



Home Office

Country Information and Guidance

Ghana: Sexual orientation and gender identity

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Preface

This document provides country of origin information (COI) and guidance to Home Office decision makers on handling particular types of protection and human rights claims. This includes whether claims are likely to justify the granting of asylum, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave and whether – in the event of a claim being refused – it is likely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under s94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

Decision makers must consider claims on an individual basis, taking into account the case specific facts and all relevant evidence, including: the guidance contained within this document; the available COI; any applicable caselaw; and the Home Office casework guidance in relation to relevant policies.

Country Information

The COI within this document has been compiled from a wide range of external information sources (usually) published in English. Consideration has been given to the relevance, reliability, accuracy, objectivity, currency, transparency and traceability of the information and wherever possible attempts have been made to corroborate the information used across independent sources, to ensure accuracy. All sources cited have been referenced in footnotes. It has been researched and presented with reference to the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), dated April 2008, and the [European Asylum Support Office’s research guidelines, Country of Origin Information report methodology](#), dated July 2012.

Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve the guidance and information we provide. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this document, please [e-mail us](#).

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to make recommendations to him about the content of the Home Office’s COI material. The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office’s COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy.

IAGCI may be contacted at:

Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration,
5th Floor, Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square, London, SW1V 1PN.

Email: chiefinspectorukba@icinspector.gsi.gov.uk

Information about the IAGCI’s work and a list of the COI documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector’s website at <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/country-information-reviews/>

Guidance

1. Introduction

1.1 Basis of Claim

1.1.1 Fear of persecution by the authorities and/or non-state actors because of the person's actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

1.2 Other points to note

1.2.1 This instruction refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons collectively, although the experiences of members of each group may differ.

1.2.2 Decision makers should also refer to the Asylum Instructions on [Sexual Identity Issues in the Asylum Claim](#); [Gender Identity Issues in Asylum Claims](#); and [Gender Recognition in Asylum Claims](#).

1.2.3 Where a claim by a male applicant falls to be refused, it must be considered for certification under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 as Ghana is listed as a designated state in respect of men only.

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2. Consideration of Issues

2.1 Credibility

2.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see sections 4 and 5 of the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

2.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).

2.1.3 Decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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2.2 Particular social group

2.2.1 LGBT persons form a particular social group (PSG) in Ghana within the meaning of the Refugee Convention because they share a common characteristic that cannot be changed and have a distinct identity which is perceived as being different by the surrounding society.

2.2.2 Although LGBT people in Ghana form a PSG, this does not mean that establishing such membership will be sufficient to make out a case to be recognised as a refugee. The question to be addressed in each case will be whether a particular person will face a real risk of persecution on account of their membership of such a group.

2.2.3 For further guidance on particular social groups, see section 7.6 of the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.3 Assessment of risk

- 2.3.1 Decision makers must establish whether or not the person, if returned to their country of origin, will live freely and openly as an LGBT person. This involves a wide spectrum of conduct which goes beyond merely attracting partners and maintaining relationships with them. If it is found that the person will in fact conceal aspects of his or her sexual orientation if returned, decision makers must consider why the person will do so. If this will simply be in response to social pressures or for cultural or religious reasons of his or her own choosing and not because of a fear of persecution, then they may not have a well-founded fear of persecution. But if the reason why the person will resort to concealment is that they genuinely fear that otherwise they will be persecuted, it will be necessary to consider whether that fear is well founded.
- 2.3.2 For further guidance, see Section 3.2 of the Asylum Instruction on [Sexual Identity Issues in the Asylum Claim](#).

State treatment

- 2.3.3 Ghana's Criminal Code criminalises 'unnatural carnal acts' with somebody over 16 with a term of imprisonment 'of not less than five and not more than twenty-five years'. However, the law does not explicitly refer to same-sex activity between men or women. It is unclear whether the existing laws can be used to prosecute LGBT people. The question of whether same-sex sexual activity is illegal has caused considerable debate within the country and the issue has not yet been resolved.
- 2.3.4 While there are protections for citizens enshrined in the constitution, it does not explicitly say whether this extends to sexual orientation. (See [Legal rights](#))
- 2.3.5 There is no mention of gender identity within the law, and no reports about the treatment of transgender people. (See [Legal rights](#))
- 2.3.6 There are no recent reports that people have been prosecuted or imprisoned for same-sex activity. There are, however, some reports of arrests linked to sodomy or being 'homosexual' though the exact reasons for the arrests are often unclear and there is no data on the numbers who may have been arrested or when these took place. There are some reported cases of state violence against LGBT people, which may be underreported. Some sources reported violence and other mistreatment against LGBT people either by, or with the collusion of, state authorities. There are also some reports that the police have harassed and extorted LGBT people. (See [Legal rights](#))

Societal treatment

- 2.3.7 Generally, Ghana is a free, open and democratic society with civil liberties protected. The former President, the late John Atta Mills, was hostile to LGBT rights, and there was anti-gay rhetoric during his presidency from government figures, as well as by religious groups and the media. The current President, John Dramani Mahama, is less hostile to LGBT rights and persons. Some prominent public figures have made statements in support of LGBT rights (See [State attitudes and treatment](#))

- 2.3.8 There is widespread societal hostility towards LGBT people. Ghana is a religiously plural country, with a Christian majority and Muslim minority population, and some of these groups have openly condemned homosexuality. There are some reports of societal violence against LGBT people, although evidence of the extent of such violence is limited. LGBT persons also experience discrimination in accessing health care, and in employment and education. (See [Societal attitudes and treatment](#))
- 2.3.9 There are no officially registered LGBT organisations in Ghana, but NGOs and human rights organisations operate freely with few government restrictions. Some are reported to have assisted LGBT people, although LGBT rights do not seem to be a priority for some organisations. (See [Societal attitudes and treatment](#))
- 2.3.10 The size, location and openness of an LGBT ‘community’ in Ghana is unclear. Sources refer to areas where there is some kind of LGBT ‘community’, such as Takoradi and the Accra suburb of Osu. Urban areas seem to be more tolerant of LGBT than rural areas. (See [Societal attitudes and treatment: LGBT groups and human rights NGOs](#))
- 2.3.11 The Supreme Court in [HJ \(Iran\) v Secretary of State for the Home Department \(Rev 1\) \[2010\] UKSC 31 \(07 July 2010\)](#) found that protection must be extended to a person who cannot live openly as a gay person without a well-founded fear of persecution. There is, however, limited information of how **openly** LGBT people are treated by the state and society generally in Ghana, although there is evidence of a LGBT community existing. Same-sex sexual activity is criminalised, prosecutions are rare and very few charges are brought, while societal intolerance is widespread. However in general the level of discrimination and abuse faced by LGBT persons is not such that it will reach the level of being persecutory or otherwise inhuman or degrading treatment. Each case needs to be considered on its individual merits, with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they are at risk of persecution or serious harm.
- 2.3.12 For further guidance on assessing risk, see section 6 of the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 2.3.13 For guidance on handling and considering claims made by LGBT person, see Asylum Instructions on [Sexual Identity Issues in the Asylum Claim and Gender Identity Issues in Asylum Claims](#)

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2.4 Protection

- 2.4.1 If the person’s fear is of persecution or serious harm at the hands of the state, they would not be able to seek or obtain protection from the authorities.
- 2.4.2 If the fear is from non-state actors, protection from the authorities may not be available in most cases. However, the police have provided assistance to some LGBT people. Therefore, in any particular case, the onus is on the person to demonstrate why they will not be able to obtain protection. (See [State protection](#))

- 2.4.3 For further information on assessing the availability or not of state protection, see section 8.1 of the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.5 Internal relocation

- 2.5.1 Where the threat is from the state, internal relocation is not an option.
- 2.5.2 Where LGBT people encounter hostility from non-state actors they may be able to avoid this by moving elsewhere in Ghana, but only if the risk is not present there and it is not unduly harsh to expect them to do so. Taking into account their personal circumstances, decision makers must explore whether a person can relocate to those parts of Ghana that are more tolerant towards LGBT persons, such as parts of Accra and Kumasi (See [Societal attitudes and treatment](#))
- 2.5.3 Decision makers must also take account that the Supreme Court in the case of [HJ \(Iran\)](#) made the point that internal relocation is not the answer if it depends on the person concealing their sexual orientation in the proposed new location for fear of persecution.
- 2.5.4 For further guidance on internal relocation, see section 8.2 of the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and the section on discretion in the Asylum Instructions on [Sexual Identity Issues in the Asylum Claim](#)

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2.6 If refused, is the claim likely to be certifiable?

