



Struggling to Survive

Children Living Alone on the
Streets in Tanzania and Kenya

We **fight** for children
living on the streets

children RAILWAY
Fighting for street children

Struggling to Survive:

Children Living Alone on the Streets in
Tanzania and Kenya

Emilie Smeaton

Acknowledgements

Deepest thanks to all the children and youths who participated in this research, who provided their company, shared their lives and experiences, acted as guides and introduced the street interviewers to their friends. Every child and youth who participated in the research made an important contribution and is remembered with fondness.

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The Research Team

The research team comprised a number of professionals with different areas of expertise based in three countries:

Research Team in UK: Emilie Smeaton (lead researcher responsible for research design, data collection and analysis) and Dr Myfanwy Franks (carried out analysis).

Research Team in Tanzania: Emilie Smeaton (lead researcher and street interviewer), Jones Joseph Muchendu (interpreter for Emilie and street interviewer), Joseph Nandwa (street interviewer) and Mercy Njoki Gigchengi (street interviewer and occasional interpreter for Emilie); Pete Kent (street interviewer) and Jane John Mori (interpreter for Pete).

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'This research report is dedicated to Rweyemamu Silasi, better known as Ustadhi. Ustadhi was brutally murdered by a mob on the streets of Mwanza, in northern Tanzania on the 5th August 2011 after being accused of stealing a mobile phone. Ustadhi had been living on the streets for over four years but had begun to create a life for himself away from the street; he had stopped sniffing glue, had started a small business and had rented a small room with some friends. Ustadhi's death was not reported in the media and nobody has been charged with his murder. Ustadhi was 17 years old'.

Foreword

Wherever they are in the world, children living alone on the streets do so because they have very few other options. Many are forced to leave home; many more choose to take to the streets as home has become an intolerable cauldron of violence, neglect and humiliation. All too often, however, this is also the very treatment children receive on the streets.

Many people are unaware of these children, or perceive them as a nuisance who somehow want to be on the streets. The children themselves are viewed as the 'problem' rather than the communities and societies that have failed them. Many people do not see these children; fewer still will listen to them. Railway Children sees these children very clearly and we believe it is our duty to give them a voice that society will not only hear but begin to listen to.

Railway Children has been working in partnership with local agencies in Kenya and Tanzania since January 2006. The work done by these agencies is fantastic. Many children and young people in the region who were living on the streets now have positive family relationships, are able to attend school or can support themselves economically as a result of their work. Without the support of these agencies these children would remain living on the streets negotiating a life of violence, drugs and sexual exploitation.

These agencies are not alone in recognising the need of children on the streets. Countless individuals show acts of kindness to children on the streets every day. National and local governments in both Kenya and Tanzania recognise the needs of children who live on the streets and have made genuine attempts to do what they can to support children directly or in collaboration with civil society organisations.

Still, it became clear to us since working in the region that there are a significant number of children on the streets who remain there despite some services being available and the best efforts of civil society organisations and government. We want to gain a better understanding of why this is.

All the children that took part in the research had spent at least four weeks on the streets; some had lived on the streets for years. We want to provide these children with a voice, the children who are hardest to reach, the children with the most compelling and most traumatic stories. This might mean these are the children with the most complex and problematic behaviours: the children that we believe most need our support.

This research is an attempt to give some of these children that voice; to give them the chance to tell their stories so that we can learn from them. The findings of this research will support Railway Children to adapt our existing programmes and where appropriate develop new programmes better able to meet these children's needs. We hope that you, the reader, in whatever capacity you can, will adapt your programme, policy or perhaps just your attitude, to better understand and meet the needs of these children.

I would like to reiterate: the intention of this research is to gain a better understanding of the lives of those children that are hardest to reach. There is no suggestion that all children who move away from home are represented through this research as this research focuses on those who have fallen through the safety nets already in place. Kenyans and Tanzanians should be proud of the many children that live in extremely difficult circumstances but do not take to the streets because of the support provided by extended families, clans, neighbours, and civil society organisations.

I had the privilege of carrying out a small number of interviews in Tanzania as part of this research. I would like to thank all of the children who took part in the research for their bravery in telling their story. We were all moved by their desire for their stories to be understood by others so that future children who take to the streets might be treated with a little more dignity and respect. I would also like to thank Railway Children's partners for their understanding, patience and considerable time given to this research. Thanks also to the lead researcher and author, whose dedication to the well-being of each and every child involved is an inspiration to all of us. Finally, thanks to you, the reader, for taking the time to read this report.

Pete Kent

East Africa Regional Director

Railway Children

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1. Introduction

Reuben

Reuben is an 11-year-old whose general appearance is that of a younger child. Reuben's parents died when he was young and he was cared for by his older brother. His brother decided to leave home and, with no-one to provide water and soap to bathe and food to eat, Reuben thought he would die if he remained at home. He had been told good things about the town and thought that sleeping outside on the streets would be better than remaining at home as Jesus would protect him. Reuben hoped that a Good Samaritan would allow Reuben to live with him, take him to school and help him secure a good job after leaving school. Then, when he was in a good job, he would care for the Good Samaritan who took him off the streets.

Reuben used to sleep in a shack with other young boys but after witnessing sexual acts between some of the boys, which made him feel uncomfortable, he left the relative safety of the shack and began sleeping on the streets.

After spending two months on the streets, Reuben thinks that street life is not good because someone could take him and sell him, abuse him in other ways or kill him. Reuben thinks his life is in constant danger, particularly whilst sleeping outside and he worries that someone will come and kill him. Reuben described how other children living alone on the streets had been conspiring to steal his jumper by attacking him with a screw-driver.

The only help Reuben receives is from a few women who feed him scraps of food after he has fetched buckets of water for them, and a few people who respond when he begs. He would like to be helped but is aware that somebody could tell you that they will help you but could instead harm you. Reuben would like to stay with someone and be fed, have a bed to sleep on and be taken to school. This, Reuben believes, would give him a comfortable life. Reuben does not think about the future as tomorrow cannot be guaranteed: maybe God will take him and he will not live another day.

Reuben thinks that people should help children on the streets in any way they are able by providing somewhere to live, taking them to school and clothing them. Then, in turn, when children have grown up and have a job, they will help those that helped them.

Section 1: Introduction

This research report addresses the experiences of particularly vulnerable and marginalised children: those who have experienced living alone on the streets for four weeks or more in Tanzania and Kenya. Some of the experiences of children described in this report are distressing, hard to read and may evoke a range of emotions such as sadness, anger, frustration and distress¹.

The first section of the report sets the context to the research findings by:

- defining children who live alone on the streets;
- stating the aims of the research;
- providing some background information about Tanzania and Kenya;
- offering some details of estimated prevalence of children living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya;
- providing a brief summary of practice work undertaken with children living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya;
- presenting characteristics of the children who participated in the research;
- explaining the structure of the rest of the report.

1.1 Definition of children living alone on the streets

Children living alone on the streets are often referred to as 'street children' both in general discourse and within literature describing aspects of their lives and policy or practice responses to meet their needs. This report does not refer to children who live on the streets or participated in the research as 'street children' as this term can be used in a range of ways, for example to describe children who live on the streets with their families, work on the streets or spend time on the streets but return to their family home. The term 'street children' also emphasises the role of the streets when, as the findings of this report reveal, inherent to these children's lives are their experiences prior to coming to the streets and in environments away from the streets. These children are first and foremost children and have the same rights as any other children to a life free from risk or harm where they can develop and reach their potential. Therefore they should not be labelled by where they live but recognised as individual children with diverse characteristics and needs.

The children that this research addresses live full-time on the streets and do not return home at night to live with their family or other carers.

1.2 Aims of the research

There is a significant body of research addressing children and youths who live on the streets in different parts of the world. It is important to recognise that there is considerable diversity in the experiences of children who

live on the streets dependent upon personal circumstances and characteristics alongside the environments where they live. The voices of children who live on the streets is lacking from a number of research studies addressing their lives and recommended responses to meet their needs².

With this in mind, Railway Children made a strategic decision to undertake qualitative research in Tanzania and Kenya³. The findings of the research will support the expansion of Railway Children's work in these two countries and the development of a programme of work aiming to meet the needs of children living alone on the streets ensuring positive outcomes for these children. The aims of the research were to:

- capture, in their words, the experiences of children in Tanzania and Kenya, who live alone on the streets for four weeks or more whilst under the age of 16;
- present an up-to-date and realistic perspective of what it means to be alone and on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya;
- provide a robust evidence base addressing the lives and experiences of children living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya;
- identify a range of policy and practice recommendations to meet the needs of children who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya.

It is important to outline that the focus of the research was to gain the views and experiences of children who are particularly vulnerable and marginalised such as those who have never received any services and are not known to service providers, or those who are known to service providers but whose cases are particularly complex and current service provision has not been able to meet their needs. However, children who were away from home for four weeks or more but have accessed services also participated in the research as it was important to include their views and experiences of the services available. For example, a small number of the children who participated in the research have stayed in centres for children who live on the streets or have been supported to return to their families.

1.3 Background information about Tanzania and Kenya

Tanzania

After achieving independence from Britain, Tanganyika and Zanzibar merged to form Tanzania. Ninety-five per cent of the population is Bantu consisting of more than 130 tribes. Swahili is the official language with English the official language of commerce, administration and higher education⁴.

The economy is heavily dependent upon agriculture, accounting for more than a quarter of GDP, providing 85 per cent of exports and employing 80 per cent of the workforce⁵. There are a number of threats to the environment including recent droughts affecting agriculture.

1 These were some of the emotions experienced by the research team.

2 This has also been highlighted in a recent article: McAlpine K Henley R Mueller M & Vetter S (2009) 'A Survey of Street Children in Northern Tanzania: How Abuse or Support Factors May Influence Migration to the Street' Community Mental Health 46 pg 26 – 32.

3 Railway Children had previously commissioned research addressing the lives of children who spend time on the streets in the UK and the methodologies and learning from this project were used to inform the research in Tanzania and Kenya.

4 https://cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/countrytemplate_tz.html 14th December 2010.

5 Ibid.

In Tanzania it is estimated that 36 per cent of the population live below the poverty line of \$1 a day, equating to approximately 14,400,000 people⁶. Tanzania is one of Africa's biggest recipients of development aid, receiving almost 40 per cent of the 2008/09 national budget from foreign donors⁷. Just under 71 per cent of children are reported as living in absolute poverty with almost half of children living in rural Tanzania suffering three or more severe deprivations of basic need compared with ten per cent of children living in urban areas⁸.

The age of majority⁹ in Tanzania is 18. Around half of Tanzania's population of 40 million are children under 18¹⁰. It is estimated that in 2010 there are 2.5 million orphans in Tanzania accounting for 12 per cent of all children¹¹. The official Tanzanian definition of an orphan is a child who has lost one or both parents. However, in most villages the definition of an orphan tends only to be applied to a child who has lost both parents which makes them particularly vulnerable as it:

“further erodes their chances of participating in the kind of structures that could give them support.”
(UNICEF, 2002; 1.)¹²

The concept of 'social orphan' has also been developed to refer to children who have one or two parents who are alive but unwilling to provide care for their child¹³.

