



Child Protection Policy

For the

Catholic Church

In

Ghana

Child Protection Policy For the Catholic Church In Ghana

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PREFACE

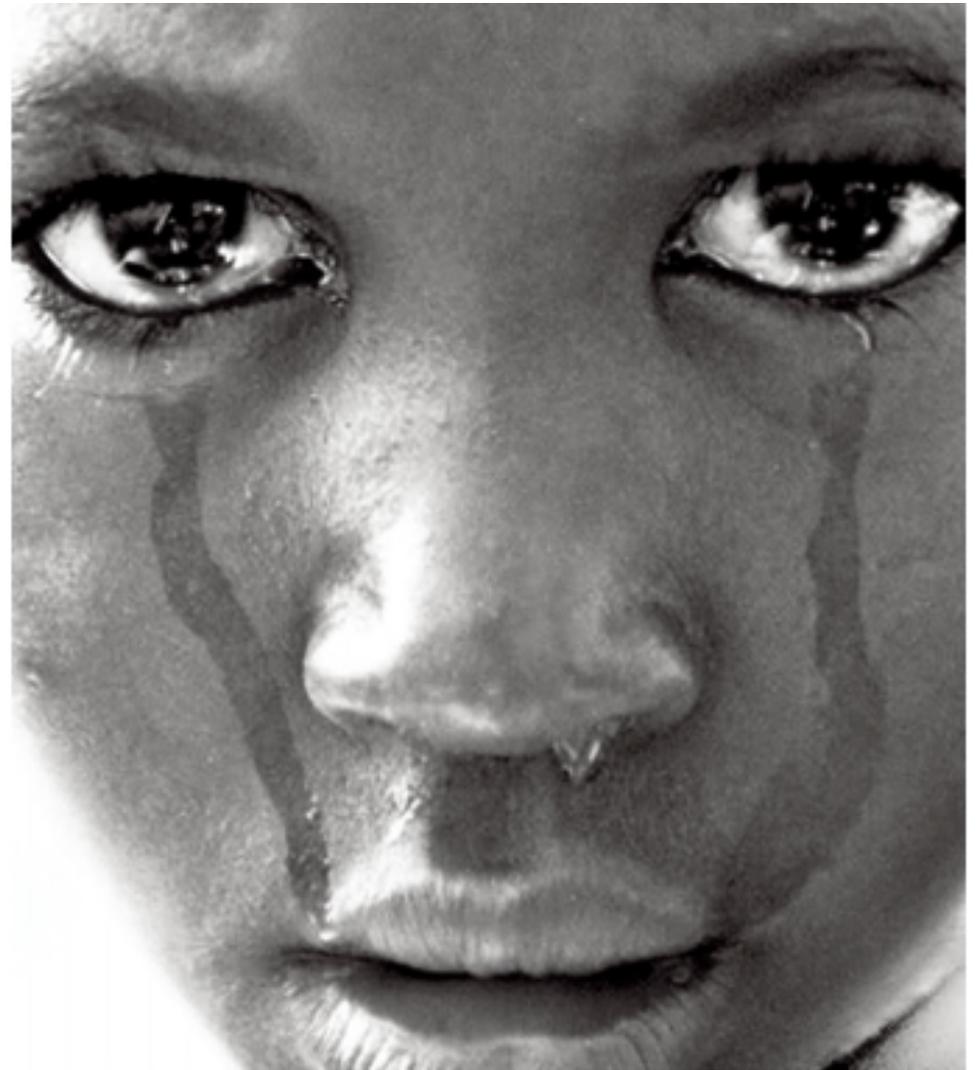
It is with profound happiness that we present to the Catholic Church in Ghana, the Child Protection Policy of the Catholic Church. After many years of reflection through workshops, seminars and meetings, we your Bishops have come out with this Policy which seeks to protect and safeguard the well-being of children and the vulnerable in our Church and society.

It is regrettable and sad that the Church which identifies herself with the poor and vulnerable is itself accused of covering up and not doing enough to protect children and the vulnerable. The release of painstaking investigative documents on years of child sexual abuse has not only dented the image and credibility of the church but has also compromised her very mission to children in society.

Pope Francis has recently expressed great sadness and apologized to victims of child abuse in the Church and the cover-up by some church authorities. He has taken a serious view at this and has urged all church authorities to put measures in place to prevent such abuse and even where it occurs that there is no cover-up.

This Child Protection Policy of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference seeks to improve, sensitize and enact measures that will eliminate child abuse and or prevent its occurrence. It is the product of years of reflection through seminars and workshops by the Centre for Human Development of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference. We have also relied on documentations from Dioceses and Religious Congregations from within and outside Ghana who have developed their responses to the issue of Child Sexual abuse in their circumstances.

We would like to thank the Committee of experts for bringing their experience and expertise to bear in the policy.



- Teach your children what to do if someone tries to touch them.
- Teach your children what to do if someone makes them uncomfortable.

5. Communicate Your Concerns: confront and tell someone when you are uncomfortable with a situation, or discuss suspected abuse with a state official. Pay attention to your own feelings and do not wait until it is too late. Only by communicating concerns can we use our knowledge to protect children. Even if abuse is not occurring, it is still important to let others know when you have concerns. This is one of the most difficult, but important steps in the process of eliminating abuse.

- Talk to the person involved, and/ or
- Report to the CPO or a member of the CPC, and/or
- Report to the police.

By the publication of this document, it supersedes all other Catholic Church related Child Protection Policy documents within Ghana. It is the dream of the Conference that the adoption of this policy document will create many safe environments for our children and the vulnerable in the Church in particular and the Ghanaian society in general.



Most Rev. Philip Naameh

Archbishop of Tamale &

President: Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference

Foreword

The pain caused by the crime of child abuse by clergy and Church personnel cannot be described and cured. It marks the victim and his loved ones for life. Aware of this the Catholic Church has, over the years, invited her clergy, religious and all persons working with children entrusted to their care, to abide by guidelines that protect the children under 18 years of age (minors) and vulnerable adults who, like children cannot give full consent to what they are doing or what is done to and with them.

Already in 2002, Pope John Paul II stated, "*there is no place in the priesthood and religious life for those who would harm the young*" (n. 3, *Address to the American Cardinals*, 23 April 2002). This has been restated by Popes Benedict XVI and Francis.

On 10th July 2014, when Pope Francis met victims of sexual abuse of minors and as he expressed his deep sorrow, he said:

There is no place in the ministry of the Church for those who commit such abuses, and I commit myself not to tolerate this evil that is inflicted on a minor by anyone independently of his clerical state. All bishops must exercise their pastoral service with the greatest care in order to ensure the protection of minors and they will have to give an account of this responsibility.