- 2.6.1 Where a claim falls to be refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 2.6.2 For further information on certification, see the [Appeals Instruction on the Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#)

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3. Policy summary

- 3.1.1 The law about same-sex activity is unclear. Although LGBT persons face intolerance and discrimination, in general the level of intolerance and discrimination is not such that it will reach the level of being persecutory or otherwise inhuman or degrading treatment.**
- 3.1.2 However an asylum claim from a LGBT person may succeed if it can be demonstrated that they face an accumulation of measures which are sufficiently serious by their nature and repetition that they constitute persecution. Each case needs to be decided on its merits.**
- 3.1.3 Protection will not be available if a person is threatened by state actors. However, if a person is at risk from non-state actors, or rogue state actors, the onus is on the person to demonstrate that they will not be able to obtain protection.**

- 3.1.4 Where an LGBT person faces a well-founded fear from non-state actors, they may be able to avoid this by moving elsewhere in Ghana, notably to parts of Accra, if it is not unreasonable or unduly harsh for them to do so.**
- 3.1.5 Where a claim falls to be refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.**

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Country Information

4. Legal rights

4.1 Constitution

4.1.1 Ghana's Constitution guarantees human rights regardless of 'race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religion, creed or gender' (Chapter 5, 12(2)). However, sexuality or gender identity is not mentioned.¹

4.1.2 Other provisions include:

- The inviolability of a person's dignity (Ch. 5, 15(1))
- Freedom from 'torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment' or 'any other condition that detracts or is likely to detract from his dignity and worth as a human being' (Ch. 5, 15(2)(a) and (b))
- Equality before the law (Ch.5, 17(1))
- Freedom from discrimination 'on the ground of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, creed or social or economic status' (Ch. 5, 17(2)). However, sexuality or gender identity is not mentioned.
- Freedom of speech and expression (Ch.5, 21(1)(a))
- Freedom of thought, conscience and belief (Ch.5, 21(1)(b))
- Freedom of association (Ch.5, 21(1)(e))
- Freedom of movement (Ch.5, 21(1)(g))²

4.2 Codified laws

4.2.1 Ghana's Criminal Code Act 29 of 1960, amended in 2003, section 104, states that:

¹ GhanaWeb, Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/republic/constitution.php?id=Gconst5.html>, accessed 2 October 2015

² GhanaWeb, Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/republic/constitution.php?id=Gconst5.html>, accessed 2 October 2015

- (1) Whoever has unnatural carnal knowledge-
 - (a) of any person of the age of sixteen years or over without his consent shall be guilty of a first degree felony and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than five years and not more than twenty-five years; or
 - (b) of any person of sixteen years or over with his consent is guilty of a misdemeanour; or
 - (c) of any animal is guilty of a misdemeanour.
- (2) Unnatural carnal knowledge is sexual intercourse with a person in an unnatural manner or with an animal.³

4.2.2 According to Article 296(4) of the Criminal Procedure Code, a misdemeanour shall be liable for a term of imprisonment not exceeding three years.⁴

4.2.3 'Unnatural carnal knowledge' involves 'sexual intercourse with a person in an unnatural manner' and requires 'the least degree of penetration'⁵.

4.2.4 According to the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), female-to-female sexual relations are legal, but male-to-male sexual relations are illegal.⁶ A 2011 GhanaWeb article noted that the law is 'silent on any form of punishment for lesbianism.'⁷

4.2.5 No information could be found on the legal status of transgender persons

4.2.6 In 2013, Amnesty International noted that Constitutional Review Commission recommended that the country's Supreme Court should rule on whether Ghana should legalise same-sex acts and that the government 'took note' of the recommendation.⁸ No information can be found on whether the legal status of homosexuality has been resolved.

³ Acts of Ghana First Republic, Criminal Code 1960 (Act 29), <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/88530/101255/F575989920/GHA88530.pdf>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁴ International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), 'State-Sponsored Homophobia: A World Survey of Laws: criminalisation, protection and recognition of same-sex love', May 2015, http://old.ilga.org/Statehomophobia/ILGA_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_2015.pdf, accessed 29 September 2015 <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/criminal-laws-on-homosexuality/homosexuality-laws-in-african-nations.pdf>, accessed 8 October 2015

⁵ Law Library of Congress, Laws on Homosexuality in African Nations, February 2014,

⁶ International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), 'State-Sponsored Homophobia: A World Survey of Laws: criminalisation, protection and recognition of same-sex love', May 2015, http://old.ilga.org/Statehomophobia/ILGA_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_2015.pdf, accessed 29 September 2015

⁷ GhanaWeb, 'Gays can be prosecuted', 7 June 2011, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=210533>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁸ Amnesty International, Annual Report: Ghana 2013, <http://www.amnestyusa.org/research/reports/annual-report-ghana-2013>, accessed 1 October 2015

4.3 Interpretation of the law

- 4.3.1 The 2014 US State Department report (USSD 2014) reported that ‘there was considerable public debate over whether...legislation could be used to prosecute consenting adults for same-sex sexual activity’⁹. Freedom House (2015 report) noted that ‘it is unclear if [the] law applies to same-sex activity’.¹⁰
- 4.3.2 In a 2010 article, GhanaWeb noted a ‘renewed’ debate on homosexuality within the country, and quoted Ernest Kofi Abochie, a Law Lecturer at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, who ‘stated categorically’ that the Code Amendment Act of the 1992 constitution ‘does not clearly interpret what homosexuality means. This he believes makes it almost impossible for the act of homosexuality to be considered criminal’.¹¹
- 4.3.3 A further GhanaWeb article of 4 November 2011 observed that Nana Oye Lithur, a human rights lawyer, pointed to ‘guaranteed constitutional rights of all persons including homosexuals in Ghana. She said irrespective of the President’s abhorrence of homosexuality and Ghana’s cultural and social stigma against it, gays do not infringe on any legal or constitutional provisions while exercising their sexual preference. She said Ghana’s laws and Criminal Code are silent on homosexuality’.¹²
- 4.3.4 A 2011 article by William Manful, former Head of Protocol for the Ghana High Commission in London, commented on the legal debate concerning same sex partnerships:

“The multifaceted nature of the issues has drawn comments and contributions from all and sundry including the clergy and the legal fraternity. The religious perspective has called for outright condemnation due to the Biblical position on sodomy and same sex partnership. The legal angle however appears to be admonishing caution as well as the constitutionality of illegalizing or criminalizing the gay and lesbian lifestyle. Even though existing codes in the country’s criminal legal system identifies unnatural sexual practices as acts of misdemeanor the constitution which is the supreme law of the land remains silent on the matter. Needless to say that, the constitutional debate will continue until a clearly defined legal position is adopted to guide the society’s treatment of gays and lesbians.”¹³

⁹ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

¹⁰ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 – Ghana, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/ghana#.VebyePn1DyM>, accessed 2 September 2015

¹¹ GhanaWeb, ‘Ghana’s laws do not prohibit homosexuality – Law Lecturer’, 14 May 2010, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=182046>, accessed 1 October 2015

¹² GhanaWeb, ‘Nana Oye Lithur: Gays Have Rights and Must Be Respected’, 4 November 2011, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=222923>, accessed 1 October 2015

¹³ TalkAfrique, ‘The Gay and Lesbian Debate: A Credit to Ghana’s Democracy’, 24 July 2011, <http://www.talkafrique.com/issues/the-gay-and-lesbian-debate-a-credit-to-ghana%E2%80%99s-democracy>, accessed 1 October 2015

4.3.5 The Daily Guide, an Accra-based newspaper, quoted Martin Amidu, Attorney General and Minister of Justice, who said that ‘the laws of Ghana only frowned on homosexuality when it involved a minor or when one partner was forced into a sexual act’. He further explained that ‘when two consenting male adults had sex with each other in the privacy of their rooms, such a situation could not be described as illegal and the participants were at an absolute liberty.

