



**"WE ARE TREATED AS IF WE
ARE NOT HUMAN BEINGS"**

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FORWARD WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

A publication by FORWARD, ACDEP and PAYDP

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Please note: This document contains sensitive material that relates to violence against women and girls that some people may find upsetting.

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PROJECT PARTNERS

THE ASSOCIATION OF CHURCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (ACDEP)

ACDEP is a development NGO in Northern Ghana with its Development Secretariat located in Tamale, the capital of the Northern Region. Our primary focus is on the socio-economic development of Northern Ghana as a whole and the rural poor in particular. ACDEP is engaged in the fields of Agricultural Development, Food Security, Livelihoods and Climate Change; Agricultural Value Chains and Market Access; Agri-business Financial Services; Primary Health Care, Community Health and Nutrition; with Youth, Gender and Environment as a cross-cutting programme. Through these programmes, ACDEP works with other development

FORWARD (FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT)

FORWARD (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development) is an African-led, women's rights organisation. Our work focuses on the issues of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child marriage, and other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) that impact on the health, dignity and wellbeing of African women and girls. We work for the day when African women enjoy equal rights and opportunities, have control over their own bodies and are free from violence. To achieve

PURIM AFRICAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM (PAYDP)

The Purim African Youth Development Platform (PAYDP) is a non governmental organisation and non profit organisation that seeks to protect the rights of young people and women and seek to promote the total development of communities with emphasis on vulnerable groups among young people and women.

PAYDP is made up of board members, volunteers and staff who use their resources to support the development of the organization. Our primary goal is towards young people with special emphasis on girls.



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ACDEP	Association of Church Development Projects
ADVANCE	Agriculture Development and Value Chain Enhancement Programme
AFDOM	African Development Organization for Migration
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
FORWARD	Foundation for Women's Health, Research & Development
GHS	Ghanaian Cedi, the currency of Ghana
GPRTU	Ghana Private Road Transport Union
GSS	Ghana Statistical Services
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISODEC	Integrated Social Development Centre
ITTU	Intermediate Technology Transfer Unit
LESDEP	Local Enterprise and Skill Development Program
MMDA	Metropolitan Municipal District Assembly
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NORSAAC	Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre
PAYDP	Purim African Youth Development Platform
PEER	Participatory Ethnographic Evaluation and Research
PR	Peer Researchers
RAINS	Regional Advocacy and Information Network System
RCC	Regional Coordination Council
SONIDA	Songsim Integrated Development Association
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

AGRO ROOM YMS

GLASSARY



KAYAYEI

Young women and girls who earn money by carrying loads on their heads in urban lorry parks and markets, also known as head porters.

RETURNEES

Those who have migrated from their original region to work as kayayei, and have since returned.

Internal migration in Ghana has been a pervasive phenomenon for decades. Unique and particularly concerning, is the migration of women and girls aged between 10 and 35 years to become Kayayei, or head porters – young women and girls who earn money by carrying loads on their heads in lorry parks and markets. Kayayei represent a highly vulnerable group of young women and girls, because their work is insecure and poorly paid. They tend to have limited social safety nets, inadequate housing and are disproportionately affected by violence and abuse.

This study is a collaboration between Association of Church Development Projects (ACDEP), Purim African Youth Development Platform (PAYDP) and FORWARD. It aims to provide robust evidence to inform the design and implementation of strategies for effective interventions to improve the socio-economic wellbeing and reproductive health rights of young women and girls, specifically, Kayayei, Kayayei returnees and those at risk of becoming Kayayei in Ghana.

This report has been organised into six chapters. The first chapter introduces the issue, providing background information on the study locations and internal migration in Ghana. It also begins to explain why young women and girls decide to become Kayayei, and the challenges they face. In chapter two, the study methodology is described. Findings of the studies in locations of origin are presented in chapter three, findings from research in the destination location in chapter four and chapter five discusses these findings. Recommendations are made in the final chapter.

INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

The research was carried out in four regions of Ghana. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were carried out in three regions of northern Ghana, from where the majority of Kayayei originate. Participatory Ethnographic Evaluation Research (PEER) was carried out with Kayayei in Accra, where the majority of Kayayei migrate to.

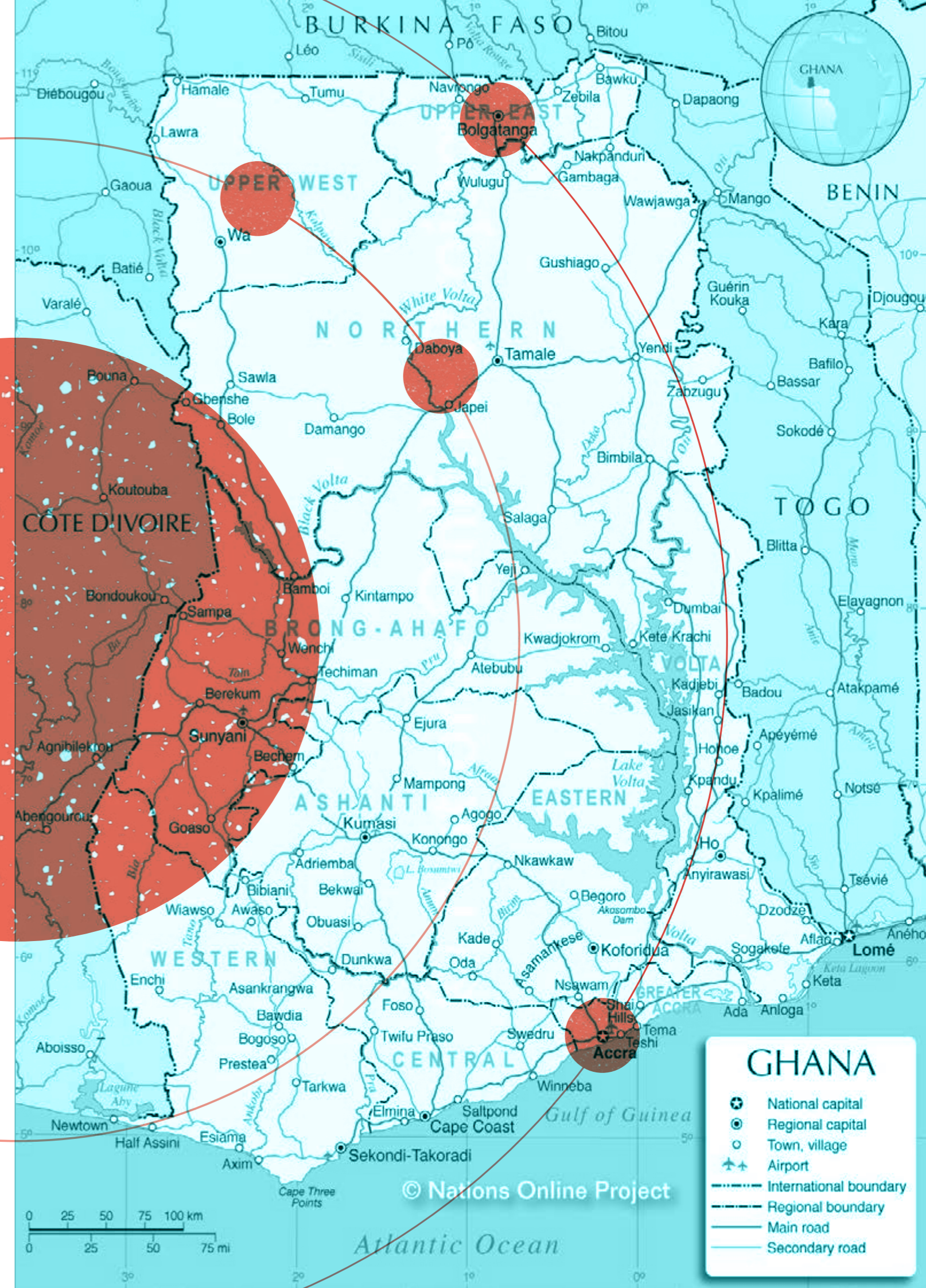
Accra is the capital of Ghana and is located in the south of the country, on the coast. In 2010, the population of the Greater Accra region was 4.01 million people. More than a third of the population of Accra is below the age of 15, and over half of the population are below 24.

Northern Ghana comprises three regions; the Upper East, Upper West and Northern Regions, which all lie within the Savannah belt. Collectively, these are referred to as the northern regions.

The Upper West and Upper East Regions are the least populous regions in the country with a population of 702,110 and 1,046,545, i.e. 2.8% and 4.2% of the total population of Ghana respectively. The Northern Region however, is the fourth most populous region with a population of approximately 2,500,000 (10.1% of the total population). Over 70% of the population in Northern Ghana live in rural areas and approximately 70% of the inhabitants are smallholder farmers. According to the 2010 population census, in the Northern, Upper West and Upper East regions, 62.5%, 53.5% and 51.9% respectively of the female population aged six years and above have never attended school.

²See Map 1 for a map of Ghana marking the three northern regions and the location of Accra.

¹⁶² Ghana Statistical Service (2013), 2010 Population and Housing Census, National Analytical Report, Accra: Ghana Statistical Service



1.2 INTERNAL MIGRATION IN GHANA

Despite the focus on international immigration in available literature, internal migration i.e. migration within countries actually accounts for the majority of migration globally. There are 740 million internal migrants in the world, nearly four times the number of people living outside their country of birth. Internal migration and north-south migration in particular, has been prevalent in Ghana since the pre-colonial era. 80% of Ghanaian migrants stay within the country. 70% of these move from rural to urban areas, to seek jobs and other economic and educational opportunities.⁴

Migration occurs in part due to the differing ecology within Ghana, causing people to move to the more fertile coastal regions during the dry season to look for work as agricultural labourers.⁵ Migration patterns in Ghana reflect changes in urbanisation, poverty and general inequality.⁶ Communities with higher levels of literacy, income, higher rates of subsidised medical care, better access to water and sanitation are less likely to produce migrants.

More than half of the internal migrants in Ghana travel to Accra and the Ashanti region. 75% of migrants originate from rural areas but, in contrast to expectations, migrants from the Upper East, Upper West and Northern Region only account for 10% of all internal migrants.⁷ Compared to other countries, the level of urban-to-rural migration in Ghana is high. This suggests high levels of return migration and circular rural-urban migration.⁸

It is difficult to calculate the volume of internal remittances within Ghana, because they are often sent through informal channels, for example through friends, relatives or the migrants themselves. However, it is estimated that only 36% of migrants within Ghana send remittances. Migrants in the south of Ghana are much more likely to remit, and remit more in per capita terms than migrants in the north of Ghana.⁹

Factors influencing migration are numerous but centre around economic incentive. The influencing factors are also nuanced for men and women. The majority (47%) of migration is in order to find work, most commonly in the manufacturing sector or in sales. Education is the second and marriage the third most common motive for internal migration, although women are generally more likely than men to migrate for marriage. Some forms of migration are on the rise, which is the case for young women migrating to Accra to work as Kayayei.¹⁰

However, policies related to the migration of adolescent young women and girls tend to be overly simplistic and do not focus on the protection of their rights. Girls are often seen as victims of sexual exploitation but no effort is made to analyse the complex motivations for migrating.

