Child Rights in Mining

Pilot Project Results & Lessons Learned

Obuasi, Ghana | March 2014

Addressing Sex Trafficking, Worst Forms of
Child Labor and Other Child Exploitation and
Abuse in Informal Mining Communities

Free the Slaves liberates slaves, helps them rebuild their lives, and transforms the social, economic and political forces that allow slavery to persist. We support community-driven interventions in partnership with local groups that help people to sustainable freedom and dismantle a region's system of slavery. We convince governments, international development organizations and businesses to implement key changes required for global eradication. We document and disseminate leading-edge practices to help the anti-slavery movement work more effectively. We raise awareness and promote action by opinion leaders, decision makers and the public. Free the Slaves is showing the world that ending slavery is possible.

Participatory Development Associates (PDA) is an organization of skilled people who aim to support processes of empowerment and self-determination in communities, organizations and individuals. PDA works with government, non-government and private organizations, as well as multilateral and bilateral organizations in areas such as decentralization, child protection, policy analysis and advocacy, poverty and social assessments, reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS, gender and development, issues of governance in education, health and forestry, organization development with NGOs and other civil society organizations, and monitoring and evaluation.

Social Support Foundation, founded in 2000, seeks to contribute to the growth and development of marginalized communities and disadvantaged populations. We empower vulnerable groups by teaching them their rights so that they can effectively participate in civil society and demand their share of community development. Our programs include rights education and civic participation, livelihood empowerment, and health promotion for women and children, people with disabilities, and persons living with HIV.

SOCIAL SUPPORT FOUNDATION

Contents

Acronyms

DOVVSU...Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
FTS.. Free the Slaves
NGO...Non-governmental Organization
JSS...Junior Secondary School
PDA ....Participatory Development Associates
PRA...Participatory Rural Appraisal
SSF..Social Support Foundation

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Gold mining is one of Ghana's major industries, and gold exports provide the country's economy with one of its top sources of export income.[1] However, at many mining sites children are exploited as workers.

From November 2011 through April 2013, Free the Slaves (FTS), Participatory Development Associates (PDA) and Social Support Foundation (SSF) collaborated in the implementation of a pilot project aiming to improve respect for children's rights in and around gold mines in Ghana. The project was carried out in 10 unlicensed, informal, small-scale and artisanal gold mining communities in the Obuasi Municipality and two surrounding districts in the Ashanti Region of southern Ghana. The main purpose of the project was to create an environment in which children would be protected from sexual exploitation and violence, child slavery, the worst forms of child labor and other abuse in these informal mining areas.

The Ghana Child Rights in Mining Project intended to address the lack of awareness and protection of child rights, which manifests in the widespread incidence of hazardous child labor and sexual violence against children in these areas. The project hypothesized that parents lack knowledge about their roles and responsibilities in promoting child rights and that there is a general lack of awareness regarding government resources to address child abuse.

Key Pilot Project Results: Improved Attitudes and Positive Action

- ✓ **Suitable Work:** Percentage of participants who could identify suitable work for children rose from five percent at baseline to 93 percent at pilot project completion.

- ✓ **Child Impacts:** Percentage of participants who could identify impacts on children of hazardous work rose from four percent at baseline to 79 percent at pilot project completion.

- ✓ **Child Behavior:** Percentage of participants who could recognize behavioral patterns of girls who have suffered sexual abuse rose from 11 percent at baseline to 75 percent at pilot project completion.

- ✓ **Government Assistance:** Percentage of participants who had knowledge of government agencies to contact in cases of child exploitation rose from 25 percent at baseline to 61 percent at pilot project completion.

- ✓ **Child Protection:** Percentage of all participants at pilot project completion who had taken appropriate action to protect children: 25 percent. Percentage of participants who are parents who had taken action to protect their own children at pilot project completion: 71 percent.

The child rights project team began by conducting qualitative, participatory research into modern forms of slavery,[2] including child sex trafficking and the related and overlapping problem of hazardous child labor, to understand the dynamics of exploitation and abuse of children in the 10 communities. The research was designed primarily to understand the narratives of exploited and enslaved children in order to guide programs that strengthen community-based protection and prevention. While Ghanaian human rights groups have been concerned for many years about the enslavement and exploitation of children linked with so-called *galamsey* mining sites, very little research has been carried out in this area. The research for this project documented sexual slavery among girls and found many children in the worst forms of child labor; boys as young as 12 were working with dangerous chemicals to extract gold dust from ore and girls as young as 10 were prostituted in mining camps and pushed into sexual relationships with older men.

Using narrative pedagogy[3] methods, the project developed and printed illustrated booklets around the themes of parenting, child labor and sexual abuse in informal mining communities. These themes were drawn from real narratives found through the research. The booklets were printed in Twi, the local language, but were accessible for illiterate audiences. They were used with more than 350 participants within 25 learning groups led by trained community facilitators. For four months, the groups met weekly or biweekly to discuss the illustrated stories, and how to take up ways to protect children and reduce sexual violence and child labor.

In March 2013, independent Ghanaian evaluators undertook a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot project. The evaluation revealed that participants' understanding of and sensitivity to the worst forms of child labor, sexual abuse and child exploitation were greatly improved over the course of the project's implementation. The findings suggest that participants could identify and relate to the in-depth, context-driven stories and scenarios, which thus promoted discussion. Learning group participants had positive reactions to the illustrated storybooks, citing appreciation of the illustrations, and expressed a desire for a greater distribution of booklets in the communities. As individuals learned about child rights issues, their own responsibilities in promoting these rights and appropriate actions to protect children from abuse, they started to take actions and use the correct channels to protect children. Individuals and groups in these communities increased their knowledge about which government institutions are tasked with child protection issues and were more ready to advocate and to hold those institutions accountable.

Key Lessons Learned: Root Causes, Improving Capacity, Conducting Field Operations, Community Ownership

- ✓ **Root Causes:** Recognizing poverty as a root cause of child labor, slavery and exploitation, it will be important to include links to sustainable livelihood projects, vocational training and educational assistance in a program scale-up design.

- ✓ **Improving Capacity:** Capacity building for local government officials to carry out their child protection duties, enhanced training for community members on advocacy, and awareness raising on child exploitation issues within mining areas through various media outlets will also be important for a successful scale-up.

- ✓ **Field Operations:** The learning group methodology was shown to work best in cohesive, rural communities rather than in urban settings. Five to six months should be allowed to translate themes and narratives drawn from formative research into effective illustrated stories. Modest stipends should be provided to facilitators during the learning group implementation, and adequate time should be allowed for training facilitators on challenging topics.

- ✓ **Community Ownership:** To encourage maximum reach and sustainable community ownership, project development and learning group activities should include a diverse range of community members (avoiding a leaders-only or women-only focus, for example). Learning group activities should be followed-up with action planning, which should include engaging community members in advocacy activities to promote child protection and child rights.

Based on the success of this pilot project, Free the Slaves endorses the evaluators' recommendation of a continuation and scale-up of the Child Rights in Mining Program in Ghana.

Background

Sex Trafficking, Worst Forms of Child Labor and other Child Exploitation and Abuse in Ghana

Children in Ghana are subject to the worst forms of child labor as defined by the United Nations International Labor Organization, which includes children who are subjected to slavery, prostitution and work that harms their health or well-being.[4] The worst forms of child labor in Ghana include forced labor, sexual slavery, prostitution and hazardous labor in sectors such as mining, fishing, agriculture and domestic servitude. Children work in quarries and informal mining, including diamond and gold mines,[5] and children, most commonly girls, are also subject to sexual exploitation and prostitution.

