

**Growing Up Free**

ENDING CHILD TRAFFICKING IN GHANA



# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT

Two-Phase Baseline Study of Child  
Trafficking in 34 Communities in 6 Districts  
in Ghana

**April 2018**



## Trafficking's Footprint Baseline Research Project Partners

**FREE THE SLAVES:** [Free the Slaves](#) liberates slaves and transforms the social, economic and political conditions 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.

**NORDIC CONSULTING GROUP:** [Nordic Consulting Group](#) (NGC), based in Denmark, working for this report in association with JMK Consulting, specializes in international development cooperation. NCG has expertise in institutional development, governance, human rights, economic, financial, social and environmental analyses and infrastructure development. NCG partners have backgrounds in political and social science, economics, resource management and infrastructure. NCG strives to contribute to the global body of knowledge on what makes aid and development interventions effective, and under what circumstances. All partners and staff members are highly committed to continuous improvement and fostering innovation.

**PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES:** [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. It is a private, limited liability company (registration no. C-95,118) founded in 2001, and has been at the forefront of research, evaluation and development facilitation for the past 15 years. Its work broadly focuses on programs, assessments and analytical discourses that seek to strengthen the role of the citizenry in decision making processes and supporting the most vulnerable to improve their lives. PDA has a track record in managing complex qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research and evaluation assignments in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, and has personnel with a wide range of experience in handling and analyzing large-scale data to inform corporate decisions and planning. The organization also has expertise in community-driven development practices. PDA is based in Ghana, with its offices in Accra and Kumasi.

**INTERNATIONAL NEEDS GHANA:** [International Needs Ghana](#) (INGH) is a Christian development organization which began operations in Ghana in 1984 and was officially registered as a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization in October 1987. INGH is committed to seeing transformed lives and changed communities through partnerships guided by God's love and a commitment to holistic development. They seek to achieve this through their integrated thematic approach in promoting community development, with a focus on: child rights, education & development, health & longevity, gender & empowerment, evangelism & discipleship. They are part of a global partnership in more than 30 countries worldwide. In Ghana, their interventions have covered 21 Metropolitan / Municipal / District Assemblies, across five regions. They operate from their head office in Accra and two operational offices in Winneba and Adidome.

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# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT





# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT

## Definitions



**Forced Marriage:** (i) A woman, without the right to refuse, is promised or given in marriage on payment of a consideration in money or in kind to her parents, guardians, family or any other person or group; or (ii) the husband of a woman, his family, or his clan, has the right to transfer her to another person for value received or otherwise; or, (iii) a woman on the death of her husband is liable to be inherited by another person. <sup>1</sup>



**Hazardous Child Labor:** Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. <sup>2</sup>



**Modern Slavery:** Modern slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. Free the Slaves also makes use of this sociological definition: Forcing a person to provide labor or sexual service under the threat of violence or other serious harm, for little to no pay, where the person cannot walk away. In its 2017 [Global Estimates of Modern Slavery](#), the International Labor Organization, Walk Free Foundation and International Organization for Migration noted that modern slavery is not defined in law and is used as an umbrella term that includes forced labor, debt bondage, forced marriage, other slavery and slavery-like practices, and human trafficking. <sup>3</sup>



**Trafficking:** Article 3, paragraph (a) of the [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons](#) defines trafficking in persons as: "The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to

slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” According to [Ghana’s Human Trafficking Act of 2005](#) and its 2009 amendments, human trafficking is defined as: “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, trading or receipt of persons for the purpose of exploitation within and across national borders by (a) the use of threats, force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or exploitation of vulnerability, or (b) giving or receiving payments and benefits to achieve consent. Exploitation shall include at the minimum, induced prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”



# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT

## Findings at a Glance

### Child Trafficking & Exploitation

- Cases of child trafficking and other forms of child exploitation were documented in all six districts studied by research teams during 2016-2017, but the number of cases varied widely.
- More than 500 instances of child trafficking were uncovered in 20 communities surveyed in the 2016 phase of the study.
- 107 households with cases of child trafficking were documented in 14 additional communities surveyed in the 2017 phase of the study.
- The percentage of households in a community reporting at least one child subjected to trafficking or exploitation ranged from 2 percent in two communities to 100 percent in one community.



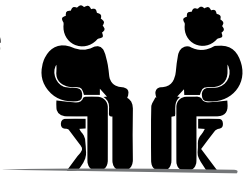
### Economic Factors

- In almost all communities studied, residents expressed a desperate need for income-generating activities.
- The economic desperation of some households was demonstrated by the low sums traffickers were able to pay parents to "hire" their child, reportedly ranging from 100 GHS (approximately \$25) to 300 GHS (approximately \$60).



# Programmatic Responses

- Free the Slaves and International Needs Ghana are working to combat child trafficking and address its causes through the [Growing Up Free](#) program. Overcoming vulnerabilities described by community members during the Trafficking’s Footprint baseline study is a core component of the Growing Up Free program. These vulnerabilities include:
  - A general lack of awareness of children’s rights under Ghanaian law
  - The absence of strong protective community organizations to protect children from traffickers
  - Difficulties accessing vital services such as health and education
- The Growing Up Free program addresses these vulnerabilities directly through:
  - Community mobilization
  - Socioeconomic service provision
  - Reintegration of survivors
  - Strengthening of the rule of law



# Purpose and Use of this Study

- This study collected baseline data on the prevalence and awareness of child trafficking and exploitation in 34 communities selected for the Growing Up Free program. This data will be compared to end-line figures to evaluate the project’s success.
- Focus group discussions and community mapping exercises conducted as part of the study provided valuable context about the drivers and mechanics of trafficking in specific project communities so that tailored project activities could be developed. These exercises also identified specific households with cases of trafficking that are being approached now with programmatic interventions to liberate identified children from slavery.
- This study’s results are not intended to represent the scope or prevalence of child trafficking or exploitation throughout Ghana.







# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT

## Executive Summary

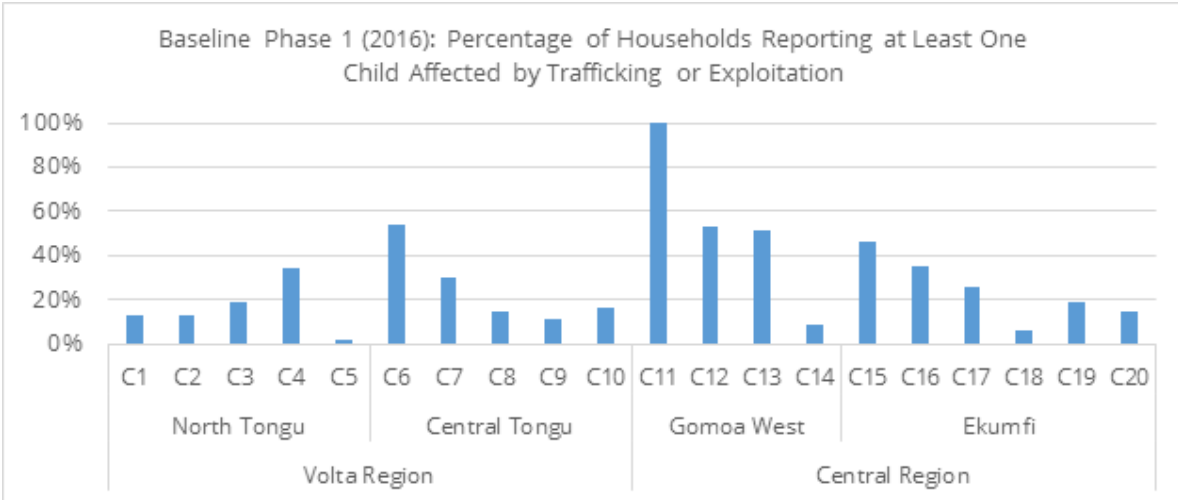
Free the Slaves (FTS) is committed to rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of its programs. To this end, FTS commissioned a baseline study to determine prevalence and awareness of trafficking before implementation of the Growing Up Free project in Ghana. Baseline research activities were conducted in the 34 project communities in two phases when community entry began: 20 communities in 2016 and 14 communities in 2017.

In 2016, Nordic Consulting Group and JMK Consulting conducted the baseline study in the first 20 Central and Volta Region communities. In 2017, Participatory Development Associates (PDA) conducted the baseline study of the remaining 14 communities in the Central, Greater Accra and Volta regions. In 2019, PDA will conduct a follow-up study of all project communities and produce a summative evaluation that assesses the efficiency, efficacy, impact and sustainability of FTS activities in the fight against human trafficking.

The researchers documented significant levels of child trafficking and exploitation. In total, teams conducted 160 focus groups, 68 key informant interviews, 80 social mapping exercises and 2,243 household visits to establish the prevalence of child trafficking and exploitation in each community studied. The percentage of households reporting at least one child who had been subjected to trafficking or exploitation varied widely, ranging from 2 percent in two communities to 100 percent in one community. Enumerators uncovered more than 500 instances of child trafficking or exploitation in the 20 communities surveyed in 2016 and 107 households with child trafficking in the 14 communities surveyed in 2017.

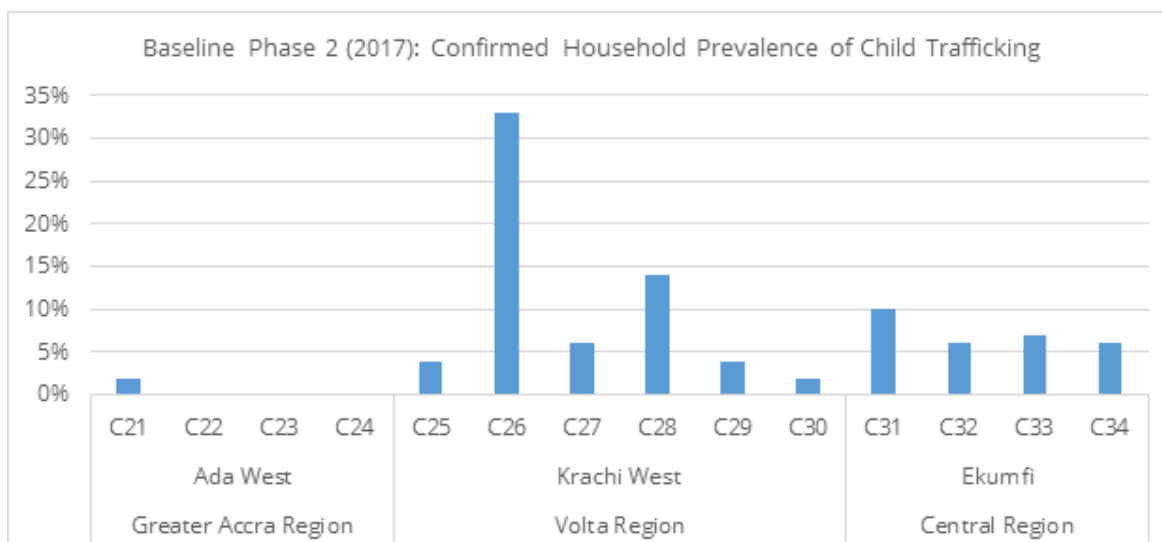
The baseline study used participatory methodology. In each community, a select group of residents was assembled. They participated in a focus group during which they were familiarized with key concepts and terms that they would be asked to identify in their communities. Following this, focus group participants worked together to develop social maps that identified households where they believed that child trafficking was taking place. Study teams also collected data on other forms of child labor and sexual exploitation that the focus group meetings and social mapping activities identified. Following these meetings, evaluation consultants investigated each case identified by the focus group with a household survey.

