

Enough! Taking Positive Action to End Sexual & Gender-Based Violence in Ghana

1 General information

Organization's legal name:	The Pearl Safe Haven
Address:	House No. 58, George Bush Highway, Mako House Building, Dzorwulu
Legal status:	Company Limited by Guarantee
Contact person:	Isobel Acquah
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Project dates:	September 2019 – December 2022, confirmed annually based on performance evaluation
Project locations:	New Botianor, Greater Accra, GHANA
Estimated annual budget:	GHC 722,086

2 The problem

There are currently no functioning safe houses in Ghana for victims of SGBV. 38.7% of married Ghanaian women between the ages of 15 and 49 years have experienced violence at the hands of an intimate partner and women under the age of 19 years are 4 times more likely to experience violence¹. Gender-based violence undermines the health, dignity, security and economic capacity of its victims. Since SGBV carries with it the stigma of silence and shame, survivors in Ghana are often forced to bear the impact of abuse alone. There is inadequate funding and training for meaningful assistance/prevention so governmental organizations such as the Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police (specifically tasked with handling reported cases of domestic violence) are limited in their ability to identify, respond to and act against reported incidents.

The Pearl Safe Haven will be an emergency shelter with elements of transitional housing serving as protection for survivors of domestic violence, abuse, and rape. Women will be referred to the Pearl Safe Haven by the Ghana Police Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) and we will work closely with Social Welfare, Gender Ministry and coalition partners including Obaapa Development and WILDAF Ghana to ensure a successful outcome for our clients. We will also assist with connecting survivors to legal counsel, health services, and crisis counseling in a safe space. Lastly, we hope to address not only the physical violence from abusers but also societal structural violence of certain Ghanaian beliefs. Our advocacy campaign through social media will seek to challenge social norms, attitudes, and behaviors justifying and perpetuating SGBV in Ghana.

¹ Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Ghana Statistical Services (GSS) and Associates (2016), Domestic Violence in Ghana: Incidence, Attitudes, Determinants and Consequences, Brighton: IDS.

3 Operational capacity

People & Skills: Our management team and board of directors comprise professionals who are committed to feminist and human rights based principles with expertise in Gender Equity Advocacy, Women's Justice and Empowerment Project Implementation, Sexual and Reproductive Rights, International Development, Public Health, Corporate Law, Financial Management and Enterprise Risk Management.

The operating budget provides for 6 full-time staff with the needed skills to run daily operations and programmes.

- *Shelter Director:* Responsible for ensuring services are advocacy based and client centered, legal and grant requirements are met, proper documentation is kept, and accurate reports are generated.
- *Social Workers:* Two salaried social workers sourced from Department of Social Welfare and with experience handling domestic violence cases.
- *Program/Project Manager:* Charged with lead execution of programs, maintenance of procedures/process manuals, and coordination of community engagement and advocacy efforts.
- *Finance and Admin Manager:* Responsible for bookkeeping, accounts payable, support for event coordination, payroll/processing and general office administrative work.
- *Live in Matron:* Trained employee residing in the Pearl Safe Haven ensuring quick emergency response time and around-the-clock care for the survivors in the shelter.

Funding, Other Grants and Capacity Needs/Gaps: The Australian High Commission of Ghana provided the initial GHC 197,000 seed capital to commence building the shelter. We have since received an additional GHC 347,000 from local professional firms and businesses who have aligned themselves with our vision. This includes the Mohinani Group, Diamond Cement, JLD & MB Legal Consultancy, Signum Development, and West Africa Forgings. Application for a grant for a vehicle to transport our clients to/from the shelter is in progress. We currently have a funding shortfall of GHC 1,557,165 to cover remaining project start-up costs. We estimate our annual operating budget to be GHC 722,086 of which we are currently looking to raise.

Internal Policies and Procedures: Work is in progress to develop internal procedures and policies around key areas such as Counseling, Trauma and Self Care, Conflict Resolution, Anti-Violence Capacity Development, Crisis Intervention Techniques, Risk Assessment & Safety Planning, Regulatory Compliance, Shelter Operations and Financial Management. We seek to conclude on these policies and test their efficacy at least 1 month prior to onboarding full-time staff. Thereafter, our Program Manager will be responsible for keeping them up to date.