Free the Slaves Formative Research Findings on Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Mining

FTS formative research, conducted in communities to inform intervention design, found that informal mining is an important part of a broader livelihood strategy for Ghanaians living in poverty. For farmers, it supplements income during the "off" farming season. To supplement family incomes, children (especially boys) between the ages of 10 and 18, and even reportedly as young as 6, become involved with mining activities. Some of these children work to help meet basic family needs, but others want to earn income to help cover the costs of staying in school. Once they are working, there is a greater likelihood they will drop out of school, which tends to reinforce children's reliance on *galamsey* mining as a future income source. Engagement of children in informal mining has health and well-being consequences for children; there are few safety protections and the children often handle toxic chemicals.

While grassroots groups working in these mining areas believe many children end up working in the mines because they have been coerced by parents or relatives through explicit or implicit mental or physical threat, and thus would be classified as being in child labor slavery, such cases were not documented through this formative research. FTS research partners have indicated that obtaining such sensitive case details was difficult; they were unable to access many of the mining areas that may have had child laborers present and much care was taken in asking children sensitive questions that may have revealed coercion by a child's parents but carried the risk of re-traumatizing the child. FTS' experience is that the worst forms of child labor often occur simultaneously with child labor slavery. Further engagement with these communities will help reveal whether child labor slavery is indeed a systematic problem.

Women and girls have limited access to employment opportunities at the mines apart from carrying loads and supplying food and drink and many rely on the income secured through that work. The income for those jobs is generally lower than for some of the other more skilled jobs carried out by men. It is common for girls

as young as 10, pressured by economic necessity, to be exploited sexually by male mine workers, who provide financial support in exchange for sex. This effectively turns the girls into sex slaves because of their lack of legal and psychological capacity to consent. Respondents suggested that family members often turn a blind eye to such abuse. Respondents described incidents where girls suffered pressure or violence from men in their community and then, because the girls lacked support and assistance to cope with these incidents, they would become more regularly exploited for sex. Many respondents also suggested that girls and boys were developing a culture of early sexual activity and that they feel increasing pressure, either from male and female peers or from *galamsey* workers, to have sex at an early age.

Galamsey: *Derived from the phrase "gather them and sell," used to describe gold miners who work at small independent operations with simple hand tools.*

The men who exchange financial support for sex with girls may be guilty of sex trafficking under international legal definitions. In cases where parents are complicit as a means of reducing their own financial burden, they may also be guilty of sex trafficking, depending on the specific facts of each case. While this research cannot rule out the presence of third-party sex traffickers profiting from the prostitution of girls, that phenomenon was not uncovered.

Girls face social stigmatization when communities learn that they have been sexually exploited, and it is common for stigmatized girls to drop out of school. Contraceptives are rarely used in exploitative situations, and childbirth carries many health risks for these young girls. High rates of abortion and attempted abortion using over-the-counter drugs or other chemicals, with associated health risks, were reported. Despite the physical and emotional risks, research respondents said that many girls feel pressured to stay in exploitative relationships for financial reasons.

Research highlighted that traditional social systems of protection, such as rite-of-passage ceremonies that usher girls into adulthood, are currently weakened or rarely in use in and around *galamsey* gold mining communities (presumably in part because these are more transient communities). Members of these communities were also unaware of legal protections for children under Ghanaian law. At the same time, local district governments have little will or capacity to provide entitlements to vulnerable families or to prosecute offenders. Interviewees reported having limited trust in government systems. As a result, cases of sexual violence against girls are often resolved through informal mediation between the parties, rather than legal action. Community leaders expressed a sense of helplessness in the face of their desire to address the issues of child sex trafficking, hazardous child labor, and related forms of exploitation in *galamsey* communities.

Existing Child Protection Structure within Ghana Government

Over the past decade, the government of Ghana has made efforts to address the exploitation and trafficking of children.

- ➢ The Children's Act of 1998[6] lays out many forms of protection for children and the actions against children that are not allowed by law, including "exploitative child labor."

- ➢ The 2005 Human Trafficking Act[7] addresses trafficking of both minors and adults in Ghana and makes illegal sexual exploitation, slavery and slavery-like practices, and forced or coerced labor.

- ➢ In 2009, the Ghanaian government established a seven-year National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, which aims to significantly reduce such child labor by 2015.[8]

Several Ghanaian government agencies include units that address aspects related specifically to child labor or trafficking, including the Department of Social Welfare, Child Labor Unit and the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU). These units have implemented programs to combat the worst forms of child labor and child exploitation, including the National Program for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Cocoa and the Hazardous Child Labor Activity Framework for the cocoa sector. Anti-human trafficking units exist within the Police Service, Immigration Service, and Department of Women and Children.

Despite these efforts, child labor in Ghana remains a major issue. In particular, little is being done to address child labor and sexual violence within small-scale mining areas. This is in part due to the sensitivity within the Ghanaian government around *galamsey* mining. Because informal mining is illegal and the *galamseyers* sometimes cause disruptions to formal mining work, mining companies have put pressure on the Ghana government to remove *galamsey* mining operations. Much effort around informal mining in Ghana has been to forcibly remove the miners rather than to support the miners to become formal and regulated and, in turn, operate mines free of child labor.

A New Approach

Description of the Child Rights in Mining Project

In 2011, Free the Slaves partnered with Participatory Development Associates and Social Support Foundation to launch an 18-month Child Rights in Mining pilot project in 10 communities in and around Obuasi, Ghana, where informal small-scale and artisanal mining occur close to Ghana's largest formal mining site. The project components are detailed below.

Formative Research

The FTS/PDA/SSF team organized formative, participatory, qualitative research during February and March 2012 around three major areas in order to guide programs to strengthen community-based protection and prevention: 1) the narratives of exploited children; 2) the local perspectives on the consequences and causes of such abuse; 3) local awareness and understanding of governmental and civil society services designed to protect children and prevent the worst forms of child labor and sexual slavery. After PDA provided five days of training to local resident researchers in methods of participatory research, trainees, PDA, and SSF staff formed three teams of four researchers.

Researchers used participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tools with community members, including semi-structured interviews, community mapping, trend analysis, body mapping,[9] and ranking and scoring. In addition, 49 focus group discussions were conducted at schools, mines and local government offices; and 61 individual interviews were conducted with miners, children, district officials, opinion leaders and other community members.

Booklet Design

The project team used the research findings to develop and print illustrated booklets featuring themes drawn from real narratives of local community members. The stories in these booklets focus on three themes that emerged from the research: 1) the importance of good parenting; 2) the dangers of child labor; 3) the existence and root causes of sexual violence against children.

Each book follows several stories of children in exploitative situations and each story contains a list of reflective questions that promote thoughtful discussion on the causes and consequences of child exploitation. The booklets were printed in Twi, the local language, but were accessible for illiterate audiences.

[28] He worked in the Chanfan site as a danka boy. [29-31] Koduah did all the work the ghetto owner asked him to do, like washing and extracting of gold with mercury, pounding stones and shanking.

Koduah washing and extracting gold with mercury, pounding stones and shanking.

Booklet Implementation

Following the publication of the illustrated storybooks, 25 learning groups with more than 350 participants were formed in the 10 communities. Implementing participatory methods, the learning groups discussed the themes of the illustrated storybooks.