Our Popes have thus made it clear that we have to prevent abuse from happening and we cannot condone abusive behaviour of our members and just transfer people from one place to the other without doing something about the abusive behaviour. Transferring the person who has sexually offended a minor, is like burying the head in the sand. The problem does not disappear of that. It is only postponed.

Bishops' Conferences and Conferences of Major Superiors have been

programmes should be supervised to ensure proper policies and procedures are being followed to keep children safe. If the abusers know that someone is watching, they have more trouble finding opportunities to abuse without getting caught.

- Identify secluded areas, lock empty rooms.
- Develop policies regarding use of secluded areas. For example, staff should check bathrooms before sending children in alone.
- Do not permit children to enter staff-only areas.
- Only meet with children where other adults can pass by.
- Supervisors should look in on activities.
- Make sure enough adults are involved in programmes.
- Allow parents to drop in on programmes.
- Don't start new programmes without approval from the Pastoral Council, the Parish Priest, and/or the children's ministry committee.

4. Be Aware of Child and Youth Behaviour: Parents and caring adults should know what is going on in the lives of the children within their care and pay attention to subtle signs of a problem. Communication is vital. When we observe and communicate with our children, we are more likely to detect the signs if they are in danger. We can notice a sudden change in behaviour (e.g. if they get moody or aggressive, lose interest in school, or stop taking care of their personal hygiene) all potential signs of child sexual abuse.

- Talk to your children.
- Listen to your children.
- Observe your children.
- Let your children know they can tell you anything.
- Teach your children where their private parts are.
- Talk to your children often about protecting themselves.

Appendix J: Creating and Promoting A Child Protection/ Safe Environment through Education

During an education session/ orientation, children, pastoral agents, teachers and caregivers, etc. and all in contact with children should be made aware of the following things:

- 1. Know the Warning Signs.** They should be helped to recognise the early signs of inappropriate relationship between an adult and children and be able to identify potential abuse before it happens.
 - Discourages other adults from participating or monitoring.
 - Always wants to be alone with children.
 - More excited to be with children than with adults.
 - Gives gifts to children, often without permission.
 - Goes overboard touching.
 - Always wants to wrestle or tickle.
 - Thinks the rules do not apply to them.
 - Allows children to engage in activities their parents would not allow.
 - Uses bad language or tells dirty jokes to children.
 - Shows children pornography.

- 2. Control Access through Screening:** Be careful about whom we allow to work with our children and include items that must be completed prior to working with children.
 - Communicate the church's commitment to keeping children safe.
 - Use written, standard applications.
 - Require criminal background checks.
 - Complete face-to-face interviews.
 - Check references.

- 3. Monitor all Ministries and Programmes:** Once the screening has been done on adults, all ministries and

invited by the Pope to formulate *Child Protection Policies* for priests and religious and all church personnel working with minors and vulnerable adults. It is in this light that the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference produced the *Guidelines for Dealing with Cases of Sexual Abuse of Minors perpetrated by Clerics* (May 2015). This has now been developed further taking into consideration Child Protection Policies from other places and recent instructions from the Vatican. Quoting the words of St Paul, in his letter of 20th August 2018, Pope Francis stated that “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it” (1 Cor 12:26). We cannot remain indifferent. We are called to prevent this suffering from ever happening.

This *Child Protection Policy of the Catholic Church in Ghana* (2018), offers the new Guidelines for the priests and religious and lay people working with children and vulnerable adults in the name of the Catholic Church in Ghana. It abrogates the 20185 Guidelines.

May our children and vulnerable adults know that they are safe in our midst.

Bishop Richard Kuuia Baawobr, M.Afr.
Bishop of Wa
Episcopal Chairperson for Clergy & Religious

Preamble

- 1.1. Every child is precious as he / she is created in the image and likeness of God. He / she is to be protected in the pastoral care that the Church offers through her personnel. The protection that is to be offered to children under 18 years of age, is also to be offered to *vulnerable adults* because, like the children, they constitute a group who cannot protect themselves, or defend themselves against abuse. Abuse of children is a delict, crime in Church Law (Can. 1395 §2) and in Civil Law.
- 1.2. Jesus welcomed children and made them feel safe and loved in his presence. He exhorted his disciples to let the children come unto him so that he could welcome them and bless them (cf. Mt. 19:14). This attitude of Jesus is what the Church, Family of God in Ghana wants to emulate. We want that children and other vulnerable people feel safe in the presence of those who minister to them and are not exploited.
- 1.3. Child sexual abuse happens in many places, at home, in the school, in the parish, but is often muted for obvious reasons. This violation of the rights of the child is often done by relatives/guardians, teachers, health workers, religious leaders and practitioners, caregivers and strangers. This is alarming. This raises serious pastoral concerns that demand a strong prophetic voice to address and fight for its extermination.
- 1.4. In the recent past in some countries in the world, the abuse of children has landed the Church in a very difficult situation and has cost the Church a lot of money, but has especially affected the credibility of the Gospel she proclaims to God's people. Those who have survived from having been so

Appendix H: Abuse Report Form (to be attached) Appendix I: Acknowledgement of Receipt of Child Protection Policy

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCH/DIOCESE _____
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I, the undersigned hereby acknowledge that I received a copy of the Arch/Diocese of _____ Child Protection Policy. Further, that I have read the Policy, that I understand its meaning, and that I agree to conduct myself in conformity with the Policy and as the Policy may be amended in the future. I also understand that this acknowledgment will be kept in my personnel file. And I do hereby take full, personal responsibility for my actions in breach of the Policy.

Surname-----

Forname-----

Date of Birth-----

Address-----

Contact Phone Number-----

Signature-----

Witness-----

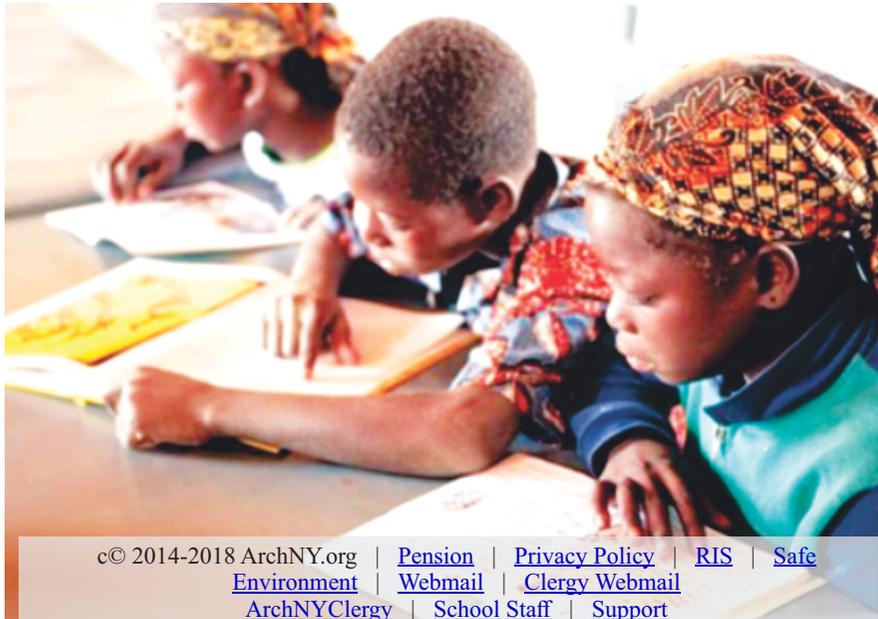
Date-----

¹⁰To be signed by those working with children after they have been given an orientation in Child Protection.

has accepted to live a life of prayer and penance, the CDF authorizes the local bishop to issue a decree prohibiting or restricting the public ministry of such a priest. Such decrees are imposed through a penal precept which would entail a canonical penalty for a violation of the conditions of the decree, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state. Administrative recourse to the CDF is possible against such decrees. The decision of the CDF is final.