Many children become orphans through their parent or parents dying of an HIV/AIDS-related illness. In 2007 it was estimated that in Tanzania there were 1.4 million people living with HIV/AIDS and 96,000 deaths from HIV/AIDS¹⁴.

Kenya

Kenya is a geographically diverse country with, according to the official 2009 census, a population of nearly 39 million. Kenya is ethnically diverse as 40 different ethnic groups are represented in the country. English is the official language but Swahili is commonly spoken. Many people also speak the mother tongue of their native tribe. Economically, there is a heavy dependence upon rain-fed agriculture and tourism.

Parts of Kenya were colonised by Germany and Britain in the 19th century. During the early 20th century, the interior central highlands were settled by British and other European farmers who became wealthy through coffee and tea farming. From 1952 to 1959 the Mau Mau

rebellion against the British led to Kenya being placed under a state of emergency. Kenya became independent on 12th December 1963. There was recent political and civil unrest in the 2007 election when protests surrounding the elections escalated into widespread violence resulting in over 1,000 deaths and approximately 600,000 people being displaced¹⁵. After 20 years of debate, in August 2010 the new constitution became law. This new constitution is expected to yield significant change as it will bring a more decentralised political system limiting presidential powers and replacing provincial governments with local counties. A second chamber of parliament will be created and a land commission established to address ownership disputes and review past abuses.

In Kenya it is estimated that 46 per cent of the population live in poverty¹⁶ and that an estimated 8.6 million children live in poverty¹⁷.

As with Tanzania, the age of majority in Kenya is 18. Children up to the age of 14 account for 42.3 per cent of the population¹⁸. It is estimated that, in 2010, there are 2.5 million orphans accounting for 13 per cent of all children¹⁹. There are high levels of HIV/AIDS with an estimated prevalence of 2.5 million in 2002²⁰, estimated to reach 2.9 million by 2010²¹.

1.4 Prevalence of children living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya

There are difficulties in measuring the numbers of children who live alone on the streets related to issues defining these children²², locating these children and the mobile nature of their lives. There have been a number of attempts to measure the scale of children living on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. Some of these attempts note an increase in numbers. For example, in 1991 in Dar es Salaam there were an estimated 200 to 300 street children; by 1995 this figure had risen to 3,500²³. In 2001 it was estimated that there were 10,000 to 30,000 children in Nairobi²⁴. A 2007 article estimated that there were between 250,000 and 300,000 children living on the streets in Kenya with more than 60,000 living in Nairobi²⁵. In Tanzania, a 2008 survey²⁶ in Mwanza, Tanzania's second largest city, revealed that there are over 400 children on the streets. Results from Mkombizi's 2010 census show that there has been a reduction in the numbers of children and youths living full-time on the streets in Arusha but that numbers of children and youths living full-time on the streets in Moshi has increased²⁷.

6 Ng'ingo E (2010) Giant Leaps in Struggle with Poverty <http://allafrica.com/stories/201004050843.html> 14th December 2010

7 McGregor S (2008) Poverty Reduction Slow Despite Economic Growth <http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=44979>.

8 National Bureau of Statistics, Research on Poverty Alleviations and UNICEF Tanzania (2010) Childhood Poverty in Tanzania: Deprivations and Disparities in Child Well Being http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Tanzania_FinalChildPovertyStudy.pdf

9 The age of majority is that where it is legally recognised that a child has become an adult.

10 National Bureau of Statistics, Research on Poverty Alleviations and UNICEF Tanzania (2010) Childhood Poverty in Tanzania: Deprivations and Disparities in Child Well Being http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Tanzania_FinalChildPovertyStudy.pdf

11 Unicef, UNAIDS, U.S. President's Emergency Plans for AIDS Relief (2006) Africa's Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations: Children Affected by AIDS New York: Unicef.

12 Unicef (2002) Child Care and Protection – Tanzania (2002) New York: Unicef.

13 Ibid.

14 http://cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geoscountrypage_tz.html 14th December 2010.

15 Elhawary S (2008) Crisis in Kenya: Land, Displacement and the Search for 'Durable Solutions' Overseas Development Institute.

16 Otieno J (2010) Kenya: Poverty Holds Back Growth Plan <http://www.allafrica.com> 16th September 2010.

17 <http://www.actionchildren.org/where-we-work/kenya/country-background.php> 17th November 2010.

18 http://cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geoscountrypage_ke.html 14th December 2010.

19 Ibid.

20 Cradle, The Undugu Society of Kenya in partnership with The Consortium of Street Children (2003) Street Children and Juvenile Justice in Kenya Unpublished Report.

21 <http://www.globalexchange.org/countries/africa/kenya/kenyahiv.html> 14th December 2010.

22 McAlpine K Henley R Mueller M & Vetter S (2009) 'A Survey of Street Children in Northern Tanzania: How Abuse or Support Factors May Influence Migration to the Street' Community Mental Health 46 pg 26 – 32.

23 Bamurange V (1998) 'Relationships for Survival – Young Mothers and Street Youths' in Rwebangira M & Liljetstrom (eds) Haraka Look Before You Leap: Youth at the Crossroad of Custom and Modernity Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

24 Kilbride P Collette S & Enos Njeru (2001) Street Children in Kenya: Voices of Children in Search of Childhood Bergin & Garvery: Westport, Connecticut London.

25 IRIN (2007) "Kenya: Nairobi's Street Children: Hope for Kenya's Future Generation" in Youth in Crisis: Coming of Age in the 21st Century IRIN In-depth Feb 2007 <http://www.irinnews.org/pdf/in-depth/youth-in-crisis-IRIN-In-Depth.pdf> 15th September 2010

26 Smeaton E (2009) Children on the Streets in Mwanza: Summary of Survey Findings Sandbach: Railway Children.

27 Mkombizi (2011) Mkombizi Census Report 2010

1.5 Practice with children living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya

As discussed in more detail in section 2, there are a number of obligations that governments have made to protect and to care for children in both countries, including children on the streets. However, provision of services for children on the streets through government agencies is extremely limited. National budgets are limited and governments do not have the resources to provide comprehensive services. As a result, virtually all practice with children on the streets is carried out by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The role of Social Welfare departments is often more in relation to regulating practice of CSOs rather than delivering services themselves.

There are a number of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) working with children and youths living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. Some of these provide centres where children are accommodated. The range of services provided by these centres differs between organisations. Some are able to provide education and/or work to reunify children with their families. Others provide the basics of a bed to sleep in and food. Some centres provide only for the children who live there whilst others provide services to children who do not live there, such as the provision of education, medicine, food and the opportunity to bathe and wash clothes. Some organisations provide outreach work on the streets. This outreach work can take different forms such as, for example, street work, training, education and support to receive national identity cards.

1.6 The children and youths who participated in the research

Ninety-three children and youths participated in the research in two locations in Tanzania and two locations in Kenya. Whilst the majority participated in individual face-to-face interviews, in one setting it was impossible to choose which children to interview out of the many who wished to take part in the research so, as not to exclude, a group interview was carried out with 13 children who thought they were aged ten to 17. Whilst addressing the age range of those children and youths who participated in the research, it should be noted that many people in Tanzania and Kenya, and other countries, do not know their birthday or birth year since, for example, many families do not have a record of when their children were born. In addition for children and youths who live on the streets, it is hard to keep note of the passing time due to the nature of their lives. The youngest research participant thought he was seven and the oldest 24. The majority of children and youths thought they were aged between 13 and 16.

Most of the children who participated in the research were male, due to the low visibility of females on the streets, and only six females participated in the research. Traditional cultural values relating to girls mean that their freedom is restricted compared with males. This is part of the reason that there are fewer girls on the streets. There is also additional stigma for females of living on the streets as:

“girls’ presence on the streets subvert gender norms and young women are forced into commercial sex work through a lack of alternatives and societal sanctions.”

(Evans, 2002; 58.)²⁸

In addition, girls who migrate to urban centres are likely to find work as domestic servants. Child domestic workers are also vulnerable as they often work long hours carrying out housework, childcare and cooking and are often subject to exploitation and sexual harassment²⁹. Given the substantial imbalance between the number of females and males who participated in the research, the findings of this research are significantly more representative of males who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya for four weeks or more. It should be noted that whilst this research offers some learning about females who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya and that there are some similarities between the experiences of young females and males, this report offers limited evidence of the experiences of females.

1.7 Structure of the report

The rest of the report is structured in the following manner:

- Section 2 adds to setting the context of the research by outlining policy developments and the legislative framework linked to children living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya.
- Section 3 outlines the research methods and associated issues.
- Section 4 presents children and youths’ experiences of family and home life prior to coming to the streets.
- Section 5 focuses upon children and youths’ experiences of living alone on the streets.
- Section 6 addresses children and youths’ experiences of agencies.
- Section 7 considers insecure and disorganised attachment, development of identity and resilience.
- Section 8 offers concluding comments, recommendations and required actions to meet the needs of children and youths living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya.

As mentioned previously, a key aim of the research was to capture the words, experiences and stories of children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya, to understand their lives and present a realistic account of their experiences. Sections 4, 5 and 6 focus upon directly representing children and youths’ experiences in quotes and as summaries of their experiences. Turusifu’s story is told throughout sections 4, 5 and 6 and acts as an introduction to each of these sections of the report. Each of these sections ends with children and youths’ recommendations.

The research findings indicate that there are many similarities between the experiences of children and youths in Tanzania and Kenya who live alone on the streets. Any differences between the two countries are specified as are distinct differences between males and females.

28 Evans R (2002) 'Poverty, HIV, and barriers to education: street children's experiences in Tanzania' Gender and Development Vol 10, No. 3, November 2002.

29 Koda B O (2000) 'Democratisation of social relations at the household level: the participation of children and youth in Tanzania' in C. Creighton & C. K. Omari (eds) Gender, Family and Work in Tanzania Aldershot: Ashgate.

At a few points in the report, the experiences of the research team are presented as footnotes as these support with presenting the realities of the lives of children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya.

In consideration that this report is likely to be read by a diverse audience, some of whom may not be familiar with Tanzanian and Kenyan cultural and social life, some terms are defined and brief explanations of aspects of cultural and social norms and values are offered. Where amounts of money are described, the equivalent amount in pounds and pence is offered as a footnote. It should also be noted that it is common practice in Tanzania and Kenya to use familial terms to describe a person when that person may not be a biological relative or may be a relative other than that the term describes in a European culture. For example, a child may refer to his or her 'grandmother' but this person may be what in European culture would be referred to as a great-aunt or other extended family member. To ensure clarity of understanding, the family terms used in this report are those commonly understood in Europe. So, in section 4 when children and youths describe a grandmother or grandfather, they are referring to a maternal or paternal grandparent.

The names of all the children and youths who participated in the research have been changed to protect their identities and ensure anonymity. Traditional, biblical and Islamic names are common in Tanzania and Kenya, as are some names more common in western countries. Children and youths chose the name which they wished to be called in this report and their choices reflect this range of names.