Governance Structure: The Pearl Safe Haven uses a Management Team Model.

- Ms. Teresa Barnes is Co-founder, Co-Chair and Executive Director (Strategy and Fundraising). She has 30+ years experience in international development consulting with organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) where she implemented women's justice and empowerment projects in Kenya, Ghana, Papua New Guinea and Asia.
- Ms. Isobel Adjoa Acquah is the Co-founder, Co-Chair and Executive Director. She is a Strategy and Legal Consultant with 14+ years experience as legal, regulatory and operational strategy advisor to organizations looking to expand to West Africa. An advocate for leadership diversity in the workplace, she is former chair of Merryll Lynch's EMEA Cultural Leadership Network and Founder of "The Lady", an NGO that helps young women (15-25 years) prepare for and thrive in male-dominated corporate Ghana.
- The Management Team includes: Ms. Renee Jackson Kufuor (Business and Government Liaison), Ms. Theresa Acquah (Curriculum Manager), Ms. Akosua Agyepong (Project Manager), Ms. Dzifa Biga (Finance and Operations Lead), James Baduor (IT Lead), Fida Haddid (Fundraising Lead), Dr. Arthur Newman (Clinical Psychology Lead and Curriculum Advisor), Naa-Amy Wayne (Research & Data Lead)
- Volunteer support of the Management Team include: Ms. Morgan Floyd (Projects Lead) and Grace-field Okaijah (Project Assistant)

4 Strategic Fit

The Pearl Safe Haven vision is to promote the basic constitutional human rights of women and children and to protect and restore those who have suffered gender based violence. Our approach is statistically significant and multi-pronged. Our mission is to create a refuge where women and children who have suffered abuse can feel safe to rebuild a constructive life for themselves. The Pearl's Safe Haven's core values are Empowerment, Partnership, Accountability, and Sustainability.

Programmes & Projects Undertaken & Key Achievements on SGBV Prevention and Response include:

Activity	Outcome
Participated in SGBV awareness durbar at the Kofi Annan International Peace-Keeping Centre (KAIPC) during the 2019 International Women's Day celebrations	Partnered with KAIPC, GIZ Ghana, DOVVSU, and the Gender Ministry to sensitize over 200 JSS and SHS students (both male and female) from Accra & Tema metropolis on SGBV and empowered them to be advocates in their communities
Invited to join the British High Commission's Anti-Trafficking Working Group	Engaged with British High Commission and international and local human trafficking law enforcement agencies on opportunities for collaboration to better address human and sex trafficking issues in Ghana
Partnership with the African Human Rights Forum and the "Duafe Campaign" focused on bringing an end to Domestic Violence in Africa	Partnering with a male-led think tank/activist group that are focused on changing male perspectives on gender-based violence. The partnership included collaborating on social media and on a campaign for Silver-Bird cinemas. The Pearl team has also been invited to share the project and the Ghanaian legal perspective on domestic violence to an audience of 300+ in August 2019
Working with Queen mothers to raise awareness of gender violence and child marriage	Worked on a rescue mission for a young married woman (15 years old) and planning community engagement with several queen mothers to raise awareness of gender-based violence, with a focus on teenage pregnancies and rape in rural communities.

5 The Action

Outcome 2. *Public-private institutions and other multi-sectoral stakeholders demonstrate their commitment towards the prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG); protection for survivors; investigation and prosecution of cases; punishment/rehabilitation; and provision of reparation/redress.*

Establish a Working and Reliable Safe House in Accra: There are currently no operational safe houses in Ghana for victims of SGBV. Regardless of efficiency of current rescue programs, community action plans, or response time of law enforcement officials, most victims rescued from gender-based violence have nowhere to go. Survivors of SGBV are forced right back into an unsafe environments where they are often coerced into retracting their accusations against their abusers. The Pearl Safe Haven is a 4-storey facility that will house up to

a 100 women annually. It has been designed to ensure a secure compound that will be guarded 24/7 and the location kept secret to the public to ensure safety.