C. Revision of MPSST

For some time the CDF has undertaken a revision of some of the articles of "Motu Proprio Sacramentorum Sanctitatis tutela", in order to update the said Motu Proprio of 2001 in the light of special faculties granted to the CDF by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI. The proposed modifications under discussion will not change the above-mentioned procedures (A, B1-B3).CDF/VIS 20100412 (720).



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abused carry scars that no amount of monetary compensation can repair.

- 1.5. Pope Francis has directed Bishops' Conferences and Conferences of Major Superiors all over the world to draw up policies that will protect children against abuse by those who are ministering to them. Such policies will also help those who minister to minors to know how to minister to them in the most appropriate manner. They will also help all to know which steps to take when an abuse happens: how to report the case, how it is to be investigated and judged and what type of support is to be offered to the survivor of the abuse and the family and community and to the one who has perpetrated the abuse and to the community and family.
- 1.6. This *Policy*, issued by the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, takes into consideration the above elements in view of ensuring that the service that is rendered to children and other vulnerable adults is in conformity with the demands of the Gospels and of justice in Ghana. It has been inspired by similar policies drawn up by some Episcopal Conferences, Dioceses, and some Institutes of Apostolic and Consecrated Life inside and outside of Ghana.¹
- 1.7. This *Policy* is binding for all Church personnel working in Ghana with children and around children and vulnerable adults.

2. Definition of Terms

- 2.1. The terms used in this *Policy* are to be understood in the following manner:
- 2.1.1. **A Child** is any person who has not yet reached his or her 18th birthday. This is the widely accepted definition of the term, used in the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (No.1).
- 2.1.2 **A Vulnerable Adult** means a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself/herself from violence, abuse or neglect is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, through old age or otherwise. Canonically, a vulnerable person is said to habitually lack the use of reason and as such enjoys the special protection of the Church. All the rights of children are to be enjoyed by vulnerable adults.+
- 2.1.3. **A Minor** is an overarching term which includes children, adolescents and vulnerable adults.
- 2.1.4. **An Abused child** is any child who has been neglected, or sexually, physically, spiritually or psychologically injured.
- 2.1.5. **A Delict** is a crime in canon law, an external violation of a law or precept gravely imputable by reason of malice or negligence.
- 2.1.6. **A Rumour** is general gossip among people.
- 2.1.7. **An Allegation** is an assertion made by a party which the party then undertakes to prove.

¹ These include the Child Protection Policies of the US and Irish Bishops' Conferences, the Archdioceses of Kansas City, USA, Hartford, USA, the Navrongo-Bolgatanga Diocese, the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), the Missionaries of Africa (M. Afr), etc. Some materials from the Centre for Child Protection of the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, Italy, have also been incorporated into this Policy

B1 Penal Processes

The CDF may authorize the local bishop to conduct a judicial penal trial before a local Church tribunal. Any appeal in such cases would eventually be lodged to a tribunal of the CDF.

The CDF may authorize the local bishop to conduct an administrative penal process before a delegate of the local bishop assisted by two assessors. The accused priest is called to respond to the accusations and to review the evidence. The accused has a right to present recourse to the CDF against a decree condemning him to a canonical penalty. The decision of the Cardinals members of the CDF is final.

Should the cleric be judged guilty, both judicial and administrative penal processes can condemn a cleric to a number of canonical penalties, the most serious of which is dismissal from the clerical state. The question of damages can also be treated directly during these procedures.

B2 Cases referred directly to the Holy Father

In very grave cases where a civil criminal trial has found the cleric guilty of sexual abuse of minors or where the evidence is overwhelming, the CDF may choose to take the case directly to the Holy Father with the request that the Pope issue a decree of "ex officio" dismissal from the clerical state. There is no canonical remedy against such a papal decree.

The CDF also brings to the Holy Father requests by accused priests who, cognizant of their crimes, ask to be dispensed from the obligation of the priesthood and want to return to the lay state. The Holy Father grants these requests for the good of the Church ("pro bono Ecclesiae").

B3 Disciplinary Measures

In cases where the accused priest has admitted to his crimes and

Appendix G: Guide to Understanding Basic Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith Procedures Concerning Sexual Abuse Allegations

The applicable law is the Motu Proprio "Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela" (MP SST) of 30 April 2001 together with the 1983 Code of Canon Law. This is an introductory guide which may be helpful to lay persons and non-canonists.

A: Preliminary Procedures

The local diocese investigates every allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a cleric. If the allegation has a semblance of truth the case is referred to the CDF. The local bishop transmits all the necessary information to the CDF and expresses his opinion on the procedures to be followed and the measures to be adopted in the short and long term.

Civil law concerning reporting of crimes to the appropriate authorities should always be followed.

During the preliminary stage and until the case is concluded, the bishop may impose precautionary measures to safeguard the community, including the victims. Indeed, the local bishop always retains power to protect children by restricting the activities of any priest in his diocese. This is part of his ordinary authority, which he is encouraged to exercise to whatever extent is necessary to assure that children do not come to harm, and this power can be exercised at the bishop's discretion before, during and after any canonical proceeding.

B: Procedures authorized by the CDF

The CDF studies the case presented by the local bishop and also asks for supplementary information where necessary. The CDF has a number of options:

2.1.8. **An Accusation** exists where a person has some evidence that a crime was committed and reports it. In this category, certain difficult cases can arise, for example:

- a) The person has evidence that a child or children are in danger, but does not know the perpetrator.
- b) The person has evidence that a particular person is committing a crime, but does not know the alleged victims.

Whether it is a rumour, allegation, or accusation, all three must always be taken seriously and acted upon. The difference between "rumour" and "allegation" can be subjective. All cases should be immediately communicated to the Diocesan Child Protection Officer, who with the Commission that assists him/ her, is qualified, and whose job it is to investigate and decide the substance of any "rumour" or "allegation."

