

Growing Up Free

Ending Child Trafficking in Ghana



More Than One-Third of Households Studied are Affected by Child Trafficking and Slavery-Like Conditions

Researchers have discovered significant levels of child trafficking and slavery-like conditions in 20 communities in Ghana's Volta and Central regions. Teams conducted 80 focus groups, 40 interviews, 20 social mapping exercises and 1,621 household visits to establish the prevalence of child exploitation in the region. They discovered child trafficking and slavery-like conditions in every community studied, with an average of 35.2 percent of households having a victim of child trafficking or slavery-like conditions.

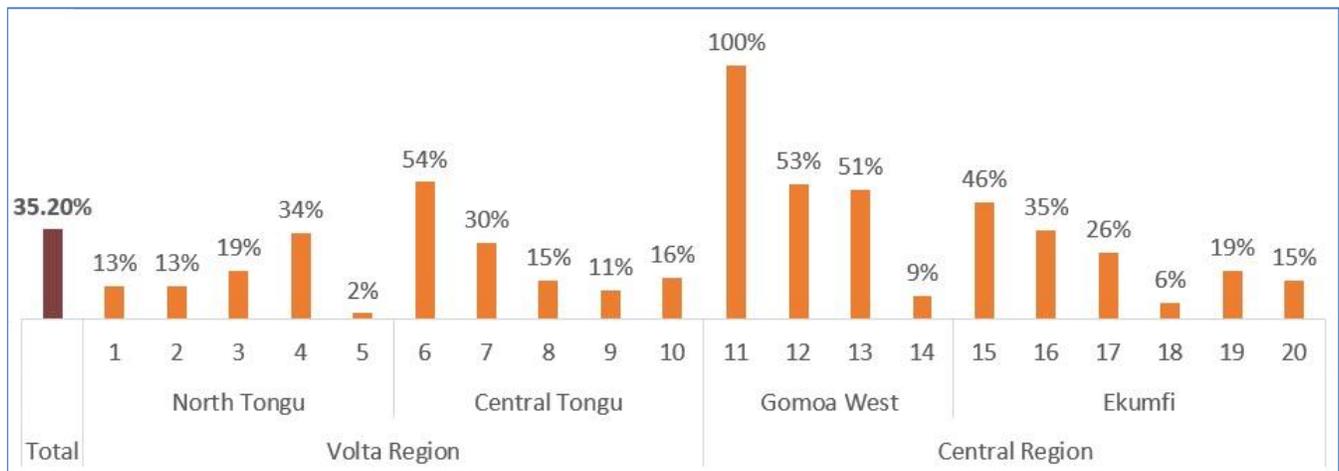
The research teams uncovered more than 500 instances of child exploitation in just 20 communities:

50%	of the cases were in the fishing industry
27%	were cases of domestic servitude
4%	were cases of forced marriage
19%	were other cases where children were working without getting paid

The rate varied significantly by community (see table below). In more than 20 percent of the households surveyed, more than one child had been trafficked or sent into slavery-like conditions. One household reported 10 trafficked or exploited children.

Research Results in 20 Communities Studied

Percentage of households reporting at least one child affected by trafficking or slavery-like conditions



The study found that parents, children and other community members are very aware of the risks of child trafficking and exploitation. They know these types of work are often damaging the health of the children and that they risk losing children to the poor conditions under which they work. Community members described their desperate need for income as the core reason for trafficking their children or sending them to work in slavery-like conditions. Indeed, the majority of survivors (83 percent) were found in households that were identified as being in the lowest wealth ranking during the social mapping exercises. The desperation of these households is further demonstrated by the low sums paid to parents to “hire” their child. These were reported to range from 100 GHS (app. \$25) to 300 GHS (app. \$60). In these same communities, a 25 kg sack of rice would be sold for 170 GHS.

Research Findings Will Shape Growing Up Free Project Activities



Project Background: The governments of Ghana and the United States signed the first Child Protection Compact Partnership in 2015, aiming to support four Ghanaian government ministries and civil society in combatting child sex trafficking and forced child labor. To support compact implementation, Free the Slaves, in partnership with International Needs Ghana, has been employed to rescue and reintegrate child trafficking survivors, raise public awareness about child sex trafficking and forced child labor in selected communities throughout the Central, Greater Accra and Volta Regions of Ghana, fund and organize the provision of rehabilitative care services for child survivors of trafficking, and identify livelihood alternatives for the families of survivors. The program will be implemented in 34 communities from 2016 to 2019.

Research and Evaluation: To determine prevalence and awareness of child trafficking in project communities, Free the Slaves contracted Nordic Consulting Group A/S and JMK Consulting to conduct evaluation and research. The first effort was a 2016 baseline study of 20 communities throughout the Central and Volta regions. This will be followed by a second baseline study of 14 communities in 2017 and a follow-up study of all 34 communities in 2019. The data will be used to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficacy, impact and sustainability of Free the Slaves activities in the fight against modern slavery.

Livelihood Focus: Community members throughout almost all 20 surveyed communities described a fundamental need for more secure sources of income and employment. This lack of employment opportunities will be addressed by the Growing Up Free project’s focus on livelihood support:

- linking survivors and their families to apprenticeships and vocational training programs
- providing the parents of survivors and at-risk children with business development and financial management training
- introducing the parents of survivors and at-risk children to alternative livelihoods and supporting them to find and create new sources of income

Teen Pregnancy Focus: Teenage pregnancies were identified as an inciting factor for many forced marriages. Parents often forced their daughters to marry the father of the child and this deprived the girls of education and forced them to find work to provide for their child. Free the Slaves will mobilize community anti-trafficking groups throughout these communities to advocate for alternative means of addressing teenage pregnancies that do not involve forced marriage.