“The law does not follow you to see what you do; your house is your castle. Your room is your castle; what you do there is nobody’s business. It is only when you rape an adult by way of unnatural carnal knowledge that you become a subject of prosecution” he said.¹⁴

4.3.6 In 2012, in a telephone interview with the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, the Centre for Popular Education and Human Rights, Ghana (CEPEHRG), an organisation working for HIV services, sexual minority rights and human rights, ‘indicated that homosexuality is illegal in Ghana’.¹⁵

4.3.7 In a 2013 article, the gay rights publication Pink News reported that the Ghanaian Justice Minister-designate Marietta Opong stated categorically that she believes Ghana’s constitution does not protect the rights of gay people to have legal same-sex relations and said that people who believe that the constitution would protect gay rights would have to take the matter to the Supreme Court. This contrasted with statements made by the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection-designate, Nana Oye Lithur, who ‘caused controversy’ in February 2013 by asserting her belief that gay people have rights under Ghanaian law.¹⁶

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5. State attitudes and treatment

5.1 Arrests and prosecutions for same-sex activity

5.1.1 In their latest reports, both the US State Department and Freedom House reported that there were no reports of adults being prosecuted for same-sex activity in 2014.^{17 18}

¹⁴ Daily Guide, ‘Clash Over Gay Rights. Legal, Religious, Moral Reasons’, 31 March 2012, <http://newsghana.com.gh/clash-over-gay-rights-legal-religious-moral-reasons/>, accessed 30 September 2015

¹⁵ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, ‘Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services’, 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

¹⁶ Pink News, ‘Ghana: Justice Minister-designate opposes gay rights’, 8 February 2013, <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/02/08/ghana-justice-minister-designate-opposes-gay-rights/>, accessed 1 October 2015

¹⁷ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

¹⁸ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 – Ghana, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/ghana#.VebyePn1DyM>, accessed 2 September 2015

- 5.1.2 An undated paper by Mark Luckie of the University of California, Berkeley School of Journalism following a trip to Ghana during its 50th anniversary of independence (circa 2007) that ‘while the criminal code does not explicitly say that homosexuality is illegal, many gay men and women have been arrested and imprisoned under the interpretation that homosexuality is ‘unnatural’.¹⁹
- 5.1.3 A 2011 GhanaWeb article entitled ‘Gays can be prosecuted’ claimed the director of public prosecutions, Gertrude Aikins, ‘indicated that persons caught engaging in homosexual activities could be liable for prosecution....Ms. Aikins said persons engaged in homosexuality fell foul of the law, but admitted that compared to sodomy, homosexuality carried a less severe sentence as far as the criminal code is concerned...Ghanaian laws prohibit unnatural carnal acts - a definition which is widely understood to include homosexuality, although, in practice, very few have been prosecuted for homosexual acts.’²⁰
- 5.1.4 Several sources report on arrests (but not prosecutions) of sexual minorities. These included incidents where:
- in May 2010, four men who work with the gay community were reportedly arrested in connection with a sexual assault, and charged with sodomy²¹
 - in 2011, police reportedly arrested three men for engaging in sodomy²²
 - in 2012, a man was reportedly ‘picked up’ by police for having a condom and being in the company of a man²³
 - in 2012, police in Walewale, a small farming town and capital of the West Mamprusi District, Northern Region, arrested a 21-year-old man on suspicion of being homosexual and ‘recruiting’ other youth to be homosexual. Police stated the arrest was for the suspect’s own safety, since residents of the town had vowed to kill the man and his entire family if he was not removed from the community²⁴
 - according to the ‘blog of a gay man in West Africa’, in August 2012 police arrested three young Ghanaian men for ‘group fun time’ and the men spent two weeks in remand prison²⁵

¹⁹ UC Berkeley School of Journalism, Ghana-Somewhere Over the Rainbow, undated (circa 2007), <http://journalism.berkeley.edu/projects/mm/luckie/rainbow.html>, date accessed 1 October 2015

²⁰ GhanaWeb, ‘Gays can be prosecuted’, 7 June 2011, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=210533>, accessed 1 October 2015

²¹ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 October 2015

²² Xinhua, ‘3 gays arrested in Ghana’, 5 November 2011, http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2011-11/05/content_14043283.htm, accessed 8 October 2015

²³ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, ‘Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services’, 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

²⁴ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

²⁵ Erasing 76 Crimes, ‘Tough life for gays in Ghana’, 29 October 2012,

- in May 2012, two women were arrested and detained at James Town Police station for 'engaging in illegal practice' after a 'planned wedding ceremony' which was disrupted by 'young people'. They were released after their relatives intervened²⁶
- in February 2015, two students of St Paul's Boys High School accused of engaging in homosexual acts were arrested.²⁷
- in August 2015, it was reported that a 21-year-old student was arrested by police, after angry residents threatened to kill him because they suspect he is gay.²⁸
- 16 September 2015, police at Amasaman in the Ga West municipality in the Greater Accra Region, arrested two men engaged in homosexuality on a school compound.²⁹

5.2 Police violence

5.2.1 An International Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Commission (ILGHRC) report of February 2011 pointed to 'gay bashing' and 'physical violence' which occurs 'at the hands of, or with the collusion of, the police or other agents of the state.'³⁰ The section of the report was written by Mac-Darling Cobbinah, of the Centre for Popular Education and Human Rights, Ghana (CEPEHRG), an organisation 'educating young people on HIV/AIDs, STIs, and human rights'.

5.2.2 USSD 2014 reported that there 'were no reported cases of police or government violence against LGBT persons during 2014', although 'stigma, intimidation, and the attitude of the police toward LGBT persons were likely factors in preventing victims from reporting incidents of abuse.' However, more generally the report continued:

'While the constitution and law prohibit such practices, there were credible reports police beat and otherwise abused suspects, prisoners, and other citizens. According to the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), beatings of suspects and other citizens occurred

<http://76crimes.com/2012/10/29/tough-life-for-gays-in-ghana/>, accessed 30 September 2015

²⁶ Amnesty International, Annual Report: Ghana 2013,

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/research/reports/annual-report-ghana-2013>, accessed 1 October 2015

²⁷ Joy Online, Two SPACO 'homosexuals' arrested; Police investigate death of student,

<http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/February-7th/two-spaco-homosexuals-arrested-police-investigate-death-of-student.php>, accessed 21 November 2015

²⁸ The Accra Times, Ghana Police Arrest Gay Man for Recruiting Other Men into Homosexuality, <http://accrareport.com/news/ghana-police-arrest-gay-man-for-recruiting-other-men-into-homosexuality/>, accessed 21 November 2015

²⁹ Ghana Web, 2 men caught in homosexual act, 16 September 2015,

<http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/crime/2-men-caught-in-homosexual-act-382183>, accessed 21 November 2015

³⁰ The International Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Commission (ILGHRC), 'Nowhere to Turn: Blackmail and Extortion of LGBT People in Sub-Saharan Africa', February 2011, p. 60,

http://www.iglhrc.org/mwg-internal/de5fs23hu73ds/progress?id=t_2WwapSHWWlvRHgqvNNQLLs49nIHQdBawgWPA7toHE, date accessed 2 October 2015

throughout the country but were generally unreported in official channels because victims were reluctant to file formal complaints. Police generally denied allegations or claimed the level of force used was justified. Military officials also reportedly mistreated persons. Several nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), lawyers, and civil society organizations criticized police use of excessive force.³¹