2.1.9. **An Abuse** is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It takes different forms. Each form of abuse has to be taken seriously as one often leads to another. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal, spiritual or psychological. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. In reality, the impact is often multifaceted. An abuse is essentially an injustice.

2.1.10. **A Sexual Abuse** is when a person involves a child or another person in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent; or where the perpetrator is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override

or overcome lack of consent. It includes any act of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact, committed by an individual without the consent of the person targeted or in certain cases, such as that of children (or when consent could never be considered valid) by an emotional manipulation or by blackmail, threat or constraint. The perpetrator seeks to subject another person to his/ her own desires. It can significantly impact negatively on an individual's mental health, sometimes resulting in self-harming behaviours, sexualized behaviour, depression and low self-esteem. In addition to the emotional impact there is a possibility of sexually transmitted infections, including syphilis and HIV-AIDS. Sexual abuse is an injustice caused by the misuse of power or trust and is an assault on fundamental human rights, principally to the person's physical, psychological, spiritual integrity and his/her safety.

2.1.11. **Neglect** is the repeated deprivation of assistance that a child or vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the child or vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well-being or development is impaired.

2.1.12. **Psychological or Emotional Abuse** is normally to be found in the relationship between a care-giver and a minor rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. Acts or behaviours which cause mental distress or anguish to the minor or which negate the wishes of the vulnerable adult has a harmful effect on his/ her emotional health and development; or any other form of mental cruelty.

- b) issues of personal relationships with friends and family, to ensure that the person does not have unsupervised access to minors.
- 4. Who the supervisor is, responsible for implementing the *Safety Plan*?
- 5. Consequences for non-compliance with the *Safety Plan*;
- 6. Dates on which the *Safety Plan* was implemented and the last time it was reviewed.

The *Safety Plan* should be signed by the person, the Child Protection Officer and at least one person who is directly involved in the supervision of the individual.

Appendix E: Confidential Questionnaire for all persons working with Children (Partial Screening; to be handled by each Arch/ Diocese)

Appendix F: Covenant of Care/ Safety Plan for those who have Sexually Abused Minors (to be adapted to the circumstances of each Arch/ Diocese)

A written Safety Plan is necessary to ensure that the person who has abused minors will not be in a position to abuse again. A clear, written guideline is necessary so that both the person and those charged to supervise him have a clear and common understanding of the restrictions she/he must follow.

The guidelines should take into consideration the nature of the abuse, related factors (such as alcohol) that led to the abuse, the results of therapy or treatment programs the confreere has been engaged in, and the level of risk he has of abusing again.

Elements of the written *Safety Plan* should include the following:

1. A summary of the problem behaviours;
2. Information about how the person spends the majority of his/her time, including the specific work he/she has been assigned;
3. The restrictions he/she has, including:
 - a) limitations on the person's access to minors and how any such access is supervised;
 - clarify if the person can travel outside the community alone, or if he/she will need a another with him/her;
 - clarify if there will be restrictions on where he/she is allowed to go for walks, etc.
 - clarify what kind of reporting he/she needs to do concerning his/her whereabouts;
 - clarify if he/she is allowed internet access;

2.1.13. **Physical Abuse** is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. This can include, for example, pushing, hair pulling, inappropriate application of techniques, e.g. control and restraint, the use of incorrect moving and handling techniques that are potentially dangerous and are known to cause distress and misuse of medication. Physical abuse, whether it be in relation to a child or vulnerable adult, can lead to physical injuries and in extreme cases death.

2.1.14. **Discriminatory Abuse** is the inappropriate treatment of a child or a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

2.1.15. **Institutional Abuse** is the mistreatment or abuse of a child or a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice. It includes the inappropriate care of a vulnerable adult in an institutional situation (hospital, residential home, nursing home or in the community, etc.).

2.1.16. **Spiritual Abuse** is linked to emotional/institutional abuse. Spiritual abuse could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposing his/ her will on

other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

- 2.1.17. **A Victim/ survivor** is somebody who has suffered abuse in one form or the other.
- 2.1.18. **A Perpetrator** is somebody who has committed an abuse on a child or vulnerable adult.
- 2.1.19. **Support** refers to the help that is offered to the survivor or perpetrator and their families or communities because of the abuse.

3. **International and National Regulations on Child Rights and Protection**

- 3.1. The United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has outlined the rights of the child (Cf. Appendix A).
- 3.2. At the level of the African Union of which Ghana is a member, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children (ACRWC) recognizes and spells out the rights of the Child and how that is to be protected. Having signed up to these International Conventions and Protocols on the protection of children, and other regulations such as The Children's Acts, 1998 (Acts 560), The Criminal Code Amendment, 1998 (Act 554); policies on Early Childhood Development and many others we have committed ourselves as a country from the civil point of view to protect children. The Church cannot do less than the State in this matter.

paying particular attention to the child's age and to any medical condition or disability.

- Access to a telephone at all times is essential in case of emergency.
- Where transport is being provided by the parish or parish activity, make sure that drivers and vehicles meet legal requirements. Where transport is being hired, check with the service provider that drivers and vehicles conform to legal requirements. Always inform parents/guardians about transport being used.
- A clear policy should be agreed with parents and guardians regarding the taking of photographs and the making of video recordings of children or young people involved in parish-related activities or events.
- There should be regular health and safety reviews of facilities, procedures and practices.

11. **Record Keeping – Activities**

- Each Group will be responsible for storing in a confidential way an accurate record for each activity involving children or young people.
- This record should include a copy of the signed parental/guardian consent form with contact details for parents/guardians and should include necessary medical information.
- A written record of organisers and supervisors in attendance at events should also be kept.
- Ensure that an Incident Report Form is completed in the event of any accident or incident relating to a child or young person

9. Complaints Procedure

- Develop a clear and transparent complaints procedure and appeals process to be used by young people, staff, workers, volunteers, or by parents who are dissatisfied with any aspect of activities or services provided.
- Make sure that children and young people and their parents or guardians receive a copy of the complaints procedure.
- Fully inform all staff and volunteers about the complaints procedure.
- All complaints should be recorded.

10. Health and Safety

- Adequate and appropriate supervision must be provided in relation to all events and activities organised for children and young people.
- In places such as changing areas, toilets and showers, separate provision must be made for boys and girls.
- There must be adequate and gender-appropriate supervision of boys and girls in such areas.
- Ensure that buildings and/or facilities used for events and activities are suitable, safe and secure.
- Make sure that fire precautions are in place and that fire extinguishers are checked regularly.
- Make sure a first aid kit is readily available. This should be regularly checked and replenished. It is advisable that first aid training be provided for workers and volunteers.
- Be alert to the risk of injury involved in some contact sports,

- 3.3. The abuse of children is a crime at the level of civil law, a grave sin and a serious counter witness in the spreading of the faith and the ongoing pastoral care of the members of the Church.