The study found that most project communities had high numbers of children who had been subjected to trafficking or other forms of exploitation (such as hazardous child labor <sup>4</sup>). In 2016, researchers discovered child trafficking and exploitation in all 20 communities they studied, with an average of 35.2 percent of households having a child who had experienced trafficking or exploitation at one point in time. This did not represent the number of children trafficked at the time of the survey, but rather children who, at any point in time, had been in situations of trafficking. These figures were disaggregated into those who had been trafficked into the fishing industry (50 percent of identified cases), those who had been trafficked into domestic servitude (27 percent), those in forced marriages (4 percent), and other cases of children in the Worst Forms of Child Labor or trafficked into other industries (19 percent). In more than 20 percent of the households surveyed, more than one child had been trafficked or put into other forms of exploitation at one point in time, with one household reportedly having 10 children subjected to a form of trafficking or exploitation.



In 2017 researchers adapted focus group guidelines and survey questionnaires to more clearly discern the prevalence of child trafficking and disaggregate cases of child trafficking from those of other forms of exploitation that may have been included in the 2016 results under the category that captured cases of children in Worst Forms of Child Labor.

The data collected in the 2017 phase of the study were disaggregated into cases of child trafficking (itself disaggregated into child labor trafficking and child sex trafficking), forced marriage and hazardous child labor. This phase of the study found that the communities studied had confirmed household prevalence rates of child trafficking ranging from 2 percent to 33 percent, with a total of 107 households identified as having trafficked children.



Calculations for communities C22-23-24 were not possible. See “Methodologies and Limitations” for details.

Ultimately, neither phase of the study confirmed cases of sex trafficking in project communities. Confusion over terminology and the legal boundaries of sex trafficking may have prevented such cases from being identified during focus groups and social mapping activities. Thus, the figures do not include cases of sex trafficking that may be present within project communities, and this should not be interpreted as a finding that sex trafficking does not exist in these communities.



50 percent of the trafficking cases identified in the 2016 phase of the study involved the fishing industry on Lake Volta.



Children who fall victim to trafficking are not able to exercise their most basic rights and are often forced to work all day and even throughout the night in some cases.

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These children are vulnerable to physical and mental abuse. They are frequently beaten, starved, raped or forced into sexual relations.

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# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT

## Child Trafficking in Ghana and the Child Protection Compact (CPC) Partnership

In their 2017 *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, the International Labor Organization (ILO), Walk Free Foundation and the International Organization for Migration estimated that 24.9 million people were in forced labor in 2016, approximately 20 percent of them children younger than age 18.<sup>5</sup> Sub-Saharan Africa stands out as a region with a high incidence of forced labor, with an estimated 3.4 million victims.<sup>6</sup> These statistics would encompass the cases of child sex and labor trafficking recorded in this report.

In Ghana, studies indicate that a significant number of children from rural and poor households are being subjected to forced labor in fishing communities along Volta Lake and other major fishing communities both onshore and offshore. The U.S. State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP Office) describes Ghana as "a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking."<sup>7</sup> Trafficking into forced labor and sexual exploitation has been found to be particularly common in the nation's fishing industry, especially on Lake Volta. An investigation by International Justice Mission (IJM) conducted in 2013 and 2015 found that nearly 60 percent of the children (some as young as 4) working in southern areas of Lake Volta had likely been "trafficked into forced labor."<sup>8</sup> IJM describes how these children are forced to put their health at risk by diving into the depths of the parasite-infested waters, risking their lives untangling nets from branches of the submerged forest beneath the lake's surface, and hauling in hundreds of pounds of fish per day.

Children who fall victim to trafficking are not able to exercise their most basic rights and are often forced to work all day and even throughout the night in some cases. These children are vulnerable to physical and mental abuse. They are frequently beaten, starved, raped or forced into sexual relations. This ongoing abuse presents a steep challenge, and calls for renewed and collaborative efforts by government and civil society to mobilize community and financial resources to end trafficking in the country once and for all. Ghana faces intense pressure to reduce trafficking within its



borders and to increase coordination between anti-trafficking NGOs and governmental bodies authorized to combat trafficking, demonstrated in part by its ranking on the Tier 2 Watch List in the U.S. State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons Report since 2015. Should Ghana fail to increase its efforts and implement its National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana (2017-2021), this ranking could fall to Tier 3.

To aid the nation's efforts to end child trafficking within and across its borders, the TIP Office led negotiation of a five-year Child Protection Compact (CPC) Partnership between the United States and the government of Ghana. As CPC Partnership implementers, Free the Slaves (FTS), and its partner, International Needs Ghana (INGH), have been conducting a new project, Growing Up Free, which aims to assist 34 communities to combat child trafficking. The communities are located across six districts in the Greater Accra, Volta and Central Regions of Ghana. This project works to raise community awareness; mobilize key actors in project communities; and lead the safe removal, rehabilitation, and reintegration of child survivors of trafficking. FTS and INGH are also collaborating with three aftercare shelters, [Don Bosco Child Protection Center](#), [Partners in Community Development's \(PACODEP\) Village of Life](#), and the [Challenging Heights Hovde House](#), to provide child survivors with access to professional rehabilitative services.

Map of Ghana (Growing Up Free Project Regions outlined in Bold)



**VOLTA REGION**

*North Tongu District- Phase One*  
 Morkplikpo                      Kanuwlwe  
 Degorme                         Dadome  
 Lasivenu

*Central Tongu District- Phase One*  
 Mafi-Dove                        Mafi-Tedeafenui  
 Mafi-Atitekpo                  Mafi-Devime  
 New Bakpa

*Krachi West District- Phase Two*  
 Basare                            Mamata  
 Dzilakope                        Sablakope  
 Chantai                           Tokpo

**CENTRAL REGION**

*Gomoa West District- Phase One*  
 Mumford Penkye                Dago  
 Mumford Odukum                Hweda

*Ekumfi District- Phase One*  
 Narkwa                            Srafa Aboano  
 Otuam                                Immuna  
 Ekumpoano                        Arkrah

*Ekumfi District- Phase Two*  
 Srafa Mpoano                      Amissano  
 Edumafa                            Asaafa

**GREATER ACCRA REGION**

*Ada West District- Phase Two*  
 Akplagbanya                        Lolonya  
 Anyamam                            Wokumagbe