³ Bell, M. and Muhidin, S. (2009) Cross-National Comparisons of Internal Migration. Human Development Research Paper, No. 30. New York: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report Office

⁴ The World Bank (2010), Internal Migration in Ghana, Determinants and Welfare Impacts, West Africa Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit, World Bank

⁵ International Organisation for Migration (2009), Migration in Ghana, A Country Profile 2009, Geneva

⁶ Awumbila, M., G. Owusu & J. Kofi Teye (2014), Can Rural-Urban Migration into Slums Reduce Poverty? Evidence from Ghana, Migrating out of Poverty, Research Programme Consortium, Working Paper 13, April 2014

⁷ The World Bank (2010), Internal Migration in Ghana, Determinants and Welfare Impacts, West Africa Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit, World Bank

⁸ Castaldo, A., P. Deshingkar & A. McKay (2012), Internal Migration, Remittances and Poverty: Evidence from Ghana and India, Migrating out of Poverty, Research Programme Consortium, Working Paper 7, September 2012

⁹ The World Bank (2010), Internal Migration in Ghana, Determinants and Welfare Impacts, West Africa Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit

¹⁰ Castaldo, A., P. Deshingkar & A. McKay (2012), Internal Migration, Remittances and Poverty: Evidence from Ghana and India, Migrating out of Poverty, Research Programme Consortium, Working Paper 7, September 2012

1.3 AN OVERVIEW OF KAYAYEYI

Kayayei is a term used to describe women and girls who have migrated from northern Ghana to urban areas to earn money by carrying loads on their heads in lorry parks and markets. The word Kayayei is made up of two words; the Hausa word 'kaya', which means load, luggage, goods or burden, and the Ga word 'yei', which means women or females.

Kayayei are almost exclusively young migrant women who own few assets. They predominantly originate from the three northern regions of the country i.e. the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions and their primary destinations are the markets of the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions. The majority of these young women and girls tend to leave their home state around the age of 13-17 and stay in their destination cities for a maximum of five years. They tend to have little or no education and have no formal qualifications. The key motivation for this migration is economic, to provide for both herself and her family. The decision for a girl to migrate to work as a Kayayei is sometimes made by the entire family, rather than by the girl herself. Girls also become Kayayei to raise the funds to acquire the household items regarded as necessary for marriage, which may in part explain the gendered nature of this phenomenon.

Kayayei work is attractive to girls with low levels of education and from low income families because no assets are required to begin working. The work of carrying goods has few barriers to entry; it does not require any equipment (apart from one basin in which the items are carried) or training. In addition to being able to start work quickly, the informal nature of the work makes it easy for Kayayei to leave their jobs and return home. Kayayei is a highly gendered form of employment, carrying goods using a cart is thought too laborious, and thus 'too masculine' for females, but carrying smaller loads on one's head is considered acceptable. Thus 'truck pushers', or drivers, are invariably male while Kayayei are invariably female.

Kayayei represent a highly marginalised and vulnerable group of girls and women in Ghana. The work is precarious, they have no job security, are poorly paid, and live in terrible conditions. They face stigma and discrimination from their employers and the public, and are highly vulnerable to sexual abuse. However, the prospect of migrating to become Kayayei, to earn an income and send remittances home, often outweighs the potential cost of discontinuing education and living and working in unsafe conditions. Thus their numbers in Accra have steadily increased over the last decade, in line with families' increasing struggle to support themselves as subsistence farmers due to the impact of climate change on rainfall patterns.

Interventions aiming to reduce migration to large urban areas have included attempts to provide Kayayei with artisanal trades, through training, and to encourage them to return to their communities of origin. Paradoxically, the low economic status of the communities from which the girls are migrating means that even with skills provided, their new entrepreneurial efforts will be hampered by the absence of a vibrant market in which to sell their products as community members simply do not have significant levels of disposable income. As long as the regional inequalities in development, which are the primary cause of Kayayei migration, are not addressed, the harsh conditions in the urban areas remain preferable to staying in the north with few economic options and no source of income.

¹¹ The singular of Kayayei is Kayayoo, however in common usage Kayayoo is almost never used. So this document will use Kayayei as both singular and plural.

¹² Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) (2003), Ghana Child Labour Survey 2001, Accra: Ghana Statistical Service

¹³ Kwankye, S.O., J.K. Anarfi, C.A. Tagoe & A. Castaldo (2009), Independent North-South Child Migration in Ghana: The Decision Making Process, Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, Working Paper T-29

¹⁴ Awumbila, M., G. Owusu & J. Kofi Teye (2014), Can Rural-Urban Migration into Slums Reduce Poverty? Evidence from Ghana, Migrating out of Poverty, Research Programme Consortium, Working Paper 13, April 2014



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this study is to contribute to the design of programme interventions to improve the socio-economic wellbeing and reproductive health rights of young women and girls, specifically Kayayei, returnees and those at risk, in Ghana. In order to do so, this study had the following objectives:

1. Identify locations and communities from which most Kayayei originate.
2. Explore the push and pull factors that influence the decision to become Kayayei and the challenges faced by Kayayei.
3. Identify current interventions that address the needs of Kayayei, returnees, and those at risk of becoming Kayayei.
4. Identify and assess past interventions that target and address the situation of Kayayei, returnees, and those at risk of becoming Kayayei.
5. Identify programme intervention gaps and make recommendations for future interventions.
6. Provide an opportunity to raise the voices of young women and girls affected by the issues, so that their needs are thoroughly understood and prioritised in subsequent initiatives.
7. Add to the body of information available about Kayayei to inform broader policy direction and practice.

Research was carried out in two regions: the three regions of origin in northern Ghana and the migration capital, Accra. A range of research methodologies were used for both stages. These included research interviews in states of origin, with returnees and those at risk of becoming Kayayei, which were led by ACDEP, who are based in Tamale, and PEER with current Kayayei in Accra, led by FORWARD.

A. ORIGIN REGIONS

In the three northern regions, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were held with those who had returned from being Kayayei and those who were identified as at risk of becoming Kayayei. Young women and girls were identified as 'at risk' if they came from the same area and social backgrounds as other Kayayei. Most of these young women were between the ages of 20 and 24, but there were a few adolescent girls, and women over the age of 25. Approximately 80% of the Kayayei returnees and 75% of the at risk group were illiterate. Approximately 70% of the returnees were married, and 90% had at least one child. In the Northern Region 95% of the respondents were Muslim, whereas in the Upper West and Upper East regions, 85% were Christian.

This data was complemented by key informant interviews. At the District Assembly level, interviews were held with Coordinating Directors, District Planning Officers and Gender Desk Officers. At the local level, interviews were conducted with community leaders, such as community assembly people, traditional and cultural leaders and youth leaders. At the regional level, interviews were held with Directors and Project or Programme Officers from organisations working with Kayayei in various capacities. More details about the research participants can be found in Table 1.1.

To explore the particular challenges faced by Kayayei, as well as their choice to become Kayayei, and understand the impact of programmes aiming to help them, participants were chosen who would be able to provide insight into these issues specifically, rather than representing the views of the population more broadly. Local organisations helped identify participants, who then served as connectors to introduce further participants.

Transcripts from the interviews and focus groups were coded, analysed, and then grouped into particular study areas. In this way it was possible to quantify some of the results and produce rich, varied and representative findings.

TABLE 1.1 SAMPLE SIZES BY RESEARCH METHOD, RESPONDENT CATEGORY AND REGION

Region	FOCUS GROUPS			INTERVIEWS				
	Total	Returnees	At Risk	Returnees	At Risk	District Level Informants	Local Level Informants	Regional Level Informants
Northern	150	30	13	1	86	4	6	10
Upper West	85	24	24	1	20	6	10	0
Upper East	70	12	12	1	22	8	10	5
Totals	305	66	49	3	128	18	26	15

B. ACCRA

Participatory Ethnographic Evaluation and Research (PEER) was conducted with Kayayei in Accra. In PEER, members of the target community are trained to carry out in-depth conversational interviews with trusted individuals who they select from their own social networks. PEER is a very effective methodology when working with marginalised groups. It allows researchers to gain insights into sensitive issues such as sexual behaviour, gender relations and power dynamics within households and communities. PEER methodology received ethical approval from the University of Wales Swansea Research Ethics Board in 2007 and has been trialled and refined extensively by Options, the consultancy arm of Marie Stopes International. Over the past decade, PEER has been implemented in over 15 different countries and has a strong track record in health and social research.

FORWARD led the PEER study in Accra in collaboration with PAYDP. One PEER Supervisor was recruited from Cocoa Marketing Board market in central Accra (which is the operating base for Kayayei primarily from the Northern Region), two PAYDP staff were also chosen as PEER Supervisors. Another Supervisor, who was a Kayayei herself, then recruited 12 PEER researchers who were trained to carry out in-depth interviews with other Kayayei. Each of the PRs carried out one to three interviews which they then relayed back to their PEER Supervisors. In total, interviews were carried out with 30 Kayayei. The PEER Supervisor's role was to support the PRs if they had any problems or issues, meet them regularly to collect the data, and make plans to seek additional information where there were gaps in the data.

PEER researchers were empowered through their involvement in the study. Over the course of the research, they acquired extensive knowledge on the research subject and gained experience of designing research questions, carrying out interviews and collating data. Working in a supportive group environment, they became more confident and inspired to speak out about their experiences and needs. At the end of the study the PRs met to share preliminary findings and contribute to the recommendations.

One of the critical considerations for this study was anonymity of the responses to ensure confidentiality of respondents. Informed consent of respondents was sought before both individual and group interviews were conducted. Tape recordings of focus group discussions and real-life stories were taken with the permission of respondents. This report collates the studies carried out in the origin states in northern Ghana and Accra, and makes recommendations based on their collected findings.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

NORTHERN GHANA

This section presents the findings from interviews and focus group discussions in northern Ghana and the PEER interviews conducted in Accra. The findings focus on girls' perceptions of Kayayei work, the push and pull factors that lead young women and girls to become Kayayei, and their views on past and current interventions to support girls.

3.1 IDENTIFYING KAYAYEI HOTSPOTS

Although Kayayei come from all three regions in northern Ghana, there are particular districts and communities from which high numbers of girls migrate. These districts and communities have been designated as 'hotspots', and information about them was gathered by reviewing existing literature, supported by institutional assessments and key informant interviews.