2. Policy Developments Linked to Children Living Alone on the Streets in Tanzania and Kenya

In Tanzania and Kenya there are a number of policy developments linked to children living alone on the streets. To contextualise the plight of children who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya, and the recommendations offered in the final section of the report, it is useful to present an outline of the policy developments and legislative framework that relate to these children.

2.1 International laws related to children living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya

The International Bill of Human Rights

The International Bill of Human Rights consists of different declarations, covenants and protocols of which the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) are particularly relevant to children living alone on the streets

The ICCPR is a multilateral treaty committing its parties to respect the civil and political rights of individuals. All parties are obliged to legislate where necessary to give effect to the rights recognised in the Covenant, and to provide an effective legal remedy for any violation of those rights. It also requires the rights be recognised without discrimination of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Particular rights are set out that each individual is entitled to including the right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, electoral rights and rights to due process and a fair trial.

The ICESCR commits its parties to work toward the granting of economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCR) to individuals, including labour rights and the right to health, the right to education, and the right to an adequate standard of living.

United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a human rights treaty setting out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention and opened it for signature on 20 November 1989 and it came into force on 2 September 1990. Kenya was one of the first 20 member states to ratify the Convention in 1990 followed by Tanzania in 1991. The UNCRC is a legally binding international instrument that sets out basic human rights for children everywhere, and includes the right to:

- survival;
- develop to the fullest;
- protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation;
- participate fully in family, cultural and social life³⁰.

Specific rights elucidated in this statute include:

- Articles 1 – 4 defines a child, underscores the principle of non-discrimination and best interest of the child as paramount and obliges governments to undertake appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for implementation of rights recognised in the convention.
- Articles 14 – 15 obliges state parties to respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

- Article 19 outlines how children should be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.
- Articles 24, 26, 27, 28 and 31 set out the right of children to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health, the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance, the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Furthermore, these articles set out the right of the child to education, right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and to recreational activities.
- Articles 32, 33, and 34 highlight the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous, to be protected from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.
- Articles 37, 39 and 40 recognise the right of children that are in conflict with the law to be protected from excessive punishment or cruelty, not to be imprisoned with adults, to be afforded legal assistance in a justice system that recognises their rights and for children that have been abused or neglected to be given special help to integrate back in to society, with particular focus on restoring their health, self-respect and dignity.

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) was adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now the African Union (AU) and was entered into force in 1999. Like the UNCRC, the ACRWC is a comprehensive instrument that sets out rights and defines universal principles and norms for the status of children which originated because the member states of the AU believed that the UNCRC missed important socio-cultural and economic realities particular to Africa. The ACRWC emphasises the need to include African cultural values and experiences when dealing with the rights of the child when, for example challenging traditional African views which often conflict with children's rights such as child marriage, parental rights and obligations towards their children and children born out of wedlock. The charter is driven by the principles of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, survival and development of the child, child participation and children's responsibilities to their society, the state and the international community. Articles in the ACRWC address the following:

- Article 1 obliges States Parties to recognise the rights, freedoms and duties enshrined in the charter in accordance with their constitutional processes.
- Article 3, 4 and 5 highlight the principles of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, survival and development.
- Article 11, 12, 13 and 14 detail the right to education, leisure, recreation and cultural activities and health services.
- Article 15, 16 and 17 detail the protection of children from child labour, child abuse and torture and the administration of juvenile justice.

- Article 19 and 20 detail a child's rights to parental care and protection and parental responsibilities.
- Articles 27, 28 and 29 oblige states to protect children from sexual exploitation, drug abuse, sale, trafficking and abduction.

The United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council Resolution on Street Children 2011

In March 2011 the Human Rights Council developed a resolution³¹ on the protection and promotion of the rights of children working and/or living on the streets. The resolution takes note of the following issues:

- That it is essential for children living and/or working on the street to be empowered to organise themselves and to participate in all aspects of political, economic, social and cultural life, in particular in the planning and implementation of policies that affect them.
- That it is essential for states to take all appropriate measures to ensure the meaningful participation of children, including children working and/or living on the street, in all matters and decisions affecting their lives through the expression of their views, and that those views be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.
- That the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment while the best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his or her nurture and protection and that families' and caregivers' capacities to provide the child with care and safe environment should be promoted.

The resolution urges nation states to:

- adopt, strengthen and implement legislative and other measures, cross-sectoral strategies and plans of action to eliminate, as a matter of priority, all forms of violence and discrimination against children working and/or living on the street and to end the impunity of all perpetrators of these violations and abuses and the criminalization of children living and/or working on the street;
- prosecute and/or provide effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for sale, trafficking and all forms of exploitation of children working and/or living on the street, and to ensure protection, assistance and support for child victims of these practices;
- take appropriate measures to protect children affected by armed conflict, taking into account the best interests of the child, in order to reduce the risk of these children resorting to working and/or living on the street;
- recognise that it is generally in the child's best interests that survival behaviours, such as begging, loitering, vagrancy, truancy, running away and other acts, be dealt with as child protection issues by the relevant state authorities, and to ensure, in accordance with their legal systems, that laws on such behaviours do not constitute an obstacle to effective assistance, support and protection for children working and/or living on the street;

- ensure that children working and/or living on the street who are involved in judicial proceedings have effective access to child-friendly justice systems and, where they are party to proceedings, to legal representation, and are enabled to participate actively in the proceedings and are informed about their rights in a way understandable to them;
- ensure that all interventions directed at children working and/or living on the street take into account the best interests and the views of the child in question, in accordance with his or her age and maturity, and are undertaken by adequately trained professionals in order to prevent further victimisation.

Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight international development goals that all United Nations member states have agreed to achieve by the year 2015. The aim of the MDGs is to encourage development by improving social and economic conditions in the world's poorest countries. The MDGs also provide a framework for the entire international community to work together towards a common end, making sure that human development reaches everyone, everywhere. The Goals most relevant to children alone on the streets are:

- Goal 1 to eradicate poverty and hunger
- Goal 2 to achieve universal primary education
- Goal 6 to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Significant progress has been made towards the MDGs but there is widespread recognition that targets are unlikely to be met and that the slowest progress has been made in relation to the poorest children³². Given this, it is questionable how far the efforts to drive towards the MDGs have created positive changes for children living alone on the streets³³.

2.2 Kenyan laws, resolutions and policies relevant to children alone on the streets.

Commitment to international law

Kenya has ratified the UNCRC and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and other relevant legal and policy documents including the ICCPR and ICESCR. All the laws and policies on children in Kenya uphold the principles of non-discrimination, best interest of the child, child participation, survival and development.

Kenya has submitted the initial, first and second periodic reports on the UNCRC to the Committee of the Rights of the Child, the first report to the ICESCR and the first report to the African Union Committee of experts on the rights of the child.³⁴ In its second report to the committee to the rights of the child, Kenya reported that under the Children Act there was a large category of children in need of care and protection and this included children left orphaned by HIV/AIDS, street children, and child workers among others. As a result, the government has developed

31 UN Human Rights Council (2011) Sixteenth session. Agenda item 3 Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development UN.

32 UNITED NATIONS (2011) The Millennium Development Goals Report 2011. UN

33 Delap E (2010) *Protect for the Future: Placing Children's Protection and Care at the Heart of the MDGs* London: Everychild

34 National Plan of Action for Children 2008 – 2012: National Council for Children Services (NCCS)

responses towards issues affecting Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) including the formation of a National OVC Steering Committee and the development of national OVC guidelines. These guidelines uphold the UNCRC by providing standards for rights based OVC programmes.

Kenya's second report states that:

“through the Ministry of Local Government, the Government put in place a policy to withdraw people living on the street including children and place them in rehabilitation programmes. These programmes include the national youth service training that aims at providing children and youths with life skills as a tool for rehabilitation.”
(Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2004; 81.)³⁵

The report also highlights how the government has established the Street Families Trust Fund initiative as a channel for providing assistance to children who live on the streets. It has also identified challenges in rehabilitating street children such as the uncoordinated approaches in addressing the problem of street children; inadequate human and financial resources to deal with the problem and the high costs involved in rehabilitating children.

In its concluding remarks on Kenya's report, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that in relation to children who live on the streets the Kenyan government:

- identifies and addresses the root causes that result in children living on the streets;
- develops a comprehensive strategy to address the high number of street children, with the aims of reducing and preventing this situation;
- ensures that street children are provided with adequate nutrition and shelter, as well as healthcare, educational opportunities, protection and recourse to the justice system in order to support their full development;
- raises awareness on the issue of street children in order to change stigma and negative public attitudes particularly among law enforcement officers; and
- ensures that street children are provided with recovery and reintegration services, including psychosocial assistance for physical, sexual and substance abuse and where possible and when in the best interests of the child, services for reconciliation with a view to reintegration with their families³⁶.

Legislative framework

Children Act 2001

The Children Act 2001 domesticates the UNCRC and the African Children's Charter. Sections 3 to 18 provide safeguards for the rights and welfare of the child. Sections 23 to 29 give provisions for parental responsibility; other sections are concerned with administration of children's services, children's institutions, children's courts, custody, guardianship, adoption, foster care maintenance, children

in need of care and protection among others. Since 2007, the Kenya Law Reform Commission has been undertaking the reform of this Act; among the issues at hand are harmonisation of the Children Act with the 72 further pieces of legislation that are concerned with children. Important amongst these are the Sexual Offences Act Kenya (2006), the Education Act (1968) and the Employment Act Kenya (2007).

Draft National Children Policy

The Draft National Children Policy Kenya (2011) document is before cabinet awaiting approval at the time of writing this report. This policy is the government's specific commitment to create an environment where all the rights of a child will be fulfilled. It is based on the four goals of the UNCRC: survival, development, protection and participation rights.

Kenya Vision 2030

This is the new long term development blueprint for the country which aims at providing a *'high quality of life for all its citizens by the year 2030'*³⁷. The vision is based on three pillars; economic, social and political. The economic pillar aims at improving prosperity of all Kenyans through economic development programmes covering all regions of Kenya. The social pillar seeks to build a just and cohesive society with social security in a clean and secure environment while the political pillar aims to realise a democratic political system founded on issue based politics that respects the rule of law and protects the rights and freedoms of every individual in Kenyan society.

National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children

The National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children was published in 2005 and seeks to support and protect the rights of OVC in relation to child survival, child development, child protection and child participation. The policy also gives special attention to children in need of care and protection³⁸. Its objectives are to:

- ensure that OVC have their basic needs met and rights fulfilled;
- support OVC to develop their full potential;
- protect OVC from all forms of abuse, exploitation and discrimination;
- ensure the full and meaningful participation of OVC in all matters affecting their lives; and
- mainstream OVC issues and concerns into all government policies in collaboration with all stakeholders.

35 Committee on the Rights of the Child (2004) 44th Session: Second periodic Kenya country report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1998 – 2004.

36 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 44th Session: Consideration of the reports submitted by state parties under Article 44 of the Convention. Concluding remarks: Kenya

37 Kenya Vision 2030: The popular version: Government of the Republic of Kenya 2007

38 Draft National Policy on Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (2005)

2.3 Tanzanian laws, resolutions and policies relevant to children living alone on the streets.

Commitment to international law

The United Republic of Tanzania ratified the UNCRC in 1991 and the ACRWC in 2003 and other relevant legal and policy documents including the ICESCR.