The goal of Growing Up Free is to enhance the effectiveness of Ghana's efforts to combat child trafficking through the achievement of three objectives:

## Protection Objective 1



**An increased number of child trafficking victims in 4 districts and 34 communities in the Central, Volta, and Greater Accra regions receive comprehensive, gender-sensitive, trauma-informed care and case management services with appropriate community integration and follow-up.**

## Protection Objective 2



**Families of children safely removed through this program and identified as at-risk in program communities will be able to provide for the basic needs of their children, including shelter, food, healthcare and education.**

## Prevention Objective 1



**The public's increased awareness and knowledge of child trafficking in Ghana prevents child trafficking from occurring and promotes appropriate community action when child trafficking is suspected.**



In pursuit of these objectives, the project focuses primarily on local civil society solutions and mobilization, and equips target communities to engage with the government of Ghana to implement greater financial commitments to anti-trafficking policies and programs. FTS worked with Nordic and JMK to use the qualitative data collected

through the first phase of the baseline study to develop a narrative curriculum. This narrative curriculum is presently being used in all 34 communities.



The curriculum that Nordic and JMK developed uses the experiences recounted during the focus groups and social mapping exercises to create fictional but realistic stories that resonate with community members, while protecting the identity and source of the original tales. These illustrated stories are integrated into

booklets used to train learning groups in each project community.

In 2016 and 2017, FTS and INGH formed and trained 34 Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs) in 20 communities in the districts of North Tongu and Central Tongu in the Volta Region and Gomoa West and Ekumfi districts in the Central Region.

These CCPCs mobilize their communities to resist trafficking, identify cases of child trafficking and advocate for the children's return. The CCPCs collaborate closely with the learning groups established by FTS and INGH to spread general awareness of the risks of trafficking and children's rights under Ghanaian law. Learning groups and CCPC members also work in their communities to identify cases of trafficking and report these to the police. In many cases, when traffickers are confronted by CCPC members or by the parents of the children whom they have been exploiting, they relinquish the children voluntarily. In other cases, it is necessary for FTS and INGH to work with CCPC members and local police to insure that a child victim of trafficking is safely removed and returned to a safe household in their home community.

INGH and FTS fight the threat of re-trafficking by providing survivors and at-risk families access to the tools and services they need to provide for basic needs. These services include programs to develop financial literacy; opportunities to train for small-scale farming, livestock rearing and other locally appropriate vocations; apprenticeships and jobs in preferred businesses; and access to community-based savings and loans cooperatives.



# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT

## Methodology and Limitations

### **PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY**

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, the study aimed to collect baseline data on the prevalence and awareness of child trafficking and other forms of labor or sexual exploitation in project communities that would enable FTS to measure and compare community-level changes that happen after implementation of the Growing Up Free project in the communities. Second, the baseline activities (especially the focus group discussions and social mapping exercises) provided valuable information on the context of the project communities, the mechanics by which children are led into slavery, parents' awareness about the conditions under which children are forced to work, and what study participants believe to be the primary drivers of trafficking in their community.

### **OVERALL METHODOLOGY OF THE TWO-PHASE BASELINE STUDY**

The baseline study used a participatory methodology for data collection and analysis. While the data collection tools were adjusted and refined following the first phase of the study, the two phases shared an overall methodological architecture. The study was conducted in each of the 34 Growing Up Free project communities.



# Baseline Study Process

## Step 1 ▶

The process began with mapping of communities through initial discussions with opinion leaders and CCPC members.

## Step 2 ▶

This was followed by focus group discussions where participants discussed their knowledge, attitudes and practices of child labor and child trafficking in the communities. Participants discussed concepts that were being measured in the study and had space to discuss their perception of whether these phenomena occurred in their community and, if so, what form they took. Notes of these conversations were taken and later analyzed alongside other forms of data collected.

## Step 3 ▶

The maps drafted at the first stage were presented to focus group participants for social mapping exercises. In the social mapping exercise, focus group participants identified households; and armed with the deeper understanding of how to identify trafficking acquired during preliminary discussions, they identified households that had children who were suspected victims of trafficking. The social maps also provided household wealth ranking, as is described earlier in this report.

## Step 4 ▶

Follow-up surveys were done in households that were identified as having at least one case of child labor or child trafficking. Consultants conducted interviews with each of the identified households to determine whether the individual cases could be confirmed as trafficking. This presented a challenge during the 2016 phase of the study, where there were a number of difficulties linking the households identified during the social mapping activities to surveyed households. To compensate for this, the 2016 consultant surveyed additional non-identified households based on a sample size identified by the consultant prior to the social mapping activities. The 2017 phase of the study only followed up with identified households during the survey.

## Step 5 ▶

Enumerators also conducted interviews with key informants from each community to collect information that is more sensitive from local experts and authorities such as assembly representatives, religious leaders, schoolteachers, traditional leaders or members of the community anti-trafficking groups established by FTS.

Household prevalence rates were calculated for each project community by dividing the total number of cases of child trafficking confirmed through the household survey by the total number of households in the community.

### General Formula for Measuring Prevalence for Each Phenomenon

$$\text{Prevalence} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Confirmed Cases (at Household Level)}}{\text{Total Number of Households in the Community}} \times 100$$

While the definitions of human trafficking and other forms of child exploitation (such as hazardous child labor or sexual exploitation) may seem clear in principle, in reality it can be very difficult to determine whether cases of children working in the fishing industry or having married before age 18 do in fact constitute instances of child trafficking. One important concern when developing the data collection tools for both phases of the study was to strike a balance between devising relatively short and easily comprehensible questions, and getting enough detail to determine whether an instance of a child working in fishing or married before age 18 constituted trafficking. This balance was critical to obtaining accurate household prevalence rates for child trafficking in the target communities; therefore, each potential instance of child trafficking needed to be investigated and confirmed.

