

Strengthening National Legal and Policy Frameworks on CEFM and Improving Coordination Among all Key Stakeholders

Presenter

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Outline

1. Girls Not Brides Ghana National Partnership
2. Prevalence of CM in Ghana (data)
3. Legal and Policy Context
4. Coordination of CEFM in Ghana
5. Recommendations
6. Question and Answer



Achievements of GNB-Ghana

- *Girls Not Brides* Ghana national partnership launched December 2014 with 5 civil society organisations. Today we are 32 NGOs under the umbrella of GNB-GH
- GNB-Ghana is the 6th recognized National Partnership globally approved by Girls Not Brides UK; The Global Partnership to end child marriage.
- Presently 32 NGOs who are members are working with one voice across Ghana to end Child early and forced marriage. This number keeps growing as new members are registering with our mother body in UK to join the stream of organisations out to end child early and forced marriage.
- GNB-Ghana has developed a national strategic plan which demonstrate the path way of change the partnership has adopted to bring CEFM to an end
- Developing strategic plan to advocate for the development and implementation of a national strategic framework to end (CM) child marriage
 - Increased awareness of the impact of child marriage and of potential solutions
 - Expanded policy attention and resources for child marriage work
 - Strengthened learning and coordination among organisations working to end child marriage



Achievement of GNB-Ghana (Continued)

- Issued press releases on the Day of the African Child calling on the government of Ghana to have a second look at some bills and laws which are in place to protect children from forced marriage but seems to be more blanket than deterring. Some of the bills and laws are:-
 1. *The Children's Act 1998 (Act 650) does mention of 'child marriage' but with little deterrent or punitive measures against all who perform, permit or promote child marriage. There seems to be no provision in the children's act which provides for nullification of child marriage hence there is the need for the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to initiate a 'bill on early and forced marriage through Parliament to be passed into law. The bill should also address its effect on health, education, community and the economy at large.*
 2. *The Criminal Act 1960 which states the age of sexual consent at sixteen years conflicts with the age of marriage (eighteen) in the Children Act 1998. We call on parliament to look into this conflict of laws and streamline them to ensure that the rights of children are well protected.*



Achievements of GNB-Ghana (continued)

- Seeks collaboration and coordination with Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP), UNICEF Ghana, donors (the Netherlands, Canada and UK), INGOs and local CSOs
- Keen to participate in consultations in the development of the national strategic framework to end CM
- Welcomes the launch of the African Union Campaign to end CM in February 2016



Prevalence of CM in Ghana (data)



- 27% of girls are married before they are 18; 5.8 before 15 years
- Regional variations: Upper East (39%), followed by Western (37%), Upper West (36%), Central (31%), Ashanti (31%), Central (28%), Ashanti (23%), Brong-Ahafo (29%), Northern (27%), Eastern (27%) and Greater Accra (12%)
- Teenage pregnancy girls marrying early to avoid shame or to prevent girls getting pregnant outside of marriage
- CM among girls least educated, poorest and living in rural areas



Legal and Policy Context

- International human rights instruments ratified by Ghana include ICESCRs; ICCPR; CRC; CEDAW
- Regional human rights instruments ratified: African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and ACHPR Protocol on Women
- Section 14 of the Children's Act (Act 560) – minimum age of marriage 18



Legal and Policy Context (continued)

- Section 109 of the Criminal Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29) – marriage against one’s will criminalised
- Article 25(1) of the 1992 Constitution – free compulsory education



Coordination of CEFM in Ghana

- Institutional framework coordinating CEFM: Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ); Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police service; Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP)
- Child Marriage Unit of the Domestic Violence Secretariat: MOGCSP, UNICEF with funding Royal Netherlands Embassy
- National Advisory Committee - Traditional and Religious Affairs, MOGCSP, Education, Health, Civic Education/Community development, Police, Civil Society, Youth Representation, UNICEF/UNFPA, Parliamentarians and Media
- National Stakeholders Working Group