The initial report on the implementation of the UNCRC was submitted in 1998 to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva and the second report was submitted in 2004. This report placed particular attention to the problem of HIV and AIDS and its implications for children and young people particularly children in need of special protection³⁹.

The report highlighted the political developments and commitments undertaken by the government that contribute to overall protection of vulnerable children. These included the ratification of international instruments, development of sectoral policies such as the Child Development Policy 1996, a National Policy on HIV/AIDS, National Multi-Sectoral Strategic Framework on HIV/AIDS 2003 – 2007, the Government Policy for Child Survival, Protection and Development (CSPD) 2001, the development of National Guidelines for Community Based Care, Support and Protection of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (Draft) and initiation of community based care programmes to support and protection vulnerable children. In its response, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that the State Party undertake the necessary measures to fully implement the National Guidelines for the Care and Protection of Orphans and Vulnerable Children and that the State Party continue and strengthen its efforts to allocate appropriate human and financial resources to ensure the provision of adequate care and protection to children deprived of a family.

The Committee welcomed steps undertaken in Tanzania to address the issue of street children, but expressed concern at the significant number of street children and their vulnerability to various forms of violence, including sexual abuse and exploitation, and the lack of a systematic and comprehensive strategy to address the situation of those children. The Committee was further concerned at the fact that street children are perceived as delinquents and criminals. As a result, the Committee recommended that the Tanzanian government:

- develops a comprehensive strategy to address the high numbers of street children with the aim of reducing the number of children living alone on the streets and preventing children from living on the streets;
- ensures that street children are provided with adequate nutrition and shelter, as well as with health care and educational opportunities, in order to support their full development; raises awareness of the issue of street children in order to change negative public attitudes about them, particular among law-enforcement officers; and

- ensures that street children are provided with recovery and integration services including psychological assistance for physical, sexual and substance abuse, and where possible and in the best interests of the child services for reconciliation with a view to reintegration with their families⁴⁰.

Legislative framework

Law of the Child Act 2009

In Tanzania there has been recognition for more than 20 years of the need to examine and reconsider laws relating to children. For example, in 1986 the Law Reform Commission of Tanzania (LRCT) informed the minister responsible for justice, and provided recommendations, of the need to revise legislation affecting children⁴¹.

The Law of the Child Act was finally passed in 2009. The enactment of this law is an attempt to domesticate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴² and other international conventions to which Tanzania has made a commitment. The Act:

- provides for reform and consolidation of laws relating to children;
- stipulates rights of the child;
- aims to promote, protect and maintain the welfare of a child;
- provides a legal framework for foster care, adoption and custody of the child;
- further regulates employment and apprenticeship and
- makes adequate provision for children in conflict with law.

Children on the Streets in Tanzania are also covered by the Law of the Child Act. For example:

- Sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 highlight the definition of a child, the principal of non discrimination, a child's right to a name and nationality and a child's entitlement to live with parents and maintenance of the child.
- Sections 9, 10, 11 give a child the right to: life, dignity, respect, leisure, liberty, health, education and shelter to be afforded from his/her parents; enjoyment of the estate of his/her parents; opinion, to be listened to and to participate in decisions which affect his well-being.
- Sections 12 and 13 prohibit any person from engaging a child in any activity that is harmful to the child's health, education, mental, physical or moral development; protect the child from torture, or other cruel, inhuman punishment or degrading treatment including any cultural practice which dehumanizes or is injurious to the physical and mental well-being of a child.
- Section 16 defines children who are in need of care and protection in the following categories: orphans or abandoned by relatives; neglected or ill-treated by the person who has the care and custody of them; has a parent or guardian who does not exercise proper guardianship; is a destitute; is under the care of a parent or guardian who, by reason of criminal or drunken habits, is unfit to have the care of the child; is

39 Committee on the Rights of the Child: Second Periodic Reports of State Parties due in 2004: United Republic of Tanzania(2004)

40 Committee on the Rights of the Child: Concluding Observations, Republic of Tanzania

41 Cradle, Undugu Society of Kenya in partnership with The Consortium of Street Children (2003) Street Children and Juvenile Justice in Kenya Unpublished Report.

42 Law of the Child Act 2009

wandering and has no home or settled place of abode; is begging or receiving alms.

- Sections 34 to 68 give provisions for alternative care for children including guardianship and adoption.
- Sections 77 and 78 give the child a right to light work and prohibit exploitative labour.
- Section 83 protects children from sexual exploitation.

Children who live alone on the streets clearly fall in to one or more of these categories and as such have a right to care and protection under the law.

The Removal of Undesirable Persons Act was not wiped off the statute book through the adoption of the Law of the Child Act and this has been known to be used by the police and government officials to round up children and youths who live on the streets in violation of a number of children's rights⁴³.

The Law of the Child Act places clear obligations on Local Government Authorities to respond to the needs of any child in need of care and protection including children on the streets and outlines certain processes that social welfare officers should follow when responding to the needs of children on the streets. For example:

- A social welfare officer is obliged to perform an investigation where he/she has reasonable grounds (perhaps notification by a CSO) to suspect that a child is living on the streets (s96(1)).
- After determining that the child is living on the streets, the social welfare officer (accompanied by a police officer) is under a duty to take the child to a place of safety for a period not exceeding 7 days (s96(2)). No guidance is given as to the role of the police officer nor what constitutes 'a place of safety'. CSOs should press social welfare to ensure that such places are satisfactory.
- Within a 14 day period the child should be brought to the Juvenile Court so that an application for an order can be made (s96(3)).
- While the Juvenile Court considers the matter it may commit the child to an approved residential home, to the care of a social welfare officer, or to any fit person (s96(4)).

Processes defined in the Act include those to register, license and regulate residential care homes, orders available to the courts and guidelines for the police and judiciary. Children should never be kept in the company of other adults when under the care and protection of the state and cannot be sentenced to a custodial sentence for any offence. In cases involving an imprisonable offence if committed by an adult, the child can be placed in the care of an 'approved school'⁴⁴.

Plan of Action on Most Vulnerable Children

Tanzania's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare began to develop its National Costed Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children in 2006, with funding from the US Agency for International Development and technical assistance from Family Health International⁴⁵. The four-

year action plan is being implemented by the government and used as a reference tool by stakeholders working to improve the lives and promote the rights of the country's most vulnerable children including children living alone on the streets.

The Tanzanian National Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children was piloted in target villages in 21 of 126 districts in Tanzania and assigns roles to the national, district and local levels of government⁴⁶. At the national level the government develops policy and coordinates the efforts of itself, international funders and NGOs to roll out the Plan and deliver services to Most Vulnerable Children. At the district level the government implements national policy by creating supporting and empowering Most Vulnerable Children Committees (MVCCs) at village or street level. The District authorities develop annual Most Vulnerable Children's plans and map out needs based on the MVCCs' input then directs resources from public and private sources to the village or street level. Finally, the local level MVCCs identify the Most Vulnerable children in their communities and inform the district level of need; they monitor the Most Vulnerable Children's status and coordinates local delivery of services by government of Tanzania and NGO service providers.

The intention of the plan is that it will reach out to all groups of vulnerable children, including children and youths living alone on the streets. Current indicators used by MVCCs to assess vulnerability tend to focus around poverty and children that have been orphaned; whilst these are issues that are relevant for many children at risk of migrating to the streets, there are further levels of vulnerability, particularly around violence, that are missed by the current MVCCC structure.

Tanzania Development Vision 2025

In 1995 Tanzania Development Vision 2025 was developed. The vision aims at achieving high quality livelihoods for its people, attaining good governance through the rule of law and developing a strong and competitive economy.

National Plan of Action to Prevent and Respond to Violence against Children

Tanzania is only the second African country to have conducted a national study on the extent of violence against children as per the recommendations laid out in the United Nations Study on Violence against Children⁴⁷. In response to the findings of the study the government is currently in the process of developing a national plan of action to prevent and respond to violence against children in consultation with civil society. The plan outlines a multi-sectoral approach including government departments of education, health and justice and communities including CSOs. At the centre will be the Department of Social Welfare and the plan calls for greater resources to be made available for Social Welfare to be able to meet their obligations⁴⁸.

43 http://www.ccr-tz.org.uk/files/ccr_briefingpack_A4sized_ENG.pdf 20th November 2010.

44 There is currently one approved school in Tanzania.

45

46

47 World Report on Violence Against Children (2006) UNITED NATIONS

48 The multi-sector task force: A National Response to Violence Against Children (2011), Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children.

Strategic Plan for Street Children in Tanzania

The Strategic Plan for Street Children is a government effort to address issues facing children on streets⁴⁹. The vision of the Strategic Plan is to have a Tanzania without street children by the year 2025, while its overall objective is to ensure that street children get their rights and essential services to improve their lives by the year 2025. The strategy has been developed by the Ministry for Community Development Gender and Children in consultation with a number of development partners but has not yet been ratified as government policy by the Cabinet.

2.4 Age of criminality responsibility in Tanzania and Kenya

In setting the policy context for the research, it is useful to note that the age of criminal responsibility in Tanzania is seven years old and in Kenya it is eight, despite the commitments made to children by the Tanzanian and Kenyan governments through the policy and legislative frameworks outlined in this section of the report. In Tanzania and in Kenya it still occurs that children are charged, through their presence on the streets, with touting⁵⁰, begging, loitering⁵¹, dumping or littering⁵².

49 Community Strategic Plan to Control the Problem of Street Children, Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children (unpublished)

50 'Touting' can be defined as soliciting for business.

51 'Loitering' can be defined as lingering or hanging around in a public place or business where one has no particular or legal purpose.

52 These offences can be likened to that of 'vagrancy'.

3. Research Methods

This section of the report addresses the research methods, the preparation work carried out to inform the methods, the general approach to the research, locating the research and the researcher, language issues, data collection, accessing children and youths, analysis and ethics.

3.1 Exploratory work to inform the research methods

When designing the methodology of the research, many factors had to be taken into consideration that specifically related to the cross-cultural nature of the research and some exploratory work was undertaken to inform the methodology alongside significant preparation before implementing the research.

As the white British lead researcher⁵³ responsible for the design, implementation and delivery of this research has significant experience of carrying out research with children on the streets in the UK and developing research methodologies that work well with children who live on the streets but no previous experience of carrying out research with children on the streets outside of the UK, the lead researcher spent time, on a number of trips, in Tanzania and Kenya. This time was spent with children on the streets to develop familiarity and understanding of their worlds and carrying out interviews with children on the streets using both an interpreter and, where the child being interviewed requested, carrying out the interview in English. From these experiences, it was apparent that it was possible for the lead researcher to carry out in-depth interviews with children who lived alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. The lead researcher also worked closely with Railway Children's East Africa Regional Director and spent time with professionals who work with children on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya to build knowledge of both the practice and policy context.