The learning process was designed to create a participatory space, encourage ownership by community members, and impart skills in dialogue, negotiation and a greater understanding of parent and leader responsibilities. Project leaders also assisted each learning group to create its own unique action plan for addressing child protection issues, based on increased understanding of child rights. Two trained community facilitators were present in each community and were responsible for facilitating group meetings, documenting action points and providing support to group members.

The implementation stage lasted four to five months, depending on the community, with groups meeting once or twice a week.

Evaluation Methodology

Before the beginning of the learning groups, a baseline interview was conducted with participants using 21 open-ended questions. For each question, there was a correct/ideal answer and participant responses were graded on a scale of 1 to 5 ranging from very unfavorable to very favorable based on how close they were to the answer that would imply greatest protection to children.

In the final stage of the project, PDA commissioned a team of two researchers to conduct an independent evaluation of the pilot project in March and April 2013. Ten interviewers were trained to collect data from the project communities.

In each community, three learning group members interviewed prior to the study were interviewed again using the same baseline questionnaire along with six additional questions. These participants, and three non-participants in each community (as control groups), were also interviewed using a problem-centered guide developed to investigate participants' attitudes and abilities to take the right steps to protect children from abuse. The three non-participants were randomly selected from community members that had no known prior contact with the project, its facilitators or learning group members. The problem-centered guide included five hypothetical scenarios describing threats to children's rights, each with three open-ended questions focused on respondents' perceptions of the problem and what they would do to help the child. During data analysis, responses were categorized into themes. (Field interviews were conducted in Twi from an English questionnaire and problem-centered guide that can be found in this report's appendix.)

Focus group discussions with learning group members were held in eight of the communities (the learning groups in the other two communities were reported as non-functional). In each community the learning group facilitators and two children -- one child of a participant and of a non-participant -- were also interviewed. One child was 7 and the remaining were teenagers. Consent of parents and assent of the children were obtained prior to the interviews, and the interviewers were trained to use child-sensitive methods.

Salient findings from the evaluation are described below. While the baseline and follow-up survey responses were graded on a five-point scale with answers ranging from very unfavorable to very favorable, the narrative description of the results below groups together favorable and very favorable answers as well as grouping together unfavorable and very unfavorable responses (although the graphs disaggregate the data).

Using the Booklets

Members found all the booklets and themes easy to understand and to use, mainly because the booklets were written in the local language and were read aloud during meetings. Members were of the opinion that the picture illustrations in the booklets made the stories seem real and easier to understand.

"We love everything about the book for it was real. Yes, because many people in the learning group were victims of such things for either they were using people or people have used them before."

Learning Group Member

Children's Basic Needs and Rights

Program participants were asked to define "child" (defined under international human rights law and Ghanaian law as under the age of 18) in order to determine the age at which they believed parental protection is most needed and appropriate. During the baseline survey, only 18 percent of respondents provided an accurate ("favorable") definition of a child, and during evaluation, 39 percent of respondents provided favorable answers (Figure 1). The project also seems to have positively influenced participants' understanding of the basic needs of a child. At baseline, only four percent of respondents gave favorable answers to the question about the needs of children, and by evaluation, 82 percent of participants gave favorable answers. The identified needs included a right to basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter and education.
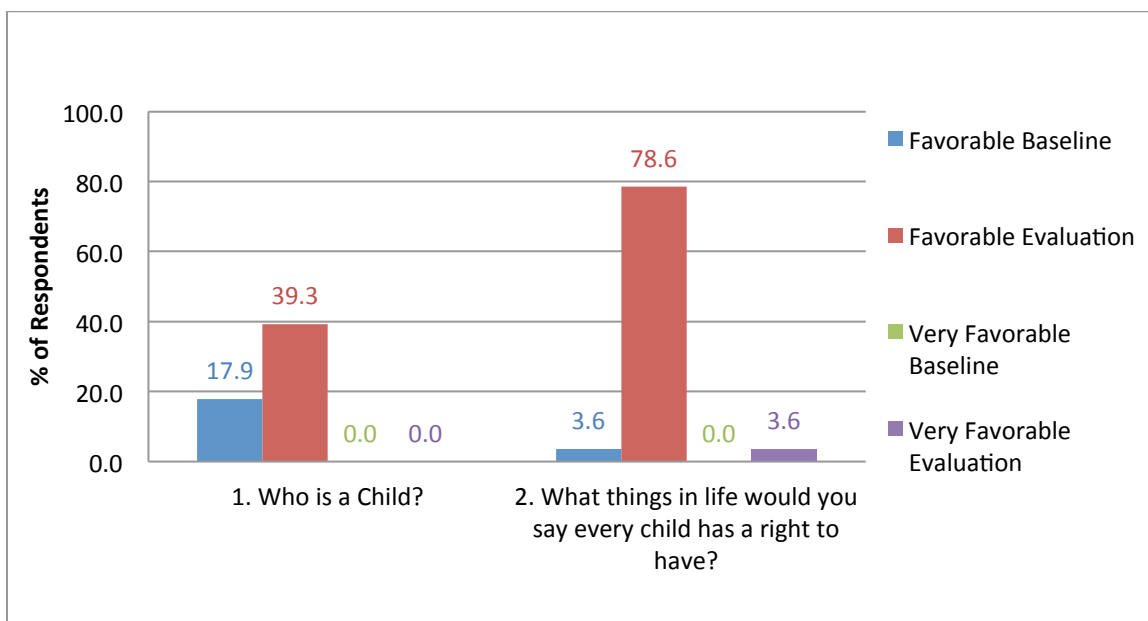

Figure 1: Children's Basic Needs and Rights

Learning group members noted that the storybooks helped to improve their own parenting skills and clarified their parental responsibilities, including the importance of providing for their child's basic needs and staying informed on their child's activities. There was also a perception that parents' failure to provide these necessities would lead to a child becoming what participants called a "bad person" (while this term is open to interpretation, bad person among participants often seemed to refer to those who engage in early sex, smoke, drink alcohol or do drugs, or engage in other risky or unhealthy behavior).

Child Labor and Exploitative Labor

Prior to project implementation, less than five percent of participants (one person) were able to identify suitable work for children (favorable answers included household and light chores). At the time of the evaluation, 93 percent of participants provided favorable responses (Figure 2). Participants cited work at *galamsey* sites, street selling ("hawking") and carrying heavy loads as inappropriate for children. Fifty-four percent of participants at evaluation indicated that children should not engage in *galamsey* mining, and 36 percent indicated that children should not engage in street selling, whereas most participants did not consider it a problem if children helped with farming, fishing or household chores (not shown in figures). Most children interviewed indicated that they worked very long days, regardless of whether they were children of participants or non-participants.
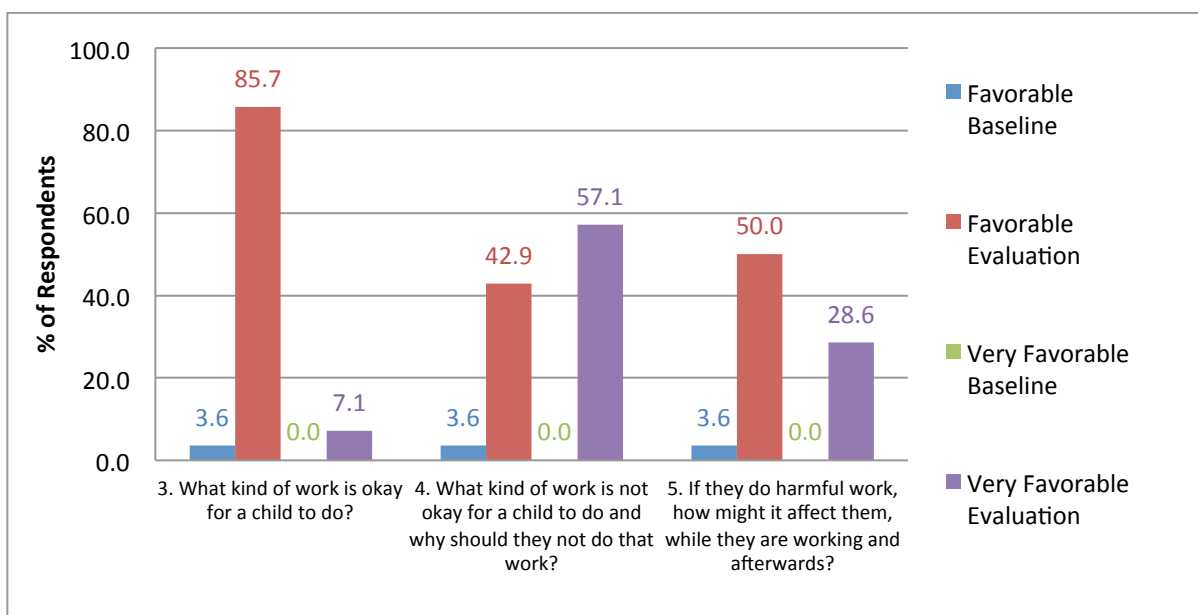