Become a Direct Resource for Client Referrals: The Pearl Safe Haven has partnered with h DOVVSU to receive direct client referrals based on specific criteria outlined in our partnership agreement. We have already had 2 cases referred to us, but have not been able to accommodate them as the safe house construction is yet to be completed.

Assistance in Prosecution of SGBV Cases: In most cases, victims of SGBV will never press charges against their abuser due to lack of legal counsel and/or financial means to hire counsel. We will provide access to legal counsel and support for prosecution against their abusers both onsite (and offsite office for survivors who might not necessarily need housing) to ensure survivors have a voice in court as well as reparation for abuse.

Assist in the Rehabilitation of Victims: Our facility will not only house SGBV survivors but also provide vocational training, classes, legal consultation, mental health counseling (via an onsite clinic) to enable proper comprehensive care and rehabilitation. Our approach is grounded in findings from a xxxx World Health Organization (WHO) study finding that the best care for victims of SGB involves “responses by other sectors such as the judiciary, education, and social services” (WHO). Without this comprehensive care, victims will be less empowered to re-establish their lives and move on from their trauma and abuse. The Pearl Safe Haven will monitor women as far as 6 months after leaving the shelter to offer support and additional protection.

6 The Methodology

Victims of SGBV are “four times as likely” to be homeless as a result of their abuse². The Pearl Safe Haven will meet the immediate need of women fleeing situations of abuse by providing a safe, stable place to escape their abusers. SGBV is frequently condoned, and sometimes perpetuated by extended families and is an unsafe environment for victims to remain³. By building a safe house, we are reducing that risk of extended family perpetuating abuse or turning over young women to abusers in the first place.

Additionally, research has shown that survivors of such trauma and abuse have encountered significant psychological and social barriers when looking for a job after rehabilitation⁴. At the Pearl Safe Haven, women will receive vocational training and employment support from our corporate partners when entering the workforce. These support structures will be vital to the survivors’ livelihood since domestic violence and a lack of support from employers/coworkers is a significant detriment to job-retention and success⁵. Furthermore, in a report led by UK Aid, researchers agreed that there is a “close association between experiences of domestic violence and restricted access to livelihood options, fewer skills and lower productivity among victims” as found in research by the World Health Organization.⁶ We will combat this statistic by creating a network of partners and employers who would be understanding of these client’s cases and can provide them with opportunities outside their normal scope of job opportunities.

² Pavao, Joanne et al. Intimate Partner Violence and Housing Instability. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, Volume 32, Issue 2, 143 - 146

³ Fernandez, M. (1997). Domestic Violence by Extended Family Members in India: Interplay of Gender and Generation. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 12(3), 433–455.

⁴ Nnawulezi, Nkiru & Godsay, Surbhi & Sullivan, Cris & Marcus, Suzanne & Hacskaylo, Margaret. (2018). The Influence of Low-Barrier and Voluntary Service Policies on Survivor Empowerment in a Domestic Violence Housing Organization. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. 88. 10.1037/ort0000291.

⁵ Swanberg, J. E., & Logan, T. K. (2005). Domestic Violence and Employment: A Qualitative Study. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 10(1), 3-17.

⁶ Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Ghana Statistical Services (GSS) and Associates (2016), Domestic Violence in Ghana: Incidence, Attitudes, Determinants and Consequences, Brighton: IDS.

⁷ Garcia-Moreno, C., Jansen, H.A. Ellsberg, M., Heise, L. and Watts, C.H. (2005). WHO Multicountry Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence Against Women: Initial Results on Prevalence, Health Outcomes and Women’s Responses. Geneva: World Health Organization.

Finally, the Pearl Safe Haven will not only provide tertiary care to victims, but also seek to prevent SGBV at its source. In an Oxfam Publication, Francine Pickup explains how “‘the community’ plays a vital role in perpetuating, condoning, and even promoting, violence against women”⁸ As an organization, we seek to challenge acceptance and normalization of SGBV through social media campaigns as well as through Public Figure Ambassadors. In Ghana, social media has an enormous impact on the youth population. In 2016, 90% of teenagers in a controlled study in Ghana reported “having profiles on social networking sites, especially Facebook and WhatsApp” and 42% reported spending 4 hours or more a day on their social media sites⁹. Since this will be the generation leading Ghana into the future, digital media is the most significant way that The Pearl Safe Haven can reach the most amount of individuals. It is our hope that these campaigns will spark discussion through communities and begin to change accepted norms and repressive actions towards victims of SGBV.

