

**DEFENCE for
CHILDREN**



Ghana



SUMMARY OF ANNUAL REPORT - 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DCI- Ghana implemented the Girl Power Project, Reducing Violence against Children Project, Reducing Sexual Violence against Children and Combating Child Trafficking Project in the year 2015 with funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DCI-ECPAT and Agir Ensemble.

The projects were implemented in 3 districts in the Ashanti region, namely, Kumasi metropolis, Asokore Mampong municipality and Obuasi municipality. Strategies used during the project implementation included awareness raising, capacity building, advocacy networking and linking as well as socio-legal protective services.

Achievements for the year under review included: strengthening of referral mechanisms in Kumasi metropolis and Obuasi municipality through the establishment of referral protocol strengthening of child protection networks of government partners and CSOs, strengthening of community-based child protection teams and, provision of socio legal protective services to 2,112 child and young women victims through mediation, medical support, referrals and counseling, which details are presented in this report.

The successes will be used to leverage the implementation of advocacy for girls' rights project in the year 2016.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Defence for Children International (DCI) is an independent Non-Governmental Organization and a global movement for children's rights. It has been promoting and protecting children's rights on a global, regional, national and local level for over 30 years. Defence for Children International is represented through its national sections and associated members in 47 countries worldwide, with an International Secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland. Defence for Children International Ghana is the national section of DCI in Ghana.

DCI Ghana operates to defend the rights of the child by advocating for and disseminating policies that protect the rights of children, building the capacities of child protection institutions and structures at national, district and community levels as well as empowering children for their self-protection and overall development

DCI-Ghana's aim is to promote and protect the rights of children as enshrined in the UN Convention on the rights of the child and the Ghanaian laws on children, with the vision of having a Ghana where children's rights are fully known and respected by all. In light of this, DCI-Ghana's objectives are as follows:

- To influence the development, enforcement and implementation of policies that protect the rights of children
- To foster sustainable cooperation and solidarity with government, UN and other agencies on children's rights
- To sensitize the public on the rights of the child
- To highlight child rights violations at national and international level in order to promote accountability and access to justice for the victims
- To facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration of children from prisons, child victims of abuse and other vulnerable children

In the year 2015, DCI-Ghana promoted and protected children rights and child justice through the implementation of the Girl Power Project, Reducing Violence against Children, Reducing Sexual Violence against Children and Child Trafficking Project. This report covers the project activities and achievement in 2015.

2.0 ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2.1 Awareness Raising

2.1.1 Distribution of IE&C materials: Thirty-eight thousand, seven hundred (38700) leaflets, flyers, stickers and posters were distributed to the general public (including children, parents, social workers, and duty bearers) to raise awareness on reducing sexual violence against children, empowering girls and young women, and combating child trafficking. The posters and stickers were posted at vantage places and on vehicles, schools, offices, markets, lorry

parks, churches, mosques to enhance the knowledge of the public on violence against children.

2.1.2 Strengthening of Child Rights Clubs: Eighty-two (82) Child Rights and Young Women Clubs of 2,214 members were strengthened through awareness raising, training seminars, focus group discussions and life planning skills sessions in the Kumasi metropolis, Obuasi and Asokore Mampong municipalities. This brings to total 71 Child Rights Clubs and 11 Young Women’s Clubs in the 3 districts.

2.1.3 Celebration of the day of the African child: Ninety-five (95) school children participated in the celebration of the day of the African child organized by DCI-Ghana on the theme for the year “25 Years after the Adoption of the African Children’s Charter: Accelerating our Collective Efforts to End Child Marriage in Africa”. The children were educated on the effects of early marriage and how children can stand up for their rights for changes in harmful norms and cultural practices that hinder their development.