Figure 2: Child Labor and Exploitative Labor

During the baseline survey, only one participant (four percent) provided favorable responses when asked about the dangers of hazardous or exploitative child labor (favorable answers included mention of physical, emotional, and developmental harm). At the evaluation, 79 percent of participants provided favorable responses. Some participants cited health hazards of *galamsey* mining, including exposure to mercury and toxic chemicals and dust inhalation.

Participants said they also understood from their discussions that birth control was a necessary step to curbing child labor. According to participants, having too many children caused difficulties in providing for all of them, which would then lead some into dangerous child labor situations.

Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Prostitution of Children

Three girls out of the 20 children interviewed indicated that they had been sexually abused: two 14-year-old girls were children of non-participants, and the third was the child of a participant in the learning groups.
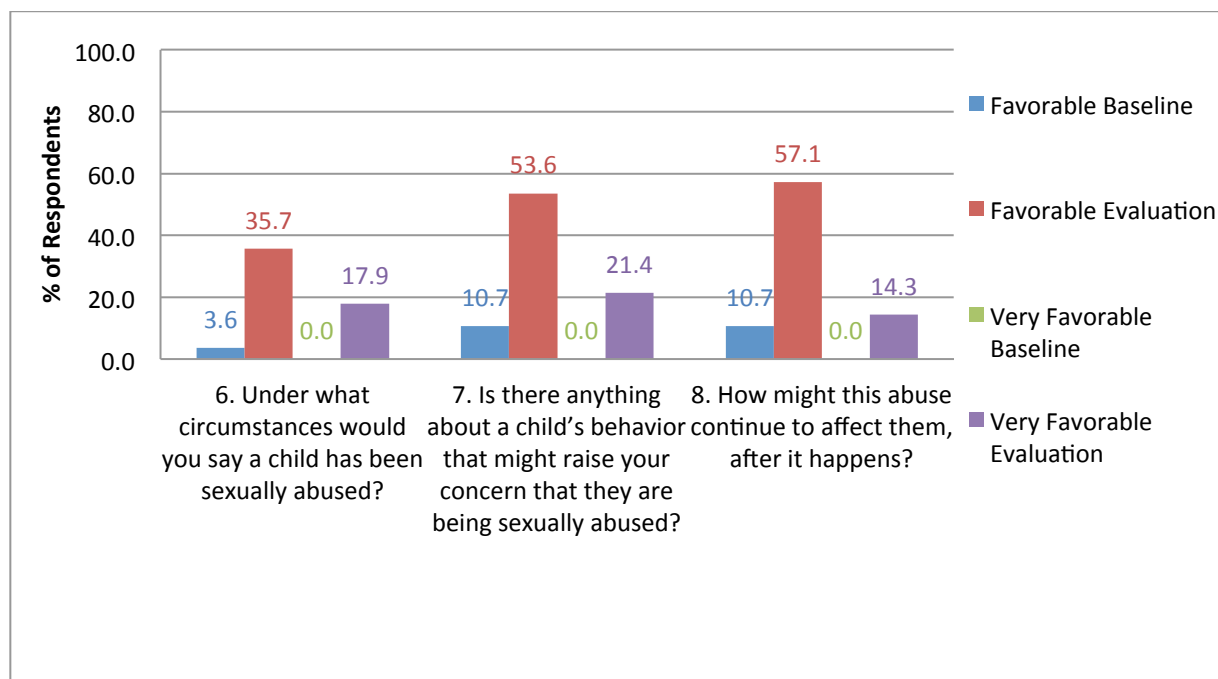

Figure 3: Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Prostitution of Children

Prior to project implementation, only one participant provided favorable responses as to what constitutes sexual exploitation and abuse of a child (favorable answers included inappropriate touching of children and sex with children). Fifty-four percent of participants gave favorable answers during the evaluation phase (Figure 3). Only 11 percent of participants could recognize the behavior of a potentially sexually abused child at the time of the baseline. In contrast, at the evaluation, 75 percent of participants had favorable responses indicating the ability to recognize the signs of possible sexual abuse. At the evaluation, participants also indicated an understanding of the long-term effects of sexual abuse compared to the baseline; at the baseline, only 11 percent gave favorable answers and at evaluation 71 percent gave favorable answers.

At the evaluation, participants listed long-term effects of sexual abuse to include exposure to sexually transmitted diseases, child pregnancy and its related health risks, and the possibility of future barrenness in cases where an assault affects the reproductive organs. However, only about six percent of respondents paid attention to the emotional scars caused by sexual abuse in children. These participants listed effects such as the shame a child would feel if a rape became public knowledge and the possibility of future relationship problems. Participants listed a few situations which in their view increased the potential risk of rape: such as perpetrators luring children into a secluded place or room with gifts, or others trying to draw a child close by persistently talking to the child or sending her to do errands.

Learning group participants indicated heightened sensitivity to sexual comments and innuendo directed toward children and greater awareness of potential sexual exploitation cases.

Individual Actions to Protect Children

There was a clear improvement in the type of actions that participants took to protect children. About 25 percent of participants took appropriate actions to protect children from abuse at the end of the pilot study compared to zero percent prior to the pilot study (Figure 4). Most interventions (such as removing a child from a situation of abuse) were attempted through the family or through the social support system of elders. Protective actions towards the respondents' own children also improved: at baseline, none of the participants took favorable actions and at project end 71 percent did. Participants listed actions taken to protect their own children as: commitment to providing their basic needs, striving to pay their school fees, encouraging them to remain in school, drawing them close so the children would share their problems with them, and being the source of sex education to their girl children at the age of puberty.

