



Ramatu's Journey



Carrying More Than Loads

At just 15 years old, Ramatu was sent thousands of miles from home to work as a *Kayaye* - a head porter in the market, carrying heavy loads from dawn until nightfall.

With no mother at home and a father who couldn't afford to care for her, the family couldn't see another way.

Alone and sleeping on the streets, Ramatu was left extremely vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Sadly, her story is far from unique. In her community, child labour is widespread - and girls growing up here are twice as likely to become child brides compared to the national average in Ghana.



Ramatu, aged 15





The Power of Community Action

Thanks to your support, AfriKids had been working closely with Ramatu's community - engaging local leaders, schools, parents, and children - to raise awareness about the dangers of child labour and early marriage, and to promote the life-changing power of education.

When the community Chief heard about Ramatu's situation, he acted immediately, raising the alarm. Together, we made sure she returned home safely.

But we knew that wasn't enough.

Without continued support, Ramatu could easily have been forced back into work. So, we stayed by her side.



Strength in Knowledge

Back at school, Ramatu was placed in a class two years below her age due to the time she had missed. But she didn't let that hold her back.

AfriKids had recently launched a Child Rights Club at her school. Recognising her vulnerability, Ramatu was quickly enrolled. Led by a teacher trained by AfriKids, the club empowers girls to understand their rights and speak up in a society where women and girls often have little voice or choice.

Through the club, Ramatu learned about the risks of *Kayaye* work and early marriage, the importance of staying in school, and even how to make reusable sanitary pads from colourful local fabrics. For girls like Ramatu, who can't afford these basic essentials, it means they no longer have to miss school - or suffer shame - when they have their periods.

Breaking Records

Last year, Ramatu sat her national exams - the equivalent of GCSEs in the UK. She didn't just top her class. She achieved the highest scores in the **entire district**.

She is now attending one of the most prestigious Senior High Schools in northern Ghana - known for its academic excellence and fierce competition for places. Her success is not just a personal victory; in a region where half of all women and girls have never been to school, it's a powerful symbol of what's possible.

Inspired by Ramatu's journey, the community Chief has now issued a formal ban on sending girls away for *Kayaye* work and on the unaccompanied migration of children to the city. The impact has been remarkable: enrolment of girls in primary and junior high schools has more than doubled - and in some schools, girls now outnumber boys.



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I NO LONGER WANT TO GO BACK TO BEING A KAYAYE BECAUSE OF THE SUFFERING THERE. BEING PART OF AFRIKIDS' CLUB HAS GIVEN ME HOPE, AND I WANT TO HELP MY PEERS. STAYING IN SCHOOL WILL MOVE ME FORWARD, NOT BACKWARD.”



Thank you for making stories like Ramatu's possible.

Backed by their communities - children in northern Ghana are not just surviving – they are thriving. And with your continued support, we can ensure that no child ever has to give up their safety or education to work or marry young.

Their future belongs in the classroom - and it's looking brighter every day.

