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**Human Rights Council**  
**Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**  
**Forty-second session**  
23 January–3 February 2023

## **Ghana**

### **Compilation of information prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

#### **I. Background**

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the outcome of the previous review.<sup>1</sup> It is a compilation of information contained in relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

#### **II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with human rights mechanisms**

2. The United Nations country team recommended that the Government ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.<sup>2</sup>

3. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended that the Government ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education.<sup>3</sup>

4. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recommended that the Government take effective measures to swiftly ratify the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa and that it accede to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.<sup>4</sup>

5. The United Nations country team recommended that Ghana ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education and the Convention on the Right to Education,<sup>5</sup> the International Labour Organization Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), by 2030,<sup>6</sup> and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.<sup>7</sup>

6. The United Nations country team recommended that the Government honour the pledge made at the Ministerial Conference on Statelessness in West Africa, held in Abidjan from 23 to 25 February 2015, and, also in line with the strategy in the National Migration Policy for Ghana of April 2016, accede to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.<sup>8</sup>



7. The United Nations country team recommended that the Government ratify the international treaties and protocols to which Ghana was a signatory, including agreements on climate change and the environment.<sup>9</sup>

8. The United Nations country team also recommended acceding to the international treaties and protocols to which Ghana was not yet a party and accelerating the implementation of recommendations from the third cycle of the universal periodic review, including by noting the gaps and taking active steps to address them.<sup>10</sup>

9. UNESCO recommended that Ghana regularly submit comprehensive national reports for the periodic consultations on the UNESCO education-related standard-setting instruments, notably on the Convention against Discrimination in Education.<sup>11</sup>

### **III. National human rights framework**

#### **1. Constitutional and legislative framework**

10. The United Nations country team noted that recent legislative attempts revealed a progressive attitude towards establishing an institutional framework to support human rights. A relevant example was the AIDS Commission Act 2016 (Act 938) and its legislative instrument (2403) of 2020, which sought to promote human rights in the HIV/AIDS response. Nonetheless, the constitutional framework establishing key pillars of comprehensive human rights protection remained lacking.<sup>12</sup>

11. The United Nations country team commended the significant achievements that had been made with the passage of Births and Deaths Registration Act, 2020 (Act 1027), the Cybersecurity Act, 2020 (Act 1038), the National Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage 2017–2026 and the strategic plan for the period 2021–2025 of the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service.<sup>13</sup>

12. The United Nations country team recommended proposing a constitutional amendment on non-discrimination for the equal protection of all persons, as reflected in article 12 (2), chapter 5, of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.<sup>14</sup>

13. UNESCO recommended that the Government put in place legislation to regulate fairly the allocation of broadcasting licences, including for community broadcasters, and to ensure media pluralism.<sup>15</sup>

14. UNHCR stated that discussions with the Ghana Refugee Board on the need for the amendment of the 1992 Refugee Act to bring it into conformity with international refugee law and standards had been ongoing since 2013. However, no significant steps had been taken to amend that Act.<sup>16</sup>

15. The United Nations country team recommended that Parliament expedite the passage of the affirmative action bill, the property rights of spouses bill, 2013, and the intestate succession bill, 2018, by 2030.<sup>17</sup>

16. The United Nations country team also recommended that Parliament pass the social protection bill to strengthen the provision of safety nets in local communities and empower key actors to provide effective social services to extremely poor households and vulnerable persons.<sup>18</sup>

17. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations expand provisions on the elimination of child labour in the Children's Act and related laws. Such expansion should include the integration of a comprehensive list of hazardous activities for various economic sectors.<sup>19</sup>

18. The United Nations country team recommended that Parliament consider repealing the legislation on “unnatural carnal knowledge” as reflected in section 104 of the Criminal and Other Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29), by 2030.<sup>20</sup>

19. The United Nations country team also recommended that Parliament expedite the amendment of the Refugee Law, 1992, in order to bring it into conformity with international refugee law and standards.<sup>21</sup>

20. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Government pass the legislative instrument on the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715).<sup>22</sup>

21. The United Nations country team recommended that the Mental Health Authority propose amendments to Parliament to facilitate the alignment of Act 846 and other domestic legislation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the areas of protection from involuntary treatment and equal right to seek release and that it ensure the protection of persons with mental health conditions from harmful procedures, such as conversion therapy.<sup>23</sup>

22. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection propose amendments arising from its extensive review of the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560), and the Juvenile Justice Act, 2003 (Act 653), for parliamentary approval, to bring them into line with provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.<sup>24</sup>

## **2. Institutional infrastructure and policy measures**

23. The United Nations country team noted that Ghana continued to make significant efforts to enhance human rights and policy measures. Such efforts included developing child protection-related policies and legal frameworks such as the Child Online Protection Framework, the Safe School Policy, the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Ghana (2022–2026) and the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana (2022–2026).<sup>25</sup>

24. The Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination recommended that the Government implement the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and consider implementing the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as a minimum benchmark for ensuring corporate responsibility and strengthening safeguards against human rights violations, in particular in the context of the activities of private security companies.<sup>26</sup>

25. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of the Interior and the Ghana Immigration Service institutionalize strategic enablers to ensure the implementation of the Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694), and the Immigration Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 848), and allocate sufficient resources to combat trafficking in persons, human smuggling and other irregular migration.<sup>27</sup>

26. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection develop a national plan of action on children's rights that would inform budgetary decision-making and reflect priorities, indicators and targets to improve the well-being of children, with an emphasis on protection against all forms of abuse, exploitation and violence, and that it fully implement the National Strategic Framework for Ending Child Marriage and allocate adequate resources to the Domestic Violence Secretariat by 2030.<sup>28</sup>

## **IV. Promotion and protection of human rights**

### **A. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law**

#### **1. Right to life, liberty and security of person, and freedom from torture**

27. While commending the passage of the strategic plan for the period 2021–2025 of the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, the United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection ensure full implementation of existing legislation and policies on domestic violence, in particular the operationalization of the Domestic Violence Support Fund to support the provision of essential services to victims of domestic violence, and design a mechanism to ensure that survivors of gender-based violence did not have to bear the cost of police medical reports.<sup>29</sup>

28. The United Nations country team stated that, as of June 2022, Ghana had 168 prisoners on death row. A bill had since been introduced to repeal the death penalty. Through civil society participation, Ghana had initiated efforts to draft a community service bill to provide an alternative sentencing regime. The draft bill was being reviewed by a technical committee put together by the Ministry of the Interior, after which the bill would be finalized prior to submission to the cabinet.<sup>30</sup>

29. The United Nations country team recommended that Parliament expedite action in passing the bill to repeal the death penalty, improve the conditions of prisoners, including in terms of overcrowding and access to food and social services, and expedite action on processes to decriminalize petty offences and finalize the community service bill for timely adoption by Parliament.<sup>31</sup>

30. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Cabinet of Ministers establish an independent mechanism for the prevention and repression of torture and enforced disappearance to strengthen implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.<sup>32</sup>

## **2. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law**

31. The Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination recommended that Ghana establish an independent and robust oversight mechanism to vet and monitor the activities of private security companies, and keep a consistent record of data relating to them, take more effective action to counter the illegal activities of private security companies and their personnel, ensure that international human rights standards were incorporated into the training manuals of private security companies, and that that became a standard requirement for licensing, and ensure that private security personnel did not perform functions that came under the responsibility of State security apparatus.<sup>33</sup>

32. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ghana Police Service train its personnel in investigating and prosecuting cases of child abuse and violence against children, and in protecting children who were victims of such crimes. It also recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice train personnel in identifying cases and providing timely responses.<sup>34</sup>

33. The United Nations country team also recommended that Parliament expedite action to adopt the legislative instrument for paralegal use by the Legal Aid Commission and provide an adequate budgetary allocation for the Legal Aid Commission to enable it to fulfil its mandate.<sup>35</sup>

34. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney-General's Department propose, for parliamentary approval, the formal establishment of an inter-ministerial national mechanism for reporting and follow-up by strengthening its mandate through formal regulation, while seeking international cooperation, technical assistance and capacity-building in the field of engagement with human rights mechanisms within the model framework for the mechanisms, as well as Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17. It recommended that they continue to actively participate in opportunities for capacity-building, such as training by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to regularize reporting to treaty bodies and engage in a process of implementation and follow-up of recommendations emanating from all United Nations human rights mechanisms.<sup>36</sup>

35. The United Nations country team recommended that the Mental Health Authority establish the tribunal envisioned in Act 846 to hear the complaints of persons detained without their consent.<sup>37</sup>

