

**INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL MINISTRY  
TANGAZA COLLEGE  
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA**

**TITLE: PLIGHT OF STREET CHILDREN: A PASTORAL CHALLENGE**

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**DATE: MARCH 2000**

**NAIROBI-KENYA**

# DECLARATION

I here by declare that the material used has not been submitted for academic credit to any other institution. All sources have been cited in full.

*Sister Margaret Aringo*

Signed *BRO. RICH. MATIYA LUKWAGO MCCJ.*  
BRO.RICH.MATIYA LUKWAGO MCCJ

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## INTRODUCTION

Street children in Kenya face innumerable hardships and dangers in their daily lives. The number of street children in Africa is expected to spiral to the shocking figure of 15 million by this year 2000, according to a report by the African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN).

The phenomenon of street children is directly linked with rapid urbanisation on the continent. The overall urbanisation rate in Africa is over 5 percent according to ANPPCAN 's Child Watch Newsletter. In his paper, "Urbanisation and street children in Eastern and Southern Africa" presented at the workshop, R.A. Obudho of the University of Nairobi said it was estimated that Africa will have the greatest number of street children by the year 2000. Of the street children found in Africa, the majority were found in the urban centres of Eastern and Southern countries. However, in Nairobi City, children are found living and working on city streets. It is a dangerous and precarious existence. The reasons for their presence vary, but all share the common experience of fighting for their everyday survival.

The purpose of this research is to find out the phenomenon and to come up with effective action to the problem of street children.

Chapter one is concerned with background of the study. We feel it necessary to draw attention to the increasingly vulnerable position of our world's children. In it the researcher stressed the statement of the problem. He also explored the basic assumptions. Because of this it enables us to monitor the Church, Non Governmental organisations, Government's works by providing resources, training, information and supporting sources concerning rehabilitation of street children.

The second chapter is set out to explore the literary Review related to the study. It gathered data from secondary sources in libraries and Church, Government and Non Governmental organisation reviews. In the second section we give some elaborate details of the research questions raised in chapter one.

The third chapter offers the research methodology. The main interest here is in drawing out the qualitative approach, using the see, judge and act methodology. All of this concerns the part of gathering and receiving available secondary data. The observations of some projects were made.

Chapter four is entitled "Results and discussions" which deals with information gathered from interviews and literature reviewed. It set out a key element in relating to the objectives, assumptions and research questions.

The fifth chapter offers project proposal and recommendations. Finally, there is an appendix in which we give some very practical guidelines of questionnaire dealing with different people. Parents, children of and on the street, children under voluntary-sector organisations and child-care workers and social workers.

## CHARTER ONE

### 1.0 PROBLEMS FACING STREET CHILDREN IN NAIROBI

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Abandoned and homeless children were noted to exist even in ancient times. But their numbers began to mushroom with the birth of the industrial revolution as countries turned from rural, agriculture-based societies to urban, industrial centres.

Clearly, "the problem is not new in human history", notes the Encyclopaedia of world problems and Human potential, citing the 1800's Waifs of London and New York. But "what is new is the scale... The present-day numbers of street children in single cities like Calcutta may be equal to the total population of those cities in the last century."<sup>1</sup>

Delivering the key note address Justice Emmanuel O'Kubasu of the High court of Kenya told the participants during the proceedings of Regional workshop on problems of street children in Eastern and Southern Africa held in Nairobi-Kenya in March 1991 that the problem of street children is universal and is not unique to Kenya or Africa alone. Street children, like crime, must be considered as a product of the society. "We cannot run away from it. We must devise ways and means of dealing with the problem". They are at once ubiquitous and invisible.

Across the urban cities, they huddle in doorways, sprawl on sidewalks. They hawk sweets or flowers to tourists and wander the gully paths of the worst slums. There are the children of the streets. Some are orphans, with no family at all; others are plain runaways... In most countries the vast majority do have homes to which they can return at night, though their days are spent in a nomadic foraging for food or money, or simply lost in a haze of drugs.

A discussion of street children in Kenya would be incomplete without mentioning of the Undugu society of Kenya which was established with the primary aim of finding solutions to the problem of "parking boys" who roamed the streets of Nairobi.

In the search for viable methods through which to rehabilitate parking boys, the Undugu society's founder Father Arnold Grol began by organising the youth in the parish generally around sports and recreational activities. As more and more of the youth who had previously wandered around aimlessly became interested in the music, soccer, boxing, volleyball and similar activities that brought them together, and opportunities were found for these youngsters to discuss their real problems-regarding

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia of World Problems and Human Potential (union of international Associations, 1994), Page 47.

survival in situations where so many despaired. Gradually, through this approach, it became possible to develop a rapport with parking boys in Nairobi. Sustained contact with these boys on weekends led to the establishment of a reception Centre at which parking boys were provided with food and shelter- if and when they needed it. It was out of this initial stream of activities that the well-known Undugu Jazz Band was formed.

Having addressed these immediate needs, it became clear from discussions with those boys who took advantage of these facilities that the rehabilitation would be able to fend for them in later life.

Proceeding from the experimental approach, the activities of the Undugu society had evolved over the years from the more social-welfare-oriented "curative approach" to a "preventive method" in a development mode that is intended to encourage such communities to take responsibility for their own social and economic development.

An UNICEF report, (1991:42) estimates that 30 million children live on city streets all over the world. These children are either abandoned, orphaned or have run away from home. Some cities, like Kampala, have more children orphaned by AIDS loitering in the streets. However, not all children on the streets are orphaned. Children and the environment (UNICEF/UNEP 1990:71) places the poor urban child population into three groups:

- Children who have a reasonable family support otherwise referred to as "home children": These comprise up to 75% of all streets children.
- Children who have a weakened family support: For these, home is no longer a place to play, learn and live. Referred to as "children on the streets", link with home is still important to them.
- Children without families: For this third group, family ties have totally broken down and they are referred to as "abandoned children of the streets". This group forms only a small fraction of the poor urban child population.

UNICEF States those children who work daily on the streets stand a risk of eventually moving from group one "home children" to group three "abandoned children of the streets". Urgent action should be taken to stabilise "home children" who spend most of their time on the streets. What is beyond doubt is that the problem is rapidly getting worse. The annual growth rate of the street children population was

put 10 percent in 1993.<sup>2</sup> There are currently estimated to be 25,000 street children in Nairobi alone and upwards of 40,000 nation-wide,<sup>3</sup> compared to an estimated 3,600 in Nairobi and 16,300 nation-wide in 1989.<sup>4</sup> A study on street children initiated by the Attorney General's office in 1989 and completed in 1991 concluded that Kenya was sitting on a "time bomb".<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGE OF STREET CHILDREN IN NAIROBI

Before discussing the challenge of street children within Nairobi, it is important to address the slums and squatter settlements in Nairobi. Estimated population 1,2 million in 1985; 2,1 million at the end of 1994. Unauthorised dwellings/ house (slum areas) all around the city; 50-60 % of the city's population lives in them. The city's largest squatter settlement is Korogocho. Mathare valley grew from 4,000 inhabitants in 1964 to more than 50,000 in 1971 and is occupied by more than 130,000 people. Many areas with unauthorised constructions have grown at comparable rates.

Typically, squatter settlements have very high densities, their structures are rudimentary, and water supply and sewage-disposal facilities are either elementary or non-existent. Few settlements have access roads or street lighting.

Between 1980 and 1990 the urban population in Kenya doubled, with most of the growth concentrated in Nairobi, the capital, and Mombasa, the second largest city.<sup>6</sup> Migration from rural areas to urban centres increased dramatically with poor families being driven from their homes by landlessness, drought and unemployment. A sprawling collection of slum settlement spread over the outskirts of Nairobi, including the areas of Mathare valley, Huruma, Dandore, Kariobangi, Kibera, Korogocho and Ngara.

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<sup>2</sup> Kenya Law Reform Commission, "A New Law on Children: Report of the Child Law Task Force", February, 1993 ("Report of the Child Law Task Force"), section 3.16, p.33.

<sup>3</sup> Human Rights Watch interview with Josephine Mulli, Idah Mutinde, and Macharia Komo, Undugu Society of Kenya, Nairobi, September 18, 1996 ("Interview with Undugu society"); Human Rights Watch *Interview* with Kimaru Wakaruru, Executive Director, Child welfare society of Kenya, Nairobi, September 19, 1996 ("interview with Child Welfare Society").

<sup>4</sup> Munyaiho, Kenya: Child Newcomers in the Urban Jungle p.3.

<sup>5</sup> Speech by Dr. Philista Onyango, Chairperson, ANPPCAN Regional office. Contained in *ANPPCAN*, Hearing on street Children in Kenya, Report on a Hearing held in Nairobi on November 4-5, 1994 (Nairobi: ANPPCAN, 1995), P.6.

<sup>6</sup> Dorothy Munyaiho, Kenya: *Child newcomers in the Urban Jungle* (UNICEF Innocent studies, 1992), p.3.

With the high population growth in slum areas, it is not surprising that the structural and population density is very high. In some areas, a house-plot of 25 by 75ft. have as many as 25 rooms. The houses in the slums are made of varies categories and sizes. Some are made of mud, others of flattened tin and cardboard and some are mud and wattle covered with plaster or corrugated iron sheet. The average room size is 3 by 3 mt. The conditions of the dwellings are usually very poor with no ventilation and are generally overcrowded.

Even with the poor conditions of the houses, people are still willing to pay higher rent, as the slum often provides the cheapest shelter available. The average income in the slum is K Sh 1000-1500 per month. Incredible fantasy and creativity is the usual way for survival in Kibera, Wilson and Mukuru. For a great number of people, life is exactly this: a "Fight for survival".

There are small-scale activities, primarily hawking, petty commodity trading, artisans (juakali) and small services provision, illegal activities such as prostitution and illicit distilling of alcohol in the slums. The result is a life of precariousness, tensions and suffering with incredible poor versus poor exploitation.<sup>7</sup>

In Kenya, child prostitution is associated more with slum areas especially where mothers of the children are themselves prostitutes. (UNICEF.1988: 29). These mothers depend on prostitution for clothes, food and shelter and education for their children. Their only choice of the moment may be to debase themselves by selling their bodies to make a living. These mothers often engage in this practice so openly that children learn to model them. Consequently, the child may run away from home and practice prostitution or fall prey to exploiters in brothels. Others practice that could be linked to this behaviour from a frustrated, rejected child, are stealing and begging.

Others who are employed are engaged mainly as clerks, messengers, drivers and watchmen in the city offices. There are, however, still many unemployed people, the majority being women and youth.

Older residents (over 40-50 years of age) are illiterate. Most youth attain only primary school level of education because of the lack of enough educational facilities and the inability of parents to send their children to school. Nursery schools are few and run by organisation such as Churches, Non-Governmental Organisations and private

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<sup>7</sup> Aberra Paulos, Janvier Kabeya, Daniele Moschetti. "Injustice in the Slums of Nairobi with reference to Korogocho" in *Tangaza Justice and Peace Commission*, (1994), 35.

individuals. All these are always under the threat of eviction and demolition,<sup>8</sup> since the land does not belong to any of the people present. The land belongs to the Government.<sup>9</sup>

The hostile environment created by adults in which these children live often leads to violence and damaging of public and private property. The child is often in conflict with the law. They become easy targets for exploitation by thieves, black-markers, the sex industry or just ordinary people who knowingly or unknowingly, take advantage of a large pool of cheap child labour. They are also open to many health hazards, becoming easy victims to communicable diseases, malnutrition and drugs and solvent addiction. All this determines a necessity of specific and new approaches for rehabilitation on the part of the local authorities and the Churches.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Even within the families, we are aware of the destructive effects that the rough edge of society can inflict on children. The world leaders cannot rise and defend the rights of innocent children who die in thousands everyday due to lack of parental care and shortage of food and other basic necessities.