With this balance in mind, the study generated remarkable information about the manifestations of child trafficking and important lessons about designing a study to determine the prevalence of child trafficking within large rural communities. Using social mapping to determine prevalence proved to be a challenge because it was time consuming and members of particularly large communities had difficulty establishing the total number of households in the community, which was critical in calculating prevalence. The lessons from the 2016 phase of the study led to several refinements to the tools and implementation of the 2017 phase of the study. These include the following:

1. The 2016 phase of the study was conducted alongside entry into the first 20 communities to collect data before the project had influenced community members or raised general awareness of trafficking. Since the study relies on



participants' ability to identify and distinguish between cases of hazardous child labor and child trafficking, the study period was delayed in 2017 so that enumerators could work with CCPC members who had gained more familiarity with the study's key concepts. These anti-trafficking group members helped to gather neighbors to form focus groups and identify households where suspected cases of trafficking occurred.

2. During analysis of the 2016 phase of the study, qualitative data suggested that while the majority of the identified cases were indeed instances of trafficking, focus group and survey questions were phrased in a manner that did not actively exclude cases of labor exploitation that might not constitute child trafficking. To correct for these potential sources of error, in the 2017 phase of the study focus group guidelines and survey questionnaires were refined to more clearly distinguish cases of trafficking from other forms of exploitation such as hazardous child labor.
3. In the 2016 phase of the study, cases of child sex trafficking that did not overlap with one of the 2016 study's subcategories of trafficking (forced labor in fishing, domestic servitude, and forced marriage) were not collected. This omission was corrected for the 2017 phase of the study; questions were added to the focus group guidelines and the survey questionnaire to identify cases of child sex trafficking.

## FOCUS GROUPS AND KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Focus group discussions and key informant interviews were carried out in all 34 communities. The primary purpose of these discussions was to increase participants' understanding of the concepts of child trafficking and its component parts, and to obtain qualitative information about the exploitation of children in project communities.

For both phases of the study, four focus groups were convened in each community.

Participants were divided into groups based on their age and gender: adult males, adult females, adolescent males, and adolescent females. The participants discussed their knowledge of child trafficking and local attitudes towards trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Following a period during which participants discussed their own perceptions of the





phenomena, enumerators provided brief but precise explanations of the concepts. This prepared the ground for the social mapping exercise and equipped the participants with the ability to identify households based on a shared understanding of concepts. This clarity of concept was important for the identification of the phenomena in the households during the social mapping.

## SOCIAL MAPPING

Following the focus group discussions and key informant interviews, social mapping exercises were carried out in all 34 communities. The social mapping exercises served 1) to provide community anti-trafficking groups with maps of their community to help target their interventions and awareness-raising initiatives; and, 2) to locate instances of child trafficking within the community. Focus group participants were then combined into three groups: adult males, adult females, and all adolescents. Each produced a unique social map and the three maps were then consolidated into a final social map that all parties agreed to.

During the 2016 phase of the study, community entry took place either shortly before or shortly after the baseline study was conducted and social maps were designed by a



group of community members assembled by a community representative familiar with the FTS program. During the 2017 phase of the study, actual sketching was done by CCPC members in each community. They discussed, drew and agreed on a pictorial representation of their community. The maps included all roads, rivers, social centers,

religious centers, and landmarks they could identify, and as many households as they could recall. Each CCPC used its own approach for the initial draft, for example, writing on the floor with chalk or on a blackboard of a classroom. Enumerators later helped participants transfer the maps onto a flip chart.

In addition to identifying households that were home to victims of trafficking, participants in the social mapping exercise attributed wealth rankings to each household. This was done to get a sense of the correlation between perceived wealth and household prevalence of trafficking. Households were identified as: “poor, getting by, or affluent.”

## HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS

The sampling strategy was purposeful, targeting households that had been identified as having child victims of trafficking. These surveys were designed to validate and confirm instances of trafficking identified during the social mapping session.

## LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

While the two-phase study collected vital and revealing data, there are naturally some limitations as to what this data can be taken to suggest:

- Given the reliance on community members' knowledge of their community, there is the possibility that the social mapping exercises did not capture all households in each surveyed community. The research teams cited instances during the 2017 phase of the study when they met more households in some housing complexes than were originally identified during social mapping. In addition, some participants were unwilling to provide information about other people's households despite assurances of confidentiality. In some instances, community members insisted that their household be 'deleted' from the social mapping since they had not been consulted before their household had been added. This typically reduced the total number of households and suggests that actual prevalence may be lower than calculated rates.
- Experience from both phases of the study suggest that using social mapping to arrive at a sense of household trafficking prevalence is more successful in communities with a lower number of households. The 2016 phase of the study found that, in larger communities, most focus group participants were less familiar with the parts of the community outside of their local neighborhood. In addition to this, they often did not have full information about individual household composition, and most were reluctant to discuss other people's households. This undermined the reliability of the social mapping activity in larger communities. To mitigate this in the 2017 phase of the study, all communities that had populations of more than 1,700 (based on 2010 population and housing census figures) were split into two sections; and communities that had 6,000 or more people were split into three sections. Each section was treated as a separate community. Even with these adjustments, the research team conducting the 2017 phase of the study relied heavily on the expertise and knowledge of CCPC members to identify and describe household characteristics that could not be provided by focus group participants. This limitation was particularly evident in the communities in the Greater Accra Region. These communities were too large to effectively determine a prevalence rate using this study's methodology. For instance, all communities in the Greater Accra Region except for one were split into two or three sections to make the social mapping as accurate as possible. Still, household prevalence and population for three of the four project communities in the Greater Accra Region were not possible to calculate.