## **3. Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life**

36. The United Nations country team commended Ghana for adopting the Right to Information Act, 2019 (Act 989), and establishing the Right to Information Commission. It

recommended that the Commission consider extensive consultative meetings aimed at refining the language of the Act to provide clarity on vague provisions.<sup>38</sup>

37. The United Nations country team noted that Ghana had been ranked sixtieth in the 2022 World Press Freedom Index, which was a fall of 30 places compared with the previous year. That decline suggested that a re-examination of the commitment to freedom of speech, embedded in the notion of human rights in the Constitution and the global commitments for which Ghana had such a strong and positive reputation, was necessary. That would involve the prosecution of crimes against journalists to curtail impunity and guarantee their safety.<sup>39</sup>

38. UNESCO recommended that Ghana decriminalize defamation and adopt relevant legislation that was in line with international standards and respond to the UNESCO Director General's annual request for information on the judicial follow-up to killings of journalists.<sup>40</sup>

#### **4. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work**

39. The Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination recommended that the Government consider implementing the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as a minimum benchmark for ensuring corporate responsibility and strengthening safeguards against human rights violations, in particular in the context of the activities of private security companies, strengthen public security forces to address vigilante groups and other armed non-State actors, bring vigilante perpetrators of criminal acts and human rights violations to justice and provide public security personnel training in relevant international human rights standards, including the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights for those deployed to work in the extractive industries.<sup>41</sup>

#### **5. Right to social security**

40. The United Nations country team observed that the budget allocation for social protection in Ghana was lower than the average of lower and middle-income countries and was not enough to reach national coverage targets set out in the National Social Protection Policy, the National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework 2022–2025 and global and regional targets, such as target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>42</sup>

41. The United Nations country team recommended that the Government increase social protection spending to 2 per cent of gross domestic product in 2022, and increase it to 4.5 per cent by 2025, in line with global benchmarks and commitments.<sup>43</sup>

42. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Government release the budget allocated to social protection programmes, such as Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty, on time and that it account for inflation, that it adapt the Social Protection Bill to ensure that Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty budget releases and the implementation of other flagship social protection programmes in Ghana be considered a statutory obligation and that social protection be protected as a justiciable right.<sup>44</sup>

#### **6. Right to an adequate standard of living**

43. The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights stated that Ghana was at a crossroads and had to decide whether to continue existing policies that would further enrich the wealthy and do little for the poor or make fiscal adjustments that would lift millions out of poverty and bring them into the agricultural economy in ways that would contribute significantly to economic growth. The Special Rapporteur noted that choosing to eliminate, or not to eliminate, extreme poverty was a political choice for a country like Ghana.<sup>45</sup>

44. The United Nations country team stated that the 2021 census had indicated that 56.7 per cent of the population of Ghana lived in urban areas, with a 4.6 per cent urban growth rate.<sup>46</sup>

45. The United Nations country team noted that the urbanization rate was not matched with well-planned, managed and financed cities. The associated challenges, such as the proliferation of slums and the lack of adequate and safe housing conditions, including clean water, sanitation and security of tenure, made it difficult to live a decent life. The coronavirus

disease (COVID-19) pandemic had further exposed the underlying inequalities and exclusion in cities and towns.<sup>47</sup>

46. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Works and Housing finalize the review of the National Urban Policy and validate the Slum Upgrading Strategy in line with increasing urban population trends, lessons learned on the impacts of COVID-19 on cities and the New Urban Agenda, while ensuring the policy's full implementation, in collaboration with the various urban partners.<sup>48</sup>

47. The United Nations country team also recommended integrating housing delivery and the right to adequate housing, including security of tenure, into the national housing policy and establishing a national housing authority to operationalize the housing policy, including through oversight of the activities of real estate developers.<sup>49</sup>

48. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning make an adequate budgetary allocation to ensure the full implementation of housing policies and ensure that Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty cash transfers were complemented by "cash plus" programmes in digital financial services.<sup>50</sup>

49. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection design a framework to trigger the expansion of social protection floors for vulnerable families. The framework should take into consideration safety nets for unemployed families and caregivers.<sup>51</sup>

## **7. Right to health**

50. The United Nations country team recommended that the Government adopt measures to ensure universal access to sexual health and reproductive rights information and services, pursuant to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and intensify public education and advocacy among women and girls on the law governing abortion, including information on obtaining safe and legal abortion and post-abortion care services.<sup>52</sup>

51. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Government scale up and expand youth-friendly and gender-sensitive programmes on comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights, in terms of education for adolescents, service availability at the community level and awareness-raising among community stakeholders.<sup>53</sup>

52. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Government intensify its response to HIV by implementing the new National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan, 2021–2025, increase government spending in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, expedite action for the inclusion of mental health in the benefits package to ensure financial protection for persons with mental health conditions and explore sustainable financing mechanisms to support mental health service delivery.<sup>54</sup>

53. The United Nations country team recommended building on progress made to strengthen COVID-19 and routine immunization, along with cold chain systems, and maintaining the continuity of services, and quadrupling the current level of public financing of sanitation and creating an enabling environment for the private sector and users.<sup>55</sup>

54. The United Nations country team also recommended increasing resources for rural water supply, especially in the rural areas of the five northern regions and Volta, where over 80 per cent of the people did not have access to basic water facilities.<sup>56</sup>

55. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Government keep up its concerted efforts to curb neonatal and infant mortality, with a focus on perinatal care, skilled birth delivery and adequate nutrition.<sup>57</sup>

56. The United Nations country team recommended that the Mental Health Authority promote initiatives such as QualityRights training for all mental health staff, caregivers, traditional and faith-based practitioners to uphold the rights of persons admitted for acute mental health care by providing treatment in a protected and decent environment.<sup>58</sup>

## 8. Right to education

57. The United Nations country team observed that all children in Ghana, irrespective of their geographical location, economic status or circumstances, enjoyed the right to education. Specific initiatives such as the school feeding programme instituted by the Government helped promote school enrolment, attendance and completion.<sup>59</sup>

58. The United Nations country team noted that Ghana had made significant strides in promoting and realizing many of the human rights principles in the education sector (e.g. through the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education and the Free Senior High School policies). Ghana had achieved gender parity in basic education, but progress had been uneven across the country and wealth quintiles, which contributed to depriving girls and women of universal access to adequate and gender-responsive services and health, protection and education services.<sup>60</sup>

59. UNESCO recommended that Ghana extend free primary and secondary education to at least 12 years, prohibit corporal punishment in education settings in the law and expressly protect in the legal framework the right to education of pregnant girls and teenage mothers.<sup>61</sup>

60. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Education continue its efforts to deliver free education to all and to place at the forefront of its efforts work on removing barriers and promoting access for women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.<sup>62</sup>

61. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Ministry of Education reduce the gap in enrolment by identifying and enrolling out-of-school children, including children with disabilities, children from migrant groups and children living in a street situation. Children from various marginalized groups could be integrated into the formal education system using various traditional and innovative means. Governmental investment was needed in developing and rolling out inclusive pedagogy, supplementing facilities and supplying items.<sup>63</sup>

62. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Education Service safeguard the funding for the reinforcement of school infrastructure and continued implementation of the Free Senior High School Policy.<sup>64</sup>

63. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Education revise the 2016 draft school feeding bill for parliamentary approval and that it include special provisions for marginalized students to ensure that successive Governments continued to prioritize the school feeding programme. It also recommended that the bill mandate a specific quota for the inclusion of locally produced food to boost smallholder farmers' activity.<sup>65</sup>

64. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the Ministry of Communication and Digitization work collaboratively to ensure the digitization of the school feeding programme to facilitate the monitoring and capture of caterer reimbursements.<sup>66</sup>

## 9. Cultural rights

65. UNESCO recommended that Ghana, as a State party to the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, fully implement the relevant provisions that promoted access to and participation in cultural heritage and creative expressions and, as such, were conducive to implementing the right to take part in cultural life as defined in article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>67</sup>

66. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts update the 2004 Cultural Policy to take into account the complete strategic role of culture in development.<sup>68</sup>

## 10. Development, the environment, and business and human rights

67. The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights noted that article 35 (8) of the Constitution required the State to take steps to eradicate corrupt practices and the abuse of power. The Special Rapporteur stressed, however, that petty corruption, a form of graft that carried particularly negative implications for the poor, was also prevalent in Ghana. The Special Rapporteur observed that opinion polls indicated that the police were seen as the most corrupt group, with 92 per cent of citizens opining that at least some police officials were corrupt and 59 per cent saying that most or all were corrupt. Other studies highlighted the role of bribery and corruption in the perversion of justice. The Special Rapporteur noted that Ghana did not have a strong record of prosecuting corruption.<sup>69</sup>