NORTHERN REGION	UPPER EAST	UPPER WEST
Tolon	Bongo	Wa West
Kumbungu	Talensi	Wa East
Savelugu-Nanton	Nabdam	Sissala East
Gushegu	Binduri	Sissala West
Karaga	Bolgatanga municipality	
Nanumba North		
Zabzugu		
West Mamprusi		
East Mamprusi		
Mamprugu Moaduri		
Central Gonja		
East Gonja		
Sagnerigu		
Tamale Metropolis		

In the Northern Region over 85% of the Kayayei respondents from 14 of the 26 districts had migrated and returned more than three times. In one area of the Upper West Region, Siriyiri, in the Wa West District, all of the young women there were returnees, with the exception of one. Appendix 1 provides a full list of hotspot communities by district in the three regions.

The flow of young women and girls migrating to become Kayayei peaks twice yearly: during the dry season when there is little farming activity in the north and during the Christmas holidays when there is increased marketing activity in Accra.

One of the new findings from the research was that the city of Tamale is also increasingly becoming a Kayayei destination for young women and girls from communities around the Tamale metropolis, Sanerigu, West Mamprusi, East Mamprusi, Savelugu-Nanton, Tolon and Kumbungu districts of the Northern Region. This could be due to the rapid growth of Tamale which leads to increasing demand for services of Kayayei in and around the two main markets. Since the Kayayei come from communities that are not too far from Tamale, they can return home or stay with relatives in Tamale after each day's work and thus do not have the problems related to accommodation and security at night that Kayayei in Accra face.

3.2 PERCEPTIONS OF GIRLS AT RISK OF BECOMING KAYAYEI

In the three northern regions, a total of 128 individual interviews were conducted with those at risk of becoming Kayayei. These young women and girls had not migrated to become Kayayei, but matched the criteria of many who had. Very few of the interviewees had any interaction with returnee Kayayei. On the rare occasions where they had, the discussions focused on the positive aspects of being a Kayayei. It appears that returnee Kayayei conceal the truth about the hardships they go through and the dangers involved. Very few of the girls at risk were involved in any income-generating activities or skills training.

All respondents were aware of Kayayei, and described them as people who travel from their homes to other places to work for money doing menial jobs, primarily carrying goods. When girls were asked whether they were likely to become Kayayei, 47.5% of women and girls in the Northern Region replied yes, 46.5% replied no and 6% were unsure. In the Upper West Region 50% replied yes, 40% replied no and 10% were uncertain. However in the Upper East region, the difference was stark. 90.9% replied yes and only 9.1% replied no.

LIKELIHOOD OF BECOMING KAYAYEI

UPPER EAST REGION



UPPER WEST REGION



NORTHERN REGION



0 ——— 20 ——— 40 ——— 60 ——— 80 ——— 100

■ Likelihood of becoming Kayayei % Response - Yes
 ■ Likelihood of becoming Kayayei % Response - No
 ■ Likelihood of becoming Kayayei % Response - Unsure

Push and pull factors are factors which either forcefully push people into migration or attract them. A push factor relates to the area from which a person migrates and is a factor that drives a person away from a certain place. A pull factor relates to the area to which a person migrates and is generally a benefit that attracts people to a certain place. The at risk group were asked about the push and pull factors that would affect their decision to become Kayayei. Their answers are summarised below.

PUSH FACTORS

- To raise money to pay for school fees if their parents are unable to
- Lack of other viable employment options, due to a lack of jobs or training opportunities
- Poor academic performance (and therefore little possibility to continue their education)
- Unpredictable rainfall leading to crop failures and increases in poverty
- The need to earn money to buy a trousseau (materials considered necessary for a bride to take into married life)
- Mistreatment and abuse from family members, including the threat of forced marriage and abusive fostering relationships within extended families

PULL FACTORS

- Perceived glamour of urban life (exaggerated by returnee Kayayei in many cases)
- The pursuit of economic opportunities
- The chance to live independently and gain social skills to prepare them for adult life

INTERVIEWEES WERE ALSO AWARE OF SOME OF THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF BECOMING KAYAYEI. THEY CITED THE FOLLOWING POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:

- Sexual abuse and associated reproductive health issues, including unintended pregnancy, abortion and the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- General poor health, risk of accidents
- Physical abuse
- Hard working conditions
- Poor living conditions
- Risk of earnings being stolen

3.3 PERCEPTIONS OF KEY INFORMANTS

In interviews with the key informants, who were primarily local government officials and community leaders, Kayayei were described as those moving to seek livelihood opportunities in bigger towns in the south, such as Kumasi and Accra, normally to work as head porters. When asked about the push and pull factors which cause young women and girls to migrate to become Kayayei, key informants responded as summarised below.

PUSH FACTORS

- Extreme poverty which compels young women and girls to become Kayayei so they can contribute to family income
- To raise money to pay for their school fees when their families are unable to do so
- Burden of domestic chores

PULL FACTORS

- The south is more prosperous than the north, drawing girls towards it, especially when they see others returning from the south having made a good profit
- Many girls are pressured or influenced by returnees, who often lie or exaggerate about the possible benefits of migrating
- Some girls migrate in order to seek adventure and a change of scene

Key informants were also able to provide additional information about the possible challenges young women and girls face as Kayayei. The findings are shown in Table 2. Each respondent was asked to rate the likelihood of the Kayayei experiencing these challenges using a 1-5 scale, where 1 is unlikely and 5 is very likely. 'F' represents the frequency or number of respondents who selected each number. The results indicate that sexual abuse, nursing babies and becoming pregnant are considered very likely to occur.

TABLE 2: RATING OF KEY INFORMANTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE LIKELIHOOD OF SITUATIONS KAYAYEI MAY EXPERIENCE

CHALLENGES	FREQUENCY OF RATINGS ACROSS VARIABLES									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Becoming pregnant	0	0.0	2	12.5	6	37.5	3	18.8	5	31.3
Nursing a baby/child during Kayayei work	2	12.5	1	6.25	7	43.8	2	12.5	4	25.0
Becoming trapped in a violent conflict	4	25.0	5	31.3	3	18.8	2	12.5	2	12.5
Exposure to sexual abuse	0	0.0	4	25.0	1	6.25	4	25.0	6	37.5
Involvement in accidents	1	6.7	1	6.7	6	40.0	6	40.0	1	6.7
Being a victim of theft	2	12.5	1	6.25	6	37.5	3	18.8	4	25.0
Being a culprit / perpetrator of theft	2	12.5	7	43.7	6	37.5	1	6.25	0	0.0
Getting lost in transit or at destination	8	57.1	3	21.7	2	14.2	1	7.14	0	0.0
Exposure to armed robbery	3	18.8	3	18.8	5	31.3	2	12.5	3	18.8
Lack of access to healthcare	2	12.5	1	6.25	4	25.0	7	43.8	2	12.5

3.4 CURRENT INTERVENTIONS

One of the key findings of this study was the failure of key actors to implement coherent and focused interventions to address the needs of returnee Kayayei and those at risk in northern Ghana. During the focus group discussions in Kpugi, a young girl remarked emphatically,

“WE SEE THE FUTURE TO BE BLEAK IF THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WE LIVE IN PERSISTS. THIS IS MORE SO WHEN INTERVENTIONS ARE SCARCE”.

In contrast however, some returnees and those at risk have benefited indirectly from broader projects focused on women's rights and poverty alleviation. One research participant said, “I have truly benefited and I am satisfied”.

An institutional assessment carried out by the African Development Organization for Migration (AFDOM) and the Department of Gender and Children revealed that there were no interventions that tackled the Kayayei issue specifically in northern Ghana. The Gender Desk Officer in Gushegu was unable to name any intervention which specifically targeted Kayayei.

In Tamale, in the Northern Region, AFDOM has a programme that supports women and girls through skills training, such as poultry farming and dress-making. The programme is being scaled up and diversified, but the success of the project is challenged by the fact that food scarcity means parents are unable to provide food for their daughters while they are on these apprenticeships.

The majority of the projects mentioned were focused on income generation and skills training. Songsim Integrated Development Association (SONIDA), a local NGO working in Gushegu, has collaborated with the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) and the Department of Community Development (DoCD) to advocate for continuing quality education for girls as a means of halting the high rate of migration for Kayayei work and to permanently resettle returnees.

In the Upper East region, Afrikids have a long-running programme which encourages girls to stay in school by providing life skills training, school bags, uniforms and exercise books for female pupils and girls who have dropped out of school.

Also in the Upper East region, Asongtaba, a local NGO, and the government's Local Enterprise and Skills Development Programme (LESDEP), have set up initiatives for micro credit schemes and youth training which have been reported to have a positive impact on addressing the issue of Kayayei. However, no formal evaluation has been conducted to assess the impact of these programmes. In addition there have also been newspaper reports that indicate the programme has been tainted by allegations of corruption.^{15 16 17} This is supported by the fact that in 2013, LESDEP went out of operation as a result of financial irregularities and the money the Government invested in it has not been recovered to date. An additional GHS 84,000,000 [approx. £15,724,697] that the government had added to this programme to scale it up was also lost.

Interviewees mentioned a number of projects involving income generation which had an agricultural focus. For example, Agricultural Cooperative Development International together with Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance sponsored the Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement Programme (ADVANCE II) project through USAID. The project linked commercial farmers in communities in the Gushegu district with various actors in the agricultural value chain. This project, though not directly targeting youth or Kayayei, sought to make farming an attractive economic venture for young people in the long-term.

The Ghana Environmental Management Project (GEMP), under the auspices of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), engages young men and women in its alternative livelihood projects as well as programmes tailored to improving biodiversity and vegetative cover.

There was also one project that was mentioned which addressed the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls. The Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre (NORSAAC), a local NGO operating in the Northern Region, has identified and mainstreamed sensitisation on Kayayei issues into its adolescent sexual and reproductive health programme because of the relationship between the two.

¹⁵ Modern Ghana, Massive LESDEP Fraud Uncovered <http://www.modernghana.com/news/505118/1/massive-lesdep-fraud-uncovered-as-finance-minister.html>;

¹⁶ www.peacefonline.com/pages/politics/201307/169911 ; Tema LESDEP is a Family Coy. 25 July 2013

¹⁷ www.kasapaonline.com/aboutus; LESDEP will Bounce Back. 18 June 2015





3.5 PAST INTERVENTIONS

An inventory of past interventions conducted highlighted the lack of projects specifically aimed at addressing the needs of Kayayei. There was also no evaluation of most of the projects that had taken place, making analysis of their successes, failures and learning outcomes difficult. The regional Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) ran a project emphasising the need to stay in education as a desirable alternative to working as Kayayei. This was through a number of activities around education for both sexes rather than a specialised and targeted programme. ActionAid Ghana runs girl's camps in all three regions and one aspect of their work is to dissuade girls from going to the south to become Kayayei.

Most of the projects identified focused on providing alternative forms of income-generating activities for young women and girls. In the Northern Region, Regional Advisory Information and Network Systems (RAINS) and Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) offered skills training to young girls. Having completed a training course, those who participated in the interventions were offered a sewing machine and seed capital. The project generally had some success, but encountered difficulties in Gushegu in particular, where the participants were ridiculed by other members of the community for taking part in the project.