5.3 Harassment and extortion

- 5.3.1 An ILGHRC report of February 2011 wrote of ‘an environment of impunity in which the rights of men who have sex with men (MSM) and women who have sex with women (WSW) are widely and routinely violated.’ It continued that homosexuals are regularly subject to harassment and extortion, ‘often at the hands of, or with the collusion of, the police or other agents of the state.’ The report focuses on the blackmail of gay and bisexual men and noted: ‘Blackmail can be committed by strangers, acquaintances, employers, colleagues, friends, or even family – virtually anyone who might have access to information that another person wants to keep secret. In a few cases, blackmailers or extortionists approached their victims without there being any prior relationship between the two parties. When strangers did not know a great deal about the victim, they often used extortion rather than blackmail to get money, property, sex, or services from them.’³²
- 5.3.2 The section of the report was written by Mac-Darling Cobbinah, of the Centre for Popular Education and Human Rights, Ghana (CEPEHRG), an organisation ‘educating young people on HIV/AIDs, STIs, and human rights’.
- 5.3.3 More generally, the USSD reported that people experienced police harassment and extortion attempts, adding that there were ‘credible reports that police extorted money by acting as private debt collectors, setting up illegal checkpoints, and arresting citizens in exchange for bribes from disgruntled business associates of those detained.’ Other abuses included delays in prosecuting suspects, rumors of police collaboration with criminals, and a widespread public perception of police ineptitude.’ This was a general commentary on the police, not directly in relation to LGBT persons.³³
- 5.3.4 A representative of CEPEHRG, in a telephone interview with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada in 2012, also claimed that sexual minorities face police extortion.³⁴ The same source said that ‘sometimes partners of

³¹ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

³² The International Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Commission (ILGHRC), ‘Nowhere to Turn: Blackmail and Extortion of LGBT People in Sub-Saharan Africa’, February 2011, http://www.iglhrc.org/mwg-internal/de5fs23hu73ds/progress?id=t_2WwapSHWWlvRHgqvNNQLLs49nIHQdBawgWPA7toHE, date accessed 2 October 2015

³³ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

³⁴ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, ‘Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services’, 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

LGBT individuals report that sex was forced on them by the LGBT individual' and that 'police blame the LGBT person instead of investigating, and that LGBT people are charged and punished', although the Board noted that this information could not be further corroborated.³⁵

5.4 State protection

- 5.4.1 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada noted in their 2012 report that, 'According to the Australian Refugee Review Tribunal, "[p]olice in Ghana are unlikely to assist a homosexual victim of assault" as they are "generally unresponsive" to claims of assault on homosexuals'.³⁶
- 5.4.2 In 2013, Amnesty International welcomed 'Ghana's commitment to investigate attacks on persons based on their sexual orientation or gender identity' although were 'very disappointed at Ghana's rejection of recommendations to decriminalize same-sex relations, and to combat the climate of homophobia and discrimination against LGBT persons'.³⁷
- 5.4.3 The USSD report for 2014 observed that 'there were reports that police were reluctant to investigate claims of assault or violence against LGBT persons. According to the HRAC [Human Rights Advocacy Center; an NGO], gay men in prison were often subjected to sexual and other physical abuse. The government took no known action to investigate or punish those complicit in the abuses'. (Section 5) However regarding human rights violations generally, the report stated that: 'The government took steps to prosecute and punish officials who committed violations, whether in the security forces or elsewhere in the government, but police impunity remained a problem'. (Executive summary)³⁸
- 5.4.4 On protection generally, the USSD noted:
'The Inspector General of Police, CHRAJ [Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice], and the Police Intelligence and Professional Standards Unit (PIPS) investigate claims that security forces used excessive force. PIPS also investigates human rights abuses and police misconduct. In 2013, the most recent year for which statistics were available, PIPS received 788 new complaints, of which 320 were closed and 468 remained under investigation at year's end. Of the 788 new cases, most involved unprofessional handling of a case or misconduct by police.'³⁹

³⁵ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

³⁶ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

³⁷ Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2014/15, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/africa/ghana/report-ghana/>, accessed 29 September 2015

³⁸ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

³⁹ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

5.4.5 Not specifically in relation to LGBT persons, Freedom House, in their 2015 report, noted: 'Police in Ghana have a history of using excessive force, making arbitrary arrests, prolonging detention of suspects, and taking bribes. In March 2014, the country's police service launched a series of initiatives to improve its image and effectiveness, including more stringent disciplinary procedures and the creation of a new training institute. For the first quarter of 2014, the Police Intelligence and Professional Standards Unit fired 21 officers and demoted a further 9 for various offenses, including brutality and fraud.'⁴⁰

5.5 Public statements by government officials

5.5.1 A Freedom House report from 2011 reported that rhetoric from members of the government 'has created a perilous environment for the Ghanaian lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) population' and that a parliament member, David Tetteh, called for the 'public lynching of homosexuals.'⁴¹

5.5.2 Amnesty International reported, on 27 July 2011, that Paul Evans Aidoo, Ghana's Western Region Minister, called for the arrest of all gay men and lesbians in the country, and called on landlords and tenants to report anyone they suspected of being gay or lesbian.⁴² This incident is also reported by the BBC⁴³, The Independent⁴⁴ and Al-Jazeera.⁴⁵

5.5.3 In a telephone interview in 2012 with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, a CEPEHRG representative stated that 'former President John Evans Atta Mills publically condemned homosexuality, including a vow to combat homosexuality.'⁴⁶ Myjoyonline.com, on 1 August 2012, reported that 'President John Evans Atta Mills says the Ghana Government stands by its position that homosexuality is against the culture and norms of Ghanaians and, therefore, the government would not go against the wishes of the people...He said the government will not support the practice of

⁴⁰ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 – Ghana, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/ghana#.VebyePn1DyM>, accessed 2 September 2015

⁴¹ Freedom House, 'LGBT Population in Ghana Under Threat', 8 August 2011, <https://freedomhouse.org/article/lgbt-population-ghana-under-threat>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁴² Amnesty International, 'Ghana: Government minister must retract his calls for rounding up and arrest of gay men and lesbians', 27 July 2011, <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/ghana-government-minister-must-retract-his-calls-rounding-and-arrest-gay-men-and>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁴³ BBC News, 'Paul Evans Aidoo Ghana gay spy call 'promotes hatred'', 22 July 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14250170>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁴⁴ The Independent, 'Ghana official calls for effort to 'round up' suspected gays', 22 July 2011, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/ghana-official-calls-for-effort-to-round-up-suspected-gays-5900371.html>, accessed 2 October 2015

⁴⁵ Al-Jazeera, 'Pre-election Ghana and the role of news media', 10 December 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/12/20111251412526848.html>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁴⁶ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

homosexuality so long as Ghanaian society frowns on it.’⁴⁷ On 2 November 2011, the BBC reported that President John Atta Mills rejected the UK’s threat to cut aid if he refuses to legalise homosexuality and that ‘Mr Atta Mills said the UK could not impose its values on Ghana and he would never legalise homosexuality.’⁴⁸ President Atta Mills died in July 2012.⁴⁹

- 5.5.4 Pink News quoted Mike Ocquaye, Second Deputy Speaker of Ghana’s Parliament between 2009 and 2013, who said that gay people are ‘sick’ who need ‘psychotic treatment’ and that ‘Africa must resist a new sodomy slave trade.’⁵⁰
- 5.5.5 The website Erasing 76 Crimes, in an article dated 4 October 2013, quoted the current President of Ghana, John Dramani Mahama: “I believe that laws must prevail. For instance, people must not be beaten or killed because of their sexual orientation, but in my country there is a strong cultural hostility towards it”.⁵¹
- 5.5.6 Pink News reported on 8 September 2015 that the Presidential candidate, George Boateng said that he would have all gay people killed by firing squad if elected. He added: “There must be a house cleaning exercise to clear all such terrible acts from the society.”⁵²

Public statements that Ghana protects LGBT persons

- 5.5.7 In 2012, the UN Human Rights Council recommended that Ghana ‘take measures in order to fight against impunity in torture and ill-treatment, especially in cases of police brutality and excessive use of force’ and ‘take steps to prevent, and ensure accountability for, acts of violence perpetrated against individuals, including on the basis of their sexuality’. Ghana considered that these had already been implemented.⁵³
- 5.5.8 The USSD 2013 reported that ‘the former and current commissioners of the CHRAJ [Inspector General of Police] spoke out against discrimination and advocated the need to protect the human rights of every citizen as provided for in the constitution. In November 2011 media accounts reported British