68. The Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination commended Ghana for maintaining stability, its democratic institutions and a strong economy in a region roiled by armed conflict.<sup>70</sup>

69. The same Working Group stated that the peace and stability that Ghana enjoyed could not be taken for granted. Measures should be taken to safeguard the country against mercenaries and mercenary-related activities, which thrive in situations of unrest, political instability and armed conflict.<sup>71</sup>

70. The same Working Group also stated that it was critical that stability be maintained and that Ghana continue to strengthen laws and effectively enforce them, thereby strengthening also the protection of human rights and security for the local population.<sup>72</sup>

71. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Trade and Industry apply Good Manufacturing Policy, product development and quality standards conformity assessments to enable consumers to follow the production processes of items they consumed and consider providing the Energy Commission and the Association of Ghana Industries with the full mandate to collect data on the industrial sector for the purpose of supporting any future projects.<sup>73</sup>

72. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture develop and implement a fisheries policy that would legitimize, promote and secure the tenure rights of small-scale fishers and fishing communities to aquatic resources and land and institute mechanisms and structures aimed at preventing tenure disputes, violent conflicts and corruption with the sole aim of enhancing harmony and equity in land use and allocation.<sup>74</sup>

73. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation actively integrate environmental, social and governance considerations for businesses into the national action plan on business and human rights, making specific recommendations for the mining business to safeguard against illegal mining and climate change.<sup>75</sup>

## B. Rights of specific persons or groups

### 1. Women

74. The United Nations country team recommended that the Government design and implement a specific quota system for the inclusion and empowerment of women, including political appointments and leadership in State-owned enterprises, and specific interventions to advance women's economic empowerment, including by expanding access to credit, land and advanced technology.<sup>76</sup>

75. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection develop a strategic plan on gender-informed entrepreneurship initiatives and innovations for women in the private sector, including in project management, and support awareness-raising campaigns using household methodologies to tackle unfair underlying social norms.<sup>77</sup>



76. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Government and the Women in Agriculture Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ensure that women's equality in agriculture and in land ownership was still considered an important issue and addressed accordingly.<sup>78</sup>

77. The United Nations country team stated that, as of April 2022, there were four identified witch camps in northern Ghana, to which women who had been accused of performing witchcraft were forced to move. They faced unfair stigmatization and discrimination for being old, single, widowed or unmarried or having mental illness. The children who were instructed to accompany such women to the camps were also affected, as they had to do house chores and lost out on opportunities for formal schooling.<sup>79</sup>

78. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the Ghana Police Service work collaboratively to design and implement a specific and strategic framework to eradicate witch camps.<sup>80</sup>

## **2. Children**

79. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations develop a strategic plan to target poor communities and ensure the inclusion of vulnerable households as part of efforts to eliminate child labour. The plan should prioritize the elimination of child labour as a national policy.<sup>81</sup>

80. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Ministry of Education expand quality free compulsory basic education to areas where child labour was endemic, including the savannah forest and coastal zones.<sup>82</sup>

81. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Regional Development, the Ministry of Education and the National Commission for Civic Education strengthen efforts to create awareness of child abuse and violence, shift cultural norms and reduce acceptance of social practices with negative impacts on children, including corporal punishment, early marriage and teenage pregnancy.<sup>83</sup>

82. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection strengthen its efforts to implement the Ghanaians Against Child Abuse campaign and the utilization of the Child Protection Community Facilitation Manual and Toolkits.<sup>84</sup>

83. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Commission for Technical and Vocational Education and Training foster inclusive admission policies to enhance the access of vulnerable groups, including girls and persons with disabilities, to technical and vocational education and training institutions.<sup>85</sup>

## **3. Persons with disabilities**

84. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities develop an action plan for strengthening the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in compliance with the Persons with Disability Act, 2006, and develop standard operating procedures on health service delivery for persons with disabilities.<sup>86</sup>

85. The United Nations country team also recommended making further efforts to implement the Inclusive Education Policy to address the needs of children with functional and learning difficulties, reinforcing disability-friendly facilities at schools and nurturing qualified teachers equipped with knowledge of inclusive education.<sup>87</sup>