3.2 Working in partnership to carry out street interviews

Due to the practicalities of carrying out cross-cultural research in three countries and recognition of the benefits of including Railway Children's partners in Tanzania and Kenya in the research, Mkombozi and Undugu Society of Kenya (USK) were invited to contribute to various stages of the research process. They also supported with implementing the research. Key professionals, from both Mkombozi and USK that are highly skilled at developing rapport with children and youths on the streets were invited to act as street interviewers. As the ability to develop rapport and build positive relationships with children and youths on the streets is such an important element of the interview process, there was scope for these professionals to become well-equipped to carry out interviews with children and youths who live alone on the streets with training and support from the lead researcher. This approach of working with staff from partner organisations also fits with Railway Children's philosophy of partnership working: of building capacity within partner organisations.

To equip the street interviewers to carry out street interviews, a four day training course was delivered to those working as street interviewers and interpreters, alongside other staff from Mkombozi, who hosted the training. The training covered a range of issues and concepts related to carrying out street interviews with children and youths who live alone on the streets.

3.3 Locating the research and the researcher

As described previously, this research report was commissioned by a UK-based organisation, led by a white British researcher who worked alongside other professionals from the UK, Tanzania and Kenya with different stages of the research being carried out in Tanzania, Kenya and the UK.

To make certain that an accurate understanding is gained of children who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya, it is appropriate to ensure that the research team have some knowledge of their lives and experiences. All of the research team have this knowledge, arrived at in different ways and to different degrees, as touched upon previously in this section of the report. To manage the impact of street interviewers' shared similarities or differences with the children and youth they were working with, street interviewers were encouraged to adopt a marginal position of being on the edge of the group they were researching. This position enables creative insight as street interviewers could use their knowledge about children and youths who live alone on the streets yet retain some distance to enable the research to take place. In practice, as with previous research with children who spend time on the street⁵⁴, whilst carrying out fieldwork, street interviewers often found themselves socially:

"poised between stranger and friend."
(Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; 97.)⁵⁵

The position of marginality had its own complications that are perhaps heightened when carrying out fieldwork in a culture not of one's own, as many of the street interviewers were. Those complications include ambiguity, uncertainty of social position and of operating in a way that is ethically acceptable, culturally appropriate and meeting the aims of the research.

3.4 Language issues: using interpreters and translators

Amongst the street interviewers, the lead researcher was the only person who was not bilingual and able to carry out an interview in Swahili without an interpreter. Whilst Railway Children's East Africa Regional Director, who acted as a street interviewer in Tanzania, speaks Swahili to a high standard, it was agreed that he would also carry out the street interviews with an interpreter to ensure mutual understanding between him and children and youths who participated in the research.

Three children and youths who carried out interviews with the lead researcher requested that their interviews were conducted in English. A few children and youths spoke in both Swahili and English throughout their interviews when working with the lead researcher. On one occasion, a youth who spoke English acted as an interpreter for a young child who spoke Luo and was keen to participate in the research.

53 The lead researcher is also the author of the report.

54 See, for example, Smeaton E (2009) *Off the Radar: Children and Young People Who Live on the Streets in the UK* Sandbach: Railway Children.

55 Hammersley M & Atkinson P (1995) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* Routledge: London.

Given that the basis of this research is the words of the children and youths participating in the research who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya, the accurate translation of their words, during the street interview, transcription of the interviews and translation of the interviews from Swahili to English was crucially important. As there are words that do not directly translate from Swahili to English, and vice versa, careful consideration had to be given to how questions were asked during interviews, especially when the question was asked in English, translated into Swahili and the response translated from Swahili to English.

During the training for street interviewers and interpreters, a significant amount of time was spent on these language issues – especially with the interpreters – to discuss conceptual issues and ensure conceptual equivalence was achieved⁵⁶. Consideration had previously been given to the linguistic competence of the interpreters who worked with two of the street interviewers as it was necessary to have interviewers whose use of English was of a high standard but who also had knowledge of the culture of children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. As it was difficult to find professional interpreters with this knowledge, and there is scope for the impact of the translator to have an effect upon the research participant, two professionals from Mkombozi and USK were identified who fitted both criteria.

The street interviews and interpreters worked together on a draft guide for interview questions that had been written in English by the lead researcher and required reworking into Swahili to ensure cultural appropriateness and that nuances of meaning were taken into consideration in translation. This proved to be a time-consuming but very worthwhile exercise and, as one technique to reduce a negative impact of translation is to have a number of people jointly making decisions about the best terms to use⁵⁷, ensured that the principle research tool for data collection was able to best avoid translation-related problems.

Work was also undertaken with the professional translators who translated the transcribed interviews from Swahili to English so that there was understanding of the need for the words of children and youths to be presented as accurately as possible.

Before analysis could take place, each research interview was transcribed from the recording of the interview in Swahili by the street interviewer who carried out the interview or, in relation to interviews carried out by the lead researcher and Railway Children's East Africa Regional Director, by the interpreter who worked with them. As previously mentioned, the transcribed interview was then translated by professional translators into English. As a final check to ensure that the words of the children and youths who had participated in the research were correctly represented before analysis took place, Railway Children's East Africa Regional Director who, as mentioned previously, speaks Swahili to a high standard, read over the translated interview which contained both the Swahili and English version of the transcribed interview. After agreement had been finalised of the translated interview, analysis could take place.

Despite all the measures that were taken to limit the impact of translation, it should be noted that 'translation-related decisions'⁵⁸ can have an impact upon the research.

3.5 Data collection

To achieve significant understanding of the lives of children who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya and the worlds they inhabit, field work took place in research participants' environments to capture their social actions and activities in children and youths' own settings. For example, the street interviewers went to locations where children and youths who lived alone on the streets were known to spend time. Time was spent at locations where children and youths slept and gathered when not working or seeking food or money. Interviews sometimes took place at these locations but because of the need for peace and privacy, interviews were carried out, for example, on the steps of shops or other buildings in the evening when businesses were not open, in open green spaces such as a sports field, in a quiet corner of a café or down a quiet street sat against a wall. In one instance, an interview took place in the home of a family for whom the participating youth carried out work. In one location, where there were some risks associated with carrying out interviews in the open, interviews took place in the grounds of a school and in a hotel garden. In this location, there were many children and youths who wished to take part in the research and the research team could see that resentment could be held towards those who participated so a decision was made that interviews would not be carried out on the streets and other open settings but in more private settings. As mentioned at a later point in this section of the report, a few interviews also took place in centres for children.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with children and youths and, with permission, recorded using a digital recorder. Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter and in recognition that more formal techniques are unlikely to be effective with the children and youths participating in the research, interviews were carried out in an informal manner whilst focusing upon a specific line of enquiry and were, in effect, presented as 'conversation'.

Alongside recording interviews, field notes were kept to record what happened in the 'interview setting', connections between processes, sequences and interactions and personal impressions and feelings of the street interviewers. Where appropriate, some of these reflections and experiences are represented both explicitly and implicitly in this report.

3.6 Accessing children and youths who live alone on the streets

The majority of the children and youths who participated in the research were accessed on the streets. Before carrying out research with children and youths in specific locations, the street interviewers spent time on the streets in the company of a professional who was known to potential research participants and who introduced the street interviewers to individual children and groups of children. Time was spent chatting with them and giving

56 Temple B (1997) 'Watch your tongue: issues in translation and cross-cultural research' *Sociology* 31 (3) pg 607 – 618.
57 Brislin R W Lonner W & Thorndike R M (1973) *Cross-Cultural Research Methods* New York: Gardner Press.
58 Birbilil M (2000) *Translating from One Language to Another* *Social Research Update* Issue 31.

them the opportunity to ask questions. Children and youths typically asked questions about where the street interviewers were from, what life was like in their country, if there were children on the streets in their country and what the street interviewers were doing on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. Depending upon individual circumstances and environments, the research was introduced and children and youths were invited to participate. After hearing that the research was taking place, some children and youths approached the street interviewers requesting to participate in the research. Sometimes an interview was carried out immediately or plans to meet at a later day or time were made. On occasion, a second meeting was arranged to discuss participating in the research. It was common for some food and drink to be provided for the child or youth as many had not eaten recently or were missing valuable time working by taking part in a research interview. Children and youths who participated in the research were also given, as a token gesture to say thank you for their participation, a small amount of money or a practical gift. After much discussion about this token gesture during the training, it was agreed that street interviewers could use their discretion as to what form this 'token gesture' should be dependent upon the personal characteristics and needs of the child or youth. So whilst some children and youth were given a small amount of money, others were bought footwear, medicine or clothing.

Whilst, as mentioned previously, the criteria for the research was to explore the experiences of children and youths who spent four weeks or more living alone on the streets under the age of 16, effort was made to ensure children and youths were included in the research who were not known to support services.

Due to the low visibility of females on the streets, other means were taken to ensure females were included in the research. Whilst a few females were living on the streets at the time of their participation in the research, three females were accessed through a centre for children who live on the streets.

As it was also important to gain the different perspectives of children and youths who have spent time in centres and received other interventions for children who live on the streets, 15 young males participated in the research who were living in a centre at the time of their participation as did two young males who had been reunified with their families.

A small number of interviews were also carried out with older youths above the age of 16, who had experienced being on the streets for four weeks or more under the age of 16 but no longer live on the streets, because of their ability to earn money and pay for some form of accommodation. Their inclusion in the research was to gather data about the experiences and views of older youths who have lived on the streets for a number of years and to consider possible longer-term outcomes.

3.7 Analysis

A grounded theory approach⁵⁹ was adopted to generate small-scale theories that are fully grounded in data and represent what is taking place in the real world.

Whilst it is recognised that all cannot be known about a person from spending time with them and their participation in a research interview, the aim of the street interviews was to gain as much knowledge as possible about each child or youth who participated in the research, as far as they were willing to share details about themselves. It was important to ensure that each research participant's story was written in detail and included socio-cultural context. Therefore each transcribed and translated interview was written as the child or youth's story which, in some cases, meant that the order of events had to be reworked in chronological order. Field notes and reflections provide additional descriptive detail and context. This formed the first level of analysis. A second level of analysis took place, from the translated transcript of each interview, using the software package Atlas.ti to identify themes and issues and make comparisons and connections across the body of data.

3.8 Ethical considerations

As with any research addressing the lives and experiences of vulnerable children and youths, ethical considerations were immensely important to ensure that children and youths who participated in the research were fully informed about the research, were able to give informed consent and were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

Given the difficult circumstances in which many of the children and youths who participated in the research were living, it was important not to raise unrealistic expectations that could not be met by the street interviewers. This was at the forefront of much of the planning of the fieldwork. For example, as some of the street interviewers are practitioners working to meet the needs of children and youths who live on the streets in specific locations in Tanzania and Kenya, each street interviewer did not carry out interviews with children and youths in a location where they worked as a practitioner to avoid confusion with their research role and children and youths' expectation that they will be able to set a practice response in place to meet their needs.