⁴⁷ Myjoyonline.com, ‘We will not support gays – President Mills’, 1 August 2012, <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201202/80831.php>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁴⁸ BBC News, ‘Ghana refuses to grant gays’ right despite aid threat’, 2 November 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15558769>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁴⁹ BBC News, ‘Ghana’s President John Atta Mills dies’, 24 July 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-18972107>, accessed 2 October 2015

⁵⁰ Pink News, ‘Ghanaian ex-deputy speaker: ‘Homosexuality is the new sodomy slave trade’’, 21 March 2014, <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2014/03/21/ghanaian-ex-deputy-speaker-homosexuality-new-sodomy-slave-trade/>, accessed 5 October 2015

⁵¹ Erasing 76 Crimes, ‘Ghana President: Anti-gay anger blocks even talk of change’, <http://76crimes.com/2013/10/04/ghana-president-anti-gay-anger-blocks-even-talk-of-change/>, accessed 2 October 2015

⁵² Pink News, Presidential candidate wants to ‘eradicate gay people by firing squad’, 8 September 2015, <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2015/09/08/presidential-candidate-wants-to-eradicate-gay-people-by-firing-squad/>, accessed 21 November 2015

⁵³ UN General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Ghana, 13 December 2012, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session22/AHRC226_English.pdf, accessed 5 October 2015

Prime Minister Cameron was considering suspending direct aid to countries with poor records on LGBT rights. In response the late President Mills commented that Ghana was committed to upholding human rights as provided by the constitution, but he would not initiate a change to the law.⁵⁴

(See [Redress of abuses](#))

- 5.5.9 The organisation African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHer) observed in 2014 that the President ‘ignored pressures’ from religious groups and appointed Oye Lithur, which ‘sparked a lot of controversy on the airwaves, the media and other private discussions because of her stance on gay and human rights issues.’⁵⁵
- 5.5.10 A Human Rights First report of 2014 quoted ‘voices for equality’ within Africa who are ‘standing up for the protection of equality and dignity for all people.’ It quoted Nana Oye Lithur, the Ghanaian Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection, who said ‘the rights of everybody – including homosexuals – should be protected’. It also quoted Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, who said ‘homosexuals are not criminals’.⁵⁶

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6. Societal norms

6.1 Civil liberties

- 6.1.1 Freedom House (2015) classifies Ghana as a ‘free’ country and noted that ‘freedom of expression is constitutionally guaranteed and generally respected in practice. Ghana has a diverse and vibrant media landscape that includes state and privately owned television and radio stations, and several independent newspapers and magazines.’⁵⁷
- 6.1.2 The US State Department for 2014 described Ghana as a constitutional democracy with free and fair elections, and that the constitution and the law provide for freedom of speech and the press, although the government sometimes restricted those rights.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2012humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁵⁵ African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHer), ‘Report: Socio-Political situation of LGBT people in Ghana, 2013’, 14 March 2014, <http://www.amsher.org/socio-political-situation-of-lgbt-people-in-ghana-2013/>, accessed 5 October 2015

⁵⁶ Human Rights First, ‘Report: The State of Human Rights for LGBT People in Africa’, July 2014, <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/HRF-HRC-Africa-Report.pdf>, accessed 5 October 2015

⁵⁷ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 – Ghana, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/ghana#.VebyePn1DyM>, accessed 2 October 2015

⁵⁸ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 8 October 2015

6.2 Religion

6.2.1 The CIA World Factbook gives the following religious make-up of Ghana's population (26.3 million): Christian 71.2% (Pentecostal/Charismatic 28.3%, Protestant 18.4%, Catholic 13.1%, other 11.4%), Muslim 17.6%, traditional 5.2%, other 0.8%, none 5.2% (2010 est.).⁵⁹ The 2013 US State Department's report on religious freedom concluded that, in general, Ghana respects religious freedom and there is peaceful religious coexistence.⁶⁰

6.3 Marriage

6.3.1 The Social Institutions and Gender Index noted in 2014 that, according to the government's latest report to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee, 'there are three forms of marriage in Ghana, two of which - Muslim and Christian marriages - are consolidated under the Marriages Act, 1884-1985. The final form, customary marriage, continues to be governed by customary law, though some sections of the Matrimonial Clauses Act of 1971 are applicable to these marriages as well.' The report continued that 'there are no reports that women in Ghana face any legal restrictions in relation to freedom of movement and access to public space.'⁶¹

See also [Public opinion and treatment](#) and [Religious treatment](#)

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7. Societal attitudes and treatment

7.1 LGBT groups and human rights NGOs

7.1.1 In August 2011, Freedom House reported that there were no registered LGBT organisations in Ghana and that in 2006 the government banned an LGBT rights conference⁶², an incident that the BBC also reported.⁶³

7.1.2 However, there are reports of LGBT organisations in Ghana, including:

- Centre for Popular Education and Human Rights, Ghana (CEPEHRG)⁶⁴
- The Coalition Against Homophobia in Ghana (CAHG)⁶⁵, although there is no information about the group's activity in 2015

⁵⁹ CIA, The World Factbook, Ghana, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gh.html>, accessed 5 October 2015

⁶⁰ US State Department, International Religious Freedom Reports for 2013 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 5 October 2015

⁶¹ Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2014, <http://genderindex.org/sites/default/files/datasheets/GH.pdf>, accessed 8 October 2015

⁶² Freedom House, 'LGBT Population in Ghana Under Threat', 8 August 2011, <https://freedomhouse.org/article/lgbt-population-ghana-under-threat>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁶³ BBC News, 'Ghanaian gay conference banned', 1 September 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/5305658.stm>, accessed 10 December 2015

⁶⁴ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁶⁵ International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), 'Ghana: The Coalition Against Homophobia in Ghana (CAHG) Educate People About Respect for LGBTI Rights', 8 August

- The Human Rights Advocacy Center, Ghana, which was established in 2008. Their website gives a summary of their work with LGBT peoples:

‘HRAC has been busy organizing LGBT empowerment workshops geared towards the LGBT community, community service organisations, NGOs and state institutions.

‘So far, HRAC has successfully organized two workshops in Accra and two workshops in Takoradi. The purpose of these workshops are to equip participants with the tools needed to be able to better advocate and protect the rights of vulnerable populations, particularly the LGBT community. These workshops are also meant to empower the LGBT community by educating them on their rights as well as strategies to protect their rights.

‘HRAC has also drafted a LGBT human rights handbook, which is currently being reviewed by the various stakeholders who were present at the LGBT workshop rights. When completed, this handbook will be a reference guide for the Ghanaian LGBT community and will include stories LGBT individuals’ experiences as well as information on institutions where the LGBT community can seek help when their rights are being violated.’⁶⁶

- 7.1.3 The Daily Guide, in an article ‘Homosexuality in Ghana: A Right Or An Aberration?’, dated 30 July 2011, reported that the position of Amnesty International in Ghana on the issue of LGBT rights seems ‘neutral’. ‘Our position is simply that we do not either support or stand against it,’ said Lawrence Amesu, director of the Ghana chapter.’⁶⁷
- 7.1.4 In a telephone interview with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, a CEPEHRG representative said that their organisation ‘attempts to provide LGBT victims with protection, but does not have the means or the space to provide adequate protection. He indicated that CEPEHRG provides security training to teach people how to avoid problems, and stated that the organisation worked with other organisations after the March 2012 assaults on LGBT people in James Town to assist a few victims to move out of their homes. He also said that the organisation has been threatened with closure by both the government and citizens.’ He added that ‘although LGBT victims can report violence to some human rights organisations, there is little recourse because homosexuality is illegal.’⁶⁸
- 7.1.5 USSD 2014 noted that ‘a variety of domestic and international human rights groups, including the CHRAJ, the Human Rights Advocacy Center (HRAC), and the Ark Foundation, generally operated without government restriction,

2011, <http://ilga.org/ghana-the-coalition-against-homophobia-in-ghana-cahg-educate-people-about-respect-for-lgbti-rights/>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁶⁶ Human Rights Advocacy Center, ‘LGBT Rights’, <http://www.hracghana.org/>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁶⁷ Daily Guide, ‘Homosexuality in Ghana: A Right Or An Aberration?’, 30 July 2011, <http://www.modernghana.com/news/342773/1/homosexuality-in-ghana-a-right-or-an-aberration.html>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁶⁸ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, ‘Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services’, 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Government officials generally were cooperative and responsive to their views.⁶⁹ Freedom House 2015 noted that ‘NGOs are generally able to operate freely, and they play an important role in ensuring government accountability and transparency.’⁷⁰ It is not clear from the sources whether these NGOs advocate for LGBT rights.

