

## **UNFPA SUPPORT TO GHANA IN THE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

The shared objective of the government and UNFPA in its assistance in Ghana has been to advance awareness and enjoyment of rights by all inhabitants – women, men and young people - facilitated by the government and civil society partners, collaboration with other UN Agencies and bilateral development partners.

Some of the human rights instruments and measures which have received technical and financial support from UNFPA, in collaboration with implementing partners, include:

1. Review of the Children's Act 560 of 1998 – to increase the legal minimum age of marriage to 18 years;
2. Amendments of the Criminal Code
  - a. – Act 29 of 1998 that criminalized harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital Cutting/Mutilation, Trokosi - abolished customary/ritual servitude within the wider context of harmful traditional practices and similar practices;
  - b. – Act 554 of 1998 that increased the age of criminal responsibility, and had specific provisions for the protection of women and children from all forms of violence and abuse specific offenses (indecent assault, sexual offences with related sanctions).
3. Support for the elaboration and submission of the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> reports to the CEDAW Committee;
4. Adoption of the Domestic Violence Act 732 of 2007, including advocacy with policy makers, training and consultations with stakeholders; development of a costed National Plan of Action for the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (on-going);
5. Human Trafficking Act 694 of 2005 – participation in consultations;
6. Spousal Property Rights Bill - participation in consultations;
7. Support for the establishment of the Women and Juveniles Unit (WAJU) subsequently the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service;
8. Support for the establishment of the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) in 2001 and adoption of the National Gender and Children's Policy in 2005 to mainstream gender concerns in national development processes to improve the socio-cultural, legal, economic and political situation and participation of both women and men;
9. The Draft of the Youth Policy, the National Adolescent Reproductive Health Policy and the National Adolescent Development Programme and related adolescent and sexual reproductive health capacity building programmes;
10. The elaboration of the Reproductive Health Policy and Standards; support for Fistula Management and campaign for its eradication;
11. The Draft Ageing Policy review.

UNFPA advocated for the adoption of the Domestic Violence Act and provided support for its implementation in national institutions. One of the most innovative strategies, even before the adoption of the Act, has been the partnership with the national police to reinforce its capacities to provide services to survivors. UNFPA also supported the elaboration of a national plan to implement the Domestic Violence Act that finally passed into law in May 2007. In a joint programme with UNDP, and in close collaboration with the gender sector group, UNFPA has assisted in the development of the implementation plan – an inter-sectoral plan to make the law a reality in Ghana.