- Despite efforts to include only confirmed cases of child trafficking, the household prevalence rates calculated for the 2016 phase of the study may be inflated by including cases of hazardous child labor or other forms of exploitation that would not meet Ghana's definition of human trafficking. This is due to imprecise distinctions used to differentiate between forms of child trafficking and exploitation. To correct for these potential sources of error, the 2017 phase of the study focus group guidelines and survey questionnaires were refined to more clearly distinguish cases of trafficking from other forms of exploitation such as hazardous child labor. These ambiguities exemplify the difficulties in determining the precise household prevalence rate of trafficking in an area.
- In addition, both phases of the study likely overlooked cases of sex trafficking. The 2016 phase, while it sought to gather a range of data on different forms of trafficking, did not specifically design questions to discover cases of sex trafficking that community members might have been reluctant to report. While the 2017 phase attempted to identify cases of sex trafficking through a series of questions in focus groups and household surveys, community members often provided qualitative data on cases that would be considered trafficking under Ghanaian law, but they did not identify these cases as sex trafficking or link them to households during the social mapping process.
- During the 2016 phase, NCG surveyed additional non-identified households when the number of identified households in the social mapping exercise was less than the sample size identified by the consultant prior to the social mapping activities. In the 2017 phase, a few households that were not identified in some communities were surveyed, especially where there were fewer than 30 households identified in the social mapping. This methodological adjustment may contribute to the difference between the rates of trafficking found by the two phases of the study.
- While trafficking rates of communities in Gomoa West appear alarmingly high, it should be noted that the rates do not represent the current or existing situation, but a rate at any given time. Since no time limit was set when collecting data on child trafficking for the 2016 phase of the study, the percentage of households that had children who were victims of trafficking means that at any point in time (i.e. not necessarily at present) these households had one or more child trafficking victims. The 2017 phase of the study collected data only on those children in trafficking at the time of the field research, which may contribute to the lower rates of trafficking found in these communities.

# Faces of Freedom in Ghana

Many children trafficked into forced labor in fishing are never seen again. But the Growing Up Free program is already changing attitudes and saving lives.



**Dodzi Kwablavi** | Orphaned Child Trafficking Survivor Now Protects Her Own Child: Orphaned as a baby, Dodzi was adopted by an impoverished local woman who trafficked her into fishing on Lake Volta. She spent years as a labor and sexual trafficking victim. Today she is learning new skills to support her daughter in freedom



**Richard Mensa** | Child Trafficking Victim Deprived of Education Dreams of Being a Teacher: Poverty and ignorance forced Richard's grandmother to traffic him into fishing. He spent seven years on Lake Volta. At her funeral he saw a chance to be free—and was courageous enough to take it.



**Francis Alehey** | His Father Aided Traffickers – His Mother Finally Saved Him: Francis' father was a trafficking collaborator who took money to exploit vulnerable children. He sold many—even his own son. Trapped on Lake Volta, Francis was beaten and abused. His mother saved him by taking a stand.



**Setsofia Dowokpor** | Illness Forced His Mother to Sell Him into Forced Labor: His bedridden mother sold him to traffickers in a desperate bid for money. Setsofia was trapped for five years. When his mother died, community outreach efforts won him his freedom.

Read their complete case histories: [www.freetheslaves.net/ghana](http://www.freetheslaves.net/ghana).

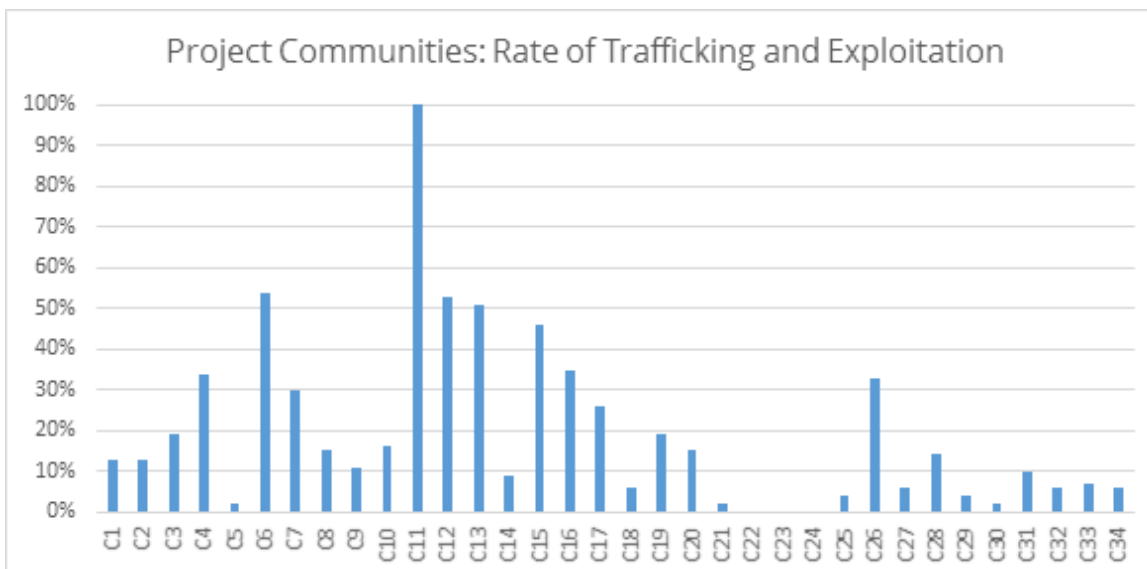
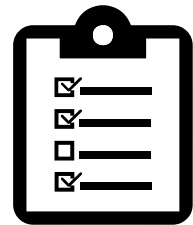


# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT

## Findings

### PREVALENCE

The two-phase baseline study collected a vast amount of qualitative data that has been used to inform FTS and INGH's programmatic interventions. In addition, except for three communities in the Greater Accra Region, the study provided rates of child trafficking and exploitation for each project community.



Calculations for communities C22-23-24 were not possible. See "Methodologies and Limitations" for details.

The range of rates of exploitation differed noticeably within and between the two phases of the study. As discussed in "Methodology and Limitations," much of this difference may be due to the changes to the focus and disaggregation of the data collection tools between the two phases. The 2016 phase found an average of 35.2 percent of households (with a low of 2 percent and a high of 100 percent) having a victim of child trafficking or exploitation.