7.2 Gay ‘scene’ or ‘community’

7.2.1 A response from the Australian Refugee Review Tribunal in 2010 contained the following information:

‘[There are] some gay-friendly bars, restaurants, and other meeting places, in Accra. These venues do not publicly advertise their gay or gay-friendly status. Rather, they rely on word of mouth and messages posted on gay chat sites on the internet for their patronage. Despite the discreet nature of such venue advertising, one gay man in Accra states that “[i]t is common knowledge that there are a number of bars in Accra and Kumasi...that are in effect gay bars, where gay men meet and socialise every weekend.” In an article on GhanWeb.com, a Mr K Simpa states that despite these places being common knowledge, “you do not have the police, or indeed irate, passionate mobs descending on these places armed with petrol bombs and threatening to burn the establishments down unless these men started sleeping with women. There are a number of known gay people (both married and single) who are known in their vicinity and who have not been carted off to our prisons to “teach them a lesson”...A number of hotels allow two men to share a double bed overnight, so long as they are getting their money. They know what goes on in most cases but they see themselves as hard-nosed businessmen, not morality policemen.

‘The only exclusively gay bar in Accra over the past decade has been Henri’s. However, an August 2010 post on the Gay Ghana website states that Henri’s has closed, and “there are no plans to re-establish the club”. Furthermore, once popular mixed venues, Strawberry and Karldorf are “no longer attracting a gay crowd”...

‘Today, an online Accra newspaper, published an “investigative” report in December 2009 on precincts and locations where homosexual conduct, referred to as “Papa Ashawo”, is “invading” Accra. The disapproving report lists locations and venues that play host to gay beats; “Papa Ashawo is now very dominant at Madina-Zongo Junction, a sprawling suburb with all the trappings of a ghetto in Accra...Other areas like Adabraka, Labadi, Chorkor and Mamprobi have in recent past recorded the male to male sex, where supposed married men or men in sex relationship brandish the act around with glee.” Today also names places where male prostitution takes place; Nikki’s restaurant and bar, “opposite Oman FM” is described by Today as

⁶⁹ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

⁷⁰ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 – Ghana, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/ghana#.VebyePn1DyM>, accessed 2 October 2015

“the latest haven for the male prostitution. Our search team found out that the act is practiced in a Guest House which is partitioned into smaller rooms within the precinct of the Nikki restaurant and bar.”⁷¹

7.2.2 A GhanaWeb article dated August 2013, ‘Ghana tops gay list in Africa’, observed that ‘Ghana has been named as the African country with the most registered homosexual ‘hopefuls’ seeking expatriate partners. This is according to an online website that is ripe with homosexual information.’ The article continued that the:

‘...site also has a detailed eighteen (18) point list of likely gay hangouts with particular days when gays socialise. Among such hangouts are Rhapsody’s at Accra Mall, Chester’s in Osu, Coconut Groove on ring road, Le Reeve in circle and University of Ghana, Legon.

‘The site also highlights certain locations in Accra which are tagged “no-go zones” for expatriates due to the “very dangerous” nature of such areas. One of such “very dangerous” areas in Accra is Christian village located in Achimota.

“Especially watch out for Christian Village (Achimota): this has really become a no-go zone. Very dangerous.”⁷²

7.2.3 A Speak Ghana article referred to an ‘LGBT community’ but also quoted a gay activist who observed that ‘there is no one united umbrella for all LGBT members in Ghana. An umbrella that will unite them, fight for their rights, and provide medical health, psychological and other forms of assistant for them. There is no support, no association and no funding aid for the LGBT [people].’⁷³

7.2.4 The FCO’s travel advice for UK nationals, not Ghanaians, updated in August 2015 observed: ‘Homosexuality is illegal. Although there is a small gay community, there is no ‘scene’ and most Ghanaians don’t accept that such activity exists.’⁷⁴

7.3 Public opinion

7.3.1 According to the Informer, a Ghanaian newspaper, over 82% of the population abhorred homosexuality in 2012. The 82% figure ‘was arrived at by the tabulation of the percentages of the various religious groups in

⁷¹ Australian Government, Country Advice – Ghana – GHA37425, 29 September 2010, http://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1788_1301506684_gha37425.pdf, accessed 5 October 2015

⁷² GhanaWeb, ‘Ghana tops gay list in Africa’, 12 August 2013, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ghana-tops-gay-list-in-Africa-282218>, accessed 5 October 2015

⁷³ Speak Ghana, ‘Film on LGBT in Ghana’, 12 February 2014, <https://speakghana.wordpress.com/2014/02/12/film-on-lgbt-in-ghana/>, accessed 5 October 2015

⁷⁴ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Travel Advice, Ghana, Local laws and customs, updated 28 August 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/ghana/local-laws-and-customs> accessed on 11 December 2015

Ghana...These are groups who have openly come out to condemn the practice of homosexuality.’⁷⁵

- 7.3.2 A Human Rights First paper of July 2014 noted that ‘according to a recent Pew survey [2014], 98 percent of Ghanaians feel that homosexuality is “morally unacceptable,” the highest percentage of any country surveyed.’⁷⁶

7.4 Violence and discrimination

- 7.4.1 A CEPEHRG spokesman, in a telephone interview with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, said that assault of LGBT people is ‘common’. For example, a ‘HIV/AIDs peer educator in the Volta region was beaten up by assailants and taken to police’. He added that ‘he was personally assaulted because of his sexual orientation in the market in Accra, and explained that the perpetrators took all of his belongings and took him to the police. He added that the police did not investigate, and told his assaulters to leave, even though they still had his belongings.’⁷⁷ The US State Department in 2013 also reports this incident.⁷⁸

- 7.4.2 The website Erasing 76 Crimes quoted excerpts from a description of gay life in Ghana, although access to the original source (GayGhana.org) could not be obtained:

‘I was beaten by a man who thought I have no rights to reply [to the man’s wife] when she insult [sic] me for being gay because gays are “nothing” and want to know how I got that power to reply to the wife. He used this “who are you? Homosexual talking to my wife like that?”

‘Gays / homosexuals in Ghana are living in the state of fear. ... We are beaten, even when we attend funerals, by young men who think being gay is foolish. We are attacked and robbed and all people say to us is, “What where you doing there by that time and who invited you there?” ...’⁷⁹

- 7.4.3 USSD 2014 reported that according to the HRAC [Human Rights Action Center], ‘gay men in prison were often subjected to sexual and other physical abuse.’ Although the same also reported that ‘... there were no reported cases of police or government violence against LGBT persons during the year, [however] stigma, intimidation, and the attitude of the police

⁷⁵ The Informer, ‘Over 82% Of Ghanaians Abhor Homosexuality – 2010 Census’, 27 July 2012, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=246024>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁷⁶ Human Rights First, ‘Report: The State of Human Rights for LGBT People in Africa’, July 2014, <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/HRF-HRC-Africa-Report.pdf>, accessed 5 October 2015

⁷⁷ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, ‘Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services’, 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁷⁸ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2013humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁷⁹ Erasing 76 Crimes, ‘Tough life for gays in Ghana’, 29 October 2012, <http://76crimes.com/2012/10/29/tough-life-for-gays-in-ghana/>, accessed 30 September 2015

toward LGBT persons were likely factors in preventing victims from reporting incidents of abuse.⁸⁰

7.4.4 In May 2014, Gay Star News reported that a gang of Muslim youths were wanted by police following the lynching of a gay man because of his sexuality. According to reports, local villagers refused to help the police in their investigation and were still looking for the man's lover.⁸¹ Other publications have reported this incident.⁸²

7.4.5 The African Men for Sexual Health and Rights noted in their 2013 report that 'in 2013, Ghana witnessed a large number of incidents related to homophobia and the violation of the human rights of LGBT persons.' This included the high profile incident in Jamestown and the following other examples were provided:

'Also in 2013, a group of boys in the neighborhood of Lapaz in Accra violently attacked known gay people in the rented apartments in that neighborhood once they realized these men are gay.