Is it the neglecting and exploitation of children in our generation? Or do we stand by and watch them suffer and die in their millions while their enemies are left free to stalk them on every side. The issues that face children at high risk today are not their problem, but our problem.

When we give the children in the streets coins, food, clothes, are we encouraging the vice? Although this may assuage our conscience, the reality is that we continue to perpetuate the problem. Could it be that these handouts are addictive-keeping these children on the streets? What is beyond doubt is that the problem is rapidly getting worse. The momentous population growth in the third world Countries, coupled with the deepening debt crisis and economic stagnation, means that more and more people are competing, for fewer and fewer resources.

If society does not attack both the causes of vagrant children and means of rehabilitation, there will be increasing demand to put them away.

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<sup>8</sup> NCKK, "Nairobi demolitions, what next?". (Nairobi: NCKK 1991).

<sup>9</sup> Daniele Moschetti "Evaluation of pastoral Ministry": in one of His pastoral papers presented on May 1995 for the course lead by Fr. Patrick Ryan on "Evaluation of pastoral Ministry", Tangaza College, Nairobi, academic year 1994-1995.

## **1.4 MAIN OBJECTIVES**

1. To find out the effectiveness of the Government, Non-Governmental and Religious groups approaches to the needs of street children. (The Humane response, towards prevention and from concern to concrete action).
2. The study will also find out the general concern of the society towards the "phenomenon" of street children.
3. Examine factors related to the phenomenon of street children. Attention should focus on ways of getting support in the first place to those families in difficulty and predisposed to break-up, for example, single-parent household.
4. To have a responsibility to search and implementing structures by which can eradicate problems of street children.

With this hope there is a future for the children currently at risk in our generation.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions addressed in this research are as follows:

Do the Church, Non-Governmental Organisations, and the Government co-operate in planning, implementing or monitoring the life of street children? Are the projects that are being implemented targeting the poor in slums and rural areas so as to curb down the flow of children into the Streets?

Some tattered street children wait to approach you coming out of a City restaurant: Will you give them money? When you see a child desperately, what do you do? If a parking boy or a girl needed clothes and asked you for a pair of pants, would you give him or her some clothes? If you did bring some clothes to parking boys or girls, what would probably happen to the clothes?

Are Christian agencies, and other Government and Non-Governmental Organisations have adequate skills, are they well trained needed to work effectively with children?

Do organisation provide opportunities and structures for personnel development?

These are questions of concern that this paper seeks to find out and examine.

## **1.6 BASIC ASSUMPTIONS**

The research assumes that,

1. With great dismay the Government have left much of the care of children at risk to Religious and Non-Governmental Organisations. There could be hidden factors on the part of Government that prevent them to deal with the street children in the City.

2. It is assumed that the legal system in Kenya has sufficient provisions to protect the Rights of children.

3. The public is passive about the problems. Children in our societies are neglected and exploited and too many of them are dying.

4. The Government, Non-Governmental Organisations and the Church have not yet analysed the problems of street children, and to find the solution of a tragic situation of the street children.

The plight of street children is one of the challenges facing by the Church, Non-Governmental organisations and the Government and all should find ways to resolve a critical analysis on social-economic and political issue in the country.

### **1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

The Researcher will develop the ability to integrate theory and practice. Such results and research have given birth to ministerial training to work in the areas of youth and children's ministries. The research will develop the ability to exploring social problems. This will lead to understand the plight of children: Children of the slums; Children of the night and street children. These children struggle for cheap labour or sex, sometimes both. They are rejected, forgotten and often thrown out like garbage. The researcher will further investigate reasons, why the increase of the number of street children.

### **1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The researcher is limited in this study because he is not able to reach to all-children "on the streets and of the streets" due to the limited time set for the research.

### **1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Child abandonment and neglect is a feature that cannot be ignored in this society. An abandoned child can be described as "One who has been deprived of the right to protection and assistance by a responsible parent, guardian or other fit adult person". Most cases reported involve parents who cannot adequately provide and care for their children either because of physical disabilities or economic constraints. Such parents may either leave their children supposedly for a short while with someone who can feed him and end up not returning or try to obtain help from some charitable organisations.

**The street child** is defined as a child for whom the street (include wastelands, under bridges, alleys and unoccupied buildings) has become his/her home more than that of his/her family, if he has one. Here, there is no adult guidance, supervision or care.

**Children on the street** are those who spend most of the day on the street, but who are still in contact with their families and will usually return home at night. The street is where they have to work, beg or steal to earn money to support themselves or their families.

**Children of the street** are those who live, work and sleep on the street with little or no contact with their families. They are fewer in number and are often part of street "gang". These children are more frequently involved in prostitution, drugs and may be subjected to violence.

**Parking boys:** In Kenya the term is used for these children. The "term-parking boys" is derived from one of their popular activities, which is directing motorists to available parking space along the crowded kerbs during peak hours. The children also guard the cars until the drivers return.

**Poverty** is a state of existence where by people are inhibited from participation in society because of a serious lack of material and social resources. Poverty line, or below poverty line, which people could be said to be living in absolute poverty.

**Children Act 1989** the single most important piece of legislation concerning children passed this century, providing a wide-ranging framework of responsibilities and duties for parents, courts and local authorities for safe guarding and promoting the welfare of children.

**Children's Rights** Claims to treatment, benefits or protection made by or on behalf of, children on the basis of law, code of practice or declaration.

**Police** is the main civil organisation devised to maintain law and order, using at least some military methods. The primary tasks of the police are to investigate alleged criminal acts, to gather evidence for the criminal "Justice system" and to charge (in some cases to arrest and detain) alleged offenders.

**Child-Care Worker** is a person employed in "Children's Home" to undertake direct care of children living there. The work of a child-care worker may include eating with the child at meal times, seeing that the child is ready for school, taking the child to doctor's appointments, playing games, talking about problems, building relationships and giving information to other professionals about aspects of the child's life. As a designated post, child-care worker ranks below residential social worker in most staffing structures.

**Social work** is the paid professional activity that aims to assist people in overcoming serious difficulties in their lives by offering care protection or "Counselling".

**Church:** A large body of people belonging to an established religious organisation. The term is also used to refer to the place where religious ceremonials are carried on.

## **CONCLUSION**

This chapter has discussed the background of the study. The following chapter will look at the street children from people's views in the literature that is available.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 LITERARY REVIEW: PHENOMENON OF STREET CHILDREN**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The chapter discusses the complex factors that contribute to the "phenomenon" of street children in the city. Their common experience of fighting for their everyday survival, impact of street life on children, the children act in Kenya and the Rights of the child and Church organisations, Non-Governmental organisations and Government are the focus of this chapter.

#### **2.2 COMPLEX FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE "PHENOMENON" OF STREET CHILDREN**

##### **2.2.1 CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM OF STREET CHILDREN**

###### **2.2.1.1 UNEMPLOYMENT**

The majority of mothers who abuse their children are found to live in poverty. Most of these mothers are unemployed or have taken up low paying jobs. Unemployed mothers indulge in any activity, which can provide some food and clothing for them and their children. Some of the activities are brewing beer, petty trading without licences, petty stealing and prostitution, all of which are illegal. If the police catch them, they have to serve a prison sentence and their children become neglected and abandoned.

Large families with unemployment of the parents run into problems of diminished material resources. These families are unable to provide for the basic needs of children, and this often leads to all forms of child abuse.

Girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy are often not skilled enough for competitive jobs. They are unemployed and in their desperate need, they can do anything that will give them bread for the day. They may resort to prostitution, which results in more children. Unemployment contributes to all forms of child abuse.

There are various forms of violence in the family and in society. Children may experience overly aggressive behaviour from their parents or other children. There are frequent reports of family violence in the daily newspaper, for example, a father or a mother killing members of the family before attempting or committing suicide.

Social violence to children comes as a result of armed conflicts where the powerful seek to re-establish "order" by dictatorship, torture and suppression of civil rights. The

"order" that the powerful want to re-establish is that of institutionalised violence which creates poverty, hunger, racism, sexism and economic exploitation.

Many of the global armed conflicts are in Africa. Most victims are children and women. They suffer all kinds of hardships; they are displaced, abandoned and die of hunger and famine. The destabilisation caused by these conflicts makes Africa a very insecure place for children.

### **2.2.1.2 INDUSTRIALISATION AND URBANISATION**

The children in Africa today are experiencing a rather threatening existence compared to the past. Although there is improved infant mortality rate, better medical care and increased educational opportunities, children are threatened by the human social environment. The social-economic factors are changing kinship roles and the roles of women as wives and mothers. The so-called modern industrial world has created an unfavourable environment for children in Africa just as it has in the industrial west.

Family structures are changing and new ones are emerging. Today women both in the urban and rural areas are heading households. The new roles of women cause much stress, and the support system that was available in the traditional extended family is absent. In this process a large number of children suffer. Often the mothers have to work in order to support the children. The mother's attention is divided between satisfying the employer and giving proper care to her growing children. The mothers employ child caretakers to help them in nursing the children while they are working. The relationship between the mother of the household and the child caretaker will determine the quality of care given children.

Industrialisation and urbanisation have contributed to the breakdown of the traditional African extended family network, which previously provided a safety net of support. Industrialisation and urbanisation have also contributed to a rise in cohabitation before marriage, leading to complications regarding the custody and support of children and the inheritance of property when the relationship ends.

### **2.2.1.3 FAMILY STRUCTURES**

Families reach the breaking point for a variety of reasons: Psychological, inter familial, environmental, social, economic, and political. They seem to surround the child in the street in ever-widening circles...(with) sinister multi effects they seem to bear down on the child from different ranges and directions with a powerful momentum.

Among factors are: Personal psychological factors: Abandoning children.

Family crisis: They're so many different factors that can leave a child with an inadequate home.

The condition of women: The higher number of children single working women must support, the greater the possibility of their children ending up in the street.

Stress has been identified as a factor that leads to child abuse. The breakdown of marriage, which results in separation and divorce, may cause stress. Under this condition single mothers may tend to neglect their children while the father-substitutes are inclined to physically or sexually abuse their stepchildren. Large families, which have economic and social problems, gravitate towards generating stress.

Views expressed in a 1993 UNICEF International Child Development Centre report point towards the increasingly difficult circumstances of women, as heads of single-parent households, as a major contributing factor. Like in many places in the world, Kenyan women have had comparatively less access to education and paid employment opportunities than men and are less represented in higher-paying occupations. Yet, overwhelmingly, it is the women who take responsibility for raising their children in single-parent households. The single-parent phenomenon "is the result of a combination of social and economic factors, including the increasing employment of women outside the home, connected to the impact of rapid urbanisation and the unfamiliar city lifestyle on family ties and conjugal life."<sup>1</sup> The affiliation Act guaranteed that children born out of wed lock were entitled to financial support by the father until 1969, when it was repealed in the parliament, with male parliamentarians arguing that the Act was being abused by women to claim support from more than one man for one child. Formal marriages are also becoming less stable, with divorce and separation rates on the rise. With the pressures of urban life and the breakdown of traditional support structures of African extended family, women and their children are finding themselves increasingly at risk.<sup>2</sup>

The rising costs of education, coupled with these socio-economic factors, have further contributed to the increase of children on the streets. Kenya follows the "8-4-4" system of education: there are eight years of primary level education, standards 1-8, followed by forms 1-4 of secondary level education, followed by four years of

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<sup>1</sup> Speech by Dr. Philista Onyango, Chairperson, *ANPPCAN Regional office, contained in ANPPCAN, Hearing on Street Children in Kenya, Report on a hearing held in Nairobi on November 4-5, 1994* (Nairobi: ANPPCAN, 1995), p.11.

university level education. When the Kenya Government ratified the international covenant on economic, social and cultural Rights in 1976, it recognised "the Right of everyone to education," and that with a view towards achieving progressively the realisation of this Rights, "primary education shall be compulsory and free to all."<sup>3</sup>The convention on the Rights of the child, ratified by Kenya in 1990, provides for the same.<sup>4</sup>Although not yet compulsory, primary level education (standards 1-8) in Kenya is tuition free.<sup>5</sup>As early as 1961 the Kenya African National union, which has been in charge of Government since 1963, committed itself to providing free primary level education for every child.<sup>6</sup>

However, in practice, not all children have been able to benefit from the plan for free primary education. Dropout rate are high, even at the primary school level, in large part because of the heavy expenses incurred by families to finance their children's primary education. Between 40 and 60 percent of children living in the slum areas of Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa do not attend primary school, compared to urban population as a whole.<sup>7</sup> The reality is that education in Kenya, even at the primary level, is not free.

