a child younger than 18 years old, in accordance with Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

While child marriage can happen to both sexes, it disproportionately affects girls



DATA ON CHILD MARRIAGE IN GHANA

ICS 2011

0-49 married/union by age 18)

Upper East	39.2%
Western	36.7%
Upper West	36.3%
Central	31.2%
Ashanti	30.5%
Volta	29.3%
Brong Ahafo	29.1%
Northern	27.4%
Eastern	27.2%
Greater Accra	12.2%

NATIONAL AVERAGE: 27%

DHS 2014

(20-49 married/union by age 18)

•Northern	39.6%
•Upper West	37.3%
•Upper East	36.1%
•Western	32.9%
•Central	29.5%
•Eastern	27.5%
•Ashanti	25.9%
•Volta	25.9%
•Brong Ahafo	23.9%
•Greater Accra	18.5%

NATIONAL AVERAGE: 27.2%

CHILD MARRIAGE IN GHANA

1 in 4 women (27%) between ages 20 – 49 years were married/in union before age 18 in 2011 (MICS 2011)

1 out of 5 girls (21%) between ages of 20-24 will be married before their 18th birthday

The likelihood of girls in rural areas getting married is twice as higher as girls in urban areas (**36% vs. 19%**)

While the new DHS indicate that the prevalence rate nationally remains the same, it seems there is a widening gap between the North and South of Ghana

- Teenage Pregnancy
- Fear of stigmatization by the society in case of pregnancy
- Protecting virginity and unwanted pregnancy
- Urge to conform to tradition/religion (gender norms and roles)
- Poverty at the family and community level
- Female children as “financial burden” / Fear of female children not doing well in school
- Teen- choices and search for a “better life”/ peer pressure

Article 14 of the Children's Act of Ghana clearly provides for the protection of the rights of children against any form of marriage and spells out punitive measures

Some offences identified in the Criminal Code 1962 (Act 29) that border on child marriage:

Section 109: Compulsion of Marriage

Section 71 : Exposing a child to danger

Section 72 : Negligently causing harm

Section 91: Abduction of a Child under 18 years

Person who commits these offences is guilty of a misdemeanour. This carries a one or imprisonment term and/or a fine subject to the discretion of the courts.

Other policies: Child and Family Welfare Policy, Gender Policy etc

Ending Child
Marriage
Campaign

Overall Objective

To promote and coordinate national initiatives aimed at ending child marriage in Ghana

Key Results A

Establish a coordinating mechanism/ unit

Develop a national strategy framework

Influence behavioural c

Increase public responsiveness to issue of child marriage

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MINISTRY OF
GENDER, CHILDREN
AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION

OFFICIAL LAUNCH IN FEBRUARY, 2016
By H.E. Pres. John Mahama and H. E. Lordina Maham



at **fairly comprehensive and supporting legal framework in existence in Ghana**

Child marriage still exists

efore **coordinated interventions at different levels and across different sectors (i.e. education, health, social welfare, community development etc**

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE FRAMEWORK



- Provide an integrated vision and clear direction to all sectors at various level involved with prevention and response efforts.



2

- Set out clear national goals, objectives, strategies & key interventions across different sectors leading to the gradual elimination of the practice



3

- Ensure coordinated efforts and measureable targets towards ending child marriage in Ghana

STRUCTURE OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

General Context

Introduction and Background on Child Marriage in Ghana

Legal and Policy Framework (National & International)

National Response

Rationale for Strategic Framework

Strategy

- National Vision
- Overall Goal
- Objectives
- Guiding Principles
- Scope of Framework
- Strategic Direction & Area of Action (interventions and strategies)
- Coordination & Collaboration
- M&E Plan
- Action Plan 2016/2017
- Sustainability efforts

1. Empower and increase the agency of girls at risk
2. Change social norms, culture and attitudes towards child marriage
3. Increase access and improve quality of services responsive to the needs of girls at risk
4. Establish appropriate legal and policy framework
5. Increase generation of use of data and evidence to inform programming

THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS...



To build ownership and seek technical inputs:

Who: MoGCSP, MoH, MoE, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice and Attorney Generals Department, Police, Judiciary, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry for Chieftaincy and Culture, House of Chiefs, Religious Leaders, Civil Society Organisations, Girls not Brides Network, Communities

For context and practical suggestions:

Who: Chiefs, community opinion leaders, parents, girls-at-risk, child brides, in-school youth, out-of-school youth, school authorities etc

To increase political support and strengthen:

Who: First Ladies Office, Parliamentarians, Flag Staff House Special Advisers,
Religious Leaders

To ensure there is sufficient financing:

Who: DPs, Ministry of Finance, CSOs, INGOs

Engagement of a lead Consultant

Setting up of a Core Working Group for drafting and technical inputs

Consultations across the country in zones:

- Stakeholders meetings – organisations, religious and traditional leaders, CSOs etc
- Focus Group Discussions – community members, Chiefs, girls at risk, child brides etc

Meeting with Parliamentarians

Drafting and reviews

Validation

Development of workplans

PICTURES FROM THE FIELD







THANK YOU