In other cases, programmes came to an end when the funding stopped. World Vision International provided apprenticeship training for young girls and supported them with seed capital. Unfortunately, this project was discontinued due to lack of funding. The Ghanaian government initiated a project, training women to produce hydraform bricks for affordable housing in the Northern Region, but it could not be sustained due to funding difficulties.

Another key problem that arose was that, in many cases, taking part in training-centred programmes was not financially viable for girls, causing them to abandon the programme before completion. In the Sisala East district of the Upper West Region, the then Vice President John Dramani Mahama offered resettlement programmes to some Kayayei returnees from Gumu township and its surrounding communities. As part of the package, electric sewing machines were presented to the young women and their apprenticeship fees were paid to enable them to train as seamstresses. However, lack of support in the form of food provision for the girls during the apprenticeship resulted in the collapse of the programme.

The Department of Gender in the Northern Region under the auspices of Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGSP), collaborated with the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2006 and 2007 to implement an intervention based on shea butter extraction and processing in the East Mamprusi district. The Intermediate Technology Transfer Unit (ITTU) assisted with equipment installation and the training of women. Though not targeting Kayayei returnees directly, the project sought to make shea butter extraction and processing an attractive economic activity for young women in the area. Management and ownership was unclear and therefore became politicised, ultimately leading to the failure of the project.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT

In-depth interviews were carried out with Kayayei in Accra, to better understand their living conditions, and their reasons for deciding to become Kayayei. PEER participants were asked to describe what a Kayayei is, and what their daily tasks included. Some of the Kayayei worked independently, walking around the market looking for people who need their loads carried for a fee. In a new phenomenon, others are employed by 'madams' to help them in their shops, while others worked directly with shop owners, cultivating a relationship with a specific shop owner and working exclusively for their business. Below are direct quotations from the PEER participants about the Kayayei they interviewed.

Descriptions of Kayayei included references to their hard manual work, long hours and the minimal rewards earned from their jobs. They also referenced the control of the madams, but described the positive aspect of the flexibility of being able to switch between jobs to seek better benefits.

“KAYAYEI ARE GIRLS WHO WAKE UP EARLY IN THE MORNING AND WALK AROUND THE MARKET SEEKING FOR PEOPLE WHOSE GOODS THEY CAN CARRY. THEY WILL CARRY GOODS TO WHEREVER THE CUSTOMER WANTS AND THEY WILL CONTINUE WALKING THROUGH THE MARKET TILL EVENING.”

These are girls who are employed by shop owners to carry goods in and out of the store when the need arises. Also when customers of the shop have goods to carry, these girls carry them to wherever the customers want. They are paid either per day or per week by the shop owner.

These are Kayayei who carry goods from one place to another. For example, if there is a truck load of yams that have to be transferred from the offloading point to another part of the market, these Kayayei will go up and down carrying yams.

She used to be with a madam who owns a biscuit shop. She carries the boxes of biscuits (about 10-12) in about three times every day. She has been insulted for doing things right or wrong. She earned GHS 3 a day [approx. £0.50] and is not given food and water. She left because the job didn't cover her food costs. Currently, she earns GHS 20 [approx. £3.50] a day. She gives about GHS 50 [approx. £8.50] a week to her brother who owns a biscuit shop in Agbobloshie to save into his account and that has been going on for the past two months.

ACCRA

“SOME OF THE GIRLS WHO ARE IN SCHOOL WILL COME AND LOOK FOR MONEY TO CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION. AFTER GETTING MONEY, THE FAMILY MAY HAVE PROBLEMS AND THEY WILL BE ASKED TO GIVE THEIR MONEY TO THE FAMILY. BECAUSE OF THAT THEY WOULD DECIDE TO LOOK FOR MORE MONEY BEFORE THEY GO BACK HOME AND THAT WILL CAUSE HER TO REMAIN A KAYAYEI.”

The PEER participants also gave a range of explanations for why girls become Kayayei providing more insight into the push and pull factors.

PUSH FACTORS

Many had become Kayayei to support their families. This seemed to be the primary reason for them going down south to work as Kayayei.

Her mother decided for her, so that she will make some money and support her sibling who is younger.

Girls are asked by their parents to go to the city and work, so that they can send money back home.

My mother asked me to come and work so that I can help take care of the family

Many of the participants explained that they had become Kayayei to help pay their school fees or support their younger siblings, most often their brothers' education. One of the girls even received a call from her younger brother enquiring about his shoes for school during a debriefing session with a PR.

I just completed Junior High School and was waiting for the results, so I came to the city to do Kayayei so that I can get some money to go and continue school.

Because there is no support for girls, they become Kayayei to help pay their school fees. Sometimes parents send their daughters to Accra to work as a Kayayei to make money since they have no money to pay their school fees and nobody to help.

Often our plans to go back to school change, we do not go back to school because we tend to look for more money.'

For others, a perceived lack of employment opportunities made becoming a Kayayei the only option.

There are no jobs in the village to do after completing Junior High or Senior: One girl, when her father died, her mother couldn't find employment to pay her fees, so she had to come to Accra and do Kayayei before she can continue to Senior High.

It is because there is no work back home and she needed money to pay her school fees.

In order to get married, it is expected that a bride brings a trousseau of various items such as pots, pans, serving dishes, and plates to her new house upon marriage. A number of the PEER participants were forced to become Kayayei in order get money to pay for items they 'need' to get married.

Some of the girls come to get money to go and get married. They have to buy pots, cloth etc. to go to their husband's house.

Even providing food at home is mainly done by the women so they come down to raise money to buy the needed items for marriage.



Moving to Accra to escape child marriage was a reason for a number of the PEER participants becoming Kayayei. Many girls also mentioned that their fathers were too old to work on the farms and their mothers were very young and had no income to support them.

Her older sister was in Senior High School and her father didn't have money to pay her fees, so he decided to send her into marriage. She told her older brother about it and her brother helped her to come to Accra to become a Kayayei.

If parents are forcing the girl into marriage, the girl can decide to run away to Accra and become a Kayayei.

Some young girls are given into early marriages. Some have to run away to Accra to seek greener pastures.

Family members trying to force the girls into marriage will cause the girls to run away.

PUSH FACTORS

Some of the Kayayei who took part in the PEER had been influenced to do so by their friends, who had previously travelled to do Kayayei work and come back with goods and money.

Friends tell other friends back home that there is money in Accra and that they enjoy themselves in Accra.

Some are influenced by friends to come here and they come because they are ignorant.

Friends may influence them to do Kayayei work to get more money to take better care of themselves and this will cause them to eventually stop schooling.

Some of the Kayayei had originally been commercial sex workers when they first arrived in Accra, but had become pregnant and so became Kayayei in order to support and care for their children.

Some of them also come down to prostitute to make money, but got pregnant in the process and had to do Kayayei.

“A GIRL LOST BOTH PARENTS AND HER AUNTIE COULDN'T TAKE GOOD CARE OF HER. SHE DECIDED TO COME DOWN TO DO PROSTITUTION FOR MONEY. IN THE PROCESS SHE GOT PREGNANT AND BECAME A KAYAYEI.”

4.2 CHALLENGES FACED BY KAYAYEI

The PEER study also explored challenges faced by Kayayei when they migrate to Accra. Kayayei who took part in the PEER explained that they are overworked, underpaid and often went hungry.

They either have no money to buy food, or their money is not enough to buy enough food that will satisfy them. Most eat porridge in the morning and go round working on an empty stomach, hoping to get some money from their work to buy food. On days when they do not get money, they have to pass the night without eating.

She works with a madam who doesn't give any money at the end of the day despite all the work she does for her. She gets extra money only if she carries loads for people who patronise the shop. She is not even allowed to rest. She sells doughnuts for the madam she works for. She is always given GHS 50 [approx. £8.50] worth of doughnuts to sell and she has to give her madam GHS 35 [approx. £6.00]. Whether the doughnuts are bought or not, her madam takes her share of the money, GHS 35. So sometimes she loses money.

If they drop or spoil [an item or goods] they are carrying by mistake, they are asked to pay for it with their own money, even if it was unintentional.

She is underpaid, or sometimes not paid on time. Her madam can also decide to pay her months later and if she thinks the money is too much she cuts it in half.

Their madams treat them like slaves and do not allow them to rest anytime, they are tired and at the end of the day [the madam] will not give them anything.

They are not able to make enough money to send back home. She was supposed to send money back home to help her younger siblings but she was not getting enough. So she fell prey to a man who offered to give her money for sex. She did and she got pregnant.

Kayayei who took part in the PEER also highlighted the multiple dangers associated with their work, but most had no choice but to continue Kayayei work.

She sells for her madam in traffic and so is at risk of getting knocked down by a car.

Kayayei face risk of accidents because they carry heavy loads every day. She feels the work is too difficult for her, because sometimes she carries loads too heavy for her body.

**“ONE GIRL HAD A TERRIBLE
CAR ACCIDENT WHILE
WORKING FOR HER MADAM
ONE DAY. THE MADAM
REFUSED TO SUPPORT
HER BUT A CUSTOMER
INTERVENED AND GAVE
HER MONEY TO GO TO THE
HOSPITAL. AFTER RECOVERY
SHE WENT BACK TO WORK
FOR THE WOMAN.”**

“A KAYAYEI, WHO WAS ABOUT SIX TO SEVEN MONTHS PREGNANT, WAS CARRYING A LOAD OF BISCUITS WHEN SHE ACCIDENTLY SLIPPED AND THE GOODS FELL. THE MADAM STARTED INSULTING HER AND TOOK OUT A CANE. EVEN THOUGH SHE WAS PREGNANT, THE MADAM BEAT HER AND CANED HER ON HER BACK AND HER LEGS.”

Due to the informal nature of the work, many of the PEER participants highlighted the insecurity that comes with working as a Kayayei. This can be because there is little work, or because Kayayei are managed by madams and have no legal protection. They are also vulnerable to abuse and neglect by the madams who dominate their working lives. The high numbers of Kayayei in Accra mean girls are also not secure in their position; their madams can easily find new girls if they are unsatisfied with their current Kayayei.

She lost her job because the father of her madam recommended she be sacked to reduce the financial burden of the madam.

She has to be at work before her master or else she will sack her and replace her with other girls.

If she does not show up at the store early she will be sacked.

She does not sit at a store and earn a monthly salary, so she has to move around and look for customers. Sometimes she gets customers, but other times they don't get a single customer in a whole day.

As well as being able to sack them with no notice, the madams regularly physically and verbally abuse Kayayei.

They are insulted, maltreated, cheated [out] of the money that is due them and at times slapped or beaten. They are at times sent on errands by their madams and are not paid.

She says her madam sent her on an errand. She got lost because she was not familiar with the destination. She finally found her way back but her madam beat her and said that she wanted to steal from her.

She was working with her madam one day when the items fell. Her madam sells cosmetics and that day the load was really heavy and the items fell. She was verbally abused and sacked.

She is made fun of by her madam's children and she is not allowed into the store.