While there are no tuition fees for primary education, parents must provide for the costs of text books, uniforms, stationery, and building and maintaining schools, by making "voluntary" contributions to the "development fund" or building 'fund". The Government pays for teacher's salaries and some school equipment and some textbooks.<sup>8</sup>

The cost-sharing arrangement between the Government and parents is simply beyond the means of many families from which street children come. Indeed, many street children who were interviewed said they had taken to the streets after being thrown out of school for not being able to pay school fees or because they did not have uniforms or shoes.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. , P.11-13.

<sup>3</sup> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, G.A. Res. 2200(XXI), 21 UN. GAOR sup. (No.16), UN. DOC A/6316 (entered into force January 3, 1976), Article 13.

<sup>4</sup> Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 28. The *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child* (not yet ratified by Kenya, and not yet entered into force) Similarly recognises the Right to education for all Children in Article 11, and that with a view towards achieving the full realisation of the Right, states parties shall "provide free and compulsory basic education."

<sup>5</sup> Secondary level education and higher education are not tuition-free.

<sup>6</sup> George S. Eshiwoni, *Education in Kenya since independence* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1993), p. 137-40. Secondary school education is more expensive.

<sup>7</sup> Muniyankho, *Kenya: Child newcomers in the urban jungle*, p.20.

<sup>8</sup> Eshiwoni, *Education in Kenya since independence*, p. 137-40.

<sup>9</sup> Nairobi City education authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations have responded to this crisis in education by running "non-formal" schools for Children that do away with many of the requirements which place formal education beyond the reach of urban slum-dwellers, such as uniforms, shoes the

#### 2.2.1.4 SLUM DWELLERS

Large-scale slum clearance operations undertaken by city authorities have been another factor contributing to the rise of street children. With policies ostensibly aimed at maintaining Kenyan cities at the highest standards of hygiene, the Government uses urban planning restrictions, which forbid the development of squatter settlements, to remove residents with the eviction and destruction of their homes leaving already marginalized slum dwellers and their families homeless. These operations are often undertaken without providing assistance, alternative arrangements, or notice to evicted residences, with families sometimes literally being uprooted from their homes and left to fend for themselves on the streets. Finally, in the recent years, state-sponsored ethnic violence in the west and Rift valley of Kenya has also contributed to the internal displacement and migration of the families, as well as the break-up of families.<sup>10</sup> The United Nations has estimated that, as much as 75 percent of the estimated 300,000 displaced were children.<sup>11</sup>

Whatever the causes are the numbers of children living on the street are expected to continue to rise. In addition to addressing the deep rooted and complex factors, which contribute to their existence on the street, the Kenya Government must take steps to address the treatment of street children by law enforcement and within the juvenile justice system, and by Kenyan society as a whole.

The above reasons are commonly considered as causes of the problem of street children who normally end up in hostile and difficult circumstances.

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requirement of a birth certificate for admission, and age limits for admission to standard 1. A Human Rights Watch Short Report, Vol. 8, no 9, August 1996.

<sup>10</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the "ethnic clashes" and subsequent Government action against the displaced, Human Rights Watch and African's report, *Divide and Rule: State Sponsored Ethnic Violence in Kenya* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993); Human Rights Watch or Africa, "Multipartyism Betrayed in Kenya: Continuing Rural violence and Restrictions on Freedom of speech and Assembly," A Human Right Watch Short Report, Vol.6, no 5, July 1994; human Rights Watch or Africa, "Old Habits Die Hard: Rights Abuses Follow Renewed Foreign Aid Commitment," A Human Rights Watch Short Report, Vol. 7, no 6, July 1995; Human Rights Watch or Africa *failing the internally Displaced*: (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1997).

<sup>11</sup> John Rogge "The internally displaced Population in Nyanza, Western and Rift Valley Province: A Needs Assessment and a program proposal for Rehabilitation." *United Development Program*, September 1993, Part 3 (3.8).

## **2.3 EXPERIENCES OF STREET CHILDREN**

### **THE COMMON EXPERIENCE OF STREET CHILDREN IS FIGHTING FOR THEIR EVERY DAY SURVIVAL IN THE CITY**

Street children face many difficult situations on a daily basis. Some of their experiences are indicated below:

- ❑ Homelessness
- ❑ Hunger and malnutrition
- ❑ Illness and disease, with lack of medical care
- ❑ Lack of adult support and advice

The violation of street children's Rights has become a key issue and street children are often subject to:

- ❑ Violence
- ❑ Exploitation
- ❑ Discrimination

Street children are often drawn into activities and habits of street life, which are difficult to break without knowing the alternatives and without support. These may include:

- ❑ Prostitution
- ❑ Drug abuse and involvement in drug running, petty theft and crime, exploitative work, begging, among others.

Children are often assumed to be too young to be able to make rational or informed decisions. Consequently, they may not be given:

- ❑ Consideration of their Rights
- ❑ Responsibility
- ❑ Influence in decision-making
- ❑ Opportunity to express themselves freely

In addition to all the difficulties of street life, street children may find themselves with lack of:

- ❑ Education or training
- ❑ Opportunities
- ❑ Confidence in their own ability

An immense problem, with dramatic and unpredictable consequences, is emerging around the world:

- ❑ Millions of street children who live alone, undernourished since birth;

- Who are denied affection, education and help;
- Who live without love;
- Children who survive by theft and by violence.
- Children who coalesce into gangs and re-invent a family; a structure they have never known; a security that always eluded them.
- Children who are used unscrupulously by others; mistreated, imprisoned, even eliminated.
- Children whom the world tries to forget or ignore.
- Children who see grown – ups as their enemies.
- Children nobody smiles at, nobody cuddles, nobody protects, and nobody comforts.
- Tomorrow they will be men and women.
- As the big cities grow, so will the number of street children. So will deprivation, which begets frustration, which begets violence.
- Both developed and developing countries face the problem without adequately addressing it.
- The street is the common heritage of million of them even before drugs; prostitution and crime taint them. We see for these children the right to live a life worth living.

It has been estimated that there are over thirty million street children in the world today. Most of them are living in the streets of Latin America, Asia (especially India) and Africa. Street children are often between the age of 8-15years. There are both boys and girls whom circumstances have forced to be old long before their time. These children do all types of activities for survival, for example finding parking spaces; washing cars; carrying shopping bags outside supermarkets; selling groundnuts; postcards and chewing-gum; shining shoes; collecting scrap metal and wastepaper; prostitution. These children in Nairobi form "Their own social networks, they move in groups, collect money and visit their friends in remand homes. They go to Modern Green, a lodge situated off Tom Mboya Street in Nairobi and frequented by people who sexually exploit or abuse children."<sup>12</sup>

Life is extremely difficult for these children. They lack any supervision, which was provided traditionally by the extended family. They face untold hazards; they are used for criminal activities such as drug trafficking. Organised gangs kill many through

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<sup>12</sup> Onyango, in KMWA, 1990, p.20.

accidents. The majority of children growing up on the streets have little hope for their future.

## **2.4 IMPACT OF STREET LIFE ON CHILDREN**

### **2.4.1 THE SIDE WALK SOCIETY (DIFFICULT SITUATIONS)**

Every society has its own rules and way of doing things. Boys make up a larger proportion of the street children population. Girls are more likely to find someone willing to take them off the street, but that shelter often comes at the high price of working in a brothel.

The gang provides a surrogate family, where loyalty is important. Newcomers have to prove their worth, perhaps through stealing, or taking a good beating, before they are allowed into the group. Each gang fiercely protects its territory from other groups.

Street children generally view adults with suspicion. They avoid policemen and security guards at all costs, because once a street child is known and recognised, he or she is likely to be blamed for anything that happens in the area. Anonymity spells security.

Life on the streets is dangerous enough for street children without their having to be on guard against police, the very people who are supposed to protect them. While we recognise that some police work to help street children and to reunite them with their families, many others do just the opposite, harassing and abusing the children and those who seek to help them. Police tend to view street children as hardened criminals, who must be treated with severity. Police also abuse and exploit the children for their own personal gain. In recent years, there have been alarming incidents of police using force against street children in Nairobi. The Executive Director of the Undugu society of Kenya has been cited as stating that "Kenya's dispossessed youngsters don't face the same level of public hostility as their counterparts in South America, but violence against the street children has been increasing".<sup>13</sup>

Passers-by might hand over some money or lose their purse to a snatch if they are not careful. Social and charity workers can be good for a food handout or perhaps some fresh clothes. However, the children treat them with suspicion until they have proven themselves.

Also the youngsters are probably sleeping during the day does not necessarily mean they are lazy. Safety prompts them to catnap during daylight hours when streets are crowded

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<sup>13</sup> Kirsty Scott "Adrift on a tide of apathy." *The Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland, March 25, 1995), P.42.

with people meaning that the children are less likely to be attacked or harassed. Despite being old before their time, many streets children will briefly let out the child inside each of them. A hard day's work selling newspapers or a desperate snatch and grab from an unsuspecting tourist may be followed by a wild game of chase in the park.

According to psychologist Anne Balfour, these actions are part of the schizophrenic nature of most street children who are "mini-adults one moment, children the next". Balfour, who spent time among street children in Bogota, Colombia, and Africa (Uganda and Kenya), sees beneath the bravado to the often deep-seated fear and insecurity. And for all that they run in gangs, they are still, in many ways, on their own. "They have a real sense of 'aloneness'," says Balfour. "Not that they are lonely-there are always lots of people around them. But there is a part of them that just doesn't give to others, because they have to have some means to protect themselves from being hurt. They have to keep a little shell around them."<sup>14</sup>Partly for this reason, anger is never far from the surface, ready to boil over at a perceived slight or threat. It's a sign of the hidden bruises of life on the streets beyond the visible cuts and abrasions. "The life they live reduces their concentration so far that they find it difficult to sit still and listen," says Dr. Ennew.<sup>15</sup> "The frequent fights in which they are involved are reflection not just of the violence to which they are subjected on the streets, but also of the 'short fuses' they have acquired".<sup>16</sup>

Many will dampen those fuses by drugs or glue. "Getting high" stills the hunger pains, whether for food or a family. But the relief is only temporary.

## **2.5 THE CHILDREN ACT IN KENYA AND RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

The problems of street children are related to the legal system in Kenya and Africa generally. We should point out that the problem of street children is not unique to Kenya or Africa for that matter. One may even say that the problem is more acute in other Countries than what we in Kenya have witnessed so far.

