



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO GHANA



Ada, 25 November 2015

Launch of Ghana-EU initiative in support of global "16 days of Activism - UNiTE to end violence against women" campaign

On the occasion of the International Day on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children, the European Union in Ghana (EU) including Member States represented in the country, the United Nations (UN), the High Commission of Canada and partners from Civil Society launched today the Ghana-EU initiative to support the global campaign dubbed "16 days of Activism - Orange the World, end violence against women and girls", at a Community Durbar in Ada, Ada East District. The campaign is on from 25 November to 10 December, 2015. The Community Durbar was also attended by officials of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection of Ghana. Together, the partners presented to the communities approaches to preventing violence. This will be followed by a range of initiatives across the country involving local authorities, schools and the media.

Over 300 people from the communities around the Ada East District, gathered to celebrate the launch of the Campaign. "This campaign that we are launching today is not just a renewed effort at ending violence against women and children, it is also an effort aimed at preventing it from happening in the first place", explained William Hanna, EU Ambassador to Ghana, when he opened the Durbar.

The Spanish Ambassador to Ghana, H.E. María Alonso, stated that "the numbers are appalling. In the whole world one out of three women has been the victim of violence ; out of 4,5 million victims of sexual exploitation, 98% are women and girls. 133 million girls have suffered genital mutilation in 29 countries, mainly in Africa and the Middle East and around 700 million women have been victims of forced marriages". She highlighted that Spain joins this year's campaign on the elimination of violence against women and children with the following theme: "Free women, women in peace. Act. Gender violence does not distinguish borders."

The EU is strongly committed to joining the international mobilisation supported by the UN Secretary General and UN Women to raise awareness about gender-based violence as a human rights issue and to strengthen local work around violence against women. This year's International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women marks the 20-year anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which first laid down a road map for gender equality. The colour orange is symbolising a brighter future and a world free from violence against women and girls.

Ambassador William Hanna commended the "laudable efforts" made by the Government of Ghana and all partners towards ending violence against women and children in the country. "We are becoming increasingly aware that preventing gender-based violence and protecting survivors requires the support of the entire community", he noted. The EU is currently spending over EUR

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600 000 in support of civil society organisations promoting the protection of the rights of the children including young girls against early and forced marriages.

In a keynote address, the Deputy Minister, Hon. John Alexander Ackon, on behalf of the Minister of Gender, Children, and Social Protection, Hon. Nana Oye Lithur, presented the latest initiatives undertaken by the government to end gender-based violence. Ghana has been involved with the international community in the preparation of the Sustainable Development Agenda replacing the Millennium Development Goals. For the first time, the agenda includes specific targets and indicators on ending violence against women. Ghana adopted a Domestic Violence Act (Act 732) in 2007, but the continued prevalence of violence against women and children is still a source of concern.

The costs of violence against women and children are extremely high. They include the direct costs of services to treat and support abused women and their children and to bring perpetrators to justice. The indirect costs include the deep shame for women and often their families, lost employment and productivity, and the costs in human pain and suffering.

In a session focussing on preventive approaches to avoid gender-based violence, a representative from the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) from the Ghana Police presented the role of the Unit. Fauzia Issaka, Gender Equality and Social Development Adviser, Department for International Development (DFID) presented the work undertaken by the United Kingdom to support the Government of Ghana in eliminating violence against women and children.

Other speakers included representatives from civil society organisations involved in grass-root community initiatives. Shirley Acquah on behalf of PLAN International, a child-centred organisation focussing on the protection of children, stressed the need for a "change in mind set, a change in community response to violence and a change in the reporting and handling of victims".

Two members of a Girls Empowerment Club, supported by the Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF), Gloria Amarah and Emelia Mensah, Teshie LEKMA "12" Junior High School, closed the session with an appeal "to make Education Safe for All". As part of their 2015 campaign "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Make Education Safe for All", they denounced the practice of early and forced marriages "when such girls should be in the class room; thus shattering their dreams of contributing meaningfully to society".