Recommendations

- Applaud government leadership, ownership and commitment of the National Strategic Framework to end CM e.g. MOGCSP, National Steering Committee
- Appreciate and continue inclusive and participatory process of development of legal and policy frameworks e.g. NGOs, CSOs, Government, UN agencies, donors
- Integrated, multi-sectorial responses to end CEFM e.g. National Advisory Committee - Traditional and Religious Affairs, MOGCSP, Education, Health, Civic Education/Community development, Police, Civil Society, Youth Representation, UNICEF/UNFPA, Parliamentarians and Media



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Recommendations

- Inclusion of Ministry of Finance to ensure a costed and funded national framework and action plan e.g. % of budget allocated to CEFM
- Coordination and communication across sectors and stakeholders e.g. move from project based initiatives to nation wide approaches; e.g. unified messaging during Day of the African Child (June 16), International Day of the Girl child (October 11)
- Involve youth in the process of developing and implementing the national framework



Recommendations

- Develop and implement initiatives to prevent CM and support married girls noting the regional disparities in Ghana e.g. education, life skills, safe spaces and provision of health, justice and protection services
- Promote participation and role of men, religious leaders and community leaders in promoting positive male role models especially in areas with high prevalence of CM in Ghana
- Conduct evidence based research and establish data systems (at the national and local level) with gender disaggregated data to inform national policy and action e.g. the demographic health survey (DHS) should continue to have indicators on CM as a form of violence against women and children