Gaining consent

The purpose and nature of the research was clearly explained to children and youths who agreed to participate in the research to gain their informed consent. Children and youths were assured that their identity would be protected, that any information relating to them would be anonymised, that they could stop the interview process at any point and that they did not have to respond to a question if they did not want to. Children and youths were also made aware that they could withdraw their consent for the information they gave to be used as part of the research for up to four weeks after they had participated in an interview⁶⁰. One young male refused to participate in the research after considerable time was spent addressing his questions about the research and having a lengthy discussion about agencies working with children

59 Glaser B & Strauss A (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* Chicago: Aldine.

60 It is acknowledged that this would be difficult for many children and young people to do as they have no or very limited means to make contact with the research team. Where a child or young person has access to Mkombozi or Undugu Society of Kenya, this would be possible.

who live on the streets. At a later point, when out of earshot of his peers, this young male admitted to the street interviewer that there was some element of saving face in front of peers and that he had a lot to say and would like to talk with the street interviewer at a later time but did not turn up at the agreed time and location.

Confidentiality

A high threshold of confidentiality was offered to children and youths who participated in the research to enable children and youths to share valuable and important information without fear of a breach of confidentiality. Confidentiality was offered apart from in exceptional circumstances where a child, youth or someone else they identified was in extreme and immediate danger⁶¹. This refers to situations where:

- life is at risk;
- a person is in need of hospitalisation;
- a child or youth discloses abuse, both present and historical, and, as part of this disclosure, it is identified that other children may be being abused.

Addressing child protection concerns

Given the nature of the research and the lives of the children and youths who participated in the research, it was envisaged that a range of child protection issues would be raised. Addressing child protection concerns was given significant consideration in the development of the research methodology and in the training with street interviewers and interpreters. A policy was devised where any child protection concerns raised through the research would be initially brought to the lead researcher who would seek advice, where appropriate, from Mkombozi in Tanzania and USK in Kenya, to establish the best means to address child protection concerns.

In practice there were a number of hindering and facilitating factors that influenced addressing child protection concerns. For example, in both Tanzania and Kenya agencies with responsibility for addressing child protection concerns do not necessarily have the capacity to respond effectively or have established procedures that will result in action being taken to protect the child. However, Railway Children's partnership relationship with Mkombozi and USK meant that it was possible for referrals to be made to both organisations when carrying out the research in locations where either organisation provided services for children who live alone on the streets. Where they had no services to meet the child's needs, their professional relationships with other organisations were drawn upon to enable support with referring a child or youth to a project or service. For example, in one location a child who was clearly very vulnerable, but did not participate in the research as he was new to the streets, was provided with a place in a centre and, through work carried out by centre staff, his

uncle was located with the aim of reunifying the child with his family.

It was particularly useful for the lead researcher to be able to discuss child protection concerns with other members of the research team who possessed in-depth knowledge of what services and options were possible in the locations where the research took place or, if they did not possess that local knowledge, were able to provide a contact who did.

Debriefing

At the end of the interview, time was spent with the child or youth to check how they were feeling and discuss any issues that arose during the interview. For example, if a child or youth had identified a specific set of circumstances or range of needs where a practice response was appropriate, and it was possible to make a referral to a local agency or take a child or youth directly to a project, this would be discussed at the end of the interview⁶². Sometimes it became apparent that a relatively simple action could meet a child or youth's needs. For example one young male, in the course of his interview, described how he was well-loved at home but had travelled far to find work after his father's death and could not raise the money to return home even though this is what he wanted to do⁶³. It was agreed that, to say thank you for his participation in the research, a bus ticket would be bought for him to return home⁶⁴.

Ensuring the safety and well-being of street interviewers

Before street interviewers started to carry out fieldwork with children and youths who live alone on the streets, their well-being and safety was given some consideration. Measures taken to protect physical safety depended upon individual environments where the research took place. In some areas, street interviewers worked in pairs, interviewing children close to one another. Some areas were avoided as they were known to be dangerous or there were indications to the research team that problems could arise if they were to interview in a particular location. Throughout the course of the fieldwork, some of the research team did experience threats or violence or risk of being robbed⁶⁵. Clearly there are a number of dangers when working with children on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya and the research team had to consider how they operated in order to keep themselves safe whilst carrying out the research.

The fieldwork and analysis could be mentally draining and, because of the experiences and circumstances of some of the children who participated in the research, street interviewers could find themselves feeling upset, angry or frustrated after working with a particular child or context⁶⁶. Whilst all of the street interviewers prioritised the children or youths they were working with at that time,

61 This model of confidentiality has been used previously by Smeaton E (2009) *Off the Radar: Children and Young People on the Streets in the UK* Sandbach: Railway Children, Smeaton E (2005) *Living on the Edge: The Experiences of Detached Young Runaways* London: The Children's Society and Pearce J Williams M & Galvin C (2002) *It's Someone Taking a Part of You: A Study of Young Women and Sexual Exploitation* London: National Children's Bureau.

62 With children's agreement, a number of children were referred to a local agency (as mentioned previously), taken to a centre for children who live on the streets or facilitated to receive medical attention.

63 Both this young person's individual story and the cultural practice of males taking responsibility to provide for their family after the death of their father are discussed in later sections of the report.

64 Whilst buying a bus ticket may seem a relatively straightforward exercise, due to the nature of life on the streets it is not appropriate to just buy a ticket and give it to the boy. It was agreed that to ensure that money was not stolen from the boy, and that the money was spent on a bus ticket, the lead researcher physically purchased the bus ticket. Then, in recognition that a bus ticket could be lost or stolen from the boy's pocket whilst asleep and sold on, it was agreed that the lead researcher would keep the bus ticket and meet the boy at the bus station the following morning before the bus left. This experience reveals how the consequences of making even a simple intervention have to be thought through in some depth to ensure the benefits of the intervention are achieved.

65 Some of these incidences are reported in more detail in sections of the report as they link to research findings.

66 Whilst carrying out analysis of the interviews, the two researchers also experienced such emotions at times.

there was often a need to talk through some of how they were feeling about something they had heard or seen that day and time was allocated for this, including a final debrief with all the street interviewers and interpreters at the end of the data collection stage.

4. Life Before Coming to the Streets: Family and Home

Turusifu

Turusifu lived with both his parents until they separated and he remained living at home with his mother. One day, aged nine, Turusifu was lighting the stove and the curtains caught fire. His mother beat him severely and told him to leave and live with his father. As he did not know where his father was, Turusifu lived on the streets in his home town, staying with a group of children who slept in video kiosks.

Turusifu's mother became unwell and moved to a larger town. Turusifu returned to live with his mother and helped care for her until her death. After his mother died, Turusifu was cared for by a number of women in the local area until he met his uncle who took him to live with his maternal aunt and grandmother in another town. Turusifu was then taken by his grandmother to his paternal grandfather in a rural area so that he could attend school. However, after his grandmother left, Turusifu was beaten ruthlessly by his grandfather and cut with knives. He was forced to work as a herdsman looking after goats instead of attending school. Turusifu found this maltreatment very difficult and went to the police,⁶⁷ telling them he was an orphan and that he had a grandmother in another town. The police put Turusifu on a bus destined for where his grandmother lived. Once there, his grandmother told him to return to his grandfather and gave him the bus fare to return but Turusifu went to the town where he had lived before being taken to his grandmother. He looked for, and found, his uncle who was an alcoholic and was not able to provide anywhere for Turusifu to live so Turusifu, aged ten, came to the streets where he has lived for the past seven years.

⁶⁷ In both Tanzania and Kenya there are various types of police: traffic police, municipal police, local police and so on. Children may have specified in their interviews the particular group to which they were referring but throughout the report all types of police are referred to simply as 'police' as this was the appropriate translation when translating from Swahili to English.

This section of the report addresses the family and home life of the children and youths prior to living on the streets and participating in the research. It is important to acknowledge, particularly for those readers unfamiliar with social and cultural family and community life in Tanzania and Kenya, that some of the patterns and issues addressed in this section of the report are experienced by many children and are not solely experienced by children and youths who live alone on the streets. Poverty, violence and reconstituted families⁶⁸ are common in the lives of children and youths who live on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya as well as being experienced by children and youths who do not live alone on the streets. Many have experienced the death of the parent who cared for them or both parents. Problems with step-parents are common as is abuse from extended family. Many of the children and youths who participated in the research have lost all contact with family members. A few children have no recollection of their parents.

4.1 Family form and relationships with parents and carers

Over a third of the children and youths who participated in the research lived with single mothers either from birth because the father was not present or because the parents separated and the child remained living with their mother. Parental separation could directly or indirectly lead to children and youths moving to the streets. For example, as explained in more detail at a later point in this section of the report, some mothers were unable to provide for their children after the father left the home. One child described how he was very happy living with his parents and wanted to live with them together. Once they separated:

“I thought I was better to separate and stay alone than stay with one parent ... so I also separated from them and came to town to try to fend for myself.”

A few children and youths described being moved to and fro between their parents which they found unsettling:

“When I went to my mother, my father would take me away and if I went to my father, my mother came to take me so I had no direction. I was spinning like that and I couldn’t study because of that: because if my father took me to school, I stopped when my mother took me away and vice-versa.”

Many of the children and youths experienced living with a number of different stepfathers or stepmothers and step-siblings. Polygamy was practiced by a number of the children’s fathers. Omega’s father, for example, had five wives. In addition, it was common for children to live with different members of their family at different stages of their childhood, as fitting with Tanzanian and Kenyan cultural practices relating to children and extended family.

Mothers

Some of the children and youths explicitly stated that they were loved by their mothers and that they loved their mothers:

“I love my mother, she is suffering with my brothers and sisters, my mother lacked school fees, they impregnated her and now her child is crawling.”

“I love mother and she loves me.”

Matatizo describes visiting his mother but states that, because of his age, he believes it is wrong for him to stay in the same home as his mother and her husband:

“I usually go back to my mother’s place because I love her so much. ... I must go to see my mother at least once per week on either Saturday or Sunday. ... I am as old as X (another boy on the streets who thinks he is 15). How can I sleep there while my mother is with her husband? It is not acceptable⁶⁹.”

From descriptions of family life and mothers’ actions and responsibilities it became clear that a number of mothers’ lives were very difficult and required working long hours to care for their family. Some of the mothers were unable to provide for their children and their children recognised this and took themselves to the street. Some of the children remained loyal to their mothers and financially supported them where possible:

Alex ran away from home because he was beaten by both parents. His parents separated and both remarried. He has been on the streets since he was six and thinks he has been on the streets for eight years. Alex sees his mother every Monday when she comes into town to sell vegetables at the market. Alex looks forward to seeing his mother. She used to offer him some money for food but, as she is poor, Alex will not take the money. If he were to do so, his younger brothers may not eat that day. If Alex has money, he gives his mother money when he sees her.

Despite being beaten and humiliated by his mother in public, Samuel visits her every Sunday and gives her money when his family are not eating:

“My mother wanted me to stay at home but I refused, well there are problems at home ... then I thought it was better to go and stay in town and what I would be doing is only going to greet her which she likes. ... I’d get information ... my brothers and sisters would be going to sleep hungry, so if I had any money I’d give it to them.”

68 The term ‘reconstituted families’ refers to family circumstances where, after breakdown in parental relationships or the death of a parent, the family form changes to include, for example, a step-parent and step-siblings or half siblings.

69 The problem that Matatizo refers to is likely to refer to situation where the home constitutes one room and it is shameful for older youths to sleep in the same room as his mother and father because of issues relating to sex and sexuality.