To close the Durbar, the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), Junior Art Council (JAC) active in Italy and Ghana presented a sketch played by children of the Ada Community on the causes of violence and what to do about it using the Theatre for Education Methodology.

The 16 Days of Activism to end violence against women and children in Ghana will include numerous awareness events across the country organised by a wide range of partners, such as the

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United Nations in Ghana, the High Commission of Canada to Ghana and EU-funded organisations, International Needs and Maata-N-Tudu Association.

END

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Twitter: <http://twitter.com/WilliamHannaEU>

Hashtags: **#16daysGhana** and the global **#orangetheworld** and **#16days**

CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign running from 25 November - the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women - to 10 December - Human Rights Day. The first campaign was launched in 1991 by the Women's Global Leadership Institute. To mark the 16 Days Campaign, the UN Secretary-General launched the UNiTE to End Violence Against Women calls for global campaigns. The 2015 Call to Action is "Orange the World: End Violence against Women and Girls".

For more information, visit the [UN Women Campaign page](#).

European Union to Ghana

The EU is strongly supporting the government of Ghana and civil society to promote gender equality, women's empowerment and the respect of human rights in the country. The EU adopted recently a Gender Action Plan for external relations for 2016-2020 with combating violence against women and girls as a key priority. The EU is supporting three Civil Society Organisations working in a number of districts in the Northern, Brong Ahafo and Central regions to promote the protection of the rights of children including the fight against forced and early marriages. These three organisations are working closely with relevant district and municipal assemblies, traditional leaders, state agencies such as the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and community members to prevent the abuse of the rights of children. These organisations are participating in the 16 days of activism at their respective operational areas by carrying out specific activities.

UNICEF Ghana

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Unicef Ghana together with its government and NGO partners have been working towards strengthening the child protection system which aims at creating a network of services for children and strengthen institutions that are oriented to protecting children. These efforts culminated into the approval of the child and family welfare policy which was launched by July 2015. The following are the gender based violence related interventions:

- **Behavior and social change communication:** programme interventions on community engagement and dialogue to reduce the acceptance of “social practices” which have negative impact on children, such as “trokosi” (ritual enslavement of girls), child marriage, FGM/C, domestic violence and other forms of sexual violence against children. For e.g. Young girls discussing the impact of **child marriage** with their school teachers and traditional authorities in their communities.
- The **family and community dialogue toolkit** has been developed and key government and NGO partners are being trained to use these tools to stimulate dialogue at the community level. This is expected to further strengthen the links between the formal and informal CP systems - as well as identifying and promoting positive “*accepted indigenized practices*” that promote the protection of children at the family & community level.

High Commission of Canada to Ghana

The High Commissioner of Canada, H.E. Christopher Thornley and the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Honourable Nana Oye Lithur, will unveil a large and prominent mural by graffiti artist Rufai Zakari which aims to raise awareness about the challenges of child protection, including the need to protect girls from the dangers of Child, Early and Forced Marriage.

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High Commission of Canada to Ghana, Togo and Sierra Leone /

<https://www.facebook.com/High-Commission-of-Canada-to-Ghana-Togo-and-Sierra-Leone-1505168436366945/>

Haut-commissariat du Canada au Ghana, au Togo et en Sierra Leone /

<https://www.facebook.com/Haut-commissariat-du-Canada-au-Ghana-au-Togo-et-en-Sierra-Leone-473987306069616/>

UK Department for International Development (DFID)

The UK is committed to improving the lives of girls and women and has identified tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG) as a high level priority. The UK Government, through its Department for International Development (DFID), is undertaking various initiatives

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in partnership with the Government of Ghana, civil society organisations and other key stakeholders to end the widespread abuse that women and girls face in Ghana. Some of our initiatives include: a new £15 million programme which will focus on preventing violence against adolescent girls; and strengthening the evidence base on VAWG which includes funding two studies - a national qualitative and quantitative survey on domestic violence and a three-year study that seeks to measure the economic and social costs of VAWG. Many of our programmes in other sectors – e.g. health and education - also prioritise the needs of women and girls and support efforts to address the root causes of VAWG. These include: Girls’ Participatory Approaches to Student Success (£47 million, including provision of scholarships to 86,000 girls in junior and senior high schools); Adolescent Reproductive Health (£17 million, addresses issues of sexual violence and aims to improve the knowledge and behaviour around reproductive health); and Complementary Basic Education (£17.9 million, to provide out of school children, including girls, with a second chance at education).