4. Some Facts about Abuse

- 4.1. Because perpetrators of sexual violence towards children are adept at manipulating their victims into silence through fear, shame, confusion, intimidation, and the threat of violence, it is estimated globally that only about 10% of victims of child sexual abuse ever report their victimization. On the situation in Africa, according to a report by the World Health Organisation Regional Office for Africa on Child Abuse in 2011, Sub-Saharan Africa lifetime exposure to sexual violence was 23% of 13-15 year olds. Also, high levels of sexual coercion (as high as 38%) were reported by 12-19 year old girls. This was further compounded by the fact that 24% of school children reported forced sex. It is also reported that 51% of girls and 39% of boys report being propositioned by a teacher. The situation is therefore alarming and needs to be prevented before it shows up in even higher proportions in Ghana. Both preventive and curative measures need to be executed, and promptly too.

4.2. Ghana

Statistics on Child Abuse in Ghana⁵

About 33% of children in Ghana are said to have been sexually abused. The abuse includes rape, molestation, touching of private parts, watching pornography, the use of inappropriate language, and dirty jokes. Boys are abused as much as girls by people very close to them. Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service, ASP Irene Oppong confirmed that child sexual abuse is on the rise.

Cf. <https://www.crin.org/en/library/publications/ghana-childrens-rights-references-universal-periodic-review>.
<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/Sexual-abuse-33-of-kids-are-victims-328958>. Accessed on 11-10-18.

Worldwide, child sexual abuse is one of the most common forms of violence against children (Boakye Kofi, 2005; Child Helpline International, 2012). Two studies in 1998 and 1999 (Pappoe & Ardayfio-Schandorf and Coker-Appiah and Cusack in: Boakye Kofi, 2005) have shown that the prevalence of sexual abuse in Ghana is somewhere between 7 and 33% for children between the ages of 13 and 18, depending on the type of abuse. Besides, research has shown that 31.8% of the children participating in the study knew of cases of sexual abuse in their schools (African Liberty, 2012); 52.7% indicated that the action taken by the school authorities in case of sexual abuse was far from being satisfactory. Besides, police reports show only the tip of the iceberg, since sexual abuse is generally underreported and most child sexual abuse cases never come to the attention of government authorities, because of fear, stigma and lack of trust in authorities (Unicef, 2011; UN Secretary General's study, 2006).

Statistics on Sexual Violence in Ghana⁶

27% of women have been sexually assaulted in their lifetime. 1 in 3 women had been fondled or touched against their will. For 2 in 10 women their first experience of sex was against their will.

2 in 5 women are harassed or coerced when they refuse their partners sex. 3 in 10 women are forced by their male partners to have sex. 7% of women had been forced to touch a man's private parts. 6% of women had been threatened by a school teacher or principal that their schooling would suffer if they did not have sex. 4% of women had been threatened with demands for sex before being offered a job or having a favour done. Studies indicate that females who are most at risk of sexual violence in all its forms are between the ages of 10-18 years.

- Written parental consent, specifically for each trip and related activities, must be obtained well in advance. Contact details for the duration of the trip are necessary. Written permission for leaders to make decisions of an emergency nature should be obtained in case of accidents.
- A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers should be made available to parents or guardians.
- There must be adequate, gender-appropriate, supervision for boys and girls. Training must be provided for all leaders.
- Arrangements and procedures must be put in place to ensure that rules and appropriate boundaries are maintained in the relaxed environment of trips away. These rules and boundaries must be clearly outlined to all leaders during preparation/training for the event
- Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the privacy of young people is respected when they are away on trips.
- Sleeping areas for boys and girls should be separate and supervised by two adults of the same sex as the group being supervised.
- Under no circumstances should an Adult Leader share a bedroom with a young person.
- If, in an emergency situation, an adult considers it necessary to be alone in a children's dormitory or bedroom without another adult they should (a) immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and (b) make a diary note of the circumstances.

⁶ <http://gendercentreghana.org>. Accessed on 11-10-18.

⁷ Cf. Children Act of 1983, n^o 17.

- example, in a locker room or bathing facility).
- Never do things of a personal nature (for example, helping with toileting, washing or changing clothing) for children and young people that they can do themselves.

6. Photography and film

- Always ensure that the content of the photo/ film is appropriate
- One-to-one photo sessions with children are supervised.
- Parents and children consent to the use of an image and that this is recorded.
- Photographs / images likely to be published in press or on the Internet should avoid using children's full names (first name and surname) and detailed addresses.
- Parents and children are aware of the way the image will be used to represent the Church organisation or activity

7. Parental Consent

- Consent must be obtained from parents or guardians of each child or young person prior to their participation in events, activities and groups.
- Establish from parents or guardians whether the child or young person has any specific dietary requirements or medical or special needs.

8. Trips Away From Home

Trips away from home include but are not limited to pilgrimages, day trips, overnight stays and holidays.

- All trips need careful advance planning including adequate provision for safety in regard to transport, facilities, activities, and emergencies. Adequate insurance should be in place. Leaders must be properly qualified and supervised for activities undertaken

5. Procedures in Handling Cases of Child Abuse

5.1. Reporting and Recording Abuse

5.1.1. Before the Investigation

- a) When anybody is aware or suspects of an abuse or an abuse has been reported to him/ her, the person is to bring it to the attention of the Police and of the Child Protection Officer (CPO) of the Arch/Diocese.
- b) The CPO will document the case as it has been reported to him/ her. The record should include the details spelt out in Appendix H.
- c) In examining the person in view of taking a record, care should be taken not to further traumatize the person. If the survivor prefers to speak about the abuse to a woman rather than to a man or vice versa, that should be respected. The one who has reported the abuse should be given the chance to review what has been recorded and to eventually make corrections.
- d) The Arch/Bishop should be immediately informed about the accusation and given a copy of the report as recorded. The complete file will be conserved in the Arch/Bishop's archives for consultation if required. Any destruction or removal of evidence from the records is not permissible.
- e) A preliminary investigation is to be made promptly and objectively into the alleged abuse and the necessary steps taken (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, Can. 1717-1731).

5.1.2. During the Investigation

- a) **Collaboration with the Civil Authority**
The CPO will inform the Arch/Bishop, then the police, and

from that moment the Arch/Diocese, through the CPO, collaborates with the local civil and Child Protection authorities empowered to investigate and prosecute offenders and protect children.

b) Stepping Aside

When an accusation has been made against somebody, the alleged perpetrator is presumed innocent till proven guilty. However, he/ she is to be invited by the Arch/ Bishop to step aside from ministry to children while an investigation is made by the CPO or the person designated by him /her. The person is not to have any further contact with the one who has accused him/her till the investigation is over and a decision/judgment has been made.

c) Communication

Arch/Bishops should refrain from making statements to the media. Questions from the media should be dealt with preferably by a spokesperson appointed by the Arch/Bishop. When a statement has to be made, it should:

- always express compassion for the alleged victim/ survivor and his or her family.
- be limited to what is absolutely necessary and avoid anything that would interfere with the ongoing enquiry.
- talk about the “alleged” perpetrator, and the “alleged” victim / survivor.
- make assurances that all the Church desires is that openness and objectivity will be a priority in the handling of the case, and that full cooperation will be given to the legal authorities.