Working to earn money and providing money for mothers is a role that many young males in Tanzania and Kenya accept as their responsibility, particularly in the absence of a father. The experiences described above reveal how males who live alone on the streets still accept and meet this responsibility even though they no longer live with their families and have very little to meet their own needs.

A few children and youths experienced physical violence and other forms of abuse from their mothers:

After his father's death, family life became difficult for David and he lived, at various times, with members of his family: with his uncle and with his aunt and grandmother. David experienced physical abuse from all of these relatives including extreme abuse from his uncle. His mother told her brother that the abuse must stop and sent money for David but this money did not reach David as his uncle kept it for himself. David ran away and spent some time on the streets before being taken to a centre for boys living on the streets. Work was undertaken to reunify David with his mother and, four weeks before the research interview took place, David was returned home with the understanding that David would attend school. However, rather than arrange for him to attend school, David's mother sent him to cut sugar cane to earn money. David says life is hard because of his mother's treatment of him:

"My life is hard. To eat I must work and she (mother) sneers at me because of her food. ... Every time I remind her about going to school she tells me that I shall go but she doesn't do anything and when I ask her, she becomes furious. ... If you tell her about anything, even if it is not related to school issues, she becomes furious and blasts me. Sometimes she also threatens to deny me food. ... She waits until everybody is asleep, then she blasts me."

After a couple of weeks living with her, David was chased away from home by his mother because he refused to continue to work cutting sugar cane. David decided that it would be better if he stayed at his friend's house as there are books there and he is able to study. He occasionally sees his mother but fends for himself, earning money by fetching water.

Over a tenth of the children and youths who participated in the research described how they do not know their mothers. Some of these mothers have run away or left home in a range of circumstances:

Chitundu's mother left when Chitundu was a young baby. His father refused to tell Chitundu why but his paternal grandmother explained that his mother had epilepsy and often fell down and had an epileptic fit which caused problems within the family and compound. Others in the compound began to place pressure on Chitundu's father to get rid of his wife. Chitundu's grandmother explained that his parents also argued because of his father's drinking. When Chitundu's mother left, she tried to take Chitundu with her but his father's relatives refused to allow this so she left taking only Chitundu's older brother with her.

Eregi's mother left when Eregi was a young baby and she was pregnant with her second child. Eregi's mother was often beaten by her husband's family and she was chased away from home by her father-in-law.

When Immah was a month old, his mother ran away to a neighbouring country. Immah thinks this is because his parents quarrelled a lot before his birth. His father has explained to him that some of the reason for the quarrels was because of his father's use of stimulant herbs.

A few children and youths described how their mothers left when their father took another wife:

"My father had another elder wife; that is when my mother decided to leave so we left to live with that elder wife. My mother left us and never came back."

"We lived with Father when he remarried; that is why my mother left. ... She went taking my older sister with her."

Whilst polygamy is legal and traditional practice within some tribes and men may have several wives, some women do not agree with 'sharing' their husband with another wife. Some may feel that their husband does not love them as he does another wife and this may cause them to leave their husband, and sometimes their children. As traditionally in many tribes, children belong to the father's family⁷⁰, when wives leave it may be difficult for them to leave with their children. Some of the children's mothers felt forced to abandon their children due to their circumstances.

As Maxwell's experiences reveal, described later in this section of the report, poverty can also force a mother to abandon her children and leave them to fend for themselves.

A couple of youths did not like their mothers' behaviour and, in both these instances, some of the dislike of their mothers' behaviour related to alcohol: both using and selling alcohol. In addition, to his mother's drinking, Joseph also disliked her involvement with men:

70 There are exceptions to this. Whilst in many tribes in Kenya children belong to fathers, within the Kikuyus tribe, children belong to their mother.

When he was five, Joseph's parents began to quarrel and fight and his mother left to return to her family home. Joseph's father married another woman and Joseph and his siblings lived happily with his father and stepmother. When Joseph was 12, his father died and Joseph's mother returned which caused problems with Joseph's stepmother who eventually left to return to her family home. Joseph and his two sisters lived with his mother. Joseph's sister began to go out at night, leaving her baby with Joseph and his mother. Then Joseph's mother also started to go out drinking at night and return in the morning:

"She (oldest sister) used to leave a little child (the sister's baby) with us (Joseph and his younger sister), no food at home. The baby hadn't eaten; we suffered all night as the child cried all the night. Nobody helped us as she (Joseph's mother) locked the door from the outside so that we wouldn't be able to get out 'til morning (when Joseph's mother returned home)."

When Joseph's mother returned home drunk in the morning, she often beat the children whilst they were sleeping. When Joseph told his mother that he wanted her to change her shameful behaviour and look for a job, she beat him. Joseph's mother started to bring different men to the home:

"There was a time mother used to bring men into the house. She would give us money and tell us to leave the house for a while and come back at a certain time; then she would stay with the man. We would surely obey because, if refused, she would beat us so we were just compelled to obey that."

Joseph described how he and his sister were sad when their mother first left home and suffered because of this sadness but how they suffered more when she came back to them.

Some children recognised that their mothers were not in a position to provide for them as they were living in difficult circumstances:

After being reunified with his mother by a children's charity, Mosi recognised that his mother was not in a position to provide for him. He therefore returned to the street to fend for himself whilst retaining contact and visiting his mother. Mosi experienced physical abuse from his mother: being badly beaten by her was the initial reason he had left home aged seven. After being reunified with his mother, she threatened to burn him with hot water so Mosi, for a second and final time, left home and returned to the streets. Mosi views his mother as being the most important person in his life and knows that she is very poor and sick and that her life is hard.

Fathers

At least a third of the children and youths who participated in the research do not know who their father is and have never met their father. Approximately a fifth of children and youths described how their father abandoned the whole family:

"Life was good at home but my mother and father had a quarrel. My father left ... which made life difficult: the father who should have been the breadwinner was nowhere to be seen."

Within Tanzania and Kenya it is common practice for fathers from both poor and wealthy backgrounds to move away from the family to look for work elsewhere. Indeed it is common practice for both parents to work and live significant distances from their children who may remain living with both close and extended family relations. So since fathers working away from home and their family is common practice, some of the children and youths who participated in the research described how their father left the family home to seek work, leaving the family behind waiting for the money the father was supposed to provide to enable his family to survive, but did not send money home to them. Other fathers left their family permanently and all contact ceased.

Of those children who knew and lived, at some point, with their father, only two expressed an emotion about how their father felt about them:

Immah stated that his father does not love him and says he knows this because, when his father came home, he treated Immah in the same manner as Immah's stepmother treated Immah: that is harassing him⁷¹, beating him and being cruel to him. Because of this, Immah decided to go to the streets. However, Immah says he does not feel well when he is away from his father but that it is hopeless because his father's lack of love for him:

"I feel terribly bad but what will I do?"

Despite his father's drinking and failure to prevent Daraja's stepmother from beating and generally mistreating him, Daraja states that he loves his father and his father loves him.

Some of the children and youths described how their fathers were not reliable and would not always return home for months at a time. Others described how their father did not contribute to family life or provide for their family but just returned to eat; in many of these cases, the children described their father as a drunk:

"Sometimes my father came (home) and he was drunk. He just looked for food from us."

A small number of children and youths who participated in the research described how their fathers spent time in prison or were involved in crime. One of the children's fathers was serving a prison sentence for rape and a second father raped his daughter and spent time in prison but was released as the charge of rape was dropped. One child's father, who the child described as a thief belonging to the Mungiki⁷², was heavily involved in crime and was murdered by a guard.

Stepmothers

As described previously, reconstituted families and polygamy feature in the lives of children and youths on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya and, in many tribes, children belong to the father's family. When a father marries a new wife, she inherits his children⁷³. Nearly a tenth of the children and youths who participated in the research described problematic relationships with their stepmothers and experienced abuse from them⁷⁴:

"As my mother died, my father married another woman and, as I told you, that's when trouble happened."

"When my mother died, my father married another woman. That's when we began to get suffer (Ibada and his brother); to be tortured; made to suffer by the stepmother. ... Me and my brother decided to leave home and come here (to the streets)."

"She started mistreating me: she denied me food; I decided to leave."

As the above quote describes, some of the children and youths cited how they were treated by their stepmother as the reason they left home to come to the street:

"I was not in good understanding with my stepmother. ... When she gave me work to do ... it's a must to do it; like washing utensils, fetching water. But then she used to beat me up. One day she used a jug on me. It broke, I got swollen. ... One day she beat me up; I got mark (scar) here (Omega shows the street-interviewer)."

A number of the young males described how their stepmothers told lies about them to their fathers, making up things they had done or exaggerating when a child had been late home from school or from carrying out a chore. Rashidi described how his stepmother did not care for him and convinced Rashidi's father that Rashidi was dull:

"She (stepmother) didn't love me. She wouldn't bring me clothes. ... I had to stop going to school due to the problems I experienced from that mother (stepmother). ... Mother (stepmother) used to convince my father, claiming that I was dull ... (and father was) harassing me. ... Even eating was a problem. ... But my father believed what he was told by that mother (stepmother). That is what made me leave (home)."

Whilst Chitundu had a difficult relationship with his stepmother and was abused by her, he recognised that her life was hard. She worked long hours to provide food for four children and had to contend with Chitundu's father who was a drunk.

When children had a stepmother, it was very common for the stepmother's children to be treated very differently to her stepchildren:

When Ibada lived at home, his life changed when his mother died and his father remarried. His stepmother had other children and treated Ibada and his brother very differently to her children: she gave them less food and forced them to work on the land whilst her children rested and relaxed. Her children attended school but Ibada and his brother did not. Ibada's father knew that his children were being treated differently to his stepchildren but did not do anything to address this. It was these circumstances that led Ibada and his brother to run away.

There were a small number of children and youths who described very different relationships with their stepmothers than those described above: Joseph, Msela and Jimiyu all had very positive relationships with their stepmother:

"I love my (step) mother. ... I don't call her auntie, I call her mother because she loves me and I love her."

Others described their stepmother as being kind and caring. One child thought that his stepmother would want him to live with her if she found out he was living alone on the streets.

Stepfathers

Just under a tenth of children and youths who participated in the research experienced problems with stepfathers and were abused by them.

Erik was his parents' first child. When he was one, his father died and his mother married another man who had two children. This man also died and after some time, his mother married again and gave birth to a second child so there were four children. At first the family was a happy one and Erik felt that his stepfather (his mother's third husband) loved them all.

Eric's stepfather began to drink alcohol whilst their mother worked selling shoes and brought all the income into the house. As Erik's stepfather's own child grew older, he started to dislike the other three children. When Erik's mother was at church, Erik's stepfather, whilst drunk, would wake the children to send them to the shop. He would tell

⁷² A notorious organised gang in Nairobi.

⁷³ This practice differs to that of dominant patterns in Western countries where the majority of children remain living with their mother.

⁷⁴ Research with children and young people who live on the streets in the UK reveals that many have problematic relationships with stepfathers. Relationships within reconstituted families are inherently complex especially in relation to the step-parent be it a stepmother or a stepfather.

them that if they didn't find what he wanted, he would lock them out and they would not sleep in the house that night. As he sometimes sent the children out at night when the shops were shut, the children often slept outside. Their mother often returned from church to find the father inside the house and the children outside. She asked her husband why he was doing this and he started to beat her to such a degree that the neighbours intervened. Erik's stepfather started to lock the door with the children in the house so he could beat his wife. Erik and his siblings witnessed this and found it very distressing.