These identified cases were broken down as follows:

2016 Phase of the Study Findings Types of Trafficking and Exploitation	
50%	Cases in the fishing industry
27%	Cases of domestic servitude
4%	Cases of forced marriage
19%	Cases of Worst Forms of Child Labor or trafficking in other industries

The disaggregation in the 2017 phase of the study was adjusted to distinguish between cases of trafficking and those of hazardous child labor that may have been captured in the data for "domestic servitude" and "other cases of the Worst Forms of Child Labor or trafficking in other industries." The 2017 research team found a low of 2.2 percent and a high of 32.7 percent for the prevalence of child labor trafficking in the 14 communities it included. It also found a low of 0 percent and a high of 4 percent for the prevalence of hazardous child labor in these same communities. The 2017 team identified no cases of child sex trafficking or forced child marriage.

## SEX TRAFFICKING

Neither phase of the study captured quantitative evidence of sex trafficking in the 34 project communities. But qualitative data from the focus groups and key informant interviews suggests that cases of sex trafficking are not uncommon in a number of project communities, and community members are reluctant to classify them as such. Participants frequently conflated all sexual activities they viewed as consensual and were reluctant to view commercial sexual exploitation of a child as sex trafficking. This was true even in cases where the child was paid for sex and had been encouraged to participate by a parent or guardian as a means of supporting their family. In the 2017 study, the exchange of sex for money was found to be widespread but few cases were reported where a third party was identified as orchestrating or financially benefitting from it.

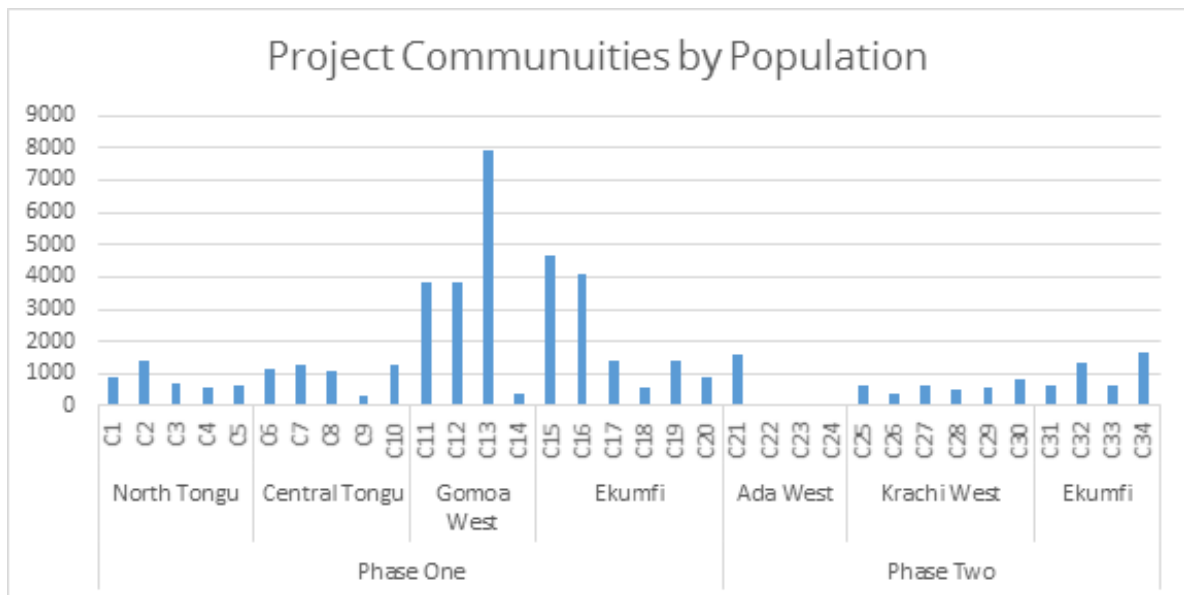


## COMMUNITY SIZE

Based on data collected during both study phases, community size is not consistently associated with the rate of child trafficking. Three of the largest target communities in Gomoa West with populations above 3,500 had some of the highest overall rates of trafficking and exploitation. There does not appear, however, to be a consistent relationship between population size and rate of trafficking. While in the 2016 study phase, the smaller communities tended to have lower rates of trafficking and exploitation, it was the opposite in the 2017 phase, where some of the more sparsely populated communities in Krachi West had some of the highest confirmed household prevalence rates that the study found (C26 and C28).







Calculations for communities C22-23-24 were not possible. See “Methodologies and Limitations” for details.

## HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC STATUS

Participatory wealth ranking conducted during the social mapping phase allowed participants to classify each identified household along a rubric ranging from “affluent,” to “getting by,” and “poor.” Although poverty was often described as a root cause of human trafficking by community participants, when considered alone it was not consistently linked to child trafficking in all communities. In some cases, the rate of poverty identified in this manner tracked the community’s rate of trafficking closely (such is the case in C11, C12, C13, C15, C25 and C26), but in the majority of cases the confirmed household prevalence rate of trafficking is significantly lower than the number of households identified as “poor” through social mapping.



The percentage of households that were characterized as “poor” ran from 1 percent to as high as 97 percent. Qualitative data collected during focus groups and social map development have shown that many community members believe the practices of exploitation identified in both parts of the study are the result of dire need caused by poverty. In some of the 20 communities surveyed in 2016, community members were not enthusiastic about the project’s aim of extricating child trafficking victims from the fishing industry. They saw the family’s need for income as a more pressing problem and, in some cases, saw a child’s return from trafficking as presenting a financial challenge for the family. This should be contrasted with the very negative attitude that participants in the 2017 phase of the study had towards trafficking. Often community members saw high rates of teenage pregnancies as being exacerbating factors that contributed to large families unable to provide for all their children. Focus group discussants returned to the lack of development in their communities throughout their conversations, describing poor access to health facilities, clean water and toilet facilities. The 2017 study team found that teenage pregnancy provided a basis for child marriage.