On the outset it can be argued that Kenyan legal system has sufficient provisions to protect the Rights of children. The following are the principal statues, which contain provisions relating to protection of Rights of the child in Kenya:

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<sup>14</sup> Anne Balfour, *Running the Risk: Young people on the Streets Today* (The Children's society, 1995).

<sup>15</sup> Judith Ennew, interview by Angela Neustater, "With one foot in the gutter, " *The Guardian* (December 16, 1988), P.26

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

## **2.5.1 KENYA CONSTITUTION**

Chapter five of the Kenya constitution protects the fundamental Rights and freedom of the individual. According to section 70 of the constitution "every person in Kenya is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual". These Rights are out in sections 71 to 82 of the constitution. They are the Rights of life (S 71), the Rights to personal liberty (S 72). Rights to protection from slavery and forced labour (S 73), protection from inhuman treatment (S 74), protection from deprivation of property (S 75). Protection against arbitrary search or entry (S 76), the Right to protection of law (S 77), freedom of conscience (S 78), freedom expression (S 79), freedom of assembly and association (S 80), freedom of movement (S 81) and protection from discrimination (S 82). Since children are human beings, the term "every person in Kenya" must include them. Children are therefore entitled to these Rights.

Section 82 (b) and (c) of the constitution exclude from being discriminatory, the application of different customary law to members of different tribes. This section forms the basis of application of various customary law practices relating to children in Kenya.

### **2.5.1.1 PENAL CODE (CAP 63)**

Under section 14 of the penal code, a person under the age of 8 years is not criminally responsible for any offence. A person under the age of 12 is only criminally liable if he has capacity to know that he ought not to have committed the offence.

A male person under the age 12 is presumed to be incapable of having carnal knowledge.

Sections 143, 144, 145, 147, 148, 149, 150 and 165 safeguard children against sex abuse. These sections deal with crimes of abduction, indecent assault, defilement, procuring girls to be common prostitutes, and indecent assaults of boys under 14.

Sections 158, 159, 160, 210, 211, 216, 227 and 228 are aimed at protecting a child's life. They prohibit infanticide, passing a death sentence on a pregnant woman, procuring abortion, and concealing birth and killing of unborn children. Section 216 imposes a duty on every person having charge of another person, who cannot by reason of age; provide himself with necessities of life, to provide such necessities. Failure to perform that duty is a crime.

### **2.5.1.2 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS ACT (CAP 141)**

This is so far the most comprehensive legislation dealing with the protection of the child in Kenya. It is an Act of parliament to make provision for protection and discipline of

children, juveniles and young persons. It provides for establishment of and procedure to be followed in juvenile courts.

It is quite clear that from the various provisions of this Act its purpose is to give children the best protection possible. Section 14 of the Act provides that in dealing with a person under 18 every court shall have regard to his welfare and shall take steps for removing him from undesirable surroundings and for securing proper provision for his maintenance and education. Section 23 makes it an offence punishable by a fine not exceeding 5,000 shilling or imprisonment not exceeding a period of 6 months, to wilfully assault, ill-treat, neglect, abandon or expose a child, or to wilfully cause him to become in need of protection or discipline, it may:

- Order that he be returned to his parents or guardian.
- Order his parents to execute a bond for his proper care and guardianship.
- Commit him to the care of a proper person.
- Commit him to the care of an appointed local authority!
- Place him under supervision of a children's officer, or other person.
- Commit him to an approved school.

Pausing here for a moment, we can be justified to say that we have adequate provisions to deal with this problem of street children. It cannot deny that most, (if not all) of these street children are in need of protection and discipline. And what does the law say about such children? That they should be returned to their parents or guardians; that their parents be ordered to execute bonds for their (children's) proper care and guardianship; that they be committed to the care of proper persons; that they be committed to the care of appointed local authorities; that they be placed under supervision of children officers or other persons; that they be committed to approved schools.

Going through these sections of the Act, one may be forgiven if he shouted, "YES" since a solution is readily available via this Act. Therefore we should seriously consider why the problem of street children exists. We should carefully consider this Act and see if we can pinpoint the problem.

It would appear that either we have the Act being put into effective operation, which would lead to disappearance of these street children, or we have street children and we abolish the Act! The two cannot co-exist!

### **2.5.1.3 LEGITIMACY ACT (CAP 145)**

This is an Act of parliament relating to children born out of wedlock. Section 3 of this Act provides for the legitimisation of children by subsequent marriage of the parents to each other's. Under section 5 of the Act, a legitimated child has the same rights of inheritance as a legitimate child. Section 8 gives him the same Rights and subjects him to the same obligations in respect of maintenance, support and legal; protection as a legitimate child.

Pausing here for a moment, once again, we find that whichever way we look at street children they have equal Rights as any other child. They are not second-hand children.

### **2.5.1.4 EMPLOYMENT ACT (CAP 226)**

Section 25 of this Act provides that no child is to be employed in an industrial undertaking except under a deed of apprenticeship. Section 27 prohibits the employment of children to attend machinery. The foregoing parade of statutes is an attempt to show that Kenyan legal system has sufficient legal machinery to deal effectively with the problem of street children. That is why Kenya has no difficulties in ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the child. The Convention is almost an elaboration of our laws relating to children. This Convention entered into force on 2 September 1990. One month after the twentieth states to ratify it. Kenya was among the first twenty states to ratify the Convention.

The Convention on the Rights of the child goes further than the Declaration by making states, which accept the Convention legally accountable for their actions towards children.

## **2.5.2 THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN**

The general declaration of Rights of the child (1954) and the international convention on civil and political Rights (1996), plus the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child declared that, like other individuals, children have specific rights.

- ❑ A child has the same rights irrespective of sex, religion, customs, rural or urban background, nationality, tribe, race, and marital status of parents of opinion.
- ❑ A child has the right to grow in a peaceful, caring and secure environment and to have the basic necessities of life including food, health-care, clothing and shelter.

- A child has the right to know who are his/her parents and to enjoy family life with them and or their extended family. Where a child has no family or is unable to live with them he/she has the right to be given the best substitute care available.
- A child has the right to express an opinion and to be listened to and to be consulted in accordance with his/her understanding in decisions, which will affect his/her well-being.
- A child has the right to have his/her health protected through immunisation and appropriate health care and to be taught how to defend himself/herself against illness. When ill a child has the right to receive proper medical care.
- A child with a disability has the right to be treated with the same dignity as other children and to be given special care, education and training where necessary so as to develop his/her potential and self- reliance.
- A child has the right to refuse to be subjected to harmful initiation rites and other harmful social and customary practices and to be protected from those customary practices, which are prejudicial to a child's health.
- A child has the right to be protected fairly and humanly within the legal system.
- A child has the right to be protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation.
- A child has the right to leisure, which is not morally harmful to play and to participate in sports and positive cultural and artistic activities.
- A child has the right to leisure, which is not to be employed or engaged in activities that harm his/her health, education, and mental physical or moral development
- A child if a victim of armed conflict, a refugee, or extreme vulnerability has the right to be among the first to receive help and protection.

From the above it is clear that children, regardless whether they are in the street or not have a right to life, security and protection. The street children are vulnerable and are unprotected in all cases and circumstances.

### **2.5.3 CHURCH ORGANISATION, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND GOVERNMENT ROLE IN THE LIFE OF CHILDREN**

The priority of the church is the evangelisation of all people which includes the children in crisis as it takes the option for the poor in its gospel message, the signs of messianic

era: "and the poor have good news preached to them" (Mt. 11. 15). Specific programmes in homes or rehabilitation centres founded by the Church should witness and enter into solidarity with the poor. In sharing life with the children in crisis, their sorrow and fear, this will ease; the compromise position of children related projects, which at times are mere patrons to the needs and the plight of the children in crisis. By selecting concrete examples of entering into the world of the children in crisis, the Church will break the complacency of those oppressing the children and oppose truthfully the causes of evil, affecting the children in crisis. The task of fighting against children in crisis is a task of all people of God, Governments, and Non Governmental organisations. It requires a network by all these parties. The possibility of rescuing the brain drainage that is caused by many factors in these children is the work of the Church in collaboration with other bodies. By working together the Church and other bodies will help the children to overcome the trauma. Many Non Governmental organisations have come up with good programmes as they make feasibility studies on the affected children. However, the lives of children in crisis can be best solved by spiritual transformation led by the Church. Proper personnel trained by the Church but not people who may be acting out of sympathy or love can undertake many programmes relating spirituality of the children. The Church should champion a process where a curriculum that suits these children will emerge without watering down the essence of the entire education system. The Church should develop its activities such as the bible story clubs that could be focused on the children, music and drama groups, which will assimilate such children. Any existing clubs may only be focused on those who belong to particular Church or denomination but all could do Evangelisation of the children. Children groups from these Churches should be used to achieve objective of rescuing and restoring the children groups to formal life.

#### **2.5.4 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has discussed the literature that is available; which clearly reveal that street children are exposed to difficult experiences and problems. Conditions forced them into the streets either from their homes, schools among others. The following chapter will look at the methodology used to collect Data from the field.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

The Researcher and Research Assistants took about three months to cover seven major urban areas. The target groups were Nairobi west, South “B”, South “C”, Mugoya, Kibera, Wilson and Mukuru where the majority of children come from to Kwetu home of peace rehabilitation center.

In each case a sample of street children was interviewed. The size of the sample depended on the number of children available in these areas. The age range was between 8 and 15 years. Data from libraries were also collected for four months. This collection was possible with the help of seven people who were distributed with questionnaires. They also enriched the findings of the study.

#### **3.2 METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY**

After the initial contact 50 children were selected out of the initial 100 interviewed. The researcher wanted 50 children from each urban area to make comparison easy. The selected children were then interviewed using both unstructured and structured interviews. Where data seemed to be in conflict the child was interviewed again using unstructured techniques. The objectives were addressed by different approaches to data collection in line with:

A general survey of complex factors that contribute to the “phenomenon” of street children, and the assessments of their common experience of fighting for their everyday survival other areas was the impact of street life on children. The children Act in Kenya and the Rights of the child. Also to examine the Church organizations, Non-Governmental organizations, and Government role in the life of Children.

#### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION**

Using carefully prepared structure and unstructured questions to interview the respondents the Research and the assistants did data collection. Together with the group we listed the various questions that need to be addressed in data collection: What? Where? Who? When? How? Since the place, time and persons involved in the research are already determined. It was agreed to focus on what information needs to be collected and which tool will be used. And the groups continued their work on collecting information.

Simple observations, interviews, discussion with the children, were also conducted on near by projects working with street children in Nairobi areas. These include Don Bosco Boy's Town (Kibera), Euphrasian Women's Center South C, Homeless children international (Kibera), Kibera Community Self-help Program, Kwetu Home of Peace (Nairobi west), Mukuru Promotion Center (South B), St. Charles Lwanga Brothers (Kibera), Child Welfare Society (South C), Girl Guides (Kibera), Missionaries of Charity (Kibera), St. Lazarus Children's School (Kibera), Kaiyo Upendo Group (Mukuru).

### **3.4 SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

We had intended to interview 200 respondents within Nairobi West, South "B", South "C", Mugoya, Kibera, Wilson and Mukuru. With this above figure we wanted to interview 50 parents (Men and Women), 50 street Children (Boys and Girls), 50 children under voluntary-sector organizations, and 50 child-care workers and social workers in the rehabilitation projects.

Our Questionnaires comprised of:

- I. Questionnaire one was addressed to parents (Men and Women).
- II. Questionnaire two was addressed to street children.
- III. Questionnaire three was addressed to children under voluntary-sector organization.
- IV. Questionnaire four was addressed to child-care workers and social workers.