7 Partnerships, networking and coordination

Violence against women is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world with no national, social/class, colour, wealth or educational boundary. The primary instruments globally and nationally that seek to protect women from sexual and gender-based violence are: The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5 – Gender Equality & Empowerment), The 1992 Constitution of Ghana, The Ghana Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732), The Ghana Domestic Violence Regulations, 2016 (LI 2237) and The Ghana Criminal Procedure Code, 1960 (Act 30).

The Pearl Safe Haven has worked with The Ministry of Gender to ensure our policies and procedures are in compliance with Ghana domestic violence regulations. Additionally, we are focused on partnering with organizations from the European Union that seek to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls. One such potential partner has been GIZ. We are in the final stages of submission for a GIZ grant for a female-led app development team for our Safe Place mobile application¹⁰.

In Ghana, the primary agencies tasked to deal with gender-based violence are:

1. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
2. Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service
3. Anti-Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Ghana Police Service
4. The Department of Social Welfare

We have a solid relationship with Ghana’s Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) and have been referred two cases so far, although we not at operational capacity yet to accept those cases.

The Board has established a network of coalition members including Obaapa Development and WILDAF, who are both very active in the gender space in Ghana. Much of our advocacy is organized directly with schools and community leaders and we have also through the Duafe Campaign, a multi jurisdictional advocacy group organised by the Africa Human Rights Forum to address Gender Based Violence.

⁸ Francine Pickup, Suzanne Williams, &Caroline Sweetman. ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A Challenge for Development and Humanitarian Work. Oxfam GB. 2001.

⁹ Ocansey, Selasi. (2016). THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE YOUTH: THE GHANAIAN PERSPECTIVE.

10.15282/ijets.6.2016.1.12.1062.

¹⁰https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-based-violence/eu-funding-raise-awareness-gender-based-violence_en

Corporate Partnerships have focused on engagement with and fundraising from Corporate Ghana and s:

- Australian High Commission - Named the Pearl as the 2018 Melbourne Cup Charity Recipient.
- Mohinani Group - Supplied storage tanks for our facility.
- Diamond Cement - Provided cement for construction of the safe house.
- Signum Developments - Provided technical support and prepared architectural designs.
- JLD & MD Law - Gave legal support and preparation of key documents.
- Stimuluz - IT consulting and website design and management.
- West Africa Forging - Donated iron rods for construction
- Hanaba Limited- Promised 3 acres of land for farming as part of our sustainability focus.

8 Target groups & beneficiaries

The Pearl Safe Haven will provide service for up to 25 survivors, ages 18 to 25 years, for up to 3 months. Younger women are in the highest risk category for domestic violence in Ghana (girls under 19 years old are 4 times more likely to be victim of abuse) and the latest DOVVSU reports show a significantly higher proportion of defilement cases (sexual abuse with minors) as opposed to other cases. However, those are the cases that are the most difficult to identify/intervene due to the strict rules related to obtain child care orders in Ghana. For that reason we will initially focus on women no longer minors under the law and build strong relationships with the key stakeholders. Children accompanying their mothers will be accommodated on a case by case basis. .

We estimate a majority of the cases referred to us will be women in lower socio-economic levels, minorities, immigrants, previous victims of abuse or those identifying as LGBTQ+. During their rehabilitation, we seek to empower survivors by seeking their input in the rehabilitation process and our programmes. Survivors will be asked to make decisions on whether to pursue legal action, course of vocational training, and long-term goal setting for both themselves and their relationship with the Pearl. To engage men and boys, we will reach community members through digital media advocacy. Also at partner locations in Accra, we will hold community classes on reproductive health education, financial empowerment of households, and workplace success all with curriculum included to address and challenge SGBV perpetuation.