The identity of the victim/survivor should be protected at all times. The complainant and victims/ survivors are informed in good time of the actions taken by the Arch/Diocese to protect them and other people

- Do not encourage visits to, or conduct meetings in, private homes or personal living quarters.
- When the need for a visit to the home of a child or young person arises, professional boundaries must be observed at all times.

3. Discipline

- Corporal punishment of children is never permitted
- Discipline problems should be handled in partnership with parents and guardians

4. Respect for Physical Integrity

- Respect the physical integrity of children and young people at all times.
- Do not engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind, including rough physical play, physical reprimand and horseplay (tickling, wrestling, etc.).
- This should not prevent appropriate contact, with the permission of the child, or young person, in situations where it is necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of a child, but where the child expresses discomfort or resistance then this contact should cease.

5. Respect for Privacy

- Respect the privacy of children and young people at all times.
- Particular care regarding privacy must be taken when young people are in locations such as changing areas, swimming pools, showers and toilets.
- Never take photographs of children or young people while they are in changing areas (for

- Do not engage in or tolerate any behaviour – verbal, psychological or physical – that could be construed as bullying.
- Under no circumstances should you give alcohol, tobacco or drugs to children or young people.
- Do not use alcohol, tobacco or drugs when supervising or working with children and young people.
- Use only age-appropriate language, media products and activities when working with children and young people. Sexually explicit or pornographic material is never appropriate.

2. Meetings with Children and Young People

- If the pastoral care of a young person necessitates the arrangement of a meeting alone with them, do not meet in isolated environments.
- Schedule meetings at times and at designated locations that allow for transparency and accountability (for example, rooms with a clear glass panel or window, an open door, and in buildings where other people are present).
- Scheduling meetings by text messages is inappropriate.
- Limit both the length and number of meetings.
- Inform parents or guardians that the meeting(s) are taking place, except in circumstances where to do so might place the child in danger. In that case, inform a colleague.

5.1.3. After the Investigation

a) If Guilty of the Accusation

If the one who has been accused is found guilty or he/she pleads guilty:

- the verdict is to be communicated to those who need to know;
- the Arch/Bishop is to take the appropriate action which will include:
- reporting to Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) through the Apostolic Nuncio;
- a sanction of the perpetrator while waiting for the response of the CDF.

b) If Innocent of the Accusation

If the one accused is found to be not guilty:

- The communication is to be made to those who need to know.
- The falsely accused is to be reinstated by the competent authority.
- The case is to be closed with ongoing spiritual and psychological support offered to the person.

5.2. Compensation

- a) Where wrongdoing is proved or admitted, it is important for the victim/survivor and the perpetrator to hear that the Church publicly admits the wrongdoing of the action. The guilty person is primarily responsible for the compensation.

5.3 Canonical and Civil Sanctions

- 5.3.1. The Code of Canon Law considers the sexual abuse of minors below 16 years of age as a delict punishable by sanction not excluding dismissal from the clerical state (Can 1395 § 2). This is extended to minors below 18 years of age (Can. 97 §1). It is a

grave offense reserved to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, according to the special faculties granted to this Congregation concerning the *delicta graviora*.

- 5.3.2. According to the *Children's Act 1990*, 560, Section 15:
Any person who contravenes a provision of this Sub-Part [The Rights of the Child and Parental Duty] commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €5 million or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year or to both.
Cf. Penal Law of 1960 n° 101-108 – Appendix B.

5.4. Pastoral Support

Pastoral Support is to be offered by different people to the victim/survivor and to the perpetrator.

5.5.1. Support Person for the Victim/ Survivor

- a) The role of the Support Person is to assist those wishing to make a complaint of child abuse, to facilitate them in gaining access to information and help, and to represent their concerns on an ongoing basis.
- b) The Support Person will be particularly attentive to the fact that some victims/survivors and their families may be reluctant to seek help and may consider other alternatives to seek redress. He/she will have to consider how any therapeutic or spiritual needs of the person who has suffered abuse may be met.
- c) In addition, the Support Person will:
 - consider any wishes of the complainant in regard to a pastoral response by the Arch/Diocese to his or her family;
 - be available to the complainant throughout any investigation which may ensue, and thereafter as required;
 - ensure that the complainant is kept informed of developments in regard to the complaint;

Appendix D: Code of Behaviour for People Working with Children

(NB: Each Arch/ Diocese may adapt the following as it is applicable to its circumstances)

1. General Conduct

- Avoid spending time alone with a child or young person. Should circumstances arise where this is unavoidable, immediately inform another responsible adult, by telephone if necessary. Make a diary note that the meeting with the young person took place, including the reasons for it
- Observe best practice in relation to travel with children and young people. Workers and volunteers should not undertake any car or minibus journey alone with a child or young person. If in certain circumstances only one adult is available, there should be a minimum of two children or young people present for the entire journey. In the event of an emergency where it is necessary to make a journey alone with a child, make a record of this and inform the child's parents or guardians as soon as possible. Inform a colleague at the time if the parents/guardians are not available.
- In permitting children and young people to work or remain in church or parish property, every effort should be made to ensure their safety and protection.
- Treat all children and young people with equal respect; favouritism is not acceptable.
- Be cognisant of the imbalance in power inherent in adult-child relationships.

Appendix C: Canon Law: Preliminary Investigation: Canons 1717 – 1718

Can. 1717 §1. Whenever an ordinary has knowledge, which at least seems true, of a delict, he is carefully to inquire personally or through another suitable person about the facts, circumstances, and imputability, unless such an inquiry seems entirely superfluous.

§2. Care must be taken so that the good name of anyone is not endangered from this investigation.

§3. The person who conducts the investigation has the same powers and obligations as an auditor in the process; the same person cannot act as a judge in the matter if a judicial process is initiated later.

Can. 1718 §1. When it seems that sufficient evidence has been collected, the ordinary is to decide:

1. whether a process to inflict or declare a penalty can be initiated;
2. whether, attentive to can. 1341, this is expedient;
3. whether a judicial process must be used or, unless the law forbids it, whether the matter must proceed by way of extrajudicial decree.

§2. The ordinary is to revoke or change the decree mentioned in §1 whenever new evidence indicates to him that another decision is necessary.