Participants of the celebration on the day of the African child

2.1.4 Radio Programs: Estimated number of One hundred and ninety thousand (190,000) households were reached through radio programs, radio discussions and phone- in sessions in the project communities. The radio programs and discussions included topics such as what is sexual violence, how and where to report cases of violence, role of parents in reducing sexual violence and child trafficking, how to protect children from being sexually abused and being

trafficked among others in Kumasi metropolis, Obuasi municipality and Asokore Mampong municipality.

2.1.5 TV Campaigns: Estimated number of Twenty thousand (20,000) households were reached through four TV programs which raised the awareness of the public on the effects of violence against children and child protection issues.

2.1.6 Youth Led Campaigns: Fifteen (15) youth led campaigns were organised in the project communities to sensitise the households on gender equality, women empowerment, gender based violence and child trafficking. The activities were led by youth groups such as Concern Youth Association, Kaase Football Club, Adventist Youth, Church Of Christ Youth, and Kasina Moro Youth Club.

2.1.7 Publication and Actions: Eight (8) publications were made in the Ghanaian observer, Chronicle and Daily Graphic which expressed the views of children on the need to be protected from sexual violence by parents and stakeholders. Activities of the organisation on child protection were also highlighted in these news coverage for public sensitization.

2.2 CAPACITY BUILDING

2.2.1 Training Seminar for Girls & Young Women: One hundred and seventy (170) girls/young women and 40 boys in the Kumasi Metropolis and Obuasi Municipality were trained on gender equality and gender-based violence, how to report violence cases, child and girls' rights, and protection measures against violence.



Seminar for selected girls on gender based violence, gender equality and child trafficking in session

2.2.2 Focus Group Discussions /Workshops: Focus group discussions with 490 girls and young women and 232 boys were held in Asokore Mampong municipality, Obuasi municipality and Kumasi metropolis. The discussions were to establish, mobilize and empower girls, young women groups to express their views and stand up for their rights.



Focus group discussion on gender based violence and gender equality with young women at Gausu

2.2.3 Life Planning Skills Sessions/ Vocational Training: Two thousand, one hundred and seventy-nine (2179) girls, young women and boys in the Kumasi Metropolis, Asokore Mampong municipality and Obuasi Municipality received life planning skills to enhance their capacity on rights and responsibilities of children, effects of unsafe abortion, teenage pregnancy, prevention and protection against violence, personal and environmental hygiene, self-esteem and decision making, forms of violence against children, and, where to report cases of violence against children including child trafficking. Ten (10) young women were also enrolled in vocational training of their choice as part of measures to prevent them from at-risk behaviours and thereby protecting them from violence.



Life planning skills session with a Child Rights Club at Abdul Sammed Basic school

2.2.4 Training for Community Leaders: Thirty-two (32) community leaders were given training on gender equality, child protection and child trafficking in the Obuasi municipality. The leaders included unit committee members, chiefs, queen mothers, religious leaders and assembly members selected from the ten project communities in the Obuasi. The training aimed at enhancing their knowledge and skills on child protection.

2.2.5 Training Seminar for Government Departments and Law Enforcement Agencies: A training seminar on gender equality and child protection was organized for 27 heads of

schools and government officials from; Department of Social Welfare, Department of Information Service, DOVVSU, CHRAJ, Department of Children, Department of Women, Labour department, Ghana Health Services, NCCE in Kumasi Metropolis. This was to refresh them child protection issues.

2.2.6 Trainings for Professionals on Child Protection: Assessment of training needs on reducing sexual violence against children was conducted. The respondents rated the following training needs as important to their work: protection of children against sexual violence, awareness raising on sexual violence, stakeholder cooperation in reducing sexual violence, strengthening evidence based advocacy and lobbying, strengthening capacity of professionals working on sexual violence. Three (3) trainings for professionals and key experts were organised in Kumasi metropolis, Asokore Mampong municipality and Obuasi municipality. Forty-six (46) professionals and key experts, including policy makers and other stakeholders in areas of child protection participated in the training. Four (4) materials were developed, disseminated and used. These include directory of the professionals for smooth and easy collaboration and networking, directory on referral institutions to the media houses, information, education and communication materials on reducing sexual violence against children and Info pack on children’s rights.