There was the murder of a gay man in Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana by an individual who is said to have visited from Kumasi, Ghana. The article embarrassed the family when it appeared in the press and thus they denied their son is gay. This ended the investigation by the police. Another young gay man hung himself in a room in Accra but there was no investigation because he accused his family of abuse and homophobia.⁸³

7.4.6 The Daily Guide newspaper, based in Accra, in an article dated 31 March 2012, reported that 'a gay men and members of his homosexual fraternity were recently attacked and chased out of a party by the Ga-Mashie Youth for Change in Accra for what the group described as the growing phenomenon of gay marriage in the area'. It continued that 'they beat some of our lady friends who were not able to run, took their phones and money and stripped them naked... They chased us with canes, cutlasses, stones, and bottles... [the assault] left the victims with no alternative but to leave the community and seek refuge with FIDA and the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Police Service.'⁸⁴

7.4.7 The source continued:

⁸⁰ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁸¹ Gay Star News, Muslim youths lynch gay man in Ghana and are still hunting his lover, 27 May 2014, http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/muslim-youths-lynch-gay-man-ghana-and-are-still-hunting-his-lover270514/#gs.h_SlWO4, accessed 22 November 2015

⁸² Towleroad 'Muslim Youth Lynch Gay Man, Hunt for his Escaped Partner: Report', 27 May 2014, <http://www.towleroad.com/2014/05/muslim-youth-lynch-gay-man-hunt-for-his-escaped-partner-report/>, accessed 10 December 2015

⁸³ African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHer), 'Report: Socio-Political situation of LGBT people in Ghana, 2013', 14 March 2014, <http://www.amsher.org/socio-political-situation-of-lgbt-people-in-ghana-2013/>, accessed 22 November 2015

⁸⁴ Daily Guide, 'Clash Over Gay Rights. Legal, Religious, Moral Reasons', 31 March 2012, <http://newsghana.com.gh/clash-over-gay-rights-legal-religious-moral-reasons/>, accessed 30 September 2015

'The Ga-Mashie Youth for Change claims the activities of the gay people are eating into the moral fiber of the community and therefore must do something to stop the progression of the act in the community.

"We invaded the place with the intention of stopping them but not to hurt anyone or beat them", says Daniel Wetley, coordinator of the youth group. "We want to register our feelings against it (homosexuality)" he adds.

'He admits they chased the homosexuals out with sticks and ordered the disc jockey (DJ) to stop the music; their main aim was to stop the activity and nothing else. "We didn't beat anyone."⁸⁵

This incident was also reported in the US State Department's human rights report for Ghana for 2012.⁸⁶

- 7.4.8 It was also mentioned by a CEPEHRG representative in a telephone interview with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. According to this representative, 'perpetrators went "house to house" in James Town neighbourhood looking for sexual minorities, chasing them up and beating them. He added that during these house raids, lesbians were sexually and physically assaulted...the perpetrators conducted the violence in public, and spoke about it on television and on the radio', although 'their actions were not stopped by police'. Rather, according to the perpetrators 'the police gave them consent to conduct these attacks'.⁸⁷ The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada said that, according to Myjoyonline.com, victims claimed they did not receive state protection and nine LGBT people sought refuge at an NGO in Accra, but that, according to the Human Rights Advocacy Centre (HRAC), the police have started to find the perpetrators of the assaults.⁸⁸ However, the original sources cannot be located.
- 7.4.9 The Daily Guide, an Accra-based newspaper, refers to Nana Oye Lithur, executive director of the Human Rights Advocacy Centre (HRAC) (who is also a Minister), who 'finds the current situation at Ussher and James Towns surprising because "Ghana's a tolerant society". 'She says it is difficult to address the level of tolerance as both pro and anti-gay groups are now more vocal on their position on the issue.'⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Daily Guide, 'Clash Over Gay Rights. Legal, Religious, Moral Reasons', 31 March 2012, <http://newsghana.com.gh/clash-over-gay-rights-legal-religious-moral-reasons/>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁸⁶ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2012humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁸⁷ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁸⁸ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁸⁹ Daily Guide, 'Clash Over Gay Rights. Legal, Religious, Moral Reasons', 31 March 2012, <http://newsghana.com.gh/clash-over-gay-rights-legal-religious-moral-reasons/>, accessed 30 September 2015

- 7.4.10 In 2012, in a telephone interview with the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, the CEPEHRG 'indicated that if sexual minorities do not disclose their sexual orientation, it is easier for them to live in urban areas rather than in rural areas where life for sexual minorities is "very difficult" ...if sexual minorities disclose their sexual orientation, they may face eviction, extortion and forced marriage, among other problems.'⁹⁰
- 7.4.11 In June 2013, Pink News, a gay rights publication, reported that a church minister was reportedly suspended over claims of engaging in 'homosexual' acts with seven young men aged between 20 and 28.⁹¹
- 7.4.12 Gay Star News reported in April 2013 that 53 students have been expelled from two of the leading high schools in Ghana for being gay.⁹² The website Erasing 76 Crimes also reported this incident.⁹³
- 7.4.13 The USSD 2014 stated that 'LGBT persons faced widespread discrimination in employment and education'⁹⁴ Freedom House (2015) reported that LGBT persons 'continue to face societal discrimination'.⁹⁵

7.5 Anti-LGBT protests

- 7.5.1 The US State Department's 2011 report stated: 'In June 2010 more than 1,000 protesters in Takoradi, Western Region, participated in a peaceful rally against reports of gay and lesbian activities in their city. This was reportedly the first such protest in the country.'⁹⁶ The news website GhanaWeb reported that 'over a thousand protesters' were in attendance and that the 'demonstration was organised by the Muslim community in Takoradi with support from other religious groups and concerned citizens'.⁹⁷ The website African Activist stated: 'The area [Takoradi] has a vibrant lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community and the protest was

⁹⁰ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁹¹ Pink News, 'Ghana: Church minister suspended over gay sex claims', 24 June 2013, <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/06/24/ghana-church-minister-suspended-over-gay-sex-claims/>, accessed 1 October 2015

⁹² Gay Star News, 'Two Ghana schools expel 53 students for being gay', 19 April 2013, <http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/two-ghana-schools-expel-53-students-being-gay190413/#gs.Gu7DyIl>, accessed 22 November 2015

⁹³ Erasing 76 Crimes, 'Ghana uproar: 53 students ejected for homosexuality?', 13 April 2013, <http://76crimes.com/2013/04/17/ghana-uproar-53-students-ejected-for-homosexuality/>, accessed 10 December 2014

⁹⁴ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

⁹⁵ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 – Ghana, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/ghana#.VebyePn1DyM>, accessed 2 September 2015

⁹⁶ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011 – Ghana, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>, accessed 1 September 2015

⁹⁷ GhanaWeb, 'Thousands attend first Anti-Gay Protests in Ghana', 4 June 2010, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Thousands-Attend-First-Anti-gay-Protests-In-Ghana-183484>, accessed 30 September 2015

designed to challenge the government into action to potentially criminalise homosexuality.⁹⁸

7.6 Access to services

7.6.1 An IRIN (Integrated Regional Information Networks) article of 1 August 2011, 'Understanding the Drivers of Homophobia in Ghana', noted:

