

# **THE RIGHT OF A CHILD AND EMERGING ISSUES IN RURAL FAMILY LIVELIHOOD**

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# Preamble

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**World Vision (2015), over 85 million children worldwide have been subjected to various forms of child rights violation:**

- **trafficking for commercial sex exploitation,**
- **hazardous physical labour**
- **denial of the right to learn**
- **health care and many more**
- **abuse (physical and psychological)**
- **total neglect from family members.**



# Who is a child?

- ❖ **The United Nations International Convention of the Child of 1989 defines more precisely the term “ a child” as;  
*“any human being below the age of eighteen years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier”***

# A child.....

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## ❖ A child:

- a growing individual,
- a future adult
- dependent on adults for sustenance, survival, protection, health care and general well-being.
- Childhood is characterized with vulnerability.
- 26 percent of the 7 billion people in the world are below the age of 15 (Population Reference Bureau, 2014).

# **The basic right of the child**

- **As contained in the UN and the African Charter:**
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- **Survival rights:** include the child's right to life and the needs that are most basic to existence, such as nutrition, shelter, an adequate living standard, and access to medical services.
  - **Development rights:** include the right to education, play, leisure, cultural activities, access to information, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.



# Basic rights of a child.....

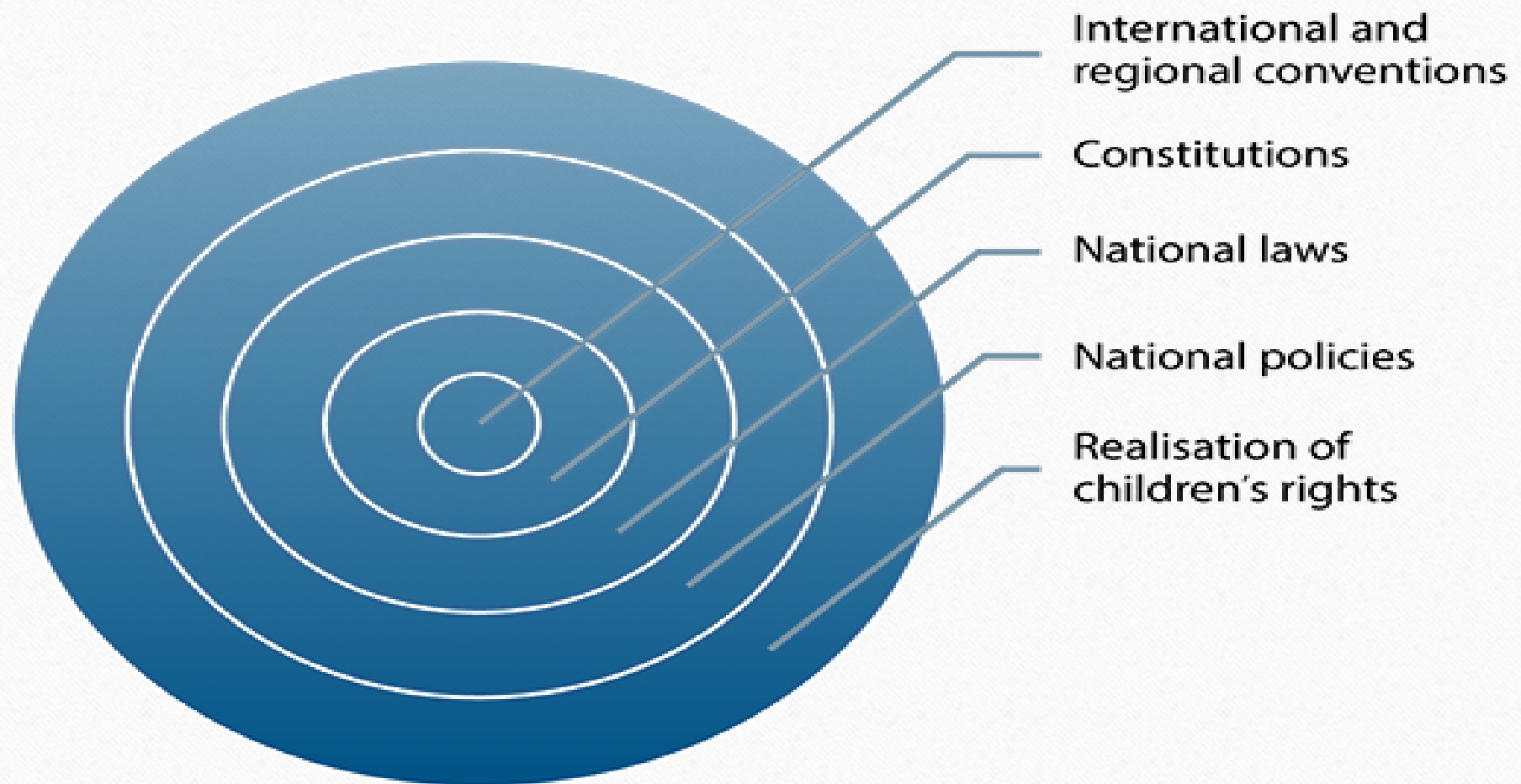
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- **Protection rights:** Safeguard them against all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation- special care for refugee children; children in the criminal justice system; protection for children in employment; protection and rehabilitation for children who have suffered exploitation or abuse of any kind.
- **Participation rights:** encompass children's freedom to express opinions, to have a say in matters affecting their own lives, to join associations and to assemble peacefully. As their capacities develop, children should have increasing opportunity to participate in the activities of society, in preparation for adulthood.