Training for professionals on reducing sexual violence against children

2.2.7 Training of Trainers on Tool Kit: DCI-Ghana participated in the Training of Trainers on a tool kit for child protection organized by the Department of Community Development in collaboration with UNICEF for the implementation of the child and family welfare policy in Ghana for the southern sector of the country. The training aimed at equipping staff on community facilitation skills to facilitate the process of social mobilization for child protection at the community and provide a guide to empower families and community structure to fulfill their role. DCI-Ghana is a member of the Ashanti Regional Training and Monitoring Team for the toll kit in Ashanti region.

2.2.8 Capacity building for staff: Five (5) staff of DCI-Ghana participated in trainings organized by Plan Ghana. These trainings built the capacity of staff on report writing and advocacy techniques, providing psycho social support for victims of trafficking in persons, gender based violence, gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The skills gained are being used to support the organization and its partners in project implementation and advocacy for child protection issues.

2.2.9 Technical Support: DCI-Ghana continued to enjoy technical support from Defence for Children International/ECPAT (DCI-ECPAT) in the project implementation through regular communication, progress reporting, monitoring visits and capacity sessions. This enhanced the capacity of the organization in project implementation, assessment, learning and linking on project outcomes.

2.3 ADVOCACY, LINKING AND NETWORKING

2.3.1 Strengthening Child Protection Networks (CPN): DCI continued to strengthen both government institutions and CSOs to have a wider coverage in lobbying and advocacy on child protection accompanying services at the district levels of Obuasi Municipality, Kumasi Metropolis and Asokore Mampong Municipality and the Ashanti regional level. In all, CPN is made up of fourteen government departments including security services and eleven CSOs. Specifically, the CPN aims at:

- Seeking the rights and welfare of children
- Sharing and dialoguing on ideas among members and
- Sharing data on the to know the situation of children in the Kumasi Metropolis, Asokore Mampong Municipality and Obuasi Municipality.



CSOs during round table discussion on strengthening network and collaboration

2.3.2 Strengthening of Local Child Protection Teams (LCPTs): Eighteen (18) LCPTs termed by DCI-Ghana as Local Advisory Committee to connote child-friendliness were strengthened through sensitization, training and linkages to the district child protection committees in KMA, OMA and AMMA. The training covered areas such as Gender equality, Gender-based violence, child Protection, networking and collaboration. These committees serve as community child protection watch teams to identify, intervene and refer cases of violence against girls and young women to the socio-legal centers and appropriate agencies such as DOVVSU, Department of Social Welfare and CHRAJ.



Section of Anyinam LAC during meeting on how to manage cases of violence

2.3.3 Participation in NGO Lunch Meeting: DCI–Ghana participated in an NGO roundtable on strategies to address hazardous child labor and mercury use in artisanal gold mining in Ghana. At the meeting, Human Rights Watch presented its new report, and NGOs shared information and perspectives on strategies for change.

2.3.4 Participation in consultative forum: DCI-Ghana participated in a consultative forum to develop a Programme Intervention Proposal document that will guide the implementation of a Programme that responds to the issue of child trafficking in Ghana. The forum was led by Alliance for Brighter Future and provided opportunity for sharing of knowledge, ideas and approaches for addressing child-trafficking issues in Ghana.

2.3.5 Evidence-Based Advocacy

Evidence-based advocacy through research on violence against children, documentary on child protection issues in the Kumasi metropolis and dialogue meetings with government and CSO partners on child protection was undertaken to reinforce the efforts on child protection issues in the Ashanti region. DCI-Ghana also participated in the Final Term Evaluation by the Country Steering Committee of the 5-year Girl power project. The evaluation determined the relevance and level of achievement of the project objectives, development effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Findings and recommendations in the evaluation report

are used as evidence-based advocacy on programme development and implementation. Copy of the evaluation report is available on request.

