

# FORENSIC DNA POLICY: A FOCUS ON NAMELESS AND ANONYMOUS REMAINS IDENTIFICATION IN GHANA



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## INTRODUCTION

The issue of unidentified bodies in Ghana is a major problem that brings pain and uncertainty to families as the bodies cannot be easily identified, leaving many without closure. It is often very challenging to identify nameless bodies and this hinders the ability of families with missing loved ones to find resolution.

## METHODOLOGY

The discussion is based on information retrieved from journal databases, online news articles, and institutional reports related to the issue of unidentified bodies in Ghana from 2000 to 2022.

### REFERENCES:

- Arizona: Naming the Dead from the Desert—BBC News, 2022. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-21029783> [Last accessed: June 13, 2022]. [Google Scholar](#)
- Ghana Plans Mass Burial for 120 Unclaimed Bodies—Ghananewsonline, 2022. Available from: <https://ghananewsonline.com.gh/ghana-plans-mass-burial-for-120-unclaimed-bodies/> [Last accessed: June 13, 2022]. [Google Scholar](#)
- Ghana Police Go Do Mass Burial for 200 Dead Bodies in Ghana Police Hospital—BBC News Pidgin, 2022. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/pidgin/tori-58314453> [Last accessed: June 13, 2022]. [Google Scholar](#)