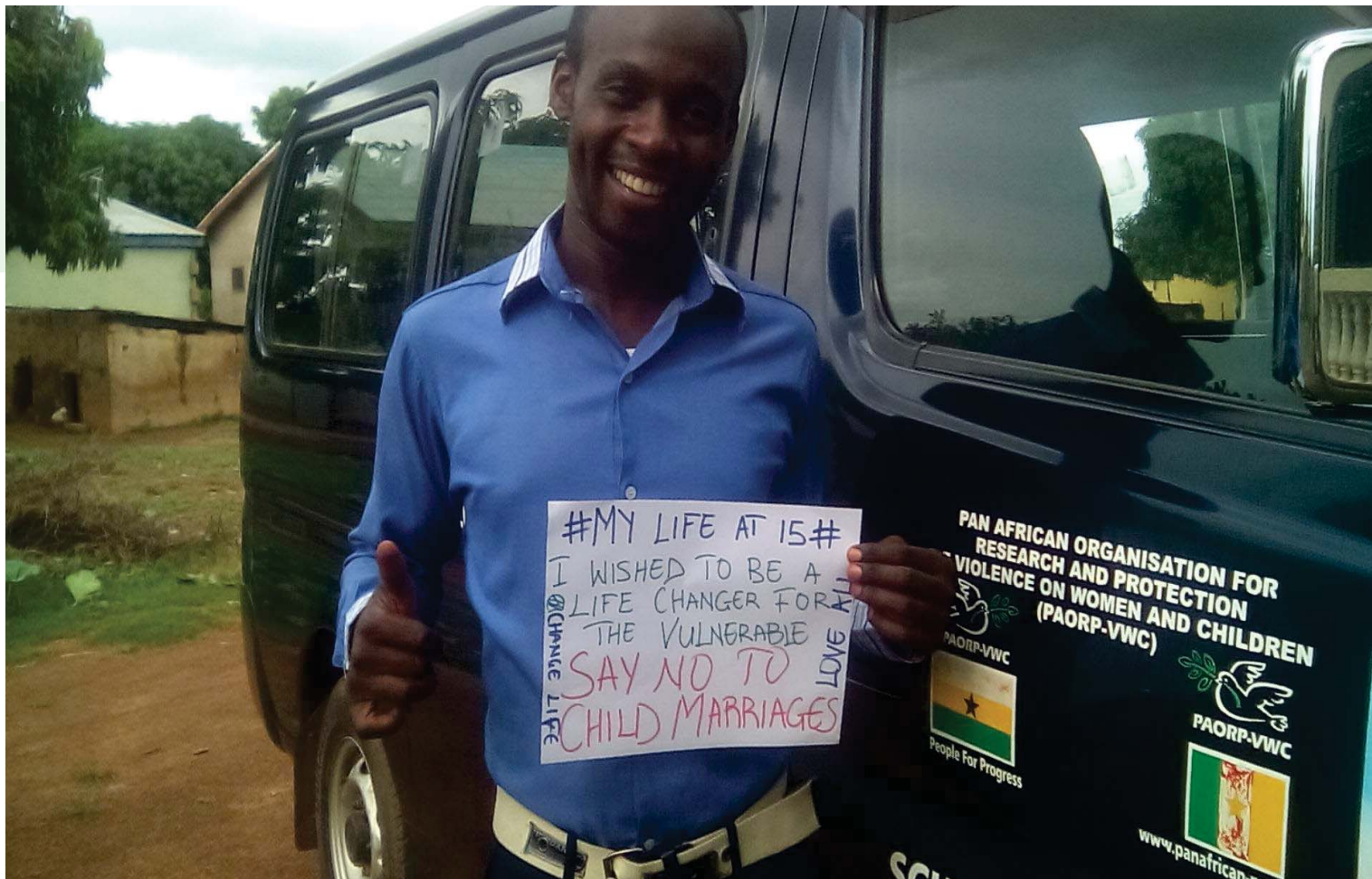
Recommendations



- Provide free and quality health (including reproductive health – prenatal, child birth, post-natal and family planning services), education (including life skills, health education, reproductive health), protection and expansion of social protection and child rights services.
- Submit periodic reports to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) including monitoring and reporting of child marriage (Ghana is due to report in 2016)
- As a member of ECOWAS, Ghana is well positioned to be a regional champion of CM



The End



GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The Global Partnership
to End Child Marriage



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

GIRLS NOT BRIDES GHANA
The Ghanaian Partnership to End Child Marriage
www.GirlsNotBrides.org

Join Hands with **GIRLS NOT BRIDES** to Celebrate this important Day in the fight to **END CHILD MARRIAGE IN GHANA**

Theme: "HARNESSING CROSS-SECTORIAL RESOURCES TO END CHILD MARRIAGE IN GHANA"

Venue: NADAWLI COMMUNITY PARK
Date: Monday 12th October, 2014
Time: 9:00am - 12:30pm

Special Guest: Upper West Regional Minister
GHANA PARTNERSHIP
We Must Win Together in Ghana

Ending Child Early and Forced Marriage is a

GIRLS
ARE
CHILDREN
NOT
WIVES

THE END
IS THE
END
MARRIAGE







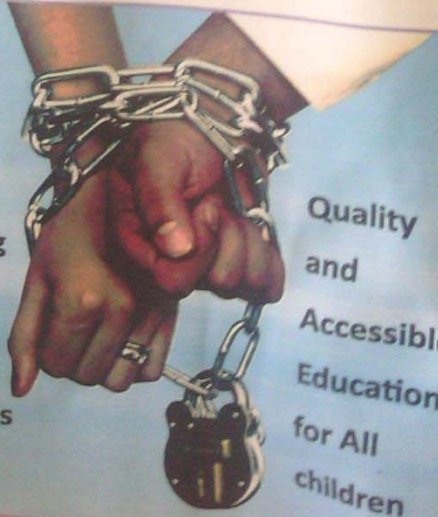
M7 Life At 15
I wanted to
become a
Lawyer BUT
NOT: A CHLA BRIDE





**"One child, one book, one pen
will change the world"**

**After
School
Learning
and
Play
Activities**



**Quality
and
Accessible
Education
for All
children**

**"No to Child Early and Forced Marriage"
Give smiling faces to children**























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SPECIAL GUEST OF HONOUR: UPPER EAST REGIONAL MINISTER (HON. ALHAJI LIMUHA MOHAMMED-MUNIRU)
VENUE: ZAARE - BOLGA DATE: 22ND JUNE, 2013 TIME: 9:00am - 3:00pm
LET'S JOIN HANDS TOGETHER TO CHALLENGE POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTHS THROUGH VOCATIONAL TRAINING
Website: www.panafrican-paorp.org