DCI-Ghana also contributed to the development of the child and family welfare policy for 'children fit for Ghana' by servicing as a member of the National Advisory Committee on the policy development process. The organization is helping to disseminate the policy in its project districts through awareness raising and sensitization efforts.

2.4 CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD JUSTICE

2.4.1 Socio-Legal Protective Services: Social-legal assistance was provided to 2,112 children whose rights were violated in various forms. 1,406 of these child victims were girls and young women representing 66.6%, and 706 boys, representing 33.4% in the Kumasi metropolis, Obuasi Municipality and Asokore Mampong municipality. This was achieved via the two (2) socio-legal defence centers for children in Kumasi and Obuasi. The nature of the cases managed by the centers included child maintenance, defilement, rape, indecent assault, child neglect, child exploitation, child trafficking, among others. Services provided to the victims/survivors were counseling, mediation, referrals, medical treatment, tracing of families, family re-union and monitoring.

2.4.2 Withdrawal of Trafficked Children: One hundred and thirteen (113) child victims between the ages of 8 and 17 years, were identified through outreaches to areas prone to trafficking by field staff as well as information received from Community Child Protection Committee members and the public. Victims identified were mostly from the three northern regions of Ghana, part of Brong Ahafo and Central Region. Families of these victims were traced and the victims were reintegrated into society through formal education, vocational training and reuniting with their families. Some of the ex-trafficked victims are still with their employers who have enrolled them in schools and vocational training in order to advance their living conditions. Field staffs frequently monitor these children who are living with their guardians to ensure that they are not exploited again.

2.4.3 Follow Ups on ex-trafficking: Follow-ups were made to monitor the situations of the 71 ex-trafficked children withdrawn during 2013-2014 project period and 113 withdrawn in 2015. The field staff and the social workers conducted a number of follow - up activities, by visiting the ex-trafficked children in their various communities or camps, to monitor their living conditions and to ensure that their rights are being protected. During the visits it was identified by field staff that the ex-trafficked children are either enrolled in school and vocations of their choice and others living with their parents. Families and guardians were provided with education and social counseling on the rights of children and protection against violence and also discussed their welfare issues with them. The project staff interacted with the families to examine the living conditions of the re-integrated children it was comprehended during the various discussions that though most families are financially unsound but they are putting in their best to seek for the survival and the development of the children

2.4.4 Repatriation of Togolese trafficked children: Field staff of DCI-Ghana frequently visited the Sokoban wood village where there are identified Togolese trafficked children for detailed information about the victims' families for repatriation. These visits proved futile as some guardians refused to provide the information while others prevented the victims from speaking with the field staff. The case was then reported to the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the Ghana Police Service. The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit embarked on sightseeing visit with DCI-Ghana and the Department of Children to the Sokoban wood village where the Unit witnessed the trafficked children at the village.

An emergency referral protocol meeting which was attended by key stakeholders in child protection in the region was held to discuss the situation of children being exploited at the wood village and the role of the key stakeholders in repatriation of the trafficked victims. The meeting concluded that the Anti Human Trafficking Unit is to conduct a swoop leading the rescue and repatriation of the trafficked children, Department of Social Development is to provide temporal shelter and feeding for the victims, Ghana Health Service is to provide medical screening and DCI-Ghana is to give logistical support for the institutions and departments to carry out activities to repatriate the Togolese trafficked children.

Ghana Health Service delegated a team of medical officers who visited the site to assess the kind of medical screening to be provided for the victims. A temporal shelter has also been secured at Kiku shelter, a home for abused children in the Asokore Mampong municipality by the Department of Social Development. DCI-Ghana is making arrangements for buses to convey victims during rescuing and repatriation.