A Kayayei, who was about six to seven months pregnant, was carrying a load of biscuits when she accidentally slipped and the goods fell. The madam started insulting her and took out a cane. Even though she was pregnant, the madam beat her and caned her on her back and her legs.

There is a woman in the market who owns a store. Kayayei do not normally stay working for this woman for more than one or two months. The mistreatment and the insults from this lady are many. Even when they Kayayei cry due to this, the shop owner will tell them to keep quiet so that her customers or people will not hear.

The interviewees also revealed the stigma experienced by Kayayei from others in the community.

It is like we are treated as if we are not human beings just because we are Kayayei. This treatment comes from people passing by, people who use their services and people around the markets.

She usually has people pushing and shoving her. In a day, when she went around carrying her head pan, she mistakenly bumped into a man, she apologised and the man insulted her, knocked her and asked if there was a problem with her eyes.

They are called thieves" and "destroyers"; because they are accused of destroying people's goods. Once I was carrying a load and mistakenly pushed something out of someone's hand. The person angrily asked me to come back and pick it up, and I had to do so whilst carrying the load on my head.



As well as direct challenges associated with their work, Kayayei face multiple other challenges. For most Kayayei, access to affordable and safe accommodation is a problem.

The majority of Kayayei have challenges with finding a safe place to sleep. Some have houses around and in the markets that have rooms they rent out to people and to Kayayei. For the Kayayei who can afford this, unfortunately they are not one person to a room. Kayayei have to share a single room with other Kayayei, and on average they can number 15 to 20 persons sharing a room. This forces some to sleep sitting down and most to have allocated portions of the ground to sleep on. These Kayayei have to pay between GHS 2 [approx. £0.35] and GHS 5 [approx. 0.90] per week for this accommodation. Some Kayayei are not fortunate enough to find a room to rent. They sleep in the markets, at the lorry stations or in front of people's stores with their few belongings and head pans.

The accommodation they have is not good enough, the room gets flooded anytime the rains are heavy. They carry their luggage on their heads until the rain stops. The rent is also too expensive.

The toilets are too close to the rooms where they sleep. Each room has more than 30 girls, the bags are hung on nails on the wall, and the surroundings are not cleaned.

Access to clean water was another issue identified by the interviewees. Kayayei generally have to use shared washing stations which require payment. The cost for access to a washing area is GHS 0.50 - GHS 1 [approx. £0.10 - £0.15]. The cost of using the toilet, usually a pit latrine, is GHS 0.50. They are required to pay GHS 0.50 for a small bucket of water, and GHS 0.80- GHS 1 [approx. £0.13 - £0.15] for a big bucket of water.

They wake up in the morning but find it difficult getting water to bathe.

Public bathhouses are not many (usually one or two) in the market places and some have to walk some distance to bathe. In the case of those Kayayei who mainly have outside bathhouses in the houses where they are sleeping, they have to pay for use of the bath house, toilet and water.

“FOR THE KAYAYEI WHO SLEEP OUTSIDE, FOR THOSE WHO HAVE WATER AND DON’T HAVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC BATH HOUSES, THEY WAKE UP AS EARLY AS 2AM, FILL THEIR HEAD PANS WITH WATER AND WASH IN THE OPEN, AROUND WHERE THEY SLEEP. SOME EVEN SAID THAT SOME OF THEM STAND INSIDE THE HEAD PAN AND BATHE. THOSE THAT HAVE CHILDREN ALSO BATHE THEIR CHILDREN IN THEIR HEAD PANS.”

“WHEN THE WEATHER IS HOT THEY SLEEP OUTSIDE ON CARDBOARD. THEY ARE DRUGGED AND RAPED. AT MORNING THEY ONLY SEE EVIDENCE THAT THEY HAVE BEEN RAPED, BUT HAVE NO IDEA WHO THE PERPETRATORS ARE.”

Many of the PEER participants described how Kayayei are vulnerable to rape and sexual abuse, those that sleep outside having an increased risk of being raped. Due to the precariousness of their livelihood and their low social status they do not report cases of abuse to the authorities.

A man entered the Kayayei's room and attempted to rape her, but she woke up all three girls who shouted and the man ran away.

One girl was raped after the perpetrator blew a powder like substance on all the girls sleeping in the room. He raped the girl till she bled and then ran away. After the heaviness from the powder wore off, they rushed the girl to the hospital but she died upon arrival.

One day one of her roommates went out to visit her boyfriend in the night and left the door open. A man came and peeped through the window, when he saw the door open. He walked to the girls and wanted to rape them; he tore one of the girl's dresses, but ran out after two of the girls woke up. Rape cases are more common for those who sleep outside.

When the weather is hot they sleep outside on cardboard. They are drugged and raped. At morning they only see evidence that they have been raped, but have no idea who the perpetrators are.

There are some area boys who have formed a group they call "The Brothers". These are people who smoke and drink and go round beating people who offend a friend or client of one of their members. In some cases where a member of The Brothers proposes [sex] to a Kayayei and the Kayayei doesn't accept, members of the group can gather and carry the girl somewhere, and the guy in question will either beat or rape her and then ask her to leave because he is angry that she is saying that he isn't good enough for her.

After a long day of roaming the market, this Kayayei girl did not get any work to do. A man asked her to buy water for him, she did, but when she came back he asked her to bring it into a building site where he had moved to. He forced himself on the girl and raped her as soon as she arrived. She was with a friend who followed after sometime to find out why her friend was delayed in returning. She found her friend on the floor and the rapist nowhere to be found.



All stakeholders recognise that Kayayei are in a very vulnerable position but they get very little support or protection from the police or security guards associated with the markets they work in, which reinforces their distrust of the authorities and makes it less likely that they will report any abuse they suffer.

She complained that in most cases of rape, the police do not pay attention to them when they report because of their work and because they don't have money to give the police.

One of their colleagues was raped and it was reported to their building manager, who said that the victim agreed to the sex because of money. So nothing was done to the perpetrator.

Sometimes they are abused sexually [while] living in a building site, or while waiting for prospective customers. The case was reported to the watchmen and he said that the victim agreed to the act due to lack of money.

The PEER participants also described how Kayayei are vulnerable to theft.

Sometimes the girls themselves steal from one another and give the things they have stolen to their friends outside to keep for them. Theft happens mostly to those who sleep outside.

Their money is not kept well, so it is easily stolen. Some girls save with the susu collectors [a popular informal savings system] who run away with the money.

One time, thieves entered their room and stole three phones. The thieves are Northerners, like the Kayayei. They work in groups to take advantage of Kayayei.

Most Kayayei keep the money they earn under their sleeping mats or wrapped in a cloth inside their belongings. Their money is most of the time stolen, especially for those who sleep outside.

PEER participants also expressed their fear of being captured and sold for use in 'medicine murder', i.e. where girls are murdered so that their body parts can be used as ingredients for 'black magic' rituals.

A Kayayei came to Accra and was looking for work. A woman offered her a job as a house help. She worked for four months, but the woman refused to pay her. She overheard the woman in a phone conversation planning to use her for medicine murder. She mentioned to the woman that she wanted to return to her home town. The woman beat her mercilessly and locked her in her room. The woman had mistakenly left her phone in the room. The Kayayei picked it up and called a fire service number she saw on the woman's phone. They came to her rescue and arrested the woman with the policemen they came with.

At age 10 her father died; her mother had died two years earlier. She was taken to live with her aunty who mistreated her. She decided to come to the capital to find work. She met a man upon arriving in the capital who told her he knew where her colleagues from the north were, because he said he could identify her tribal marks [facial scarification]. This man directed her to a ritualist who killed her and took out her private parts for rituals. Her body was later found and one of her cousins was a witness to the body, so the cousin sent word to the aunt.

“THEY HAD CASES OF SOME GIRLS REPORTING RAPE CASES TO THE POLICE, ONLY FOR THE POLICE TO ASK THEM TO PAY [BEFORE THEY TAKE ACTION] OR TELL THEM THAT IT’S NOT ANYTHING AND DO NOT TAKE THE ISSUE SERIOUSLY, BECAUSE THEY ARE KAYAYEI.”

4.3 SUPPORT SERVICES REQUIRED FOR KAYAYEI

Despite the multiple problems faced by Kayayei, none of the PEER participants had received support from either governmental or non-governmental actors in Accra. In fact, a number of them expressed the frustration they felt at being repeatedly interviewed about their situation, but never receiving any form of tangible support. This resulted in the reluctance of some girls to participate in the PEER.

The Kayayei assumed that it was just another group who would come to the market ask them questions, gather information and not come back to help them in any way.

People keep asking them questions but they do not see any improvement.

They do not get any support from anyone, they keep asking questions and interviewing them.

Some participants requested safe accommodation in which the Kayayei could sleep.

Government and NGOs should provide places to sleep for Kayayei. Most of them sleep on the streets and in front of stores. They should be given as much help as possible because they feel sorry for themselves, scared, sad and uncomfortable.

Government and NGOs should provide accommodation for Kayayei. Kayayei do not have places to sleep, they sleep in streets and in front of stores.

The need for special services for girls who have experienced sexual abuse was a recurring theme in the interviews. To start with, participants felt that affected girls should have immediate access to health services and support.



They should be taken to the hospital to see if they have any virus or disease or damage to their wombs.

They should be sent to the hospital for check-ups and provided with employment so that they can get money if they become pregnant.

She should be taken to the hospital for check-ups to find out if she has contracted any diseases. Some of the girls who get pregnant buy medicine to try and abort and sometimes die. She had a school mate who got pregnant after they registered for Senior High. She tried to abort by taking medicine which killed her.

They should be taken to the hospital and helped to get a job so that they can take care of any pregnancy that may occur.

They should be sent to the hospital for a check-up and [given] a job so that the person can take care of the pregnancy. There have been cases of abortion, where people get drugs from the pharmacy. Girls with babies carry the babies behind them [on their backs] while working to make sure the child doesn't get stolen.

Lack of police protection of Kayayei and lack of prosecution of cases of sexual abuse was mentioned by some of interviewees.

Police should show more concern and take rape cases of Kayayei more seriously.

Any case or problem sent to the police station should be taken seriously, and the police shouldn't say it's not any serious issue and they don't care because they are Kayayei.

4.4 SUPPORT REQUIRED TO REDUCE NUMBERS OF GIRLS WANTING TO BECOME KAYAYEI

As part of the PEER, the Kayayei described support they needed, both to support current Kayayei and also to prevent others becoming Kayayei. There were common themes and many expressed their desire to receive training so they could become skilled and start profitable income-generating activities instead of being Kayayei.

They should be trained to do things, for example dress-making.

*They should organise training programs on how to make sandals, bread, cake, cloth and prepare fruit juice.
They should also provide necessary machines for them to use, so that they can stop Kayayei.*

*They should be helped to set up in a skill or trade like hairdressing so that they can support themselves.
The government should build more schools and do more training programmes for business development so that girls will have better positions in the community. They want to be taught hairdressing to support their parents to buy farm tools.*

They would benefit from a programme that would assist them to get better jobs or be entrepreneurial.