## RESULTS

Table 1. Selected Recent Cases of Unidentified Bodies in Ghana

Reference	Incident	Location
<a href="https://www.modernghana.com/amp/news/869350/manso-nkwanta-killings-ghana-needs-an-independent.html">https://www.modernghana.com/amp/news/869350/manso-nkwanta-killings-ghana-needs-an-independent.html</a> <a href="https://dailyguidenetwork.com/manso-nkwanta-killings-despicable/">https://dailyguidenetwork.com/manso-nkwanta-killings-despicable/</a> <a href="https://www.ghanamma.com/2018/07/20/manso-nkwanta-killings-review-arrest-rapid-response-procedures-mps-to-police/">https://www.ghanamma.com/2018/07/20/manso-nkwanta-killings-review-arrest-rapid-response-procedures-mps-to-police/</a>	Robberies	Manso-Nkwanta Road
<a href="https://citinewsroom.com/2020/03/kintampo-road-crash-akufo-addo-panels-bereaved-families/">https://citinewsroom.com/2020/03/kintampo-road-crash-akufo-addo-panels-bereaved-families/</a> <a href="https://www.happyghana.com/3-major-accidents-on-kintampo-road-that-have-so-far-broken-the-hearts-of-ghanaians-in-2020/">https://www.happyghana.com/3-major-accidents-on-kintampo-road-that-have-so-far-broken-the-hearts-of-ghanaians-in-2020/</a> <a href="https://thenewsgod.com/kintampo-road-accident-watch-the-dying-moments-passengers-were-caught-up-in-flames/">https://thenewsgod.com/kintampo-road-accident-watch-the-dying-moments-passengers-were-caught-up-in-flames/</a>	Car accident	Dawadawa Number 2 on the Kintampo-Tamale Highway
<a href="https://www.adomonline.com/unidentified-man-burnt-to-death-at-budumburam">https://www.adomonline.com/unidentified-man-burnt-to-death-at-budumburam</a> <a href="https://dailyguidenetwork.com/man-killed-and-tied-on-an-electric-pole-at-budumburam">https://dailyguidenetwork.com/man-killed-and-tied-on-an-electric-pole-at-budumburam</a>	Lynching	Gomoa
<a href="https://mybrytmonline.com/man-killed-body-parts-removed-dumped-in-pit-filled-with-water-in-gomoa/">https://mybrytmonline.com/man-killed-body-parts-removed-dumped-in-pit-filled-with-water-in-gomoa/</a> Man killed, intestines removed at Gomoa Nyanyano (ghanaweb.com)	Ritual killing	Gomoa
<a href="https://stanfm.com.gh/2021/03/e-r-unidentified-dead-body-retrieved-from-volta-river/">https://stanfm.com.gh/2021/03/e-r-unidentified-dead-body-retrieved-from-volta-river/</a> <a href="https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Unidentified-dead-body-retrieved-from-Volta-River-1198654">https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Unidentified-dead-body-retrieved-from-Volta-River-1198654</a>	Drowning	Volta river
<a href="https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Daylight-robbery-incident-at-Tema-2-suspects-shot-dead-932866">https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Daylight-robbery-incident-at-Tema-2-suspects-shot-dead-932866</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1101184953564344">https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1101184953564344</a>	Armed robbery attack	Tema
<a href="https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Residents-in-fear-as-unidentified-man-found-burnt-to-death-at-Gomoa-1382875">https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Residents-in-fear-as-unidentified-man-found-burnt-to-death-at-Gomoa-1382875</a> <a href="https://www.ghanamma.com/2021/10/19/burnt-body-of-unidentified-man-discovered-at-gomoa">https://www.ghanamma.com/2021/10/19/burnt-body-of-unidentified-man-discovered-at-gomoa</a>	Fire explosion	Gomoa
<a href="https://newsghana.com.gh/unidentified-armed-robber-gunned-down/">https://newsghana.com.gh/unidentified-armed-robber-gunned-down/</a> <a href="https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2013/07/13/police-guns-down-unidentified-armed-robber">https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2013/07/13/police-guns-down-unidentified-armed-robber</a>	Shooting	Pasuro near Adankwame
<a href="https://www.modernghana.com/news/1107597/vr-decomposed-body-of-woman-found-in-uncompleted.html">https://www.modernghana.com/news/1107597/vr-decomposed-body-of-woman-found-in-uncompleted.html</a> <a href="https://citinewsroom.com/2021/09/decomposed-body-of-woman-found-in-uncompleted-building-in-ho/">https://citinewsroom.com/2021/09/decomposed-body-of-woman-found-in-uncompleted-building-in-ho/</a>	Unknown	Taviefe Deme - Volta region
<a href="https://mynewsghana.net/just-in-unknown-man-found-dead-with-gun-wounds-at-akyem-hemang/">https://mynewsghana.net/just-in-unknown-man-found-dead-with-gun-wounds-at-akyem-hemang/</a> <a href="https://radiooneghana.com/2021/10/dead-body-found-at-akyem-hemang-with-blood-spills">https://radiooneghana.com/2021/10/dead-body-found-at-akyem-hemang-with-blood-spills</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/mynewsghana/status/1452290056236978182">https://twitter.com/mynewsghana/status/1452290056236978182</a>	Unknown	Akyem Hemang in the Fanteakwa South District
<a href="https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/40-year-old-man-found-dead-in-Kasoa-Okrudu-River-1295506">https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/40-year-old-man-found-dead-in-Kasoa-Okrudu-River-1295506</a>	Unknown	Kasoa
<a href="https://hotfmghana.com/badly-decomposed-body-found-in-poultry-farm/">https://hotfmghana.com/badly-decomposed-body-found-in-poultry-farm/</a> <a href="https://www.adomonline.com/badly-decomposed-body-found-in-poultry-farm/">https://www.adomonline.com/badly-decomposed-body-found-in-poultry-farm/</a>	Unknown	Goaso
<a href="https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2011/09/18/police-finds-unidentified-man-dead-on-tema-motorway/">https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2011/09/18/police-finds-unidentified-man-dead-on-tema-motorway/</a> Unidentified man reported dead on Motorway - Tema Police (modernghana.com)	Runover by an unknown vehicle	Tema Motorway
<a href="https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2013/12/20/brong-ahafo-hospital-bury-35-unidentified-dead-bodies/">https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2013/12/20/brong-ahafo-hospital-bury-35-unidentified-dead-bodies/</a>	Unknown	Brong Ahafo
<a href="https://ghananewspage.com/breaking-police-exhume-four-dead-bodies-at-shrine-in-adeiso/">https://ghananewspage.com/breaking-police-exhume-four-dead-bodies-at-shrine-in-adeiso/</a> <a href="https://www.modernghana.com/news/999231/police-operation-exhume-3-headless-bodies-at-fetis.html">https://www.modernghana.com/news/999231/police-operation-exhume-3-headless-bodies-at-fetis.html</a>	Rituals	Adieso

## CONCLUSION

Ghana lacks a national DNA and missing person database, leading to challenges in matching DNA samples and causing delays in identifying unidentified bodies and missing persons. In contrast, countries like the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia have advanced DNA analysis methods using reference samples and genealogical databases. Private commercial DNA databases and initiatives like I-Familia aid in genealogy testing and identifying missing persons. To enhance forensic DNA policies in Ghana, international support, investment in education, standardization and data exchange and collaboration are needed.