2.4.5 *Monitoring visits to detention centers:* DCI-Ghana embarked on monitoring visits to detention centers in Kumasi metropolis with the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ). This activity aimed at monitoring the situation and conditions of juveniles in the centers. During the visits some juveniles were seen in adult cells and some other cells of juveniles were in poor conditions. A monitoring report was submitted to CHRAJ for necessary actions with the appropriate authorities to protect the rights of the juveniles in detention centers. Follow ups will be made in 2016 to find what actions have been taken on the recommendations.

2.4.6 *Strengthening Child Protection/Referral Mechanisms:* Two (2) protocols were established between the Police, Ghana Health Service, Department of Social Welfare, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, Ghana Education Service, Legal Aid and other stakeholders to strengthen referral mechanisms at Kumasi metropolis and Obuasi municipality. A referral form was developed in the 2 districts to refer cases to the appropriate agency for redress in a coordinated and integrated manner among the key partners.



A section of partners and CSOs during quarterly meeting

3.0 SUMMARY OF BENEFICIARIES

3.1 Project: *Girl Power: Equal Rights & Opportunities for Girls/Young Women*

PROJECT ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES
Services to individual girls and young women including media messages, trainings and workshops on gender equality and protective services	4,788
Services to individual boys including media messages, trainings and workshops on gender equality and overall empowerment	1,530
Communities reached with activities aimed at promotion of gender equality & girls' rights	20
Households reached with activities aimed at promotion of gender equality girls' rights	30,000
Traditional leaders reached with activities aimed at promotion of gender equality	219
Frontline professional staff of government institutions reached for training – including police, justice, health, education	22
Staff of government institutions reached for lobby and advocacy to influence laws and policies related to girls' empowerment, child rights and women's rights	23
CSO's and media professional reached with capacity strengthening support by partners – including girls' clubs, women cooperatives, youth organisations, community based organisations and other grassroots organisations	34
CSO networks supported or strengthened in relation to gender equality and women's rights by partner organisations	3

3.2 Project: Reducing Sexual Violence Against Children

PROJECT ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES
Services to individual girls, boys and young women including media messages, trainings and workshops on gender equality and protective services	3,207
Communities reached with activities aimed at reducing sexual violence against children	31
Households reached with activities aimed at reducing sexual violence against children	20,000
Number of practitioners, policymakers and other stakeholders in the areas of child protection, social welfare, justice including law enforcement, health and education reached with training	46
Number of government authorities reached with lobbying and advocacy meetings on child protection issues	5
Number of stakeholders from different sectors and disciplines and youth that attended multi-stakeholder cooperation/multi-sectoral coordination meetings and seminars	68
Number of initiatives and efforts to strengthen CSO networks	4

3.3 Project: Child Trafficking

ACHEIVEMENT	Beneficiaries
Withdrawals	113
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Males • Females 	<p style="text-align: center;">71</p> <p style="text-align: center;">42</p>
Household sensitized	9,500

4.0 CHALLENGES

In the course of implementing the various projects in 2015, DCI-Ghana encountered the following challenges:

- Difficulty in identifying cases of sexual abuse due to the invisibility of the cases.
- Victims of trafficking sometimes refuse to give the location of their parents and guardians for follow ups.
- Limited resources for wider impact of project outcomes in other unserved communities

5.0 CONCLUSION

The year 2015 marks a turning point in the operations of DCI-Ghana. In spite of the success chalked in the year, 2015 also marks the end of all the funded projects. Rigorous fund raising efforts are being pursued to continue and sustain the achievements of the organization in the promotion and protection of the rights of deprived and abused children. Thanks to the efforts of the DCI-ECPAT Netherlands, DCI-Ghana is anticipated to be part of the new phase of the Girl Power Project focusing on the advocacy for girls' rights. The next move is to place the organization in the national capital of Accra in order to be able to effectively fulfil its mandate in advocating for children's rights with national level platforms. Continued and new partnerships are anticipated including exploring projects with UNICEF as a key partner in children's rights in Ghana.

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