

## Overview of SISTAS' Initiative

SISTAS is an all-girls programme that provides a platform for young girls (10 – 19) to be empowered with health and socio-economic assets in order to build their agency and ensure a higher chance of fulfilling their potentials. The programme employs strategic behaviour change communication (BCC) interventions, SRH service delivery, advocacy, mentorship and Livelihood Development Skills (LDS) to address pertinent issues concerning adolescent girls to empower them to make informed decisions on their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and their general wellbeing, including awareness-raising and consciousness building on gender equality.

The programme is designed to provide an integrated, rights-based, and gender-responsive approach to reach both married (or in a union) and unmarried adolescent girls directly to reduce unwanted pregnancies and child marriage as well as other harmful socio-cultural practices that disproportionately affect girls. This model is implemented by PPAG with support from UNFPA in all the six regions that UNFPA covers in Ghana (Central, Volta, Ashanti, Upper East, Upper West and Northern regions) under the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage. The target beneficiaries are mainly the most marginalized in-school and out-of school adolescent girls in rural and deprived communities.

As an integrated model, the initiative comprises of various intervention areas including:

- The formation of “SISTAS” clubs to create safe spaces for the adolescent girls.
- SRH Information and Service Provision (outreach and facility-based levels).
- Holding of Life Planning Skills (LPS) sessions to equip leaders of SISTAS clubs with skills in providing SRHR information to the members.
- Behaviour Change Communication interventions including interpersonal discussions, radio panel discussions, film shows at health facility level and communities, reading skills, interactive theatre and distribution of IE&C materials.
- Mentorship and Livelihood Skills Development sessions to equip and inspire the girls to know and learn motivational, leadership and livelihood development skills through engagement with reproductive health advocates, entrepreneurs, and experts from various other fields.
- Undertaking Parent-Child Communication (PCC) sessions to foster greater communication and dialogue between parents and adolescent girls on issues such as child marriage, teenage pregnancy and related topics.
- Finally, there is partnership with various strategic agencies/structures (District Assembly, GHS, GES, Social Welfare Department, Department of Gender, Traditional Authorities, Youth Associations, etc) to strengthen referrals to adolescent- and youth-friendly health services and other complementary social services to protect and empower adolescent girls.

Through the SISTAS initiative, more than 35,000 adolescent girls aged 10-19 years have been reached. The initiative is currently implemented in the following regions and districts.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Districts</b>	<b>Communities</b>
Northern	Sangnerigu Municipal	Kalpohini, Sangnerigu, Gurugu, Kunyegula
Upper East	Bolgatanga Municipal	Yarigabisi, Zaare, Kumbosco, Tindonseo, Gambibgo, Yipala, Atulbabisi
Upper West	Wa Municipal	Suriyri, Jengbeyiri, Kabanye, Danko, Kambali, Konta
Ashanti	Ejisu Juabeng and Asokore Mampong	Asawase, Apromase, Dagombaline
Central	Cape Coast Metro	Amessakyire, Abura, Apewosika
Volta	Central Tongu and North Tongu	Mepe, Adidome, Sogakope, Dabala

Out of these eight districts, a sample of twelve (12) in total, i.e. 2 per region will be assessed for this consultancy to make the findings representative enough to inform upscaling or strategy modifications of the initiative.