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

Chapter three dealt with methodology, which included the design of the study, methods and designs of the research and administration of interviews, which is analyzed in chapter four.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 DATA ANALYSIS**

5<sup>TH</sup> February to March 1999 was dedicated to manual Data tabulation with the assistance of various groups. Such groups include Non-Governmental organizations. The participants first looked into collecting and documenting information. Through groups we collected a lot of information and we documented that information with the children. We documented that information and we analyzed it. However, there were many other sources of information within our Research in addition to the information that we collected through groups.

We collected information and updated our files on a regular basis. And these files were useful for occasions, such as preparing for a home visit, when returning from a home visit, when we needed information on a child which gave us more details about the particular child e.g. give reasons way the child is on the street. We went through each of 180 the survey questionnaires. This was done until all the responses to that particular question had been written down.

### **4.1 THE SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

A sample of 180 people responded to the questionnaires out of 200 distributed. These were 44 parents (Men and Women). The second group consisted of children who were examined. There were 40 street children. The child's responses to the stories were recorded on the tape with his or her permission. The third group was 50 children under voluntary-sector organizations. Each story was read to the child and time was given to enable him or her to understand the basic contracts posed by the stories.

Then the fourth group who were examined and interviewed was 46 child-care workers and social workers in projects dealing with children.

### **4.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

There are some similarities in life style of street children in Kenya and those elsewhere. There are also major differences. In these areas the majority of street children are male. Simple tables are used to illustrate and to elaborate the general discussion of findings. The findings are presented into four classes:

Parents (Men and Women).

Street children (Boys and Girls).

Child-care workers and social workers.

Children under voluntary-sector organizations.

#### 4.2.1 CLASS ONE: PARENTS MEN AND WOMEN

The total number of 44 responded out of the 50 questionnaires distributed. The method used was simple counting and grouping and the age of respondents was between 14-60 years. The youngest was 14 years and the oldest was 60 years.

The majority of the respondents were single parents, large families and unemployed. Thus, contribute to the "phenomenon" of street children in the area. Also there was a range of basic needs of children with high frequencies of provision (shelter, food, clothing), protection, prevention from Aids, Health care, participation through knowledge of their rights, peer education and also positive futures through education.

There were short and long-term solutions to the problem of street children.

All the parents were aware of the crisis and were also aware of what other people and ministries are currently doing. With the high number of the respondents were giving various reasons as to why there are street children. In the first place children run away from home due to unbearable conditions.

**TABLE 1**

<b>THESE CHILDREN ARE PRODUCTS OF SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION RESULTING FROM</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Stark poverty	22
Broken families	6
Single parenting	5
Proper supervision	3
When the parents are arrested and send to jail	2
Parents leave their Children to drift aimlessly and get entangled in-promiscuity	1
Fast rate of urbanization	1
Rapid industrialization	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>

**Table 1** shows a range of factors or the major reasons for the increase in the number of street children. The stark poverty factor is the first followed by broken families,

single parenting, leave their children to drift aimlessly in the urban areas without proper adult supervision and consequently they acquire "street life", a good number of children are left to fend for themselves when their parents are arrested and sent to jail, promiscuity, fast rate of urbanization and rapid industrialization. These children are either abandoned, orphaned or have run away from home.

**TABLE 2**

<b>PARENTS CONCERN TOWARDS...</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
We give them money or food	Mainly the little ones move in groups collecting and eating bits and pieces: chicken heads, intestine, legs and potatoes which they cook in tins.	27
The problem of the society	Children drugs-sniffing petrol and chewing "miraa" Older boys buy petrol from petrol stations with money obtained from begging and in turn, sell it to the younger boys and girls. Girls especially, are exposed to sexual abuse through child prostitution.	10
Feels like crying	when children dressed in rags, loitering around the streets of the town feeding from dust bins and sleeping in tunnels.	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>43</b>

**TABLE 2** Indicated parents concern towards their children in the street. 27 were most frequency (by giving them money or food) followed by the little concern of the

society and they're sorrowful about it. All in all, they feel pity when children are helpless and dependent.

**TABLE 3**

<b>CHILDREN IN ALL (CHRISTIAN, ISLAM, OR AFRICAN RELIGIOUS TRADITION)</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Are seen as gifts of God	7
Heirs	7
Without children a family would grind to a halt	6
Children prolonged the life of parents	6
Childless marriage is calamitous for the couple	6
Main purpose for marriage is to bear children	6
Wealth depends on children	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>

Table 3 gave an indication of different responses of parents towards a child. The highest frequencies of the responses were children in all (Christian, Islam, and African tradition) are seen as gifts of God to humanity and the children, especially the heirs, have the duty and the responsibility to care for their old and weak parents. The remaining frequencies were; without children a family would grind to a halt, children continued the lineage and prolonged the life of their parents, without children the marriage often broke up, main purpose for marriage is to bear children, wealth and as a property. Thus, a sign of absolute rights over the children (in some society in time of serious famine the father could sell some of his young children for food) is a possible cause of the phenomenon.

**TABLE 4**

<b>NUMBER OF STREET CHILDREN INCREASING OR DECREASING?</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Street children are increasing due to the increasing of the root cause of poverty, war, violence, children of migrant workers, as refugee children and the social disadvantaged	12
Increasing due to lack of protection and guidance	8
Increasing due to bad peer influence	7
The number is increasing day by day due to harassment at home	6

Decrease-scorned and harassed by police	3
Decrease due to innocently murdered or poisoned	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>

**TABLE 4** it is interesting to observe that the more the causes increase the more the children living on the streets began to rise dramatically. These suggestions included the root cause, lack of protection and guidance, the bad peer influence, harassment at home, harassment by police, innocently murdered or poisoned.

**TABLE 5**

<b>STREET CHILDREN FACING THE DANGERS OF:</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Poor diet	6
Beating rape and torture by police	5
Sickness dies to malnutrition	5
AIDS because of unprotected sex with other street children or adult clients	4
Sexual exploitation	4
Crime	4
Homeless young people and lack of education and training	4
Inadequate shelter	3
Even death at the hands of adults	3
Accidents or fights produce injuries	2
Death squads, vigilante groups, possible criminal, take the law- into their own hands	2
Violence	1
Street-kids killings	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

**TABLE 5** Street children face many difficult situations on a daily basis. The poor diet is first because lack of education, shelter, and many others. An illiterate is a person with an undernourished mind. Hunger and malnutrition are the most problems facing street children.

## 4.2.2 CLASS TWO: STREET CHILDREN

**TABLE 6**

<b>FACTORS THAT SEND CHILDREN INTO THE STREETS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Forced by unbearable conditions at home	12
Single parents and stepparent	10
Lack of education started hanging out on the streets	6
Poor family sends us to the streets to beg	5
Peer pressure coaxed to leave home	5
Came to Nairobi to look for relatives due to tribal clashes	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

**TABLE 6** reveals that the factors, which send children into the streets, are caused by unbearable conditions at home. It is very difficult for the children to sleep at home. Followed by the single parents and stepparent where children are abused and neglected. Lack of education, send children to the streets, peer pressure and followed by tribal clashes. Thus children are often the first to suffer and forced to go out to earn money. The children can be classified as "of the street" and "on the street".

**TABLE 7**

<b>YEARS OF STAY IN THE STREET AND PLACES WHERE THE CHILDREN ARE FOUND</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<b>Year of stay in the street: Between 1989 to 1999</b>	
Busy car parking places	12
Around market place	7
Places: Where people board taxis	6
Outside departmental stores	5
Bus termini	4
Cinemas	3
Busy road intersections	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>

Data regarding the length of time between 1989 to 1999 and places where the children are found can be summarized as follows: The longest stayed was 10 years the least was 2 years. Our conclusion from the above findings is that some were working as porters and as vendors selling vegetables, fruits and some street children have found

odd jobs like cooking food, laundering in hotels and noting that many street boys and girls who do not get employment turn to drugs.

**TABLE 8**

<b>TO DESCRIBE THEM AS STREET CHILDREN OR ABANDONED CHILDREN</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Street is our home more than our family	12
We are normal children	9
We are not real street children	8
We are abandoned	4
We are here to earn money for the family	3
We were rejected from our homes	3
Orphaned	2
Run away from home	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>

In this table 8 Data of our respondents described themselves to tell who they are or their identity. They said that the street becomes their home more than that of their family and there is no adult guidance, supervision or care. The majority of them are normal children and some are not real street children because they were forced to leave their homes during the clashes in molo. Some have been abandoned because the children really have no choice in what they do in this world. Others earn money for the family and some run away from home. Our conclusion is that, if the problem of these abandoned children has to be tackled, the families that rejected, neglected, exploited and abused them have to be visited.

**TABLE 9**

<b>CHILDREN DO ALL TYPES OF ACTIVITIES FOR SURVIVAL</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Finding parking spaces and guarding cars	11
Loading and unloading luggage and farm produce on trucks	7
Selling vegetables, fruits	7
Prostitution	5
Collecting waste paper	5
Begging	4

Washing cars	2
Shining shoes	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>

**TABLE 9** reveals that most of children do all types of activities for survival. The majority of the respondents are found in parking spaces and guarding cars. The children guard the cars until the drivers return. 7 were involved in activities like loading luggage and farm produce, selling vegetables and fruits. Other activities were prostitution and collecting waste paper, begging, washing cars and shining shoes. Our conclusion is that, we soon realized that the street-smart youngsters would readily change their story-about how they became homeless, what they did to survive, what life was like depending on the advantage they would attain in answering question. For example older children will often take younger ones with them when they are begging, because they know a cute face can elicit more sympathy. Surreptitious pinches or slaps can induce the tears that encourage greater generosity from a passer-by, too.

**TABLE 10**

<b>INNUMERABLE HARDSHIPS AND DANGER IN THE LIVES OF STREET CHILDREN</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Police abuse	18
Night is the most dangerous for them	8
Basic necessities-food, shelter, medical cares, clothes etc.	7
Life of fear	5
Survive by theft, violence, prostitution and drug involvement	4
Working at low payment jobs	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>

**TABLE 10** has indicated a high frequency of police abuses. Police tend to view street children as hardened criminals, who must be treated with severity. Danger at night ranked second, basic necessities, life of fear, survive by theft, violence, prostitution and drug involvement and working at low payment jobs. Our conclusion from the findings is that the police in Mombasa, Kisumu are better than in Nairobi-just walking around doing nothing, the police might come and just pick you from the street and beat you up, and take you to the station.

**TABLE 11**

<b>CHILDREN: DO PEOPLE CARE FOR YOU?</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Some Sisters and social workers make friends with us after we visit their projects, clean ourselves, change clothes and we eat food and we come back.	22
Some attend school-street education and formal education	5
We have day care centers for meal and play	4
Yes some friends give us a homely environment	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>

**TABLE 11** has indicated that so many respond to the needs of children at risk. While what is being done by Christians and others is but a small portion of what needs to be done. There were more short-term and long-term solutions to the problem.

**TABLE 12**

<b>IN CONTACT WITH THEIR FAMILIES OR NO CONTACT WITH THEIR FAMILIES</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Streets is our abode	14
We run away from home	10
We go to the street everyday	9
We search for food and our families	6
We return home in the evening	6
We return home at times	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>

**TABLE 12** shows the similarities in the life style of street children in Nairobi and those elsewhere. The majority are those who spend most of the day on the streets, but who are still in contact with their families. And those who live work and sleep on the streets with little or no contact with their families. The children "of the street" and children "on the street".