> *"I used to cane my child a lot when he did something wrong. Even his father once used a pestle (for pounding fufu) to hit his head! But with what I have learned, I have talked to his father and things have changed now."*
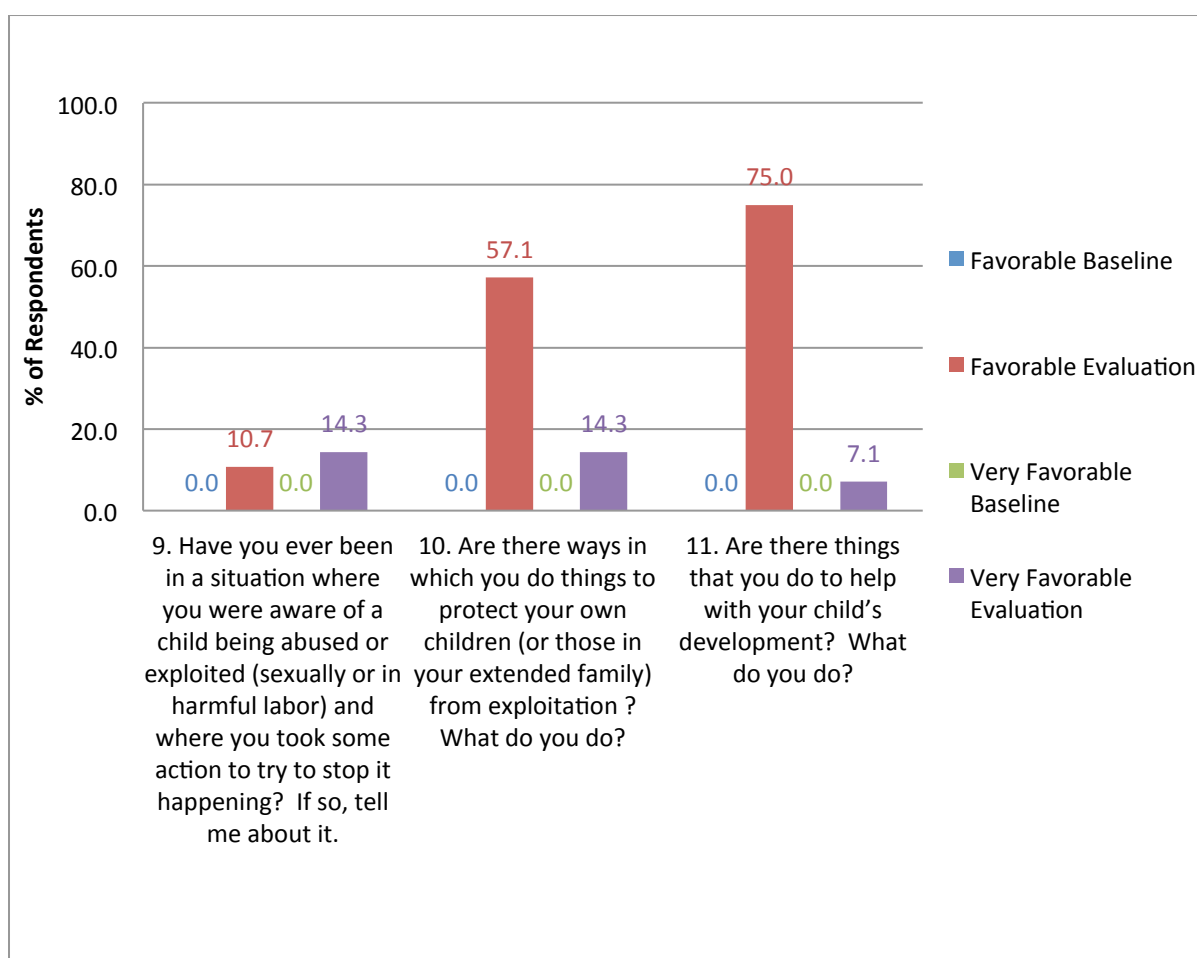>
> *Learning Group Member*

Figure 4: Individual Actions to Protect Children

Project participants provided better answers to the scenarios described in the problem-based guides than non-participants. They appeared better able to analyze the situations described and gave more hands-on responses that leaned towards child rights protection. Project participants were more sympathetic towards the children and did not assign blame to the children as often as the control group of non-participants. They were also more willing to address the situations in a structured way, were more direct in their responses, and knew the legal routes to take to protect children from child labor and sexual, physical, and verbal abuse.

A side benefit from the learning groups that members mentioned was that they felt the group built solidarity among them, such that if they had any problem of child labor, sexual abuse, or other exploitation, they would have somebody with whom to share the problem.

Significant learning points on parenting that were shared by group members included: that parents should provide the basic needs of the child; that the burden of care should not be left on only one parent; and that they should know about what goes on in the child's life. For instance, members said that when they see their child with a new toy or electronic device that they have not provided, they should ask where it came from, as this could indicate that somebody was attempting to lure the child into a sexually exploitative situation. The claims of adult participants were corroborated by children in separate interviews.

> *"There has been a change in the way my mother treats me. She does not insult me anymore. I used to fetch water with big buckets, but no more. And I don't hawk alone. Every now and then I do it with her."*
>
> *13-year-old Boy*

None of the 10 children of participants interviewed worked at a g*alamsey* site; one worked in her mother's shop; another sold door-to-door. Two children of participants said they used to be involved in *galamsey* mining and street hawking but had stopped because they had been asked to do so by their mothers. Five of the 10 non-participant children interviewed indicated that they were involved in work outside the home, including work at a *galamsey* site and street hawking.

Advocacy with Duty Bearers

Through the activities of the learning groups, participants increased their awareness of government agencies to contact in cases of child abuse or exploitation, from 25 percent at baseline to 61 percent at evaluation (Figure 5). The most commonly mentioned institutions were the Department of Social Welfare, the police, the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), and the community Unit Committee or Assemblyperson, in that order.

At the baseline, only seven percent of participants knew what role those government institutions should play, and at the time of the evaluation 57 percent of participants could articulate this. The roles of various government agencies, as identified by the respondents, included providing information and creating awareness of child rights issues, intervening in child abuse cases and prosecuting offenders.
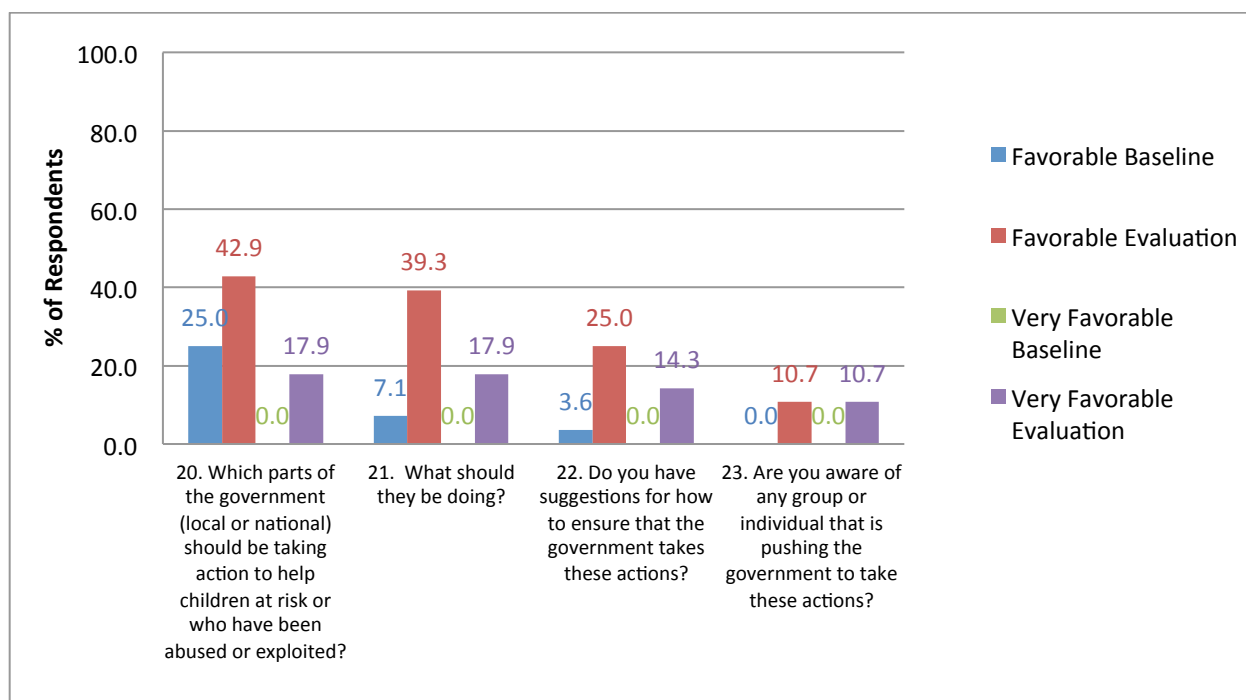
Figure 5: Advocacy with Duty Bearers