## **Five Core Principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:**

- ☐ **The right to life, survival, and development**
- ☐ **Non-discrimination**
- ☐ **Devotion to the best interests of the child**
- ☐ **Respect for the views of the child**
- ☐ **The right to an adequate standard of living and social security**





***Figure 1.1: Basis for child's Rights***

# **Nigeria's 2003 Child Right Act**

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- **the right to name;**
- **right to survival and development;**
- **right to freedom from discrimination;**
- **right to the dignity of the child;**
- **right to health and health services;**



# **Nigeria's 2003 Child Right Act**

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- **right to parental care;**
- **protection and maintenance;**
- **right of a child to free and compulsory and universal primary education;**
- **rights of a child in need of special protection measures and so forth**

***(FGN, 2003, Humanum, 2015).***

# **Rural Family Livelihood**

- **Majority of rural families depend on activities such as (farming, fishing, mining, small-scale trading e.t.c) as a means of livelihood.**
- **Livelihood is conceptualized as the means of support, subsistence, or the activities that give economic of financial support to rural individuals or families, as a means of securing basic necessities such as food, water, shelter, medicine and all other forms of basic necessities.**



# **Rural Family Livelihood.....**

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- **These activities constitute the livelihood strategies Chambers and Conway (1992) construed livelihood strategy as comprising the capabilities, assets and activities required as a means of living**

**In most rural families/households across the world, livelihood structures and patterns are complex and deriving from a combination of interlinked income earning activities which varies enormously according to opportunities, constraints and preferences.**

**Generally, families/households in a typical rural setting engage in agricultural and non- agricultural livelihood.**



**In Nigeria, about two-third of rural families earn their livelihood from subsistence farming, either as small-scale farmers or as low paid farm workers while the remaining one-third engage in petty services. (Matthews-Njoku and Nwaogwugwu, (2014)**

**Understandably, agriculture has remained the bedrock and major livelihood of most rural families' economies, especially among indigenous people (World Bank, 2006).**

# **Emerging Trends in Rural Family/ Household Livelihood**

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- **Changing patterns in rural family livelihood encompass the diversification of household economies; diversification of activities among different members of the household as well as multiple activities by single members (of which children are not excluded) (Trilochan, 2009).**



**Table 1.** Livelihood strategies of households in Northern Ghana.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Assets</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Vulnerable (5%)	High proportion of orphans, school drop-outs, youth economic migrants, widows with children, elderly, handicapped, sick	0-0.5 acres of land per active member; no livestock except 0-5 poultry; basic house & cooking equipment, clothes	Sale of firewood, making baskets or ropes, collecting wild products, sheanut gathering, buy & sell foodstuffs
Poor (35%)	High proportion of widows with children, youth semi-permanent migrants, migrants creating farms outside their tribal areas, small-scale farmers with weak labour capacities	0.3-2.5 acres per active member; 0-5 sheep/goats, 0-3 cattle (per household); Bicycle, roofing sheets	Food crops and livestock farming, petty trading, collection/processing/sale of NR products, seasonal and semi-permanent migration
Medium (51%)	Large family and high labour capacity (that is, low dependency ratio)	1.5-4 acres per active member; 10-40 sheep/goats, 3-30 cattle; (semi-permanent house; modest education and assets (e.g. sewing machine, shop, TV)	Farm and non-farm activities
Well-off (9%)	Large family and high labor capacity, higher proportion of skilled labor	1-25 acres per active member; 0-120 sheep/goats; 0-1000 cattle; larger, permanent house with water, electricity, kitchen, toilet, fridge; tractor, car/truck. May have two houses-one in town, more modest on farm	Agricultural: perennial (cocoa, rubber, mango), non-traditional or food crops (all on commercial scale); livestock (including commercial poultry). No-agric: tractor or transport services, medium-large-scale trading, shop/house rental, salaried positions

Source: Al-Hassan and Poulton (2009).