§3. In issuing the decrees mentioned in §§1 and 2, the ordinary is to hear two judges or other experts of the law if he considers it prudent.

§4. Before he makes a decision according to the norm of §1 and in order to avoid useless trials, the ordinary is to examine carefully whether it is expedient for him or the investigator, with the consent of the parties, to resolve equitably the question of damages.

- represent the wishes and any therapeutic needs of the complainant to the CPO as required;
- arrange, if considered helpful, a meeting between the complainant and the Arch/Bishop.

- d) In some cases the complainant may decide not to avail of the services of the Support Person. In that case they will be supplied with information of where they may seek help e.g. counselling. The Support person will inform the complainant that they will be available if the complainant wishes to contact them.

5.5.2. Support to the Perpetrator

- a) An Adviser is to be available to the accused person. The adviser will have regard to all pastoral, legal and therapeutic issues arising for the accused person.
- b) A solicitor who is independent of the solicitor representing the Arch/Diocese will legally represent the accused person. The accused person shall be responsible for his/ her own defence.

6. Structures for Child Protection in Ghana

6.1. Arch/Diocesan Level

Each Arch/Bishop is to appoint (i) A Child Protection Officer and (ii) A Child Protection Commission.

6.1.1 The Child Protection Officer

The main roles of the Child Protection Officer (CPO) shall be:

- To chair the meetings of the CPC and co-ordinate its activities.
- To plan and co-ordinate appropriate Child Protection and ethical training in the Arch/Diocese for those in leadership positions.

- To plan and implement timely monitoring and auditing of Child Protection Policies in all units of the Arch/Diocese.
- To prepare timely interventions for the Arch/Bishop on Policies, procedures, harm prevention, training and education, communication of the Child Protection message, and advice and support.
- To keep himself/ herself and the Arch/Bishop informed of developments in knowledge and best practice in and outside the Arch/Diocese on Child Protection and integrity in ministry.
- To advise the Arch/Bishop and the appropriate leaders in the Arch/Diocese about Child Protection and integrity challenges as they develop.
- To cooperate with the different offices of the Arch/Diocese in areas of common concern.
- To prepare and deliver interventions for important meetings in the Arch/Diocese such as the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Priests' Assembly, meeting of Religious, etc.

- INCEST-a female of not less than 16 years has sex with a male she knows to be her grandson, son, brother, father or grandfather. The punishment is not less than three (3) years and not more than 25 years.
- Seduction or Prostitution of a child under 16-where a person who has custody, etc of a child under 16 years encourages or causes the child to be seduced or carnally known. The punishment is not less than three (3) years imprisonment.

The Child Protection Officer shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years renewable.

6.1.2. **Composition of the Arch/Diocesan Child Protection Committee**

The members of the Child Protection Committee (CPC) shall be appointed by the Arch/Bishop and shall be composed of the following people:

- The Child Protection Officer (CPO);
- A Priest
- A male Religious
- A female Religious
- A social worker;
- A legal practitioner/ Consultant
- A male adult working or who has worked with children

⁹Cf. Children's Act of Ghana 1998, Act 560.

Appendix B: Ghanaian Law on the Rights of the Child

The Criminal and Other Offences Act 1960 [Act 29] also known as The Criminal Code in Section 69A of the defines Child Abuse as when a child's rights are violated. This can happen through murder, manslaughter, genocide, abortion and different forms of sexual exploitations. The penalties for the sexual offences are the following:

- Rape-where a person has sex with a female of not less than 18 without her consent. The punishment is a term of imprisonment not less than five (5) years and not more than 25 years.
- Defilement-where a person has sex with a child under 16 years whether with or without the child's consent. The punishment is a term of imprisonment not less than seven (7) and not more than 25 years.
- Indecent assault-where a person without the consent of the other forcibly makes a sexual bodily contact or sexually violates the body of the other. The punishment is a term of imprisonment of not less than 6 months.
- Unnatural carnal knowledge-where a person has unnatural sex of another person of not less than 16 without his/ her consent. The punishment is a term of imprisonment of not less than five (5) years and not more than 25 years.
- Unnatural carnal knowledge of another person of not less than 16 years but with that person's person. The punishment is a term of imprisonment of not more than three (3) years.
- INCEST- a male of not less than 16 years has sex with a female whom the male knows to be his granddaughter, daughter, sister, mother or grandmother. The punishment is not less than 3 years imprisonment and not more than 25 years.

- A female adult working or who has worked with children

6.1.3. **The Role of the Child Protection Committee**

The main roles of the Child Protection Committee shall be:

- to provide a consistent, on-going and comprehensive approach to creating a safe environment for people who would be targets of abuses.
- to see to complaints, legal issues and pastoral issues that would ensure the safety of the child.
- To alert the CPO about possible cases of child abuse.
- To advise the CPO on how to proceed when cases have been reported.
- Together with the CPO, to seek ways of constantly raising the awareness of and educating the public about the seriousness of Child Protection and what needs to be done to ensure safe environments in our parishes and institutions.
- The CPC shall meet twice a year for their own ongoing formation on Child Protection and whenever there are cases that need attention
- The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the CPO and of the members of the CPC should be published in all the parishes and Institutions of the Arch/Diocese.
- The members of the CPC are appointed by the Arch/Bishop on the basis of merit for a term of three (3) years renewable.

6.2. **Provincial Level**

At the level of the Ecclesiastical Province, the various CPOs will meet on a quarterly basis to examine the cases they have and to advise each other on how to proceed. It will also be an opportunity for them to programme local ongoing formation on some of the issues.

6.3. **National Level**

At the national level, the various CPOs of the Arch/Dioceses will meet on a yearly basis with the Episcopal Chairman for Clergy and Religious and Secretary for the Centre for Human

Development (CEHUD) to review cases that they may not have been able to handle at the level of the provinces. It will also be an occasion for them to have ongoing formation on some aspects of Child Protection.

7. Preventing Child Abuse

For the Church to prevent abuse from happening, it is important to educate its members and other people who interact with children about abuse and its dynamics. This education should also include the importance of respecting boundaries (pastoral, emotional, social, etc.) in our work with children and vulnerable adults.

7.1. Education of Children

Children should be helped to recognize abuse when they occur and how to speak about / report them to adults. They should be educated and trained to be aware of the danger of the many abuses that surround them. They should be empowered to speak out, and break the silence of abuses against them or their friends. Children should also be educated and empowered to see and recognize signs employed by offenders on vulnerable children; to protect themselves, to recognize that the abuse is not their fault, and also to report these offenders or predators. The education should also ensure that children become peer educators to themselves.

7.2. Education of Pastoral Agents, Teachers, Caregivers, etc.

7.2.1. All pastoral agents, priests, religious, catechists, animators, youth leaders, etc. and all who are involved with children in church activities need to realize that Child Protection from abuse is part and parcel of their service and that failure in this area is a grave offence especially if they themselves are the perpetrators. They should be helped to realize what constitutes a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults and what is unsafe.

and standards that go further than the present Convention, then the country must keep these laws.