Creating Momentum, Gathering Interest

Eighty-six percent of respondents at the end of the pilot project had friends and neighbors who expressed interest in joining the efforts to protect children (Figure 6), and 29 percent had heard interest from nearby communities.
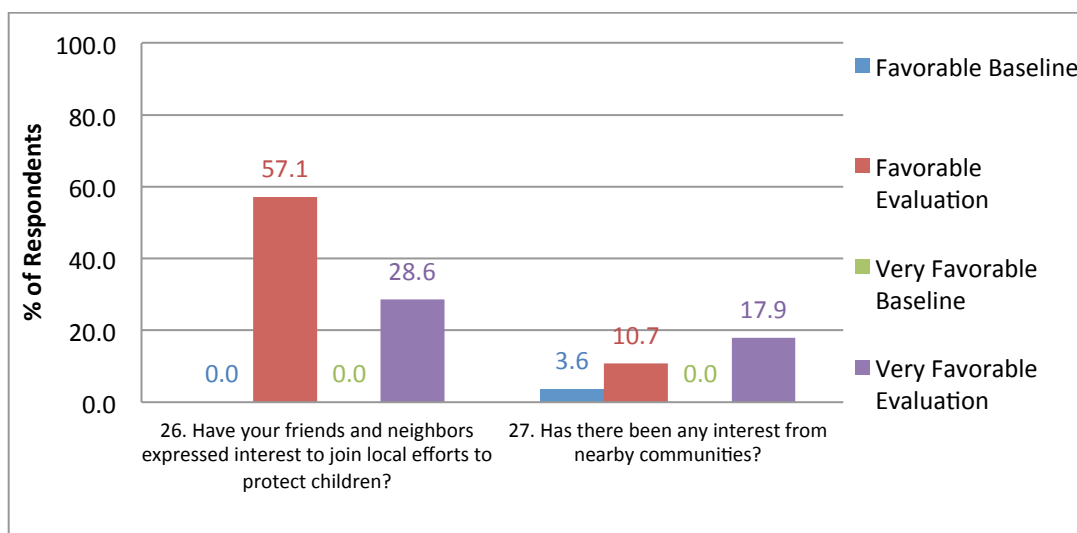

Figure 6: Creating Momentum, Gathering Interest

Addressing Challenges in Community Ownership

At the end of this pilot, the project team found that learning groups in four of the 10 communities were not meeting as regularly and were not as active as the other communities. This was in part because the community facilitators were not as active and motivated, and several community facilitators withdrew from the project and had to be replaced. Though they were paid a stipend to offset income lost due to time spent on the more-intensive learning group implementation phase, several expressed that they desired a higher and more sustained payment. While providing the higher stipend might have encouraged some facilitators to stay with the project, paying community members, including facilitators, at a high rate for an extended period of time can undermine the community ownership model and ultimately the long-term sustainability of the project.

To address the underperformance of these four communities, the project team chose new facilitators and re-launched the learning groups. Two of the communities subsequently became very active, but two have remained less so. This is likely because the methodology of this approach works most effectively in communities that are more cohesive and interconnected, where community members interact with one another on a daily basis. These communities tend to be more rural with houses that are relatively close together. The implementation of the learning groups in the underperforming communities was found to be challenging likely because those locations are more urban, located within the Obuasi city limits, where residency in the communities is more fluid.

Recommendations

To the Government of Ghana, Development Agencies, International & Ghanaian NGOs

Refinement and Scale-Up of Child Rights in Mining Approach

FTS and its partners recommend that the Child Rights in Mining approach be refined and scaled up to a much larger number of mining communities, based on the positive results achieved in this pilot project. The booklets are applicable to informal mining areas with similar contexts within Ghana and, potentially, other parts of West Africa. Thus, after an initial stakeholder validation of the booklets in a particular area, projects could begin at the stage of training community facilitators to lead the learning groups.

It is also recommended that the formative research, booklet creation, and learning group implementation be adapted to other economic sectors and contexts within Ghana, and to other countries facing similar issues of slavery, child labor and sexual exploitation.

Specific recommendations to improve the effectiveness and ensure the long-term sustainability of the project are below.

Targeting Cohesive Communities

It is recommended that the learning group implementation be used in communities that maintain cohesive, interconnected characteristics, where community members more often work, relax and attend community-wide activities together. The approach is not likely to work as well in urban or peri-urban communities where people are migrating more often and do not see one another on a daily basis.

Allocating Sufficient Time for Book Creation

Groups that wish to replicate the narrative pedagogy methodology should allow five to six months for the themes and narratives drawn from the research to be translated into stories.

Enhancement to Training of Facilitators

The more challenging topics of defining who is a child, and the emotional harms of sexual abuse, should be given greater attention in the training of community facilitators in order to better engage learning group members.

Stipends for Community Facilitators

Stipends should be provided to community facilitators to offset lost income for their time spent on the project. However, it is not recommended to pay facilitators at a high level relative to their income or to pay them after the learning groups have been completed even if they remain active on the project. The project design should include a strategy that encourages community stakeholders to take up responsibility for assisting the community facilitators.

Engaging Key Stakeholders

Projects should ensure that certain key stakeholders, including potential perpetrators, are included as members of the learning groups, in order to promote change in the knowledge, attitudes and behavior. These stakeholders include *galamsey* operators and market women.

Those implementing projects should also ensure that key local stakeholders, including traditional authorities, school officials, faith-based leaders, community information center operators and district assembly members are informed and engaged in the project early on to secure their support for the project's implementation.

Ensuring Diverse Learning Group Membership

Project implementers should work to ensure that the learning groups consist of a diverse membership representative of the communities, including on the basis of gender. While in some communities women may sustain their participation more successfully over time (due in part to gender roles regarding protection of children), strategies should be put in place to ensure that learning reaches all members of the community. While men should be encouraged to remain in the groups, all group participants should also be encouraged to share their learning with family members who are unable or unwilling to participate regularly.

Strengthening Community Systems

Following the process of educating learning group members, projects that continue to work in the mining communities should continue to support community ownership of child protection issues. Community members should be facilitated to develop community action plans in which they identify steps that they and relevant local authorities, including schools, can take to address sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Community-chosen child protection groups in each community should also be formed that help identify local risks to children and act to protect them.

Supporting Community Advocacy with Government

Institutions implementing this approach should consider including support for community members to advocate to the government for increased protection of child rights, with particular emphasis on policies to improve parenting and minimize abuse of children and resources for state institutions to be able to adequately respond to cases.