A number of the PEER participants described the kind of work they aspired to have. One girl had repeatedly attempted to train as a nurse, but was not able to get support.



[She wanted to be a] nurse or government worker, so that they can earn salary at the end of the month.

They want to stop Kayayei and get back to school.

She needs money to go back home and collect her results.

She wants to be a nurse and it's because she did chemistry at school.

She wants to become an accountant.

She wants to be a doctor in the future, because she scored high marks in her Senior High School exams.

Others mentioned that they wanted the cost of education to be subsidised to relieve the financial pressure on parents, which causes them to force or encourage their daughters to become Kayayei – because they cannot support their education.

The government or NGOs should pay the school fees of those who are still in school.

Kayayei should be supported to pay their school fees.

Set up a fund to pay the school fees of the girls who are in school so they will stop Kayayei work.

The government should support education by providing financial support to students.

Likewise, some of the girls interviewed expressed the need for investment in communities in northern Ghana, reducing the necessity for girls to migrate to Accra for work.

The government and NGOs should help our fathers and mothers with farm tools like tractors and fertilisers.

We want to see good roads, construction of more schools and health facilities.

The Government and NGOs should maintain northern Ghana and provide skilled work opportunities so girls don't have to become Kayayei.

4.5 BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPANTS TAKING PART IN THE PEER

As previously discussed, the PEER methodology is used in part because of the wide-ranging benefits for both PRs and also for interviewees, not least of which is that learning to carry out interviews improved the researchers' communications skills. Some of the participants disclosed that the experience made them more able to talk more confidently about the specific issues affecting Kayayei.

[I learned] how to conduct interviews, and how to speak in front of people and friends.

I learnt how to tolerate people and how to respond to people. I learnt how to respect the people I am talking to.

The PEER Researchers were able to understand the interviewees' responses due to the training they did before they started.

I learned how to talk to people to understand the issues the research is about.

I have learnt a lot and I will share the information with my friends who still live in the north.

Others explained that taking part in the PEER had inspired them to continue learning or training.

Taking part in the PEER has prepared us for future opportunities.

[It] added a lot to her knowledge that makes her aspire to go back to school after the Junior High School results have been checked.

Some explained that they had improved their knowledge of the experiences of Kayayei like themselves.

The Kayayei PEER Researchers found the debriefing exercise very helpful. They understood the questions better and were able to give more detailed information on what the Kayayei they interviewed were talking about.

I have learnt more about the situation of other Kayayei like myself.



PEER participants described how they were able to collect in depth information by having open and honest conversations about their experiences.

Since they were also Kayayei, the individuals they interviewed received them well and were willing to give proper and necessary information.

The PEER Researchers were able to get more information because they too were fellow Kayayei and they were willing to open up more. If the Researchers were outsiders they may not have opened up so much and [gone] into detail about what they go through.

However, there were challenges. Many PRs reported that they were teased for taking part in the study and others had difficulties persuading girls to trust them.

While she was doing the interview some of her friends mocked her by asking 'school girl what are you doing with paper walking and talking instead of looking for a load to carry?'

It was difficult interviewing the girls, she was ridiculed by the girls or accused of lying about the information.

My friends were reluctant to be interviewed because they were afraid they would be used.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Policy makers and development NGOs alike have said that the Kayayei phenomenon is now a major concern. A number of initiatives have been introduced mainly in the three northern regions to support women and girls, but few specifically target Kayayei issues and none have been sufficiently holistic in their approach. Government officials have repeatedly talked about addressing issues surrounding and affecting Kayayei, but evidence of successful interventions is limited suggesting there needs to be less emphasis on talking about Kayayei and more on actually delivering successful programmes that target those affected.

The interventions that have been assessed in this research have not proved to be effective in either protecting the rights of 'at risk' and returned Kayayei or equipping them with skills and training so they can pursue alternative forms of employment. No efforts to protect young women and girls already working as Kayayei in Accra or Tamale, where Kayayei work is increasing, were uncovered, suggesting that all current and past programmatic energy has only focused on preventing young women and girls from becoming Kayayei.

The mixed research methods of using key informant interviews, focus group discussions and interviews with those 'at risk' and returned from being Kayayei coupled with the PEER with current Kayayei has allowed this study to analyse the Kayayei phenomenon from multiple angles and perspectives. The PEER captured attitudes, beliefs and descriptions of behaviours based on what the participants shared with the researchers, providing unique and needed insights into the reality of Kayayei life and direct suggestions of interventions from the Kayayei themselves.

This research has revealed the complex nature of the Kayayei phenomenon. The needs and realities of Kayayei, Kayayei returnees and those at risk of becoming Kayayei, are distinct, each with their own set of interlinking and re-enforcing causes and consequences. This report has also referred to the changing nature of the phenomenon, with young women and girls increasingly choosing to migrate to other places in the north of Ghana such as Tamale, rather than going to the south as they have done traditionally. This new trend may suggest the fact that numbers of Kayayei are set to increase further as it becomes even easier for girls to access the work more locally. Without strategic long-term interventions, this could lead to a huge increase of vulnerable young women working on the streets of Ghana, replicating the unsafe and unsustainable working practices from the capital and all across the country.

In this section the complexities of the phenomenon and the different contributing factors, perceptions, realities and attempted interventions will be explored. Concluding recommendations will be drawn out to inform the design and implementation of strategies for effective interventions to improve the socio-economic wellbeing and reproductive health rights of young women and girls who are Kayayei, at risk of becoming Kayayei or returnee Kayayei.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO WOMEN AND GIRLS BECOMING KAYAYEI

Many young women and girls migrate more than once in their lifetime to become Kayayei. The length of migration varies dramatically; some migrate for years at a time, and others only for months or even weeks. Those migrating long-term may become accustomed to Kayayei life and have little to return to at home, while those who work as Kayayei for shorter periods are likely to be doing so in order to earn money for a specific need, and once this has been met they will return to the north.

As mentioned previously, migration patterns also appear to be changing in terms of destination location as recently more young women and girls are choosing to travel to Tamale in the Northern Region to work as Kayayei. More research in respect of these new destination locations for Kayayei needs to be done to better understand this change in behaviour.

It would be wrong to suggest there is a homogenous set of factors that impact every Kayayei's decision to migrate, as each will do so for her own reasons and with her own expectations, but this study has been able to expose some of the key push and pull factors.

The fact that the flow of Kayayei peaks twice yearly and is related to seasonal events indicates that many take the opportunity to be Kayayei when they think it is of the most benefit to themselves and their families and that they are likely to be influenced by the behaviour of others around them.

The majority of the push factors identified by the 'at risk' Kayayei, the key informants and the current Kayayei, relate directly to financial reasons for migration. The lack of economic opportunities in the north, coupled with the harsh and unpredictable climate means that if the girls stay in the northern regions they face a life of poverty with no means of finding decent work to earn the money they need to become self-sufficient adults. A desire to better themselves and to pursue higher education was frequently referenced by all the groups, and Kayayei is seen as an attractive short term solution to earn money to pay for school fees that they could not otherwise afford.

Gendered expectations and experiences also seem to play a role in the choice to become Kayayei. Some young women and girls identified the need to earn money so that they could buy items considered essential for marriage to make themselves an attractive prospect for their husbands. Some identified the threat of forced marriage and abusive relationships as a reason to migrate away from the three northern regions, to where their families have less control over their lives.

The unified pull factor identified by the 'at risk' Kayayei, the key informants and the current Kayayei was that returnees had made Kayayei work seem like an attractive prospect. The 'at risk' group shared that while they had not interacted with many returnees, those they had met presented Kayayei as a 'glamorous' alternative to life in the north. Key Informants also recognised that Kayayei returnees pressure and influence girls when they return to the northern regions and that they often exaggerate the benefits of migrating. Those working as Kayayei in Accra also told the PRs that their friends in the north had influenced their decisions by telling them that Accra is a prosperous place where they can earn money. People often believe what the returnees share because 'they are ignorant' and have no other reference information for what Kayayei life is like. As with the push factors, the pull factors include financial incentives for migration, those 'at risk' were attracted by the economic opportunities in the south. Key informants shared that they thought those at risk were likely to migrate because they know the south is more prosperous than the north. These financial incentives are tied in with a desire to become more independent and a chance to gain new skills.

The PEER participants also referred to a longer-term gendered pull factor which keeps girls in Accra as Kayayei; they shared that some girls migrate to Accra as commercial sex workers, but if they become pregnant this is no longer a viable form of employment so they become Kayayei as an alternative form of employment. After becoming pregnant their desire to return to the north may decrease as they may no longer be able to re-enter education and may no longer be motivated to earn money to buy items for marriage as they are mothers and therefore not seen as 'marriage material' in their home communities. This may mean they stay working in Accra for longer periods of time and eventually become trapped in life as a Kayayei.





PERCEPTIONS OF CHALLENGES FACED BY KAYAYEI

All of the target groups had a similar understanding of the challenges faced by Kayayei. In the interviews and focus group discussions with girls 'at risk' and key informants a number of negative aspects and consequences of Kayayei life were discussed. The girls 'at risk' were aware of potential challenges of becoming Kayayei and were able to list sexual abuse, poor health, risk of accidents, physical abuse, poor and hard working conditions, and risk of theft as known possibilities associated with becoming Kayayei. Despite this awareness, in all three regions, there were significant numbers who said they were likely to become Kayayei. The Northern Region had the lowest 'yes' response rate at 47.5% as compared to the Upper East Region where 90.9% of respondents replied 'yes' to the same question.

This suggests that often girls feel they simply have no other choice even when they are knowledgeable about the potentially life-changing negative consequences of that choice.

When key informants were asked to rank the likelihood of various risks becoming realities for the Kayayei, none of them suggested that there was no risk of the girls or young women becoming pregnant or being sexually abused, highlighting that these are believed to be common eventualities for Kayayei. Yet programs designed to support 'at risk' Kayayei are still not based on coherent or focused interventions.

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF KAYAYEI

The research also heard directly from current Kayayei about their lived experiences and the challenges they, their friends and peers working as Kayayei have faced.

The underlying theme of the precarious, informal nature of Kayayei work came across strongly in the interviews and is either the cause of, or exacerbates, the hardships Kayayei face. The madam system in particular is at the crux of the precariousness, these women have such an enormous level of power over the Kayayei working in an environment where the law is poorly enforced.

The madams are also the ones administering unjust forms of discipline on the Kayayei, both verbal and physical abuse were mentioned by the participants as common and those facing this abuse have no form of recourse. The madams are not the only ones treating the Kayayei as disposable labour, the communities surrounding them also mistreat and stigmatise them, even when using their services.

The direct mistreatment is coupled with indirect challenges that come from working as Kayayei - the most severe among these is the lack of access to affordable and safe accommodation which is a precursor to further hardships. Because of the lack of accommodation many Kayayei live without clean water and those that have no choice but to live on the streets are particularly vulnerable to rape and sexual abuse, which is then not reported to the authorities because there is a huge amount of distrust in the legal system.