Article 42 (knowledge of rights) Governments must actively work to make sure children and adults know about the Convention.

The Convention has 54 Articles in total. Articles 43–54 are about how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights, including:

Article 45 UNICEF can provide expert advice and assistance on children's rights.

Optional Protocols

There are three agreements, called Optional Protocols, that strengthen the Convention and add further unique rights for children. They are optional because governments that ratify the Convention can decide whether or not to sign up to these Optional Protocols. They are: the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on a complaints mechanism for children (called Communications Procedure).

(For more information go to unicef.org/uk/crc/op)



Article 35 (abduction, sale and trafficking) Governments must protect children from being abducted, sold or moved illegally to a different place in or outside their country for the purpose of exploitation.

Article 36 (other forms of exploitation) Governments must protect children from all other forms of exploitation, for example the exploitation of children for political activities, by the media or for medical research.

Article 37 (inhumane treatment and detention) Children must not be tortured, sentenced to the death penalty or suffer other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment. Children should be arrested, detained or imprisoned only as a last resort and for the shortest time possible. They must be treated with respect and care, and be able to keep in contact with their family. Children must not be put in prison with adults.

Article 38 (war and armed conflicts) Governments must not allow children under the age of 15 to take part in war or join the armed forces. Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war and armed conflicts.

Article 39 (recovery from trauma and reintegration) Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.

Article 40 (juvenile justice) A child accused or guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect. They have the right to legal assistance and a fair trial that takes account of their age. Governments must set a minimum age for children to be tried in a criminal court and manage a justice system that enables children who have been in conflict with the law to reintegrate into society.

Article 41 (respect for higher national standards) If a country has laws

7.2.2. Such pastoral agents, teachers and caregivers, should be taken through an orientation in Child Protection and certified. Occasional updates should be conducted as and when judged appropriate by the Arch/Bishop or the Head of the Institution.

7.2.3. Education and training should be conducted for students undergoing training for priesthood in the seminaries and houses of formation.

7.2.4. Students in tertiary institutions belonging to the Arch/Diocese should also be taken through an orientation in this regard.

8. **Keeping Records**

8.1. Documents recording actions taken and justification for such acts, especially those contained in the minutes of meetings of the CPC where the child abuse was treated, must be preserved for the credibility of the Church.

8.2. The Child Protection Officer is to keep all records and documents relating to every case of child abuse, and as the situation progresses, he/ she sends copies to the Arch/Bishop.

8.3. The documents should always be kept in a highly confidential file. Any digital record should be kept on a memory stick which is kept in the file in a properly sealed envelope in the confidential archives or a secure hard-drive. Digital data have to be password safeguarded; the password has to be recorded in the file's chronology. Any person accessing the data has to record his access in the chronology book. These conditions have to be met, due to the fact that a computer or digital record can be stolen, hacked, or viewed inappropriately.

- 8.4. If the person changes Arch/Diocese the information about him/her should be shared with the receiving Arch/Bishop.
- 8.5. The file should never be destroyed before the death of the person concerned and kept longer if circumstances and the law of the land require it. The Arch/Bishop should be consulted if there is a plan to destroy a file.
- 8.6. All information obtained in relation to all cases of child abuse is the bona fide property of the Arch/Diocese.
- 9. **Approval, Promulgation and Review**
- 9.1. This *Policy* was approved for the Catholic Church in Ghana by the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference and promulgated by the President of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference on 2018
- 10.2. It will be reviewed every three (3) years.

Most Rev. Philip Naameh
 Metropolitan Archbishop of Tamale &
 President of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference

social needs and support their development. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

Article 28 (right to education) Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 29 (goals of education) Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Article 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups) Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

Article 31 (leisure, play and culture) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Article 32 (child labour) Governments must protect children from economic exploitation and work that is dangerous or might harm their health, development or education. Governments must set a minimum age for children to work and ensure that work conditions are safe and appropriate.

Article 33 (drug abuse) Governments must protect children from the illegal use of drugs and from being involved in the production or distribution of drugs.

Article 34 (sexual exploitation) Governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.

adoption to make sure it is safe, lawful and that it prioritises children's best interests. Children should only be adopted outside of their country if they cannot be placed with a family in their own country.

Article 22 (refugee children) If a child is seeking refuge or has refugee status, governments must provide them with appropriate protection and assistance to help them enjoy all the rights in the Convention. Governments must help refugee children who are separated from their parents to be reunited with them.

Article 23 (children with a disability) A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families.

Article 24 (health and health services) Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 25 (review of treatment in care) If a child has been placed away from home for the purpose of care or protection (for example, with a foster family or in hospital), they have the right to a regular review of their treatment, the way they are cared for and their wider circumstances.

Article 26 (social security) Every child has the right to benefit from social security. Governments must provide social security, including financial support and other benefits, to families in need of assistance.

Article 27 (adequate standard of living) Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and

APPENDICES

Appendix A: A Summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 1 (definition of the child) Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention.

Article 2 (non-discrimination) The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 4 (implementation of the Convention) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights.

Article 5 (parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities) Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and caregivers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights. This must be done in a way that recognises the child's increasing capacity to make their own choices.

Article 6 (life, survival and development) Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

Article 7 (birth registration, name, nationality, care) Every child has the right to be registered at birth, to have a name and nationality, and, as far as possible, to know and be cared for by their parents.

Article 8 (protection and preservation of identity) Every child has the right to an identity. Governments must respect and protect that right, and prevent the child's name, nationality or family relationships from being changed unlawfully.

Article 9 (separation from parents) Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (for example, if a parent is hurting or neglecting a child). Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this could cause them harm.

Article 10 (family reunification) Governments must respond quickly and sympathetically if a child or their parents apply to live together in the same country. If a child's parents live apart in different countries, the child has the right to visit and keep in contact with both of them.

Article 11 (abduction and non-return of children) Governments must do everything they can to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally by their parents or other relatives, or being prevented from returning home.

Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.

Article 13 (freedom of expression) Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

Article 14 (freedom of thought, belief and religion) Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from

enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide their child as they grow up.

Article 15 (freedom of association) Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 16 (right to privacy) Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child's private, family and home life, including protecting children from unlawful attacks that harm their reputation.

Article 17 (access to information from the media) Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.

Article 18 (parental responsibilities and state assistance) Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments must support parents by creating support services for children and giving parents the help they need to raise their children.

Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect) Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 20 (children unable to live with their family) If a child cannot be looked after by their immediate family, the government must give them special protection and assistance. This includes making sure the child is provided with alternative care that is continuous and respects the child's culture, language and religion.

Article 21 (adoption) Governments must oversee the process of