Linking to Livelihoods Projects

Projects building off of this pilot should be linked to parallel efforts to improve livelihoods and alternative sources of income in order to address one of the identified root causes of child labor and slavery in this context: poverty.

Developing a Media and Communication Strategy

A large scale-up of this project approach should consider using media as a key strategy to elicit popular and political support. Positive messages around child rights and child protection should be disseminated through the media, with significant input from affected communities. Training should be provided to media as an early step toward building strategic relationships, giving the project a reach that extends beyond the communities directly targeted for implementation.

Building Public-Private Partnership

Effective public-private partnerships should be leveraged when scaling-up this project. Companies that have a stake in the project-affected area, such as formal mining companies, should be pursued for support and funding of child protection initiatives.

Conclusions

The project evaluation findings suggest that participants could identify and relate to the in-depth, context-driven stories and scenarios, which promoted rich discussions. Learning group participants had positive reactions to the illustrated storybooks, and expressed a desire for greater distribution of booklets in the community.

After individuals learned about child rights issues, their own responsibilities in promoting these rights, and appropriate actions to take to protect children from abuse, they took more action (and more appropriate action), including using the correct channels to protect children from abuse and bring perpetrators to justice.

At the conclusion of the pilot phase, individuals and groups in these communities knew which government institutions are tasked with promoting child rights, handling cases of abuse, and providing social and economic safety nets, and were more ready to advocate and to hold these institutions accountable.

Based on the positive results achieved in a short implementation period, FTS and its partners strongly recommend that this project be scaled up to other communities.

Appendix

Individual Interview Questions

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS – for participants only
with the same sample of participants as for the baseline

Date
Name
Age
Gender
Community
Occupation
Level of education

Preamble
- When did you join the learning group
- How many meetings did you attend

1. Who is a child?
   a. Favourable answer:
      i. Ability to define who children are using the legal age which is 18 years in Ghana
      ii. Knowledge of roles and responsibilities of parents towards children and of a child's dependency on parents for support and care
2. What things in life would you say every child has a right to have?
   a. Favourable answers
      i. Ability to state that children have the rights to be cared for, supported and protected by their parents
      ii. Providing examples such as rights to education, food, shelter, protection from harm and danger, protection from child labour and abuse were favourable

Knowledge of child rights/sensitivity to effects of child abuse:

3. What kind of work is okay for a child to do?
   a. Favourable answers
      i. Making mention of normal household chores such as sweeping, helping parents cook, washing dishes and other day-to-day activities of household
      ii. Mentioning that any of the above work is ok as long as they do not hinder the child's education, etc
4. What kind of work is not okay for a child to do and why should they not do that work?
   a. Favourable answers
      i. Any work that hinders the child's education
      ii. Any work that exposes the child to harm and danger
      iii. Any work that is too hard and strenuous for the child
      iv. Selling on the road side
      v. Working in mining sites

5. If they do harmful work, how might it affect them, while they are working and afterwards?
   a. Favourable answers
      i. They may be physically harmed whilst doing such work
      ii. Such work will affect them physically, emotionally and spiritually
      iii. It would hinder their education and development
6. Under what circumstances would you say a child has been sexually abused?
   a. Favourable answers
      i. When a child is sexually harassed by an adult, such as touching the child in parts of the body
      ii. If an adult makes comments that are sexually inclined to that child
      iii. If an adult actually have sex with the child
7. Is there anything about a child's behaviour that might raise your concern that they are being sexually abused?
   a. Favourable answers
      i. The child may become unusually quiet, does not play with his/her mates in school, wouldn't eat or the way he/she walks changes all of sudden
8. How might this abuse continue to affect them, after it happens?
   a. Favourable answers
      i. It can affect the child's reproductive organs and render her infertile
      ii. Long term emotional trauma and fear of the opposite sex may result from such abuses

Their individual and collective actions to protect children:

9. Have you ever been in a situation where you were aware of a child being abused or exploited (sexually or in harmful labour) and where you took some action to try to stop it happening? If so, tell me about it.
   a. Favourable answers
      i. In this case the most favourable answer is that the participant who have encountered such situation took an appropriate action such as reporting to the authorities.
      ii. The most unfavourable answer was for participants who did encounter such situations but took no action.
10. Are there ways in which you do things to protect your own children (or those in your extended family) from exploitation? What do you do?
    a. Favourable answers:
       i. Most favourable answers are participants who actively do things to protect and prevent their children from abuse. These include educating the children, providing their needs, talking to them regularly to know what is going on in their lives, observing sudden changes in their behaviours and investigating.
11. Are there things that you do to help with your child's development? What do you do?
    a. Favourable answers:
       i. Most favourable answers are supporting the development of the children socially, physically and emotionally. Providing needs, making sure they go to school, not engaging children in child labour are examples that could be mentioned as specific things done to help children's development.

12. Are you aware of any group or individual that has done something to rescue or remove a child from harmful child labour or from sexual abuse? What have they done?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. This question was to test whether participants are aware of individuals and groups doing things to protect children from abuse. The most favourable answer is to know which groups or individuals and site an example of what they have done to protect children from sexual abuse
13. Has any group or individual made community members aware of child rights issues? What did they do?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. It was expected that participants would know such groups and site their own learning group as an example and the activities within the learning group as key things done to protect children.
14. What makes it harder for groups and individuals to take actions that protect the rights of children?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. It was expected that specific issues which hinder action to protect children would be mentioned. Examples included knowing who to report to, lack of support from parents of abused children and lack of community support to make sure perpetrators in communities are brought to book, funding and resource limitations, etc
15. What kinds of skills and resources does your community need to develop so that the community members can protect children from sexual exploitation and from harmful child labour?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. Specific resources should be mentioned and justified. A participant who mentioned a specific resource and explains why such resource or skill would help community members protect children from exploitation had given a favourable answer.
16. Since your group began, have you had to take some action to protect a child?
    a. Favourable answer
        i. Yes or No but I have not come into contact with any child who needed to be protected.
17. Can you tell me what happened and how the group dealt with it?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. Where answer to 16 was yes, the participant should describe what was done and the action taken should be judged appropriate.
18. Since you became a member of the group has anything changed in the way you handle your children?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. Yes some things has changed, I am doing certain things I was not doing and have stopped some things I was doing
19. Can you give me some examples?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. Not insulting or abusing my children, love ad care for them, I talk to them more, etc

Advocacy with duty bearers:

20. Which parts of the government (local or national) should be taking action to help children at risk or who have been abused or exploited?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. Participants should be able to mention ministries within the government that deal with issues of abused and exploited children.
21. What should they be doing?
    a. Favourable answer
        i. Ability to mention the roles and responsibilities of these agencies is considered favourable. Having no idea at all is unfavourable
22. Do you have suggestions for how to ensure that the government takes these actions?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. To be able to suggest ways that government institutions can ensure that they are effective. The suggestions must be appropriate.
23. Are you aware of any group or individual that is pushing the government to take these actions?
    a. Favourable response
        i. Yes, with explanation of what these groups are and what they are doing
24. Has your learning group taken any child rights actions in relation to schools, social welfare, police or any other authorities?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. Yes we have held programmes in say schools to sensitise children and teachers about such issues, our learning groups are reaching out to the police, social welfare etc. to make our presence known…..such answers were considered favourable.
25. What actions do you plan to take?
    a. Favourable answers
        i. Those that haven't taken any actions in question 24 but plan to do so, what are these plans. We were looking for answers such as we intend to go to such places in the future.