The Kayayei shared that they have limited access to protection, support, health care and contraception. They are therefore more likely to contract STIs and have limited protection from unintended pregnancies. However, they were able to identify the kinds of services they would like to have access to in order to remedy this.

Targeted mistreatment by those that know where the Kayayei's vulnerabilities lie, including other Kayayei, came across in the interviewees' testimony. The fact that they are targets of theft is clear evidence of this. Despite the fact that they may have very little money, they are still victims of theft because they are known to keep what little money they do have with them when they sleep. With this constant risk, especially for those living outside, it makes it hard for them to save money and send remittances to their families and they may have to stay working as Kayayei longer, to re-earn money lost.





INTERVENTIONS AND PROGRAMMES

This study has been able to review various interventions and programmes that have been implemented in northern Ghana to address the needs of those at risk, returnee Kayayei and current Kayayei. It has uncovered that neither past nor current programmes have specifically targeted Kayayei in the northern regions and that in Accra Kayayei have had no targeted support.

It is assumed that Kayayei are able to benefit, in an ad hoc manner, from other initiatives aiming to create means of income generation for young women and their communities. However, the ever-increasing number of Kayayei migrants and the development of new Kayayei destinations is proving this approach to be unsuccessful in halting the flow of migrants, or addressing the needs of those already affected.

Past interventions have taken place with varied levels of success and sometimes 'at risk' and returnee Kayayei have indirectly benefited in the northern regions. Programmes that have been run have focused on income-generating activities and skills training. These projects were hampered by a number of drawbacks including funding issues, politicisation of projects, stigma surrounding girls' involvement in training opportunities and also a lack of contextual understanding of issues facing the women and girls the programmes were working with. This is evidenced by the fact that a lack of food provision for programme beneficiaries became a reason girls stopped attending the project. Implementers clearly did not take into account the fact that the financial position of the girls taking part, coupled with the lack of food available due to erratic climatic conditions, meant the girls had no food provisions while attending trainings.

Current interventions have included efforts to provide income-generating opportunities and training, agricultural initiatives, micro credit schemes, youth training initiatives, as well as programmes centred on keeping young people and girls in education. None of these efforts have been holistic and they have not been implemented specifically for 'at risk' Kayayei or returnees. There was only one project mentioned that has focused on the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of women and girls where they recognised the link between Kayayei work and SRH issues and mainstreamed it in their programme.

The failing nature of many of these programmes is rooted in the lack of effort made to consult affected young women and girls when designing interventions. There also needs to be a greater focus on evaluation of and learning lessons from different programme initiatives. The resounding message from those interviewed and in focus groups was that there is a lack of interventions holistically targeting the needs of Kayayei.

A skills training programme was identified in Tamale, the new Kayayei destination city, that existed to support women and girls, but it faces the same food scarcity issues other interventions are suffering from, highlighting that food scarcity is an underlying issue that needs to be addressed so that interventions can be more effective.

In Accra, Kayayei involved in the PEER could not tell the PRs about any programmes targeting them, but they did have a lot of insight in to what is needed to prevent girls from becoming Kayayei in the first place and also how to support current Kayayei to live less precarious lives with their rights better protected.

In terms of interventions that would prevent girls becoming Kayayei, the PEER participants identified specific types of skills training they wanted. Hairdressing and dressmaking, sandal-making, baking and other food-related skills were identified as useful enterprises for girls to be trained in. The Kayayei also pointed out that alongside training; they needed machines and resources in order to start businesses. There was a desire among the girls to raise their position in society through training in business development so they can become successful entrepreneurs.

As well as these entry level skills, others referenced more ambitious career goals including nursing, accounting and medicine, showing that despite their current employment and low social status there was a desire to better themselves and become successful professionals.

To complement their education and skills development, participants identified more societal level interventions that would create communities which would be less likely to produce Kayayei. One of these interventions was assistance for parents and farmers from origin communities so that they faced less financial hardship. The subsidisation of education would ease the burden on parents who cannot afford the current levels of school fees and would mean that girls are not faced with having to earn the money for themselves and their siblings. Some of the girls also wanted more infrastructure interventions including the provision of farming tools, again to ease financial burden, but also mentioned the need for investment in the three northern regions, including in education and healthcare.

Kayayei participants identified other interventions to ease the challenges and hardships they face, including the provision of safe accommodation, sexual and reproductive health and rights support for those who are either at risk of or have experienced sexual abuse or become pregnant. In addition, the improvement of police services - so that Kayayei can trust that law enforcement will protect and uphold their rights when they are the targets and victims of crime -was described as key to their well-being.

One of the major challenges identified during this research study is that of obtaining accurate figures of the number of young women and girls working as Kayayei in Accra and also finding relevant policy documents which are based on evidence and analyse how to protect and support these girls.



6. CONCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations, based on the study findings, suggest actions to slow down the phenomenon of migration for Kayayei work and to support existing Kayayei. It is worth noting that they do not focus on the total eradication of the practice of Kayayei, instead they explore how the Ghanaian government, International NGOs and local organisations can do more to support Kayayei and to give young women and girls other options and opportunities so that becoming a Kayayei is no longer the only option to earn an income and gain independence.

In the first place, it is crucial for all actors to adopt a holistic approach to address the multiple needs of Kayayei and those at risk. Ultimately, sufficient funds must be made available to enable long-term interventions which sustainably address the needs of young women and girls both before they become Kayayei and as Kayayei. Due to the complex nature of the motivational factors and the challenges at destination cities, a comprehensive range of complementary programmes will be essential.

Recommendations will be broken down into two distinct areas of focus, the first will apply to those who are at risk of becoming Kayayei and returnee Kayayei, and the second will apply to those who are already working as Kayayei.

As the research with Kayayei was carried out in Accra, it would be worth doing further research in the upcoming Kayayei destination city, Tamale to better understand the changes in behaviour. Although it is hoped that by implementing some of the recommendations targeted at those at risk of becoming Kayayei that there will be fewer Kayayei migrating to this new city.

6.1 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF KAYAYEI RETURNEES AND THOSE AT RISK OF BECOMING KAYAYEI IN THE LOCATION OF ORIGIN

1. INCREASE INVESTMENT IN NORTHERN GHANA TO ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC GROWTH

This study has identified that economic necessity is often the primary motivator for young women and girls to migrate to become Kayayei. It has also shown that working as a Kayayei often fails to make a long-term positive impact on the lives of women and girls. This is evidenced by the pattern of migration which is cyclical for many of the girls who will return to destination cities each year when there is no longer food available for them at home due to the erratic climatic conditions and lack of income to buy food. Poverty and economic dependence caused by a lack of opportunities reduces the decision-making power of women and girls, and therefore their ability to live happy and healthy lives.

The government needs to invest heavily in initiatives to develop the three northern regions from where Kayayei originate and create a more prosperous environment where girls can go through adolescence and into adulthood with the skills to equip them for the future. Wealth inequality between the north and south of the country needs to be addressed and where possible, money should be redistributed to support enterprise and industry creation in the north.

Investment in infrastructure was identified as a key area for attention. The Kayayei in Accra suggested subsidising farm tools for parents who are farmers and reliant on their land for their livelihoods. If jobs were created through infrastructure programmes and disposable income was freed up by provision of essential tools then this could go some way to creating wealth in the northern regions.

Alongside these financial investments, the government should put in place interventions to address the impact of increasingly erratic rainfall and other extreme weather events caused by climate change, which are devastating communities who rely on agriculture. These interventions could also create jobs if they focused on research and adaptability to create crop resilience so that food crops could better survive the new climatic conditions.

2. INCREASE PROVISION OF SPECIFIC SKILLS TRAINING AND LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS LIVING IN THE NORTHERN REGIONS

The Kayayei interviewed in this study identified several areas in which they desired skills training including hairdressing and dressmaking. Some expressed interest in being educated to become nurses, accountants and doctors. Training in healthcare professions would also be of benefit to their home communities where they could become practitioners.

In the past, FORWARD has been successful in providing women with training to create and take part in income-generating activities. The most focused and therefore the most successful, approaches are preceded by market research in the local area, to ensure that the enterprises created would be profitable and sustainable.

Such initiatives can create a positive cycle of services and employment by helping to solve practical challenges faced by participants. For example, creating crèches not only creates childcare work for some, but also removes the barriers to finding childcare for the mothers wanting to take part in education or other income-generating activities. Complementary business skills training, including book keeping, financial management, sales marketing, and customer skills, can have the added benefit of improving women's confidence, ability to negotiate and to make decisions, both in their families and communities.

However, income-generating activities cannot be successful unless there is a population of people who have the disposable income with which to pay for services or products created. As recommended above, the Ghanaian government will therefore need to significantly invest in economic growth in northern Ghana.



It is crucial to learn from the failures of other projects implementing similar activities. Steps must be taken to ensure funding is sustainable, that projects do not become politicised and that girls are not mocked or ridiculed when involved in training and development. Project managers also need to have a wide awareness of the context in which they are working and holistically support the women and girls they are working with. The lack of food available for girls while undertaking the training was identified multiple times as a reason why projects failed. This gap must be addressed in the project planning stage of any intervention. Finally, for all programming and project initiatives that take place in northern Ghana with girls at risk, or returnee Kayayei, it is essential that the girls themselves are included in project planning and consulted on their needs during project design.

3. IMPROVE PROVISION OF EDUCATION AND SUBSIDISE WHERE APPROPRIATE

The need to earn money to fund school fees (or other education costs) was identified as a key factor in young women and girls' decisions to migrate to become Kayayei. The Kayayei themselves suggested that the subsidisation of school fees would ease the burden on parents who are unable to send their children to school. It is clear that some young women and girls are prioritising education and are risking their health and safety in order to complete their schooling. If there was a policy to subsidise or even waive school fees for those who simply cannot afford it there would be fewer women and girls migrating to become Kayayei.

More could be done to support returned Kayayei who are either too old or unable to re-enter a formal schooling environment. Some Kayayei return to the northern regions as mothers and may not be allowed to return to school or may suffer from stigma. For these young women and girls vocational skill development and training in income-generating activities will increase their self-confidence and economic independence. Therefore funding for girls, especially returnees, to access education and training must be increased and ring-fenced. The funding should cover not only the cost of school fees but also the associated indirect costs, for example uniforms, transport and school equipment.

4. CREATE AWARENESS PROGRAMMES TO DISPEL MYTHS AROUND KAYAYEI

It is clear from the research that there are a lot of misconceptions about what a Kayayei is and the opportunities working as a Kayayei can bring. Many girls referred to the fact that Kayayei is glamourised by returnee Kayayei which attracts more girls to the work. Interventions need to be put in place to raise awareness about what Kayayei work actually entails and the hardships and risks that go along with it.