#### **4.2.3 CLASS THREE: CHILD-CARE WORKERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

This section 40 out of 50 responded to our questionnaire distributed to the class. The objective of our questionnaire was to find out: The complex factors that contribute to the "phenomenon" of street children, the Rights and the responsibilities of children; to

hear from them what the projects are for, and the involvement of children in participation in the running of the project and their perception towards schooling likes and dislikes.

**TABLE 13**

<b>THE COMPLEX FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE "PHENOMENON" OF STREET CHILDREN</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Children are victims of extreme poverty and broken homes	22
Unemployment	6
Children are forced to go out and earn money	6
Armed conflicts, droughts etc	3
More children in the family	2
Some children are bored in slums	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>

**TABLE 13** shows a range of factors that contribute to the phenomenon of street children. The social-economic factor is first followed by unemployment in the families. Children are imposed on them by their Parents to go out and earn money. Natural catastrophes like armed conflicts, famine, droughts and many others contribute to their being in the streets. The more children the mother has the greater viability of these children ending up on the streets and some children are bored in slums and they take to street life.

**TABLE 14**

<b>CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
Children girls and boys have Rights and Responsibilities in society.	
<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
To be heard	to listen to others
To education	to study hard
To be loved and cared for	to love and care for others
Not to be hit	not to bully others
To good nutritious food	not to waste food
Girls have the same Rights as boys	
To play	to involve others in play
Not to be forced to do hard work	to help others
To be taught with patience and kindness	to be with others

To make mistakes	to learn from their mistakes
To live in a clean and safe house	to take care of the house
To have their thoughts and feelings respected	to respect different views
•Children have a Right not to be manipulated or forced into having sex.	

**TABLE 14** shows a very varied range of children's Rights and Responsibilities. This group recognized that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.

**TABLE 15**

<b>HOW TO DESCRIBE A STREET CHILD</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Feeding from dustbins	7
Children loitering around the streets	6
Begging	6
Sniffing petrol and chewing "miraa"	5
Children sleeping in tunnels	4
Children dressed in rags	4
Working on city streets to earn money	3
Children on the street and children of the street	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>

**TABLE 15** has shown how to describe a street child. The table further reveals that the reasons for their presence in the street vary, but all share the common experience of fighting for their everyday survival. Others work on the street to earn money and become drawn into street life.

**TABLE 16**

<b>LIKES AND DISLIKES OF STREET CHILDREN IN REHABILITATION CENTRES:</b>
<b>LIKES:</b>
Education: Formal and informal education
Shelter
Freedom: "To do what they want" fighting, smoking, stealing, money, etc.
To play football and valley ball

**DISLIKES:**

Tight rules (no permission to go out)

Given work everyday

Not given (all most everything)

Given heavy duties

**TABLE 16** shows some of the likes and dislikes of street children. With support, street children attend school, gain skills and are reintegrated into society. Freedom is highly cherished by street people and boys especially may be used to smoking "bhang" and stealing.

**TABLE 17****DAILY ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN IN DIFFERENT HOMES**

Provide education for:

Girls and boys for informal and formal schools

Girls and boys sponsored from their homes

Street work by team:

Cleanliness, indoor games, drama or music, sports, scouting, handcraft

Home visits, counseling, active listening, and empowerment, sharing information on Children's Rights

Assist Children to realize the value for their lives and have respect for ones life:

Morning and evening prayers

Bible study

Singing hymns

Biblical drama

Invite pastors, priests, brothers, sisters, etc. who would like to talk to the children on religious issues to choose where to attend their services

Co-operate with other organizations under similar objective of supporting street children:

Organizations for learning and exchange purpose

Conduct inter-organization game or activities with children

Training:

Carpentry, tailoring, Business, Arts and crafts

The Data in table 17 indicate projects supports the children in a number of areas, which have these precise goals. Each of them works in its own way-with diverse, but

appropriate activities, ranging from out-reach work to providing shelter, food, education and many others.

**TABLE 18**

<b>THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOPS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
To share experiences with children in difficulty and leaning from one another	8
Workshop on drugs, health and growth	5
To know the reasons which made the boys and girls to be in the streets	4
To know our activities	4
To get to know the problems they face	4
Their visions for the future	4
To identify tools to fully involve the children and youth in difficulty in research and action	4
Workshop for parents	4
Workshop with staff and children on the Rights of the children	3
To find out about their experiences within the street	3
To reflect on the role of the social workers and the children	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>

**TABLE 18** has shown a variety of overall objectives of the workshops. The table further reveals that majority of the respondents share with the children and thus gain information in participatory ways so as to involve them in decision making, planning, implementation and monitoring of the activities in Centers. The tools are discussion (both in-groups and plenary), debates, role-play and mapping.

**TABLE 19**

<b>PARTICIPATION OF STREET CHILDREN</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Participation in decision-making	15
Knowledge of their Rights	11
Freedom of expression	10
Peer education	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>

**TABLE 19** shows the participation of street children are encouraged to make their own decisions and participate in the running of the projects. 15 were the most

frequency and this emphasis on empowerment enables street children to experience control over their own lives, giving them independence and confidence. The projects encourage participation in decision-making, knowledge of their Rights, freedom of expression, and peer education.

**TABLE 20**

<b>SO MUCH COULD BE DONE BY THE GOVERNMENT, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND THE CHURCH</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Government must pay attention to employment, broken families, educational weakness, uncontrolled population explosion, unrestrained urban growth, dwindling housing for the poor, rising costs, crushing international debts, and the failure to care for those in need	13
All Christian Agencies, non-Governmental organizations, Government and private sectors have to contribute its quota- to solve the problem of street children	10
Government should achieve some economic relief	6
The fast degenerating situation leads urgency to the search for solutions. These must start from some understanding of how and why street children come to be where they are	4
Government authorities are responsible for providing care to such children	3
Caring growth, good planning and adequate social relief in urban areas	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>

**TABLE 20** shows the attention that should focus... on ways of getting support in the first place for those families in difficulty and predisposed to break up, for example, single-parent household, those facing chronic illness, unemployment, or extreme poverty among others. Although analysis of the family situation does not always translate readily into recipes for national policy, better access to services, such as day-care or preschool education, seems to be the most likely avenue for reaching the family as a whole. Government should also achieve some economic relief, and then make a concerted effort to stimulate business growth so as to create job opportunities for young people. It included long and short terms plans.

**TABLE 21**

<b>TRAINING OF CARE GIVERS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Many Government, non-Governmental organizations and Christian workers do not have adequate skills	15
Lack short and long-term training e.g.	
Health cares	
Nutrition	
Counseling	
Socialization	
Education	
Vocational training	
Evangelization	
Discipleship	
Management and Administration	8
Lack training	7
Lack of personnel development:	
High morale	
Self-development	
Talent locations	6
Lack basic skills	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>

In this table 22 of our respondents were alarmed to note that many workers (Government, Non-Governmental Organizations and Christian Agencies) and workers insertion areas of ministry amongst children at risk do not have adequate skills, lack access to training needed or are not encouraged to acquire the basic skills needed to work effectively with the children. They lack training care. Gives therefore short and long-term training is required in health care, socialization, education, counseling and many others.

#### **4.2.4 CLASS FOUR CHILDREN UNDER VOLUTARY-SECTOR ORGANIZATION**

In this section a total number of 50 responded (boys and girls in the age of 12-19 years). The objectives of our study are as follows: To know the objectives of children

to be in the Centre. To hear from children what the Centre is for according to them and how they feel towards the Centre. Help them realize that Centers are just passing centers. (Preparing them to go back home). What the children see as conditions of the Centers and their experiences. And what influenced them to leave the streets and join the centers.

There were children under voluntary-sector organizations such as; Don Bosco Boy's Town (Kibera), Euphrasian Women's Centre (South C), Homeless children International (Kibera), Kwetu Home of Peace (Madaraka Estate), Mukuru Promotion Centre (South B), St. Charles Lwanga Brothers (Kibera), Child Welfare Society (South C), Girl Guides (Kibera), Makongeni Primary (Kibera), St. Teresa's Primary School (Kibera-Laini saba) and Goal Street Children Program (Kipande road).

There are four approved schools in Nairobi: The approved school designated as a reception and distribution Centre is Gethathuru (in Nairobi). Schools designated for protection and care cases are Omayya and Dagoretti (in Nairobi). School designated for protection and discipline case in Nairobi is Kabete.

According to the children's department the protection and care category handles and rehabilitates children who are non-offenders but lack responsible parenthood, homeless and destitute who require care, support, and protection. The other category protection and discipline caters for Juvenile Delinquents and those beyond parental control.

In practice children are often mixed together from all categories, protection and care, protection and discipline and criminal offenders. (Report of the Child Law Task Force, on file with Human Rights Watch, section 5.14 and p.123).

The children shared their experiences:

Twenty of the boys and four girls testified to have been to approved school. (Kabete approved school).

Seven had completed their term after escaping twice and being sent back.

Five boys left approved school through the "back door" efforts by their parents.

Four boys and one girl escaped successfully.

Their feelings towards the approved school were: There is thorough beating there.

It was clear to the children that they were not taken there to learn but to be disciplined. Female staffs (madams) at the approved schools are more arrogant and harsh than male staff. Manual work (digging, fetching water etc.) is too much.

The children became very emotional and some shed tears while narrating their hardships in the approved schools. Escaping from approved schools is a big triumph to all the children who have been there. They said that one would be severely punished when being sent back to approved schools after escaping. Some of them emphasized the idea of the program to rent a house for shelter since some of them had been taken to approved school by their parents and the juvenile Judge and they feared to be sent back when they would go home.

Also together they compiled a list of shiny "sheng" words:

Kabova	Bhang
Kabiere	Glue
Sadaa	Bhang
Makarao	Policemen
Keroma	Food
Kududu	Begging
Kumende	Sodomy
Chaka or Simbi	a play with beans.

Also they commented that the term referring to "Rasta mende", older street boys who are notorious for sodomising young street boys and girls.

**TABLE 23**

<b>WHAT ARE THE CENTRES FOR AND HOW THEY FEEL TOWARDS THEM</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
It's a home	22
Help those in streets with food, clothing, etc.	10
Gives knowledge	7
They learn skills	5
They learn moral behavior	4
Have recreations such as playing football, watching television	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>

**TABLE 23** indicates mixed feeling of responses. To some a Center is a home. It helps those in streets by giving them shelter, clothing, food and medical attention. It also gives knowledge by taking them to school and other technical training institutes. They learn skills in carpentry, mechanics and repairing shoes. They also learn moral

behaviors like relating and staying well with others, self-respect, self-discipline and to stop smoking cigarettes, "bhang", sniffing glue and begging.

They have also re-creations such as playing football and learning other games -- reciting poems, scouting, Girl Guide and watching television.

**TABLE 24**

<b>WHAT DO THE CHILDREN SEE AS CONDITIONS IN THE CENTRES AND THEIR EXPRIENCES</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Punish those who fight to discourage others from fighting	7
Children are not allowed to have money at all	5
Children are not allowed to smoke "bhang" sex and stealing	5
Avoid dirty jokes	5
Respect other people's view	4
Being responsible	3
Children to be good citizens	3
Taught to play and attend worship	3
Access to education and vocation training	2
Understanding one another	2
To respect one another	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>THEIR EXPERIENCES</b>	
Strict rules	15
Tight programs	10
Lack of facilities	7
Imposing rules on the children	3
Change of environment	3
Children running away from the Centers	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

TABLE 24 reveals how children see the conditions in the Centers and also their experiences. There are the problems you might expect when life on the street is brought suddenly into a home setting. A home of sixty or more must have definite rules.

