

# Ghana

## Out of the shadows: Shining light on the response to child sexual abuse and exploitation

It takes place mostly in the shadows, but sexual violence against children is happening everywhere, regardless of a country's economic status or its citizens' quality of life. Yet, child sexual abuse and exploitation is preventable, and there are strategies that have been proven successful in reducing it. When government, civil society and the private sector act together, progress is possible.

The Out of the Shadows Index illustrates how countries are responding to the problem, highlighting areas for attention and advancement towards the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which include a target (16.2) to end all forms of violence against children by 2030.

### Background indicators

GDP per capita at purchasing power parity (US\$ at PPP)	4,770
Population (m)	29.5
Population under 19 (%)	46.1
Access to broadband Internet (%)	0.2

Source: EIU



### Brief summary

**Ghana has enacted some laws against child marriage and collects data on reported incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation. However, institutional capacity to respond to these issues, a comprehensive national plan of action and engagement with industry actors is lacking.**

#### Where has progress been made?

**Laws to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation:** Ghana's laws establish a legal minimum age for marriage for girls and boys, although early marriage is not penalised. There is legislation that criminalises the visual depiction of children engaging in sexual activities and showing sexually explicit content to a child as well.

**Reporting:** The government collects and publishes data on the number of reported/recorded incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation.

**Government capacity:** The Department for Children in the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection works to safeguard the rights of children in Ghana in general. The Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit is a dedicated law enforcement unit charged with tackling child sexual abuse and exploitation cases.

#### What more needs to be done?

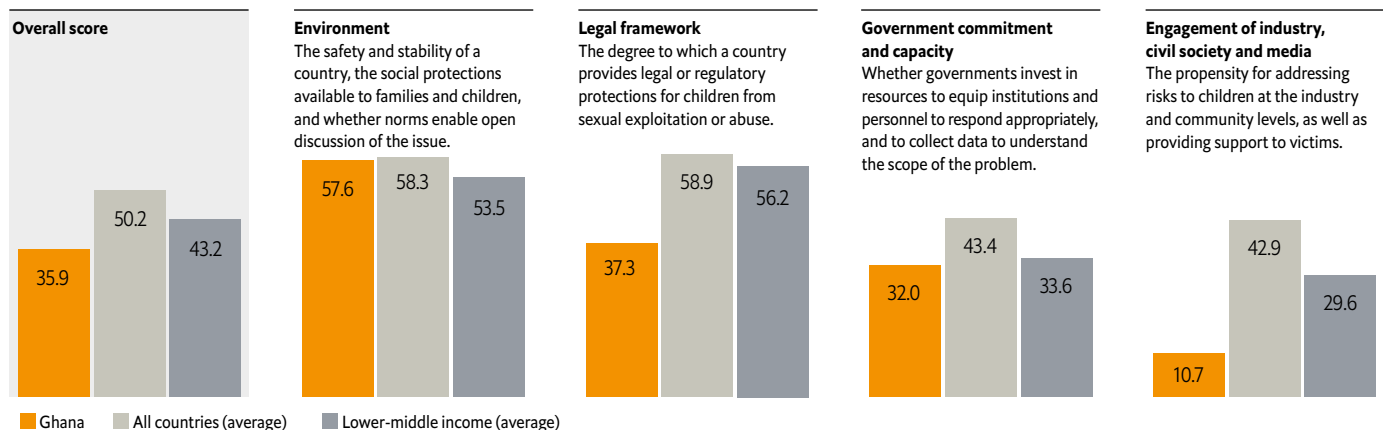
**National plans and policies:** Ghana does not have a national plan to combat child sexual abuse and exploitation. There appears to be an absence of national policies that engage with this issue.

**Technology industry engagement:** Ghana does not have its own notice and takedown system that would allow members of the public to report potentially unlawful child sexual abuse content so that it can be quickly removed from the Internet. It also does not participate in an international notice and takedown network.

**Resources for legal and law enforcement professionals:** While there is a dedicated Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit for tackling child abuse in Ghana, there are no specific guidelines or instructions for prosecuting cases of child sexual abuse.

**Tourism and media industry engagement:** Professional associations of tourism operators and journalists do not discuss issues related to sexual violence against children on their websites, nor do they provide guidelines and resources on tackling these issues.

### Index scores



All countries average includes 60 countries across East Asia & the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and Caribbean, Middle East & North Africa, North America, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Lower-middle income average (as classified by the World Bank) includes 20 countries. Full methodology at <https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com>.

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Indicator	Score / 100
1.1) Instability	74.7
1.2) Livelihoods	62.4
1.3) Social protections	40.7
1.4) Consumption of stimulants	86.5
1.5) Societal attitudes	47.7
1.6) Perceptions of violence	72.6
1.7) Attitudes to law enforcement	59.5
2.1) Contextual legal framework	28.6
2.2) Age of consent	100.0
2.3) Child sexual offenses	40.0
2.4) Child marriage	100.0
2.5) Child-specific rape laws	0.0
2.6) General sex laws	33.3
2.7) Exemptions and qualifiers	75.0
2.8) Purchasing sexual services	0.0
2.9) Procurement of minors	0.0
2.10) Visual depiction of minors engaging in sexual activities	80.0

Indicator	Score / 100
2.11) Online grooming	25.0
2.12) Protecting child interests	0.0
2.13) Internet protections	0.0
3.1) International standards or conventions	90.0
3.2) National plans and policies	60.0
3.3) Resources for legal and enforcement professionals	25.0
3.4) Data collection: prevalence	0.0
3.5) Reporting	100.0
3.6) Government and law enforcement capacity	21.4
3.7) Complaint mechanisms	0.0
3.8) Access to victim support programmes	24.0
3.9) Access to offender support programmes	0.0
4.1) Technology industry engagement	0.0
4.2) Travel and tourism industry engagement	33.3
4.3) Frontline support workers	0.0
4.4) Civil society engagement	20.0
4.5) Media industry engagement	0.0



**For a full explanation of indicators, underlying weightings and further details on the country profile, please see the interactive Excel model available at <https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com>.**

In addition to the full methodology, an interactive Excel model and a white paper outlining overall findings are available at <https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com>

### What is the Out of the Shadows Index?

The Out of the Shadows Index examines how stakeholders are responding to the threat of child sexual abuse and exploitation in 60 countries. It does not attempt to measure the scale of the problem in each country, nor does the index incorporate information on the prevalence of sexual violence against children. It includes data and information from 34 indicators and 132 sub-indicators, grouped into four categories that measure the extent to which countries are acknowledging the problem of sexual violence against children, and whether they are implementing measures to address and prevent it.

While the index can help to highlight areas for attention, existing resources such as the “INSPIRE” package of seven strategies for ending violence against children ([http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/inspire-package/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/inspire-package/en/)) and the WePROTECT Model National Response for preventing and tackling child sexual exploitation and abuse (<https://www.weprotect.org/the-model-national-response/>) offer detailed guidance and support on implementation of solutions.

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