Creating momentum and gathering new interest:

26. Have your friends and neighbours been expressing any interest or willingness to join in local efforts to protect children?
27. Has there been any interest from other nearby communities in projects that protect children from abuse and exploitation?

Problem-Centered Guide

PROBLEM CENTRED GUIDE
INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS WITH PARTICIPANTS AND NON-PARTICIPANTS

SCENARIO 1: SEXUAL ABUSE/PARENTING

Adjoa is 10 years old and she lives with her grandmother in a village near Obuasi. Her grandfather is involved in the informal mining business. Her grandmother is a petty trader, selling kenkey and fish to workers doing '*galamsey*'. Adjoa's mother lives with her stepfather in another village very far away. Adjoa stays with her grandmother because her stepfather does not want her to be part of his household. Her mother visits from time to time. For the past 3 months, Adjoa has been very quiet. She tends to sit for a long time alone in the compound. She does not eat well and does not play with her the other girls in her primary school.

A. What do you think about Adjoa's situation?

You live in the same compound as Adjoa and so you ask her if she was unwell. Initially she is reluctant to talk but you coax her. Adjoa then tells you her grandfather has been forcing her to have sex with him. She has told her grandmother but her grandmother does not believe her and says she is a bad girl.

B. Now what do you think about her situation?
C. What would you say to Adjoa?
D. What would you do to help Adjoa?

SCENARIO 2: PARENTING/CHILD LABOUR

Kofi Manu is 11 years old and attends a primary school in one of the mining villages near Obuasi. He is the first of 7 children. Kofi is now in primary 3. He sells 'pure water' after school every day and all day Saturday. Sunday is his only free day. Kofi's mother says he should stop going to school entirely because it is becoming more and more difficult to pay school fees and she has 6 other children, younger than Kofi, to take care of. She says life is so difficult and so Kofi should find work to bring in much needed money. Kofi's father does not live with them and he no longer provides any support for his children. Anytime Kofi goes to ask for money he is beaten or insulted.

A. What do you think about Kofi's situation?
B. If Kofi came to talk to you about his situation what would you say to him?
C. What would you do to help him?

SCENARIO 3: CHILD LABOUR

Yeboah, a 12 year old orphan living in a village in the Amansi East is a primary school dropout. Both his parents died of HIV/AIDS last year. Yeboah did not return to Junior Secondary School (JSS) after primary six because his grandmother who he now lives with cannot afford to pay his fees. Yeboah's uncle, Fiifi, is a worker in an informal mining town. He came on a visit and decided to take Yeboah to live with him in the town. Uncle Fiifi, did not promise to put Yeboah back in school but both Yeboah and his grandmother trusted that he would.

A. What do you think about Yeboah's situation?

Yeboah has now been living with his uncle for 6 months but he has not enrolled him in school. Instead, he has found him a job at his '*galamsey*' site, carrying sand and stone, digging and exploring everyday of the week including Sundays. All payment for Yeboah's labour goes to Uncle Fiifi.

B. Now what do you think about the situation?

You are worker at the same galamsey site.

C. What would you say to uncle Fiifi?
D. What would you do to help Yeboah?

SCENARIO 4: VERBAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE

Asantewaa goes to school late every day. Her teacher always beats her for coming late but nothing changes. Asantewaa sleeps in class during lessons and for this also she is beaten. Her academic performance is poor and she cannot answer even the simplest of questions. She has very low self-esteem and does not think she can ever accomplish anything in life.

A. What do you think about this Asantewaa's situation?

A new teacher has just been posted to Asantewaa's school. She wants to know why Asantewaa is always late and so tired all the time. Asantewaa confides in her teacher about the numerous house chores she does before coming to school.

B. What should Asentewaa's teacher say to her parents?
C. What should her teacher do to help Asantewaa?

SCENARIO 5: VERBAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE
As a member of the community you are engaged in informal mining. In your interaction with children around the mining site, you realise that 8 out of 10 of them are hit and chastised very often. Beating is carried out using anything the perpetrator finds at the time – sticks, canes, left over electric cables and so forth. The boys at the '*galamsey*' site tell you that they are beaten and threatened if they are suspected to have taken a piece of gold.

A. What do you think about how children are treated?

Upon enquiry the children tell you they do not confide in their parents because at home they are insulted and beaten by the adults around them - aunties, grandmothers, step mothers and sometimes their own mothers.

B. Now what do you think?
C. What would you say to the parents of these children?
D. What would you do to help change their situation?

Endnotes

[1] *The World Factbook*, available at: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gh.html [accessed February 4, 2014].

[2] Slavery is defined in the 1926 League of Nations Slavery Convention as: "The status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised." Available at: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-3&chapter=18&lang=en (accessed February 14, 2014). Free the Slaves utilizes a sociological definition of slavery: "Forced to work, under threat of violence or coercion, for little or no pay, and unable to walk away."

[3] According to Kathleen Cash in "AN EVALUATION OF THE FONKOZE AND BEYOND BORDERS' CHILDREN'S RIGHTS EDUCATION MODULE AS PART OF THE PROGRAM EDUCATION IS A CONVERSATION: I WANT TO LIVE! WE WANT TO LIVE! DON'T YOU?": "The children's rights program uses a narrative-pictorial pedagogy that emphasizes the conceptualization and practice of voice: Why and how people can and will talk among themselves is highly significant to the creation and the evolution of this pedagogy as well as to reasoned possibilities and alternatives for action. Human beings are preeminently social creatures, and education must build on both subjective and inter-subjective interpretations and experience. Like Cooley's adage about human nature—that we essentially live in the minds of others without knowing it (Cooley, 1902)—it follows that changing normative conversations will lead to changes in behavioral norms. Because we care about what others think of us, education for social justice must be linked to influencing social norms. People live in a negotiated reality. Through relations and interactions, people practice and learn negotiation. Influencing social interaction by changing the nature and extent of public conversation about the treatment of children will also influence normative behavior in how children are treated. Therefore, social literacy (together with traditional literacy education or learning how to read and write) must give people the practice of participation through public dialogue and guided interactions—the intent of the narrative-pictorial pedagogy of this children's rights program."

[4] According to the International Labor Organization definition. *Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (Convention 182)*, June 1999, available at: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc87/com-chic.htm [accessed August 7, 2013]

[5] United States Department of Labor, *2011 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor - Ghana*, September 26, 2012, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/506594140.html [accessed August 7, 2013]

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Parliament of the Republic of Ghana. 2005. Human Trafficking Act (694).

[8] Government of Ghana- Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare. *National Plan of Action (NPA) for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Ghana (2009-2015)*. Accra; October 20, 2010. www.mmye.gov.gh.

[9] "Body mapping is a visual method of describing bodily organs and to describe bodily functions. The maps consist of one large drawing, or of several smaller drawings to illustrate a process or practice. Body maps are diagrams...drawn on the ground to examine their knowledge about reproduction...It provides a shared point of reference for the researcher and the community members." *Participatory Rural Appraisal: Principles, Methods and Application*, 2009, N. Narayanasamy, available at: http://books.google.com/books?id=aYLUi92xU1YC&pg=PA283&lpg=PA283&dq=body+mapping+pra&source=bl&ots=9CVW9EWqQx&sig=yYZv1UE9zxiyTccLGPNJ3pIyE8&hl=en&sa=X&ei=4VACU8ffLNTo0AGEtIHQDA&ved=0CCQQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=body%20mapping%20pra&f=false (accessed February 17, 2014)