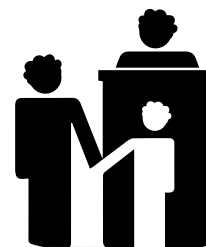
## PARENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

Both adults and children were found to be well aware of the harsh working conditions for children in the fishing industry. They know that the poor conditions and types of work children are subjected to, for example in fishing and domestic servitude, are often dangerous, damaging the health of the children and that they risk losing children to fatal injuries. The economic desperation of some households is demonstrated by the low sums paid to parents to “hire” their child, reportedly ranging from 100 GHS (approximately \$25) to 300 GHS (approximately \$60). In these same communities, a 25 kg sack of rice would be sold for 170 GHS. At the same time, many focus group participants were not clear on Ghanaian laws related to what type of work and working conditions are illegal for children. Often, any work that children did to help support their families would be considered legitimate regardless of whether it was hazardous or exploitative.



## PUBLIC SERVICES

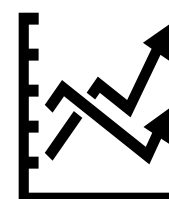
The study found that community members only rarely experience help from government agencies and the general picture seems to be that awareness and enforcement of the law and governmental social support structures are absent in many communities. Different types of preventive community mechanisms that try to enhance protection of children have been implemented in some of the communities. Community authorities such as elders and chiefs are common reference points for such initiatives. NGOs are working in some of the communities and some of these NGOs are already referring children and/or families to the Growing Up Free program.



## METHODS OF TRAFFICKING

The study also provided useful information about the methods of traffickers and different forms of trafficking in the surveyed communities. The 2016 study team found clear indications of traffickers operating in an organized manner in some of the target communities to identify and recruit child trafficking victims into the fishing industry. In North and Central Tongu, children are almost exclusively trafficked to fishing communities within the region. In Ekumfi and Gomoa West, children are trafficked both to Volta Region, to other communities in Central Region and to destinations outside of Ghana. The 2017 study team included many reports from the Volta Region of the overlap of sex and labor trafficking in which children given away or sold by their parents to work in fishing or another industry were ultimately forced into sex trafficking. Such cases were not, however, captured in the quantitative data gathered during the 2017 phase of the study.

Qualitative data on children sent away from their home communities to work in domestic servitude either via relatives or middlemen showed that most children work under harsh conditions. Although some girls are treated well, especially when they live with close family, most of them are not fed well, work long hours, are beaten, are sometimes sexually abused, and many do not attend school. Most adults are well aware of these working conditions yet still choose to send their children away to work. The reason given for sending a child to work in the fishing industry is often poverty; parents say they lack the financial means to take care of their children. In contrast, some parents report that working in domestic servitude provides the chance for a child to learn a trade and build character, or that forcing a child to perform such work serves a means of discipline





# TRAFFICKING'S FOOTPRINT

## Key Observations and Recommendations

### COMMUNITY VULNERABILITIES

Many of the vulnerabilities described by community members during the two-phase study form the focus of the FTS Growing Up Free program. These include:

- A general lack of awareness of children's rights under Ghanaian law
- The absence of strong protective community organizations to protect children from traffickers
- Difficulties accessing vital services such as health and education



The Growing Up Free program aims to address these vulnerabilities directly through building community resistance and resilience by increasing the public's awareness of children's rights and the risks of trafficking, and through the establishment of active and reliable CCPCs that take an active role in identifying trafficked children and securing their safe return.

### LIVELIHOODS

In almost all communities studied, residents expressed a desperate need for employment and income-generating activities. The vulnerabilities created by a lack of employment opportunities are being 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



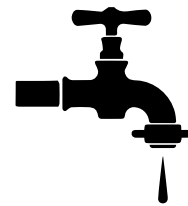
## TEEN PREGNANCY

Community members identified teenage pregnancies as an inciting factor for many forced marriages and as a long-term cause of the poverty of large families. They often reported cases of parents who forced their daughters to marry the man who impregnated them. According to reports, this has frequently led to girls being deprived of education and forced to find the means of providing for their child. In response to these findings, FTS and INGH have mobilized community anti-trafficking groups throughout these communities to train adolescent community members on family planning strategies and to advocate for alternative means of addressing teenage pregnancies that do not involve forced marriage.



## INFRASTRUCTURE

Community members' focus on the need for better access to toilets, clean water and health care facilities suggests a mutually beneficial relationship could be established between development programs that focus on the provision of fundamental infrastructure needs and anti-trafficking programs that build community-level resistance to trafficking.



## AWARENESS-RAISING ON GHANAIAN TRAFFICKING LAWS

Community members' tendency to view certain forms of child labor and sex trafficking as legitimate demonstrates a great need for raising awareness about Ghanaian human trafficking laws (including those concerning both child labor trafficking and child sex trafficking) and norm change activities at the community level. This is especially true given that sex trafficking cases where girls were paid for sex at the behest of a guardian were reported and discussed by focus groups, but not identified as sex trafficking during social mapping sessions. This is a key component of FTS work under the Growing Up Free project, and it has been a particular focus of the program since this study was conducted.



# End Notes

<sup>1</sup>1956 U.N. Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/SupplementaryConventionAbolitionOfSlavery.aspx>.

<sup>2</sup>International Labor Organization C182 Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999: [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C182](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182).

<sup>3</sup>International Labor Organization, Walk Free Foundation and International Organization for Migration, Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, 2017: <https://www.alliance87.org/2017ge/#!section=0>.

<sup>4</sup>The 2017 phase of the study also found significant qualitative evidence of sexual exploitation, and focus groups discussed a number of cases which would likely qualify as sex trafficking. These cases were not captured quantitatively in the figures reported here, however.

<sup>5</sup>The 2017 Estimates of Modern Slavery reported approximately 25 million people in forced labor, including forced sexual exploitation of adults and children, and approximately 15 million people in forced marriage.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>United States Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report (June 2017): <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/271339.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup>International Justice Mission, *Child Trafficking into Forced Labor on Lake Volta, Ghana: A Mixed-Methods Assessment*: <https://www.ijm.org/sites/default/files/resources/ijm-ghana-report.pdf>.



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Learn more: [www.freetheslaves.net](http://www.freetheslaves.net)

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