9 Locations

The Pearl Safe Haven is being built in New Botianor, Greater Accra. We were donated this land with a long lease by one of the board members. It provides the most ideal location for a project of this type as it is a secluded location rather than central Accra but still accessible to Accra . In Ghana, the victims of SGBV are often socio-economically fragile compared to their abusers. We hope to be a safe house not only for women in Greater Accra, but from all over the country. Even though the prevalence of SGBV is greater in rural areas, the support structures in place are too underdeveloped in those areas. Access to quality medical care, roads and transportation systems, as well as law enforcement response makes Accra the most practical location for serving women from all over Ghana. Our two cases so far have been younger victims whose abusers had vastly superior wealth and social power. We discovered that in order to meet their needs, a safe house in Accra was absolutely vital to rescue them from their abusive situations. In both cases, the role of the immediate family as well as close community members perpetuated the abuse of victims.

10 Comparative advantage or value added by your organization

The Pearl Safe Haven’s Comparative Advantage, Partnerships & Influences

The Ark Foundation ran a shelter that was shut down in 2015 due to insufficient financial support. This may have stemmed from a lack of sustainable funding beyond donor support. At the Pearl Safe Haven, we intend to run our operations on the principle that NGOs should run as efficiently as a business. Our intent to run lean operations speaks to this and is evident in our program execution vs. Overhead + Admin ratio of 66% vs. 34%, respectively, in our annual operating budget.

We have formed strong partnerships and are influenced by The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, Anti-Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Ghana Police Service, and The Department of Social Welfare, all respected key players to SGBV in Ghana.

Innovation & Best Practices

We seek to apply economic, operational and environmental sustainability practices to help ensure we are mindful of our environmental impact in the communities in which we operate; our operations, projects, and initiatives are planned and executed effectively and; we utilize donor and partner contributions wisely in executing our mission.

Economic & Environmental Sustainability

Farming: We have 3 acres of donated farmland on which we will grow produce to feed our residents. We intend to sell any excess produce to fund ongoing operational costs (e.g. utilities, staff salaries, etc.).

Bakery: We are currently in discussions with partners to donate equipment and/or skills training for a bakery.

Waste Management: We seek to adopt “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” waste hierarchy at the Safe Haven

Energy: We are seeking partners to donate solar-powered energy equipment to limit our reliance on ECG

Water: We are building a borehole and have received partnership donations from the Mohinani Group for tanks for storage and reuse of water

Facility Design: The building’s architectural design promotes the use of natural light and air which limits energy consumption of the building.

Operational Sustainability: With Accountability and Sustainability as two of our core values, our board and management team is committed to ensuring we leverage our extensive experience in financial management, project management, business development, operations management and development to this regard.

Annual Operating Budget Breakdown

<u>SHELTER OPERATING COSTS (ESTIMATES)</u>		Portion Funded*	Funding Shortfall
	<u>GHS</u>	<u>GHS</u>	<u>GHS</u>
<u>Staffing Costs</u>			
Program Execution Staff			
Salaries & Stipends	113,200	0	(113,200)
Admins & Other Support Staff			
Salaries & Stipends	106,200	0	(106,200)
Staff/volunteer travel, training and development	14,220	0	(14,220)
Benefits (including SSNIT & Provident Fund)	<u>62,292</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(62,292)</u>
<i>Total Staffing Costs</i>	<u>295,912</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(295,912)</u>
<u>Resident Care</u>			
Food, Utilities & Transport	220,300	0	(220,300)
Medical Treatment & Supplies	20,000	0	(20,000)
Recreational Supplies & Children's Toys	<u>3,778</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(3,778)</u>
<i>Total Resident Care Costs</i>	<u>244,078</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(244,078)</u>
<i>Post Residency Monitoring & Support (6 months)</i>	77,400	0	(77,400)
<u>Other Operating Costs</u>			
Programme Delivery Materials and Supplies	48,725	0	(48,725)
Facility Maintenance + Administrative Costs	<u>55,971</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(55,971)</u>
<i>Total Other Operating Costs</i>	<u>104,696</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(104,696)</u>
TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS	722,086	0	(722,086)

See Actions and Methodology sections for details regarding specific project activities