'Recent condemnation of homosexuality by religious and political leaders in Ghana has led to a climate of fear preventing men who have sex with men (MSM) from accessing vital health services, say local NGOs. The minister of Ghana's Western Region, Paul Evans Aidoo, publicly described homosexuality as 'detestable and abominable' after media reports in late May that 8,000 homosexuals had registered with health NGOs in the country's west (the information appears to come from records kept by the NGOs of people who accessed services for MSM).⁹⁹

See also Public statements by government officials

7.6.2 A CEPEHRG representative, in a telephone interview with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, claimed that 'his organisation had to close down their health services because neighbours were not comfortable with the people [LGBT people] accessing the services.'¹⁰⁰

7.6.3 The above representative added that 'many LGBT people have been evicted, live on the street, and are not in school....it is "very difficult" for an LGBT person to receive education, and said that if students do not disclose their sexual orientation, they still may be teased and beaten in school', although the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada could not find any information to corroborate this.¹⁰¹

7.6.4 In 2012, the organisation Erasing 76 Crimes reported:

'Gay men don't go to the hospitals for treatment especially if it is a sexually transmitted disease. Most of these diseases, you are asked to bring with you your sexual partner before treatment. Gay sex has been described as criminal, so most men come home and forget the hospital and fall on friends for help.

'Even though there are lots and lots of HIV prevention going on in Ghana, the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transsexual) has been left out. There is

⁹⁸ African Activist, 'Large Anti-Gay Protests in Ghana', 5 June 2010, <http://africanactivistarchive.blogspot.co.uk/2010/06/large-anti-gay-protests-in-ghana.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁹⁹ IRIN (United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks), Analysis: Understanding the Drivers of Homophobia in Ghana, 1 August 2011 <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/93387/Analysis-Understanding-the-drivers-of-homophobia-in-Ghana>, accessed 2 October 2015

¹⁰⁰ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

¹⁰¹ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 'Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services', 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

no prevention or awareness targeting this community and this has caused lots of damage to us¹⁰²

7.7 Religious treatment

7.7.1 An article for the ILGA, dated 8 August 2011 reported that ‘religious, political, and traditional leaders, as well as media pundits have condemned homosexuality as a threat to national security, as pathological, as un-African, and/or as ungodly.’¹⁰³

7.7.2 Freedom House observed in 2011 that ‘Muslim and Christian groups, including the Christian Council of Ghana, have mobilized their congregations against politicians who defend homosexuality.’¹⁰⁴ In 2012, in a telephone interview with the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, the CEPEHRG indicated that ‘religious leaders have condemned homosexuality’.¹⁰⁵

7.7.3 A news story of 10 August 2011 contained in the GlobalGayz digest of news, ‘Ghana church to set up centers for gay ‘cures’’, noted:

‘The Presbyterian Church of Ghana is establishing therapy centers designed to ‘rehabilitate’ and ‘cure’ gays and lesbians. Right Reverend Professor Emmanuel Martey, who heads the denomination, told the Ghana News Agency that ‘homosexuality was spreading fast in the society’ and needed to be checked. Though gays and lesbians would face challenges, he said, they would be ‘cured’ if they prayed regularly.’¹⁰⁶

7.7.4 The Daily Guide reported that ‘religious groups have been at the forefront of the fight against homosexuality’ The Presbyterian Church of Ghana’s moderator, Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Martey ‘said there was nothing private about homosexuality because it affects everyone. “So if a mother kills her child in her room, if a husband kills his wife in their room, it is the privacy of their room, why should the law then follow them?” he questioned.’¹⁰⁷

7.7.5 The source continued:

¹⁰² Erasing 76 Crimes, ‘Tough life for gays in Ghana’, 29 October 2012,

<http://76crimes.com/2012/10/29/tough-life-for-gays-in-ghana/>, accessed 30 September 2015

¹⁰³ International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), ‘Ghana: The Coalition Against Homophobia in Ghana (CAHG) Educate People About Respect for LGBTI Rights’, 8 August 2011, <http://ilga.org/ghana-the-coalition-against-homophobia-in-ghana-cahg-educate-people-about-respect-for-lgbti-rights/>, accessed 30 September 2015

¹⁰⁴ Freedom House, ‘LGBT Population in Ghana Under Threat’, 8 August 2011,

<https://freedomhouse.org/article/lgbt-population-ghana-under-threat>, accessed 30 September 2015

¹⁰⁵ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, ‘Ghana: Treatment of sexual minorities by society and governmental authorities, including legislation, state protection, and support services’, 12 August 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/country,,IRBC,,GHA,,50b73e352,0.html>, accessed 30 September 2015

¹⁰⁶ GlobalGayz, Ghana church to set up centers for gay ‘cures’, 10 August 2011, <http://archive.globalgayz.com/africa/ghana/gay-ghana-andreports-2011/#article8>, date accessed 2 October 2015

¹⁰⁷ Daily Guide, ‘Clash Over Gay Rights. Legal, Religious, Moral Reasons’, 31 March 2012, <http://newsghana.com.gh/clash-over-gay-rights-legal-religious-moral-reasons/>, accessed 30 September 2015

'In the same vein, the Christian Council of Ghana took a critical view of the practice of homosexuality and asked government not to pass it into law. Some pastors threatened to tell their congregation to vote against any party that endorses the practice.

'According to them, homosexuality is a detestable and abominable act and opined that if passed into law, in Ghana the country shall incur the wrath of God and the consequences will be unbearable.

'The National Chief Imam, Sheik Osman Nuhu Sharubutu, on behalf of the Muslim community also bemoaned the act, stressing that homosexuality and lesbianism was detestable in the sight of Allah...

'The Coalition of Muslim Organizations, Ghana (COMOG) also called for the law making body of the country, Parliament to introduce the "Prohibition of Homosexuality and Lesbianism Bill" which would imprison homosexuals without the option of a fine.'¹⁰⁸

7.7.6 The organisation African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHer) reported that, in 2013, there was an 'increase in homophobic comments in the media mainly by religious leaders.' The source continued that 'there have been hate groups springing up on daily basis, led by heads of Christian and traditional religious groups and that these groups 'have deliberately joined online social groups created by LGBT people to promote their hatred and troll on issues being discussed by the group members. They have also created juicy profiles on some dating sites to lure gay people into their homes to be robbed and sometimes violently beaten or subjected to other abuses. Five people reported such abuses in the year 2013 to the Centre for Popular Education and Human Rights, Ghana [CEPEHRG] office. These hate groups threaten to identify and attack any gay person they come across in Ghana. In the process, one person reported at the CEPEHRG office in Accra and was asked to contact HRAC for support. He has fled from Tamale in the northern region of Ghana to Accra for safety.'¹⁰⁹

7.7.7 The African Men for Sexual Health and Rights noted in their 2013 report that:

'Despite there being a significant number of LGBT people in Ghanaian society, Ghana continues to face challenges related to homophobia, hate crimes, and hypocrisy among its citizenry...

'there have been hate groups springing up on daily basis, led by heads of Christian and traditional religious groups. Other groups include prominent political and social figures who think it is time for the country to formulate a

¹⁰⁸ Daily Guide, 'Clash Over Gay Rights. Legal, Religious, Moral Reasons', 31 March 2012, <http://newsghana.com.gh/clash-over-gay-rights-legal-religious-moral-reasons/>, accessed 30 September 2015

¹⁰⁹ African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHer), 'Report: Socio-Political situation of LGBT people in Ghana, 2013', 14 March 2014, <http://www.amsher.org/socio-political-situation-of-lgbt-people-in-ghana-2013/>, accessed 5 October 2015

law that clearly states its position on homosexuality which they see as “immoral” and against the traditions and “culture” of the country.¹¹⁰

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¹¹⁰ African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMShER), ‘Report: Socio-Political situation of LGBT people in Ghana, 2013’, 14 March 2014, <http://www.amsher.org/socio-political-situation-of-lgbt-people-in-ghana-2013/>, accessed 22 November 2015

Version Control and Contacts

Contacts

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Clearance

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was cleared:

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