DANIDA

Project title: Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Ghana

Partner: Ministry for Gender, Children and Social Protection

The central goals of the project are to reduce violence against women and their children, increase support for women and their children, and create innovative and targeted ways to bring about change. The focus is on preventing violence by raising awareness of SGBV and sensitizing court personal and the media. The aim is to bring attitudinal and behavioural change at the cultural, institutional and individual levels, with a particular focus on working with men and boys. The project aims to achieve the following results:

- Improved service delivery from the justice sector in handling sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) cases.
- Enhanced capacities of communities and organised men’s groups to prevent and report the incidence of SGBV.
- Sensitize religious and traditional leaders to better understand the damaging practices and consequences of SGBV
- Foster strong partnerships with the media through the demystification of SGBV for journalists and media practitioners to facilitate gender sensitive reporting.

JUNIOR ART COUNCIL (JAC)

Founded in January 2000 by Kelvin Asare-Williams, the Junior Art Club (JAC) is a fully registered non-governmental organisation unearthing the creative and artistic talents of disadvantaged children & youth in urban slums using both educational and social approaches with branches and representatives in Ada, Nima, Kanda, Adeiso, Daboase and Rome in Italy. The mission of the Junior Art Club (JAC) is to develop the creative and artistic talents of children and

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the youth especially in urban slums and rural communities using educational, vocational and social approaches.

INTERNATIONAL NEEDS GHANA

International Needs Ghana (INGH) is an autonomous Ghanaian affiliate of the International Needs Network, a global not-for-profit organization supporting one another on the path to transformed lives, and changed communities. INGH works with individuals, communities and institutions to end violence, abuse and exploitation with a special focus on women and children. INGH does this through raising awareness on the rights of the child as well as building the capacity of families, communities and institutions to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation and to respond to abuse when it occurs. INGH promotes the development of the child through improved access to formal education and health. The highlights of the work of INGH is its contribution to the elimination of children in the worst forms of child labor with particular focus on commercial sexual exploitation of children, children in fishing and child trafficking.

INGH also works to *empower vulnerable women* economically and psycho-socially through the provision of livelihoods support, advocacy on women's rights, counseling and rehabilitation of victims of human rights abuse, violence and exploitation.

More information on www.facebook.com/internationalneedsghana.

ANESVAD FOUNDATION

Anesvad is a Spanish Foundation committed to the fulfilment and promotion of the human right to health. It has been present in Ghana since 1995, supporting more than 50 project with a total budget of more than 5 million euro. It has supported mainly maternal health care and NTD prevention and control projects. Anesvad has been working in 19 countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa, but the Board of Trustees has recently given a new mandate to focus only in Sub-Saharan Africa (from a geographical point of view), and that means that our support to Ghana in particular will increase for the next years. We will concentrate the efforts mainly in fighting Neglected Tropical Diseases in the country, taking into account the Primary Health Care approach and also considering the main health determinants: water and sanitation, nutrition, income generating activities and others. All interventions will consider as cross cutting issues the gender equity, disability prevention and inclusion for disabled right holders, environmental protection and intercultural respect and promotion.

CARENET GHANA (CNG)

Caret Ghana (CNG) is a local non-profit organization dedicated to delivering sustainable projects that promote rights and improve the living condition of marginalized groups especially women and children in Ghana. Over the past four years, Care Net Ghana with funding from

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ANESVAD FOUNDATION of Spain has improved the right to health of some 4,000 + women and children in the Akatsi North and South Districts in the Volta Region of Ghana through training women groups in right to health approaches, gender based violence, income generation, training health workers on the rights of women and children, increasing access to healthcare by introducing tricycle ambulances, access to portable water and training men groups on gender based violence.