## Facts and figures

- Rural areas host 75 percent of the world's poor, with 2.1 billion living on less than USD 2 a day, and 880 million living on less than USD 1 a day.<sup>1</sup>
- Child labour is mainly a rural issue. Out of 215 million of child labourers worldwide, 129 millions are in agriculture alone.<sup>2</sup>
- About 60 percent of child labourers aged between 5-17 years work in agriculture, in contrast to 7 percent in industry and 26 percent in services.<sup>3</sup>
- Agriculture is among the three most dangerous sectors to work in at any age, and even more dangerous for children. Data show that around 60 percent of hazardous work of children is in agriculture.<sup>4</sup>
- Only 1 in 5 child labourers are in paid employment – the large majority are unpaid family workers.<sup>5</sup>
- Rural children, particularly girls, tend to begin work at a very young age, sometimes when they are 5-7 years old.<sup>6</sup>
- Without considering household services, on average, boys make up 63 percent and girls 37 percent of child labour in agriculture in the age group 5-17 years.<sup>7</sup> But 92 percent of girl child labourers in the age group 5-14 also perform household chores, as compared with 67 percent of boys.<sup>8</sup>

## Livelihood of poor rural household.

- ❖ Farming
- ❖ Livestock production
- ❖ Artisan Fishery
- ❖ Agricultural Labour wage earning
- ❖ Self-employment in rural non-farming economy
- ❖ Migration Farmers e.t.c



# Issues facing rural Family/livelihood

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- **Poverty;**

**Effects seen on;**

**Health facilities,**

**Education,**

**Food security and Nutrition,**

**Access to portable water,  
adequate shelter).**

- **Farm related Livelihoods;**

**Low agricultural productivity,**

**Neglect of water resources**

**Idle wasteland**

**Poor post-harvest management  
(Poor storage facilities)**

**Low productivities of livestock  
(Rural Poverty Report IFAD 2011)**

# Issues .....

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- **Farm related Livelihoods;  
(Cont.)**

**Climate Change**

**Availability of fertilizers**

**Access to produce market**

**Public Transportation**

**Credit facilities**

- **Rural Non-farm Economy  
(RNFE): [Manufacturing  
(agro-processing, small  
scale business, commodity  
trading, non-agricultural  
labour, self- employment) ]**

- **Heterogeneity of non-farm  
livelihood**

- Credit facilities**

- Government** Scheme



# Issues.....

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- **Cultural Practice**

- ❖ **Gender inequality (Women and Girls child)**
- ❖ **Child labour**
- ❖ **Child Marriage**

***(Source: Rural Poverty Report IFAD 2011)***

# Poverty and the rights of the child



**Figure 5: showing pictures severity of poverty of African child**

**Source: UN.Org.Com**



# Poverty and the rights of the child

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**Figure 3: Indicating school pupil in rural communities in Africa**

*Source: UN.Org, 2014*









# **Child Labour & the rights of the child**

- **Not all work done by the child can be categorized as child labour or slavery.**
- **Participation of children or adolescents in work that does not affect their health, personal development or welfare and schooling does not negate the right of the child. (ILO)**
- **Age-appropriate tasks/assignment could indicate a child's participation in family household/livelihood and income base such activities contributing to the child's development.**
- **ILO perception of child labour is work that deprive children of their childhood, their potential and dignity and is harmful to their physical and mental developments.**
- **Child labour is a violation of human rights.**

# **Child Labour in rural areas- key notes**

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- 1. Evident in rural areas, where school drop-out rates can be high and work hazards severe**
- 2. Child labour interferes with accumulation of human capital as it substitutes to schooling and damages children's minds and bodies.**
- 3. In the longer term, stunted skills lead to low productivity and incomes of rural populations.**
- 4. Child labour undermines adults' decent work**



# **Child Labour (facts & figures)**

**According to the International Labor Organization;**

- **Africa has the largest number of child labourers;**
- **59 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 are involved with hazardous work.**
- **More than one in 5 children in Africa are employed against their will in cocoa-chocolate production, stone quarries, farms, fishing and mines. Poverty remains the major reason behind child labour.**
- **Globally, the number of child labourers have declined by one third since 2000, from 246 million to 168 million.**
- **But Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the region with the highest incidence of child labour with more than one in five children in child labour.**





**Figure 4: showing caption of Child's labour/slavery in in Africa**

***Source: UN.Org. 2014***



# **Some suggestions.....some concluding words....**

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- **Definite policy statements are expected to serve as direction for national programmes projects and activities aimed towards the protection, survival, development and empowerment of the child particularly in the rural communities.**
  - **Facts and figures show that most rural families engage in agricultural and that are farm related. related activities. Hence pertinent government, PPP and NGO interventions and activities geared towards the safeguarding of the rights of rural children should focus on agricultural rural communities.**

# **Suggestions and conclusions....**

- **Perhaps the establishment of well designed, mechanized farming settlements and communities could provide a way out of child labour, unpaid and undefined adult employment in farming livelihood in rural communities.**
- **Agricultural education and enlightenment programmes should be a priority**
- **Public Private Partnership (PPP) in agricultural projects and designs is imperative.**
- **Right-based monitoring and evaluation particularly in the rural areas is essential**



# **Suggestions and conclusions....**

- **Assessing and addressing child poverty in Africa is urgent.**
- **Country/ region appropriate strategies should be developed to assess consistently the state of the child in rural Africa.**
- **Advocacy on issues pertaining to the rights of the child particularly rural children should be unabated. Theses are attracting the attention and advocacy among development experts and scholars in recent years.**
- **Defined and definite legal sanctions for various forms of child abuse and violation of the rights of the child.**

# The End