Children are not allowed to have money in centers. But they may slip off to the shopping Centre and beg for shillings. Boys especially may be used to stealing,

smoking "bhang" and sex. The table further reveals how they control fights in homes by respecting one another, other people's views and by understanding one another. Also to punish those who fight to discourage others from fighting e.g. sweep the whole compound at the Centre, deny them food or beat them. Clean the house and to be left when others go for an outing.

**TABLE 25**

<b>THE PERCEPTION TOWARDS SCHOOLING</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<b>LIKES AND DISLIKES</b>	
<b>LIKES</b>	
They provide them shelter, food, clothing and knowledge of agriculture	10
Receive education	9
There is no glue around	8
No influence of other children	5
School is near for some	4
They make new friends	2
Water is near	1
Get recreation such as television	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>DISLIKES</b>	
No permission to go out	16
Some teachers are cruel	10
They are given heavy duties and almost commanded to do work all the times	9
Some staff members favor the young one and hate the big ones	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

**TABLE 25** shows some personal Data for our respondents. In our view they have different perception towards schooling likes and dislikes.

**TABLE 26**

<b>TO FIND OUT WHY THEY DO NOT LIKE SLEEPING</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<b>IN TOWN AS THEY USED TO DO BEFORE</b>	
Fear of police	18
Fear of rape	11
Fear of beating	7
Fear to be arrested	7
Cold, rain, mosquitoes and having friends	4

Because of the mosquitoes	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>

**TABLE 26** has shown various reasons why children do not like sleeping in town as they used to do before and prefer to stay in homes. The children especially the girls mentioned reasons such as fear of the police, fear of rape and because of the mosquitoes. It also seems that the girls used to get money through sex during the night. Now they spend their nights in homes and some depend entirely on begging in town during the day. The boys mentioned fear to be arrested and the fact that when they slept some days in the homes, they automatically lost their sleeping bases in the city (safe places to sleep which were taken over by other boys). Other reasons mentioned by the children to stay in homes were the cold, rain, mosquitoes and having new friends in the homes.

**TABLE 27**

<b>THEY HAD DIFFERENT OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Some said that they are here because they are:	
Prevent police harassment and their arrest and curb them from loitering in the street	14
Taken to school and skill training	8
Prevention from diseases in the streets	7
Change from bad to good habits	6
Leave eating from dustbins and eat good food	5
Stay, sleep and get clothes	4
Not beaten by other children in the street	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47</b>

**TABLE 27** shows a variety of objectives of the investigated respondents in this section. The table further reveals that all children who have been neglected, abused or exploited should be assisted in their recovery and reintegration into society and that this should take place in an environment, which fosters health, self-respect and dignity.

**TABLE 28**

<b>OPINIONS OR FEELINGS TOWARDS DROP-INS</b>
<b>POSITIVE:</b>
They should come to the Center so as to avoid thefts and also try to advice them

They are our brothers and sisters as well as friends

Coming to the center they may be able to identify and help them the way we are being helped

They should be allowed to sleep in

To be told the good and bad effects of being in the street

Bath and wash their clothes

To be given time to think over their lives

They should take care of themselves and be cared for

**NEGATIVE:**

They will steal our clothes, shoes, etc.

They will convince others to leave school

They will come with "bhang", glue and gum

They will bring quarrels, fights and insults

They will report us to the director

They will bring diseases like chicken pox and lice

They should be checked thoroughly to see whether they have glue

The Data in table 28 indicated a range of both positive and negative feelings towards the drop-ins. All in all the boys and girls came to a consensus and agreed that boys and girls in the streets should come because they are their brothers and sisters as well as friends. They said that they should come when they are around so as to avoid thefts and also try to advise them. They said that it's through their coming to the Center that we may be able to identify and help them the way they too are being helped.

### **4.3 RECOMMENDATION**

We have a responsibility to search for and implement tangible structures by which can effectively minister to street children at risk. We make the following recommendations concerning the "working for street children".

Extensive and viable research should be undertaken by Government, non-Governmental organization, the Church, and private sectors to verify the root causes of the growing phenomenon of street children in Kenya's urban Centers. Those that have done the research should facilitate the implementation of the findings and recommendations of their research.

The Government of Kenya should promptly sign and ratify the African Charter on the Rights and welfare of the child. The grass violation of the Rights of children is appalling. Children are denied the Right to live, deprived of a family, deprived of opportunity, deprived of the Right to know God and are exploited and abused in unimaginable ways. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) drafted in 1989 provides a very useful and comprehensive account of Rights, which we commend for study in relation on this document. Children, along with all humanity, have inalienable God-given Rights, which must be protected so that each child can grow up holistically as Jesus did. Each child has the Right to grow in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and people (LK 2:52). This access to growth is also impaired wherever religious liberties are restricted.

The Kenyan Government should reiterate the absolute prohibition on physical abuse of children by police, and should prosecute any police officer found guilty of such abuse to the full extent of the law. The promotion of the welfare of every citizen is a responsibility of Government. However, we note with great dismay that the Government of Kenya have left much of the care of children to non-Governmental organizations and Religious groups. The Government formulates social economic policies, which in the long term work against the promotion of children's welfare. Corruption in Government has also led to child trafficking, sexual exploitation of children and child labor. Donors who have been funding certain projects are withdrawing because of corruption in the country. If humanity is to survive in Kenya, a radical moral revolution is the only way.

The Government should undertake measure to provide free primary education level education to street children in Kenya, and to provide for the associated costs of education (books, uniforms, and building fund contribution or school fees) for such children. The Christian community must raise a voice for and along with children to call to account those in positions of economic and Government power that make and implement laws and policies that abuse, ignore, or take advantage of children at risk. This will involve increased participation in for a recommending and implementing social policy toward street children.

The Church and non-Governmental organizations should advocate the re-structuring of education system and the re-orientation of educational values. The Government should establish a special fund for the provision of the associated costs of primary level education to children from low-income families throughout Kenya for whom the

payment of books, uniforms and school fees are prohibitive. Single house head mothers are unable to afford the associated costs of primary education should be encouraged to apply for support to enable children to stay in school. And all agencies; Christian, Non-Governmental and Government Organizations supporting work with street children should be committed to improving the quality of existing efforts through the sharing of ideas, information and resources, as well as through training and development of meaningful structures of accountability.

Aid should be earmarked to facilitate the reunification of street children with their families. All grass roots ministers whether by local Church or particular organizations should seek to reinforce forms of interconnectedness in their common endeavors to minister effectively to children in their community. We recommend that local regional and international networks in a servant hearted capacity, (these various networks) could serve the body of Christ by identifying those who are involved in doing creative ministries, though often isolated and unknown, so that these smaller groups have access to shared information, resources and mutual shared resources should be encouraged at all levels.

Due to rural poverty, family members, especially young people, migrate to cities in search of jobs and better living conditions and end up in over crowded slum communities. Rural poverty and urban growth has thrust millions of helpless children onto the streets over stretching the meager resources available in the cities and exposing the children to disease, abuse and exploitation. It is very difficult to trace the roots or families of these resultant street children populations.

One of the most urgent of these problems is the extremely rapid increase in the growth of world population, which is expected to continue for some decades. The quest for social justice for example, and the war on world poverty, should receive new impetus from consideration of population problems. But it would be dangerous to think that nothing can be done about population programs before social justice is achieved.

Therefore, the Catholic Church and especially lay organizations must face up the fact that the world is confronted with a serious and urgent situation. The solution of the population problem is fundamental to any consideration of people's future on earth and the quality of life of hundreds millions of human beings.

Destabilized by Ethnic conflict and authoritarianism are growing in Kenya. This results in a poor investment climate, loss of revenue, disruption of an already delicate trade and economic system, and undermines health and education services. Remaining

resources are diverted for emergencies spending. Consequently more and more children die, are displaced, and become refugees internally.

We are saddened that while children cry out certain individuals have chosen to divert resources gained for the benefit of children into their own pockets, and established organizations to selfish gain. There is a need to promote a sense of Accountability to God in all ministries for children at risk. At the same time mutual trust and Accountability between donor and recipient organizations based upon integrity are foundational to any successful ministry.

Appropriately equipped workers are foundational to successful ministry for street children. We are alarmed to note that many workers do not have adequate skills, lack access to training needed to work effectively with street children. Therefore organizations should provide opportunity and structure for personnel development.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

Our findings tell us that any intervention program that seeks to alleviate the plight of the children must be holistic. There should be a unified holistic approach for Government, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Churches to work jointly in order to alleviate the problems of street children to facilitate co-operation among all organizations interested in assisting them. The legislation relating to the plight of children should be implemented with the relevant facilities provided.

In our findings, it will take more than Government and the Church. The private sector has to contribute its quota to solve the problem of street children. If not it's like a wiping a sponge over a spring of water. As it is now, the tide of misery has reached an alarming level. Therefore if we continue to do nothing we will all drown under the flood. One assumption that was confirmed that Government have left much of the care of children at risk to Non-Governmental Organizations and Religious groups. It is encouraging to see Churches and Non-Governmental Organizations reaching youth from the streets of Nairobi. The Christian Church and Non-Governmental Organizations have the compassion and resources to set a model for other organizations, for the Government and the private sectors. No one should be so foolish as to think that either Church or Government or Non-Governmental Organizations can do it alone, nor should we forget that reducing social ills is even more important than saving victims to those problems-just as it is better to prevent disease than the cure some of its victims.

Our findings regarding tackling the root cause of street children is that street children may be a nuisance to society. But they are a barometer of the ills to which we must pay attention to the root causes like: unemployment, broken families, educational weaknesses, uncontrolled population explosions, unrestrained urban growth, dwindling housing for the poor, rising costs, crushing international debts, and the failure to care for those in need. They all stem down to lack of community solidarity and broken traditional set up over the years. There are also negative influences from formal education.

The fast degenerating situation lends urgency to the search for solution. These must start from some understanding of how and why street children come to be where they are.

Therefore, strategies to deal with this problem is that attention should focus on ways of getting support in the first place to those families in difficulty and predisposed to

break up, for example, single-parents household, those facing chronic illness, unemployment, or extreme poverty.

Generally, our findings to our basic assumptions were disapproved wrong. For instance our assumption (that our generation neglect and exploit children) was proved wrong. This was due to the fact that people think that they are helping them when they give coins, food and clothes but although this may assuage their conscience, the reality is that they continue to perpetuate the problem because these hand outs are addictive-keeping these children on the streets and luring countless others. Our handouts also reinforce a belief in these children that they have a right to free things.

We also become guilty of perpetuating the abuse of these children's rights. As long as we allow our handouts to train them to remain on the street-we expose them to early deaths from drugs and street fighting, rape, childhood prostitution and STDS. Our handouts also deny these children an opportunity to self-actualization through learning and eventually, honest labor. It destroys their sense of worth and makes them dependent. Find out whom, in your City, cares enough about them to help themselves in changing their way of life.

#### **4.5 GENERAL CONCLUSION**

God's intention is that children be nurtured within the family. However, the break down of families through separation, divorce, mobility and self-centeredness has wounded and destabilized the child. Changing values that give priority to material possessions about human life and development worsens this. Children are at risk when families are at risk. We grieve at how pervasive is the failure of the family today around the world. Family members sexually abuse many children. Tragically, for many children, the home and family have become hostile, rather than nurturing environments. The family structure has been devastated by the violence of war, the dislocation of force migration, and the blatant exploitation and abuse of children.

The people who commit their efforts and lives to the service of street children experience a sense of aloneness, discouragement and pain. Such wounded healers are vulnerable to burn out and to the destructive efforts of oppressive pressures. Their immediate family and dependents are equally vulnerable.