Community members who play a part in decision-making, such as parents, husbands, in-laws and peripheral health workers, must be educated about the risks of working as Kayayei. To reach and engage this diverse people at the local level, a range of techniques and communication channels should be used. Radio broadcasts and outreach led by influential and respected community members, including faith and or traditional leaders, have been found to be particularly effective in other projects.

Girls themselves also need to be targeted with these messages as they often are making the decision to become Kayayei for their own benefit. Engaging with returnee Kayayei to better understand why they seek to glamourise it would also reveal their motivations and could open up conversations about the need to be honest about what Kayayei go through and how they are treated.

6.2 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF KAYAYEI IN THE DESTINATION LOCATION (ACCRA)

1. INCREASE PROVISION OF SAFE HOUSES AND STANDARDISED ACCOMMODATION FOR KAYAYEI

It came out strongly in the PEER study that a major barrier to safety and well-being for Kayayei is their lack of access to secure accommodation. More needs to be done to ensure no Kayayei are forced to sleep on the streets outside the markets where they are vulnerable to theft, sexual harassment and rape. Even those in accommodation reported cramped and unhygienic conditions where their belongings are not secure. Safe houses and accommodation should be provided to Kayayei as part of their work and this accommodation should be subject to inspection by an independent authority to ensure conditions comply with health and safety regulations.

The Kayayei themselves should be made aware of what accommodation, that meets official standards, is and be empowered to be able to report sub-standard or illegal accommodation to the relevant authorities who should take such reports seriously and take action to ensure that all accommodation meets minimum standards.

The government and/or the private sector could invest in building affordable accommodation for Kayayei and then allocate this to employers who would be required to pay to rent the accommodation on behalf of the Kayayei they employ. However, this type of development would require working with the employers to improve relationships between them and the Kayayei, as this research shows the dynamic is often abusive. See recommendation 5 for more on enabling this change. Kayayei could then develop better relationships with their peers and live in a safe and supportive environment.

2. MAKE SPECIFIC AND RELEVANT SERVICES AVAILABLE TO KAYAYEI

This research has shown that Kayayei have limited access to sexual and reproductive health support and services despite the fact they are at high risk of sexual abuse and exploitation. Health facilities and experienced practitioners must be made available and be accessible to Kayayei. Health centres should provide confidential services for these vulnerable women. Kayayei, in or out of marriage, must have access to family planning advice and related services, and to other sexual and reproductive health services. Obstetric care, especially in emergencies, must be available to all women - irrespective of whether they are married or not.

Some of the Kayayei in Accra reported cases where their peers had attempted to abort their pregnancies in non-medical environments leading to severe consequences including death. Kayayei clearly feel that there is nowhere for them to go to receive support and this must change. A regular, free and confidential drop-in service would provide the opportunity for Kayayei to get sexual health check-ups and to discuss any concerns with medical practitioners. This kind of service would also build trust between Kayayei and medical staff so that when emergencies arise they know they have someone to turn to.

3. IMPROVE POLICE SERVICES AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Directly related to the provision of sexual and reproductive health care and the protection required for women and girls who have experienced abuse and exploitation, is the need to improve police conduct and response to rape and cases of sexual abuse. Existing laws must be properly enforced to repair the distrust Kayayei currently feel towards police which leads many of them to not report cases.

Law enforcement officers should be sensitised to the specific needs of Kayayei and receive training to provide relevant and appropriate responses to reports of violence and abuse, both with regards to prevention and prosecution. Police need to be sufficiently trained on the laws surrounding rape and sexual abuse and the protocol for dealing with cases - particularly with this very vulnerable group of young women and girls. Existing laws to protect all women - including Kayayei - should be enforced. Protocols and agreements that have been signed protecting women's rights should be respected, where they are being ignored or are not being correctly implemented, INGOs and local organisations should collect evidence of this to lobby the Ghanaian government to provide resources for their proper compliance.

4. REDISTRIBUTE TAX TO SUPPORT KAYAYEI

The costs of providing interventions to support Kayayei can be partially met from the tax collected from the young women and girls every day. At the time of this report, the Kayayei pay the local authority GHS 0.50 [approx. £0.10] a day. There is no absolute certainty on the total numbers of Kayayei, but there is evidence that the numbers are increasing. In September 2010 the Ghana Statistical Service admitted it had been unsuccessful in its attempts to collect data on Kayayei. They set aside only one day to conduct a census for Kayayei in three markets in Accra but could not capture information on all of the girls because their numbers were much higher than expected. In 2012, a candidate running in the Accra region made a campaign promise to provide 24,000 hostel places for Kayayei. Addressing the Ghanaian Parliament on 27 February 2014, the then Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection made a reference to a 2011 study carried out by the People's Dialogue and the Ghana Federation of the Urban Poor which estimated the number of Kayayei at 15,000.

¹⁸ 'Kayayei numbers higher than anticipated, Daily Express, September 28th 2010 www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/news/Kayayei.pdf

¹⁹ NPP reacts to criticisms about its planned hostels for "Kayayei", Modern Ghana, November 1st 2012 www.modernghana.com/news/427418/1/npp-reacts-to-criticisms-about-its-planned-hostels.html

²⁰ The Hansard Official Report for 27th February 2014, Parliament of Ghana www.parliament.gh/publications/30/816 Lithur, N.O., responding to a parliamentary question

5. ADDRESS THE CURRENT FLAWS IN THE 'MADAM' SYSTEM AND INTRODUCE LAWS TO PROTECT KAYAYEI FROM LABOUR EXPLOITATION

It emerged from the research that the 'madam' system in which most Kayayei operate is extremely exploitative and feeds the social stigma surrounding Kayayei by setting an example of how Kayayei can be treated in the markets and communities. As with the case of sexual abuse, the abuse the girls receive from the madams is rarely reported because girls are fearful about being sacked and replaced by other girls willing to work in these conditions.

To help combat this entrenched mistreatment, the Ghana Labour Commission must extend the Labour Act 2003 (Act 651) to cover the informal sector. Institutionalisation of minimum wage and appropriate price mechanisms in the informal sector would also contribute to reducing exploitation of Kayayei and ensure the madams are held to higher standards. When the law is extended it will be important that community awareness initiatives take place to ensure Kayayei know their rights and how to hold the madams to account, and to ensure that the madams know what the law expects of them.





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KAYAYEI

TABLE 1: HOTSPOTS OF KAYAYEI IN LOCATIONS OF ORIGIN

REGION	DISTRICTS	HOTSPOT COMMUNITIES	
Northern	Gushegu	Kpugi Yawungu Yishe	Wantugu Gbangu Kpatinga
Northern	West Mamprusi	Zangu Zangum Walewale township Wungu Wulugu Kpasinkpe Duu Misow Kukuo/loagri Nasia	Yanga Kparigu Sariba Zo Vugu Yakuraga Yama Kinkamdin Key suburbs of Walewale
Upper West	Wa West	Mwabase Buka Bieye Domawa Asse Gusse Boro Siriwiri Pisse Verempare	Dorimon Siela Yamboso Kamdew Tokali Wechau Balewfilli Yaglu Ga Gurungu
Upper West	Wa East	Chawelle Buffiama Yalla Kuudugu Kalung Katoa Kpalimbulo Halebelle	Duu Komo Guisi Wanduong Buchmboi Naabugla Bawiesibeelle
Upper East	Bolgatanga Bongo Talensi Nabdram Binduri	Bongo-beo Bongo-seo Balungu Gorogo Dila Adaboya Namoo el few Damolg-Tindong Sumbrungu	Apatanga Kansie Zorkor Nyariga Kabire Am mgo Yikene Bansi

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF KEY INFORMANT ORGANISATIONS – NORTHERN REGION

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	LOCATION OF OFFICE	OPERATIONAL AREA	INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES
1	African Development Organization on Migration	Lamashegu, Tamale	Northern Region (N/R)	Migration, SRH, livelihood support, education
2	Department of Gender	Ministries Block 36, Tamale	N/R	Gender and development, SRH, livelihood
3	Department of Children	Labour Department Block, Tamale	Regional	Implement government policy on children's affairs
4	Regional Gender Desk	RCC, Tamale	N/R	Co-ordination of regional gender activities
5	Department of Community Development	DSW/DCD Building, Tamale	Community Care and Development	Child protection
6	Department of Social Welfare	DSW/DCD Building, Tamale	N/R	Community care of disabled people
7	Christian Council of Ghana (CCG)	Tamale-Bolga Road	Advocacy in Equality	Child panel project and Kayayei SRH Strengthening child protection Protection of child rights Victims of child abuse given loans to improve their livelihood
8	Gubkatmilai SOCIETY (NGO)	Tamale-Bolga Road – Agric Area	Mental Health and Development	Kayayei and children rights
9	CCFC	Tamale-Bolga Road, near Gariba Lodge	Education, Development and Child Welfare	Partnership on Kayayei
10	CAMFED	Near Catholic Guest House	Girl Child Education and Development	Support for girl child education and education against Kayayei Provision of school fees, logistics, guidance and counselling service Advocacy and community education Integrated Kayayei project

LIST OF KEY INFORMANT ORGANISATIONS – UPPER WEST REGION

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	LOCATION OF OFFICE	OPERATIONAL AREA	INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES
1	Plan Ghana	Wa - Upper West Region (Sissala West and East District)	Quality health care Education, water and sanitation, food security and sustainable livelihood	Recruitment and training of teachers; provision of text books, school supplies and equipment. Runs school health programmes Feeding programme Training of community health workers to promote growth monitoring of children, education, reduce malaria and also raise awareness about HIV and AIDS Promote household and school latrine construction Construction of small irrigation facilities
2	Action Aid	Wa - Upper West Region	Women`s rights Education Agricultural and food rights	Participatory community method like Stepping Stones ¹ and STAR ² to help people to understand, open up and end discrimination against AIDS Promote access to education as a right Help vulnerable children to secure their rights
3	CAMFED	Upper West Region	Girl child education and development support	

NB:

1. **STEPPING STONES:** a communication and behaviour-change tool that seeks to address change in attitude and behaviour by improving communication among women, men, girls and boys
2. **STAR:** a participatory technique integrating two approaches, Stepping Stones and Reflect, which is being used to link people's realities to rights and help them understand and claim their rights

LIST OF KEY INFORMANT ORGANISATIONS – UPPER EAST REGION

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	LOCATION OF OFFICE	OPERATIONAL AREA	INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES
1	Department of Children	RCC	Advocacy	Tippy tap project, distributing mosquito nets for maternal and infant health
2	Department of Social Welfare	Bogantanga	Advocacy & Implementation	
3	Rural Initiative for Self-Empowerment	Bogantanga	Advocacy & Implementation	Child marriage, community empowerment, health and education
4	Widows & Orphans Movement	Bogantanga	Advocacy & Implementation	Empowerment and vocational training, campaign against widowhood rites
5	Afrikids-Ghana	Yikene	Advocacy & Implementation	
6	Talensi District Assembly	Tongo	Child protection	





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