



GHANA LAUNCHES CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE POLICY

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **ADP engages the media and MoGCSP on the Child and Family Welfare Policy that bears the traits, values, aspirations, ideals and principles of Ghanaians.**
- **Key decision-makers to commit to pregnant mothers and newborns in the Upper West Region.**
- **Teachers Absenteeism seen as threat to Quality Education.**
- **Group Development Training at Busua-Fise, Ga South Municipality.**

Ghana's Child Protection system was fashioned along Anglo-Saxon traditions and models. With time, the system has become uncoordinated and ineffective owing to its colonial features and approaches which are not well suited to the current needs of Ghanaians. Every Child Protection system should reflect the different traditions, cultures, values and resources of the beneficiaries if it is to work.

As we re-think of an appropriate system for children and families, there is the need to lean on positive community structures to initiate and sustain dynamic dialogue towards change and improvement of our beliefs, practices and outcomes for the welfare of children, families and communities.

The above were the words of Hon. Nana Oye Lithur, Minister for gender Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) at the launch of Ghana's Child and Family Welfare Policy on 14 July 2015

Children in Ghana often live in closely connected families where members of the extended family participate in their care and protection. However, Child maltreatment is assuming worrying heights. Corporal punishment, domestic violence, sexual abuse, sexual violence and exploitation, children living and or working on the streets, early marriage, female genital mutilation/ cutting and the trokosi system of ritual enslavement persist in certain regions of the country (Child Protection Baseline Research Summary Report).

To address these issues, a relatively comprehensive legal framework for child protection, guided by the constitution and the Children's Act 1998 (Act 560) has been established. The policy framework is also characterized by a series of issue-specific national plans of actions. However the legal and policy frameworks are often disjointed and work in an uncoordinated manner. The child protection system in general is also reactive with few effective preventive measures. The system is characterized by weak information



From left to right: Martha Crentsil –Acquah (Host of Show), Edmund Foley (Technical Advisor on Children, MoGCSP), Charles Othniel Abbey (Head of Programs, African Development Programme) in a discussion after the launch of the Policy. Follow the link to access the videofile (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ngsJlg-mXA&index=11&list=PL806E0108960E607A>)

management system and ineffective coordination between the key actors.

This Child and Family welfare Policy seeks to establish a well structured and coordinated Child and Family welfare System that promotes the wellbeing of children, prevents abuse and protects children from harm. The overall goal of the policy is to help formulate child and family welfare programmes and activities to more effectively prevent and protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The Policy also stresses the importance of implementation, monitoring, evaluation, research and advocacy and highlights the need for improving the overall child protection information management system for better data and evidence of impact of the expected system reform.

ADP Head of Programs, Mr. Charles Othniel Abbey, in a discussion with Joy News on PM Express

underscored the facts related to the policy and other matters having a connection to the policy. He expressed worry of the Institutional framework for implementing the ideas into reality given the timing of the policy in the current macroeconomic environment looking at what has transpired in the past six (6) years under a Social Democratic Government.

In his final submission he advised that resource constrains must be an area to look at and a more political will to the whole of the policy.

PROJECT TO IMPROVE MATERNAL/CHILD HEALTH UNDERWAY IN UPPER WEST REGION



A pilot project that uses community incentives to improve maternal and child health is underway in three districts of the Upper West Region.

The project, known as Community Benefits Health (CBH), uses non-monetary incentives that benefit entire communities to cultivate support for women seeking skilled health care during pregnancy and childbirth.

Community Benefits Health is one of the five projects underway in Ghana, Sierra Leone and Kenya initiated by Concern Worldwide, USA, under its programme Innovations for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, called "Innovations."

A Wa-based NGO, Pronet North supported by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is implementing the CBH project in 34 communities in Lambussie, Wa West and Jirapa districts.

A statement issued by Mrs Dela Kokroko Gle, Senior Programme Manager for the CBH project, noted that the programme's goal is to change the behaviour of the entire community so that it commits to pregnant mothers and newborns to get the healthcare they need to survive and thrive.

These include reaching not just individual women but key decision-makers in their lives, like their husbands and mothers-in laws, and other

influential people in the community.

It seeks to make improved maternal health care the community's social norm that everyone promotes and supports, by disseminating health messages about pregnancy, childbirth and newborns through community durbars, dramas, videos, radio, posters and peer educators.

The statement said to help reach the goal, the initiative offered incentives like a borehole for clean water and an emergency transport system that benefit communities.

To obtain it, the community must meet targets it has chosen that lead to improved maternal health behaviours. The targets have included men and chiefs who regularly attend educational meetings about health care during pregnancy and childbirth where they learn to appreciate the importance of male accompanying pregnant wives for ante natal care.