While poverty has always been with us, and children have always been at risk, children today are growing up in a different context from previous generations. Today's post-modern paradigm has caused adults and children not only to abandon

hope but also to embrace despair. The context of child poverty and crisis have always been spiritual as well as physical, and today is no exception.

We hope that this report has provided some insights into the quandary that children are pouring out into the streets by hundreds everyday in Nairobi cannot be denied. While we recognize the urgent need for economic and social reforms to address the root causes of children taking to the streets, this report has focused on the need for all members of the society.

These dirty, cold and hungry children are to be helped, if they are to see a light at the end of the dark tunnel that their situation ought to be taken seriously. Since these children roam around in communities capable of offering them food, money in exchange for services offered, a place to sleep undisturbed, to wash clothes and take a bath, than help should come from none other than members of this population.

The Government made a stated commitment to reform existing Laws to bring them into compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the child; however, it has yet to be followed by the necessary action. It should be remembered that these children are not totally helpless. We are convinced that understanding the Convention of the Rights of the child will help the Churches, the police, voluntary agencies, schools and any other people working with the children to plan intervention strategies better.

The redrafted children Bill should be brought before parliament in order to enact the reformed legislation.

We recognize that legal reform is meaningless unless it is enforced. We advocate that Government; Non-Governmental Organizations and Church agencies should ensure that those who work with children are specially educated, skilled and trained on how to handle cases of street children.

Finally the Government, Non-Governmental Organizations, Church agencies and the Community should encourage to acquire the basic skills needed to work effectively with children not for children.

They are capable of organizing themselves. They have a great sense of solidarity among themselves and towards others who are poor. They are willing to do any kind of job and they are creative in their recreational activities.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **TOWARDS STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING (WORKING FOR STREET CHILDREN)**

#### **5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL**

##### **A SPECIMEN PROJECT**

##### **REHABILITATION CENTRE FOR STREET CHILDREN AND PARENTS**

### **I. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION**

This program arose from a vision of the Christians of the Diocese of Nairobi. Their encounter with parking boys and girls on the street of Nairobi made them dream of a refuge for these young ones. In their search for funds there were aided by the local contribution, which enabled them to buy 10 and a half acre. Karen in the mid-1990s.

They saw some children washing off animal parts discarded by the butcher in a very dirty creek. They dedicated their life to helping such destitute. The Home consists of one building and one office for a social worker. The Centre can contribute as it already has assisted the scattered children to rehabilitate them. Children face many difficulties: Homeless, Violence, Prostitution, Lack of education and so on.

### **II. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSISTANCE**

**GOAL:** Street children rehabilitation Centre for provision, protection, prevention, participation and positive futures and empower their Parents.

#### **THE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES ARE:**

- I. To prepare children for physical and emotional growth.
- II. To prepare children with an opportunity for self-development and with skill.
- III. To create jobs for the unemployed parents.

### **III. WORK PLAN:(To be carried out at the Missions listed in II, I).**

1. To implement workshops for off street and street work by term-6 months before starting.
2. To provide an opportunity for self-development. Informal school, formal school, dress marking (African design) and tie and dye works-Throughout the project.

3. Prepare the Children emotionally and physically-6 months and members for training-6 months.

By providing access to: formal education, vocational training and job guidance. A project aims to give opportunities to develop their confidence and work towards a positive, and independent future.

**EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES:** The project will supply the following equipment: A fully staffed (trained staff), Books and learning materials. Our organisation will established and maintain a good number of street children.

#### **4. REPORTING**

The project leader will submit a concise report after 5 weeks and will make a short progress reports each six months. He will prepare a final summary of the project achievement one month before the end of the assignment.

**SUPPORTING ARRANGEMENT:** Our organisation has 7 social workers and a manager, of whom will work at least full time. One driver or workers will be assigned full-time to the project.

#### **5.1 THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

A Board of Directors guides the project. 14 members of the Board, which comprises of the parishioners and Bro.Richard the project coordinator, stress the project. The role of the Board is mainly decision-making and fund raising, while the project co-ordinator provides the linking factor between the Board and the projects. The Board meets once a month and has duties and powers laid out in writing in the constitution.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**CO-ORDINATOR**

**ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR**

**STAFF MEMBERS**

## CHILDREN

## PARENTS

## VOLUNTEERS

## DONORS

The Administrative director is the person in charge of the site in that he or she is responsible and answerable for the staff and daily activities of the site and of course the children. Under the director the staff members follows.

### 5.2 WORK PLAN BY NUMBER

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR ACTIVITIES 2000-2003

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1.1 To implement workshops for street work by team. Start with term members, children and parents.   | 6 months before start.  |
| 1.2 The project aim to provide Shelter, food, clothing, counselling and emotional support, medical care and Reunification with their family. | throughout the project. |
| 1.3 The main aims are: protection, advocacy, awareness and campaigning.  | 6 months before start.  |
| 1.4 Adequate information about HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases health care and disease prevention.                               | 5 months.               |
| 1.5 This project may focus on: Preventative education, Health advice and access to health services,  | throughout the project. |

Rehabilitation support, and providing  
Alternative lifestyles.

1.6 The project will provide: Peer education, knowledge of their Rights, freedom of expression and participation in decision-making.	4 months.
1.7 Providing access to: Street education, formal education, vocational training and job guidance.	throughout the project.
1.8 To provide a pilot program and Demonstration Centre for micro-projects, for parents. To create jobs for the unemployed parent, Gifted and marginalized people it serves.	throughout the project.
1.9 Provide opportunity and structure for Personnel development.	3 months.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2, 102, 465.20 Ksh.</b>

### **5.3 PROJECT BUDGET**

#### **THE PROJECT INCOME: 2000-2003 Ksh.**

Public funding	250, 000.00
Companies and trusts	120, 000.00
Individual donations	60, 000.00
Investment income	12, 000.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME (BANK)</b>	<b>442, 000.00</b>

#### **THE PROJECT EXPENDITURE: 2000-2003Ksh.**

Local contribution (feeding)	300, 000.00
Education	408, 000.00
Salaries and wages	240, 000.00

Medical care	35, 805.00
Transport	127, 890.00
Water and Electricity	175, 484.00
Insurance	55, 113.00
Security	11, 000.00
Printing and stationary	54, 710.20
Staff training and development	65, 700.00
Furniture and equipment	90, 900.00
Auditing fee	27, 000.00
Repairs and maintenance	58, 000.00
Motor vehicle running costs	205, 100.00
Available materials i.e. leather and cloth	11, 500.00
Miscellaneous	45, 130.00
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>1, 911, 332.00</b>
Contingents 10%	191, 133.20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2, 102, 465.20 Ksh.</b>

#### **5.4 CONCLUSION SUPPORTING ARRANGEMENTS:**

All our term starting from the co-ordinator to our children will be full-time working hand in hand to reach our Goal by protecting our children in this Home. Also we need to prepare a detailed report of our Budget. (2000-2003).

Everyday these children must be driven to school and picked up in a single small van. Children must be counselled; health and special problems must be attended to. Intake and follow up, fund raising and so on, are all part of our job description.

Our needs:

To brainstorm new ways of fund raising and use of 10 acres and present resources for income generating project.

Part time administrator to keep books and records.

To lead children and Parents in recreation, farming and crafts.

Our conviction is that, if the above requested sum of 2, 102, 465.20 Ksh is granted, it will enable our children and Parents to become self reliant and self sufficient through the support of our project.

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**APPENDIX I**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE ONE**  
**(FOR PARENTS)**

Please answer the following questions. These questions will help me to better understand our children. Please take your time going through these questions and answer them in as much details as possible. The information will be kept confidential.

1. What do you think are the causes of children coming to the streets of Nairobi?

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2. As parents, how do you feel when you see your children smoking "bhang" and other addictive drugs or scavenging for food through garbage?

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3. What is a child to you?

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4. Do you think that they're more or less children coming to the streets?

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5. What are the problems children faces in the streets?

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6. Any suggestions to the problem of street children?

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**APPENDIX II**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE TWO**  
**(FOR STREET CHILDREN)**

Please answer the following questions. These questions will help me to better understand you. Please take your time going through these questions and answer them in as much details as possible. The information will be kept confidential.

1. Why are you on a trip to the streets?

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2. When did you come here?

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3. What do you do in the street? (Are you really a street boy or a street girl?)

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4. How do you survive on the street everyday?

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5. What difficult do you face on the street?

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6. How do you find people around you?

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Are they caring about you? \_\_\_\_\_

What type of people care? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you have any contact with your family?

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**TRAINING COURSE IN PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH WITH  
STREET CHILDREN.**

**APPENDIX III**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE THREE**

**(FOR CHILD CARE WORKERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS)**

Please answer the following questions. These questions will help me to better understand our children. Please answer them as detailed as possible. The information will be kept confidential.

1. How would you define the Rights of children?

2. How would you define the responsibilities of children?

3. How would you describe a street child?

4. What are the likes and dislikes of street children?

5. Describe your daily activities with children?

6. Have you ever-organised workshops for children?

If so what are your specific objectives?

7. Do children you work with participate in the running of the projects?

8. What would be the most efficient way with Government, Non-Governmental Organisations and the Church to assist the children you work with?

9. Are Christian agencies, Government and Non-Governmental Organisations having adequate skills, access to training needed to work effectively with children?

**TRAINING COURSE IN PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEACH WITH  
CHILDCARE AND SOCIAL WORKERS.**

**APPENDIX IV**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE FOUR**

**(FOR CHILDREN UNDER VOLUNTARY-SECTOR ORGANISATIONS)**

Please answer the following questions. These questions will help me to better understand you. Please answer them in as much detail as possible. The information will be kept confidential.

1. Can you share your experiences in brief?

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2. What are your feelings towards the centre?

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3. What are the conditions of the centre?

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4. What are your perceptions towards Education? Likes and Dislikes.

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5. What influenced you to leave the streets and join the centre?

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6. What are the objectives of the centre?

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7. What do you think should be done for the children who are in the streets?

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Should they be brought to this home?

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8. Do you have any contact with your family?

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## APPENDIX V

### PHOTOGRAPHS OF STEET CHILDREN



#### What experts say needs to be done to curb the menace

##### \*Network existing bodies

Unicef suggests that the responsible NGOs, government organisations, religious bodies and the community should unite to tackle the problem

##### \*Set up more homes and train social workers

Additional homes with properly trained social workers who will help identify needy children and rehabilitate them will help alleviate the problem

##### \*Facilitate democratic reforms.

Kenya is always ratifying all genres of conventions. It is only in a true democracy that the needs of the people - including the need to walk safely in the streets - can be adequately addressed. The government should infuse into its political strategy the means through which goals set up in 1990 at the World Summit for Children can be attained

##### \*Adopt the Undugu pattern



Children learn vocational skills at Undugu Society of Kenya. It has been recommended that other emulate the Undugu approach

street and slum children whereby the regular school syllabus is condensed into three years of basic learning. Pupils are exposed to vocational skills in their fourth year and thereafter encouraged to join the informal sector in a field of their choice.

##### \*Re-unite children with their families

The government should register and trace the street children's background in an effort to reunite them with their parents and extended families.

##### \*Other viable solutions

These include tightening up existing statutes, educating the population on family planning, and building community approved schools. It is believed that community-based approved schools, will eliminate the tendency among parents to cling to pertinacious delinquents - they will be more willing to let them go to a place they can visit.

##### \*Act now

Removing children from the streets would forever stamp out the fear of the menace. When accepting the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Unicef, the then Executive Director, Henry R Labouisse, said, "The most important meaning of this Nobel award is the solemn recognition that the welfare of today's children is inseparably linked with the peace of tomorrow's world."