## **4. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons**

86. The United Nations country team observed that, given the impending consideration of the promotion of proper human sexual rights and Ghanaian family values bill, it was important to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons from all forms of discrimination and intimidation or violence by amending laws that criminalized consensual same-sex relations.<sup>88</sup>

87. The United Nations country team recommended that the Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee of Parliament critically consider the evidential basis for the potential for human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity in deciding whether to pass the above-mentioned bill.<sup>89</sup>

88. The United Nations country team also recommended that the same Committee take into account the international obligations of Ghana under the international human rights treaties it had ratified, protecting a number of rights, such as the right to equality, freedom of expression and freedom from torture, that would be jeopardized under that bill.<sup>90</sup>

89. The United Nations country team further recommended that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection adapt the National Gender Policy and complementary subnational action plans to include measures to eradicate discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity as part of efforts to leave no one behind in the fight to end gender-based violence.<sup>91</sup>

90. The United Nations country team recommended that the Mental Health Authority ensure the protection of sexual and gender minorities from harmful practices such as conversion therapy.<sup>92</sup>

## 5. Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers

91. UNHCR recommended that Ghana expedite the drafting process of the revised national legal refugee framework with the technical support of UNHCR and enact a Refugee Act that was fully in line with international refugee law standards.<sup>93</sup>

92. UNHCR also recommended that Ghana ensure a comprehensive review of the Refugee Law, 1992, in particular in terms of the insertion of specific provisions relating to asylum procedural safeguards for asylum-seekers.<sup>94</sup>

93. The United Nations country team recommended that the Ministries of Health and Education include refugees in the national health insurance scheme policy and the free basic and secondary education policy and that the Ghana Immigration Service within the Ministry of the Interior provide indefinite residence permits for those Togolese and Ivorian refugees opting for alternative legal status.<sup>95</sup>

## 6. Stateless persons

94. UNHCR and the United Nations country team recommended that the Government collect relevant data on stateless persons and groups at risk of statelessness, review the nationality legislation with a view to bringing it into line with the international standards on the prevention and reduction of statelessness, review and update the draft national action plan to end statelessness and put in place a legal framework for the protection of stateless persons.<sup>96,97</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/37/7, A/HRC/37/7/Add.1 and A/HRC/37/2.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations country team submission for the universal periodic review of Ghana, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO submission for the universal periodic review of Ghana, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> UNHCR submission for the universal periodic review of Ghana, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations country team submission, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> UNESCO submission, p. 7.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations country team submission, pp. 1–2.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> UNESCO submission, p. 8.

- 16 UNHCR submission, p. 4.  
17 United Nations country team submission, p. 14.  
18 Ibid., p. 15.  
19 Ibid.  
20 Ibid., p. 17.  
21 Ibid.  
22 Ibid., p. 18.  
23 Ibid., p. 2.  
24 Ibid., p. 3.  
25 Ibid., p. 4.  
26 A/HRC/39/49/Add.1, para. 69.  
27 United Nations country team submission, p. 4.  
28 Ibid.  
29 Ibid., p. 3.  
30 Ibid., p. 6.  
31 Ibid.  
32 Ibid., p. 7.  
33 A/HRC/39/49/Add.1, para. 69.  
34 United Nations country team submission, p. 15.  
35 Ibid., p. 6.  
36 Ibid., pp. 6–7.  
37 Ibid., p. 2.  
38 Ibid., pp. 2–3.  
39 Ibid., p. 7.  
40 UNESCO submission, p. 8.  
41 A/HRC/39/49/Add.1, paras. 69 (g)–(i).  
42 United Nations country team submission, p. 9.  
43 Ibid.  
44 Ibid.  
45 A/HRC/38/33/Add.2, para. 77.  
46 United Nations country team submission, p. 9.  
47 Ibid., p. 10.  
48 Ibid.  
49 Ibid.  
50 Ibid.  
51 Ibid.  
52 Ibid., pp. 10–11.  
53 Ibid., p. 11.  
54 Ibid.  
55 Ibid.  
56 Ibid.  
57 Ibid.  
58 Ibid., p. 2.  
59 Ibid., pp. 11–12.  
60 Ibid., p. 12.  
61 UNESCO submission, p. 7.  
62 United Nations country team submission, p. 12.  
63 Ibid.  
64 Ibid.  
65 Ibid., p. 13.  
66 Ibid.  
67 UNESCO submission, p. 8.  
68 United Nations country team submission, p. 13.  
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