They also acquire expertise in how to access skilled delivery and postnatal care; reminding pregnant women to take their medications as prescribed, ensuring that pregnant women take nutritious food and helping with household chores when wives become pregnant.

The communities get the benefits once they reach their targets, in the case of the borehole, it's built in three stages as three key targets are met. These villages have already celebrated reaching two targets.

Specifically, the CBH programme aims to increase the number of women who seek four antenatal care visits beginning early in their

pregnancy, skilled delivery and a post-delivery health check for mother and baby.

In addition, it encourages women to start breastfeeding as soon as their baby is born and to continue breastfeeding exclusively for at least six months.

Mrs Gle observed that "A pregnant woman may want or need to go to a health facility but if her husband or village elders discourage her then she may not receive antenatal care and may eventually deliver without a skilled attendant. This poses challenges to the health of a woman and her baby."

"The CBH project will motivate commitment and behavioural change among the whole community," Dela said.

"Men, women and key decision makers in a woman's life will understand and commit to prioritising good maternal newborn and child health care and support."

She added: "This programme will contribute to national efforts in improving maternal, newborn and child health and position Ghana to better achieve Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 and the Sustainable Development Goal 3.1."

Ghana News Agency (GNA), Tuesday 21st July 2015

TEACHERS ABSENTEEISM STILL A THREAT TO QUALITY EDUCATION

The National Inspectorate Board (NIB) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) has identified teacher's absenteeism as a threat to the educational system of the country.

This was contained in the final report of the NIB on the state of schools in the country from 2013 to the beginning of the 2014/2015 academic year, which was disclosed at a dissemination meeting at Koforidua.

The report was based on a study conducted in 1,465 schools in 165 districts across the 10 regions of Ghana.

Dr Augustine Tawiah, the Acting Chief Inspector of Schools, said it was revealed that, most teachers participated in workshop activities on school days, leaving the classrooms empty.

He said the inability of the head teachers to sanction or discipline habitual absentees or lateness to school, also contributed to the poor

teaching and learning in schools.

Dr Tawiah said some of the reasons why teachers absent themselves were that of ill-health, long maternity leave by some of the teachers and enrolling on sandwich programmes of the universities to upgrade themselves.

He said the NIB, as part of its recommendations, urged the GES to review the conditions and modalities for granting permission to embark on distance education programmes.

He said there is the need to strengthen school supervision by head teachers and circuit supervisors, adding that, competent head teachers should be appointed by the GES, trained and empowered to exercise greater control and authority over their schools.

A 2-day training programme from 22nd-23rd July 2015 has been organized for indigenes of Busua-Fise in the Ga-South Municipality to provide insight into group dynamics, communication and leadership skills.

The programme was aimed at providing the local folks with requisite skills towards forming a group / community co-operative in order to benefit from Skills-Based Trainings organized under the Rural Enterprise Programme.



ADP's Training coordinator of the Centre for Development Education and some participants during one of the training exercises

the group level. A Visioning / Action Planning exercise was done to development a short term action plan for this new group. This was to form the basis for monitoring and follow-up visits to be undertaken by the Ga South Business Advisory Centre (NBSSI/BAC) and ADP's Centre for Development Education.



Mr. Charles Othniel Abbey engaging participants during the lecture sessions

Mr. Charles Othniel Abbey of ADP's Centre for Development Education trained the participants who numbered twenty (20).

The training covered sessions on Starting a Group, Team Building and Communication Skills development.

Lecture sessions and discussions on Handling Conflict in Groups and Leadership were highlighted on the second day.

This was accompanied with role plays and card games to help the people assimilate the learning sessions.

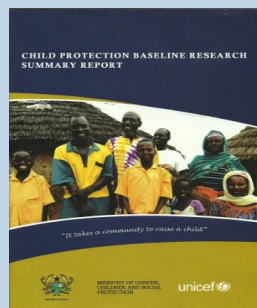
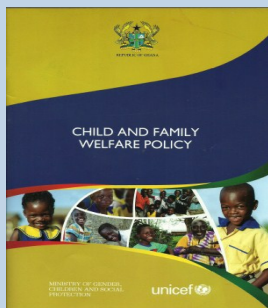
An exercise on community needs prioritization was done to enable participants identify handicrafts / skills-based training they were interested on as well as rank these at



Training team together with participants of Busua-Fise

The programme was sponsored by Government of Ghana / International Fund for Agricultural Development /African Development Bank.

RESOURCES:



For Copies please contact the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. Box

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Visit (<http://www.inspectorateboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/FLASH-REPORT-2013-2014-DRAFT.pdf>) for copy of report.

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