On one occasion Erik's stepfather poured hot tea on his stepson's face and burnt his eye so the child was not able to see properly. Erik took a chair and hit his stepfather on the head who was knocked to the floor. He then started to demolish the house, telling the three children who were not his that he did not want to see them at his house anymore. The three children went to live with their mother's sister.

The violence from Erik's stepfather to Erik's mother escalated and, whilst drunk, he tried to kill her. He was supposed to take medication to prevent him from drinking but would hide it and tell his wife that he had taken the medication when he had not. His health deteriorated to the point where he was told he may die. Erik's stepfather was taken by his brother for treatment and Erik and his siblings returned to live with their mother. Erik's mother was able to care for her family in a better way than when her husband was there. Meanwhile, her husband stopped drinking, found a job in the town where he was receiving treatment and started to save money, bought a plot of land and hired builders to build a house. He came to see Erik's mother and the children with a gift of rice. Gradually Erik and the rest of his family started to live once again with Erik's stepfather.

One day Erik's stepfather told his wife to take her children to their grandfather because he couldn't raise a child he didn't know. At first Erik's mother resisted but eventually she agreed to move to the house on the plot of land with her husband and leave Erik behind. Erik cried when she told him what she was doing and asked her how she could leave him alone with nobody to depend upon. His mother said that she would send him money. Erik was left in the home but the rent was not paid and the landlord locked the door and chased him away. His stepfather was the last to see Erik and gave him 2,000 shillings⁷⁵. He has not seen any of his family since this time or had any contact with them.

Some children experienced problems with their stepfather which led them to come to the streets:

"My mother was remarried; we had a stepfather and he never liked me. He used to mistreat me: he would beat me; he would tell me he is not my father. One day I realised he was not doing the right thing; I just decided to leave."

"My natural father died and then my mother went and married somebody else. My father (stepfather) married somebody else. He beat me and my sister. He cut my sister's arm and I saw that my father (stepfather) could even hit me; he could break my arm or kill me. ... I started to be beaten so I saw that I should stay by myself as I saw that my father (stepfather) didn't want me."

Siblings

Due to the extent of reconstituted families, children could find themselves living in a household with blood siblings, half-siblings and step-siblings not related to them who were the children of a stepmother or stepfather from a previous marriage. As described previously, children could experience being treated very differently than a half or step-sibling, being, for example, refused food, beaten, kept out of school, forced to work and rejected.

As described at a later point in this section of the report, some children were very dependent upon older siblings when their parents died. Many of the children experienced the death of one or more sibling. Siblings were often separated, particularly after parents and step-parents separated. Sometimes children were shared equally between the two parents or one was placed with grandparents or stayed with their mother whilst other children were shared out amongst relatives.

Some children described having had the desire to see their siblings whilst they were away from home and living on the streets:

"I had a yearning to see my young brothers and sisters and my mother at home."

It was common for some children to return home periodically to see their siblings. For some, this yearning was linked to concern for their siblings' welfare. Waitimu risks the wrath of his mother, who he describes as chasing him away from home, to return home to visit his younger siblings. Many children expressed sadness at not seeing their siblings who lived at home:

"I don't feel good (living on the streets) because ... I miss my sisters and my brothers."

Some of the children have come to the streets with a sibling, such as Jirani, after their parents died and they were unable to remain in the home. After Lily and her brother were placed in separate centres for children, they ran away from their respective centres and lived on the streets together:

When Lily was ten, she and her brother were living in different centres. Her brother came to find her and they ran away to another town where they lived on the street together, collecting food to eat from the rubbish dump and begging. They used glue and marijuana and slept in a ditch. Lily was on the streets for three months and did not like it but wanted to be with her brother. Her time on the streets ended when a member of staff from the centre she had run away from found her and took her back there.

Some children have lost all contact with their siblings and do not know where their brothers or sisters are. Some children expressed regret at this and a desire to see their siblings. For one child, literally losing his sister at a busy bus station meant that he has never seen her again and this shaped his route on to the streets:

Jimiyu found life at home difficult after the death of his father because of his older half-brother and the family's poverty. Until he was eight, Jimiyu survived by going from door-to-door and being given food by neighbours. When he was eight, Jimiyu left home with his sister, who was getting married, to travel to another city some distance away where his sister was setting up home in that city and Jimiyu decided to go with her in the hope of attending school. However, when they arrived at the bus station at their destination, Jimiyu lost his sister at the crowded bus station and has not seen her since. Jimiyu stayed on the streets for five years at this place in case he found his sister but did not do so and moved to the streets in another city.

Others described how a change in a sibling's status, primarily marriage, affected them. Simba explained, for example, how his sister who had cared for him was now married and this meant a change in circumstances for him:

"You know, I am here (on the streets) like this by myself and she has got a husband. Now, I can't start going to visit her. Leave them (Simba's sister and her husband) first to live; one day I will meet up with her."

A couple of children described how they used to beat their younger siblings:

Badibadas' siblings were a few years younger than him and, when they were three, four and five, he used to beat them despite caring for them. Badibadas explained that he had to leave home because he was doing bad things at home:

"I was hitting those younger ones (his younger siblings)."

Fadihili also admitted that he beat his siblings, explaining that he was disliked by his family because he beat his younger brothers and sisters when they provoked him. He in turn, was beaten by his father for beating his siblings and this is why he was living on the streets as there were no other problems at home.

One child described how he ended up on the streets because of his brothers' fears that he would be able to take their father's property because he was educated:

"I was just staying at home, then my brothers thought if I continued studying, I might take my father's property so they bewitched me and ... that's why you see me on the street."

A few children were maltreated by their brothers' wives:

"My father left us. ... We were brought up by my grandmother. ... They decided the family was too big to bring up so I left to live with my brother at our home. Then my brother married: that is when my woes began: his wife started mistreating me."

"While I was continuing with my studies, that was when my brother's wife started mistreating me. When I got home, if she cooked rice, she would give me stale Githeri⁷⁶ which was cooked two days back. I told her that she had no right to treat me like that and that I wouldn't tolerate it as this was our home and we had to take care of our property. She was even beating me and every time my brother told her off, she was not keen (but) she had my brother on her side. I told my brother all my woes but I decided to leave and come here (to the streets) because it is better to suffer while here (on the streets) than to suffer in the hands of your family."

As the above quote reveals, sometimes this maltreatment directly led to a child leaving home:

"The day that I left, my brother's wife asked me to go and fetch water. I had gone for a day without food ... she had cooked and refused to give me food. When my brother came, she told him I had eaten. I denied it but my brother said there is no way his wife could not give me food. I told him that I can't tolerate that mistreatment anymore."

In Tanzania and Kenya complex inheritance systems can have a significant impact upon women and children and it is possible that some of the abuse experienced from stepmothers, siblings and brothers' wives is linked to

76 'Githeri' is a Kenyan dish consisting of beans and corn.

inheritance issues. Experiences of some of the children and youths who participated in the research reveal that they posed a threat to individuals securing land and property for themselves or their children.

Grandparents

Many of the children who participated in the research lived with their grandparents or a grandparent, most frequently their grandmother⁷⁷. Some children were placed with grandparents because their mother was unable to care for them or because their father worked away or remarried and a decision was made that the child would live with his or her grandparents. In most of these cases, children were not abandoned but left with grandparents, as fitting with the cultural practice of children living with extended family to enable parents to work. Children also lived with grandparents when a parent, or parents, died, and there was nobody else to care for them. Some children reported very positive relationships with grandparents and feeling loved, cared and protected by them, but others described being harassed, neglected or abused by a grandparent. In one case, a child's grandmother was involved in a child being tricked into leaving home:

Lusala was happy living with his mother, father and siblings. After his father's death, Lusala and his family went to live with his mother's family. Whilst living with his grandmother, an adult male came to the home and offered Lusala the opportunity to come and live with him. Lusala later found out that this male was his cousin but did not know at the time. His grandmother encouraged this plan and it was agreed that Lusala would travel to the city with this man and return after the school holidays had ended. However, after leaving home with this man, Lusala discovered that there was no place for him to stay and that his grandmother had been complicit in a trick to lure Lusala away from home.

As previously described, some of the grandparents were instrumental in a mother leaving home and the child because of how she was treated by her parents-in-law. After being abused by his grandmother and running to the streets, Hirizi was reunified with her by an organisation working with children on the streets. He feels that he has benefited from returning to live with his grandmother:

"I changed because, formerly, I used to play truant; I used to run away from school and stay on the streets and then I would return home in the evening. But since I came to stay with my grandmother, I have been able to settle in school and if I pass the mock exam, then I shall understand that I can learn a lot if I stay with my relatives."

A few children turned to grandparents, sometimes travelling significant distances to reach them, when they felt unable to remain living with their parents or other relatives but were then rejected by their grandparents:

"My grandmother didn't want me and my aunty didn't want me and so, again, I went (to the streets)."

Some grandparents tried their best to care for their grandchildren but, as time went on, found it more difficult to do so:

"My father left us and ... we were brought up by my grandmother. As we grew my grandmother became old; she had no strength."

The experiences of some of the children and youths who participated in the research highlight how kinship care can be problematic.

Some children cared deeply for their grandmother, recognised that their grandmother had done their best to provide for them and wanted to work to be able to support their grandmothers. In Tanzania and Kenya it is often viewed as the role of the young and active to look after the older and less able generation and some children and youths who participated in the research accepted their responsibility. For example, when Eregi was asked what he hoped for in the future, he replied that he would like:

"To work. I owe my grandmother."

Some of the children maintained a relationship with their grandmothers whilst living on the streets and visiting, taking money or food when able to.

The majority of children and youths cared for by grandparents were solely cared for by grandmothers. A couple of children described how their grandfather played a significant role, either by protecting the child from parental physical abuse or by being a perpetrator of abuse, as highlighted by Turusifu's story at the beginning of this section of the report.

It is important to emphasise that even though relationships with key family members such as fathers and stepmothers could be problematic, and some children did not receive any support from extended family when, for example, parents died, other children described how they had good relationships with relatives other than their parents:

"They (extended family) haven't been bad to me. They like me. I would meet with them (when he was living on the streets). At times they would promote me."

4.2 Parental issues

Parental alcohol misuse

Just over a tenth of children reported that they had a parent who had a problem with alcohol. The majority of parents described as drunks by their children were fathers; only three children described mothers as using alcohol. There seemed to be more acceptance of fathers drinking and whilst children clearly did not like how their fathers behaved towards them and others when they were drunk, clear disapproval towards their mothers was voiced by two of the three young males whose mothers drank alcohol. Some children described how a parent's alcohol use caused problems both for the child and family life:

"When I was born my father was capable, he even owned a car but one day he got problems. He had to sell the car and the person he sold it to gave him half of the money, and was meant to give him the other half the next day, but he disappeared. ... My father, after he was swindled out of his car he used all his money on getting alcohol, local brew, he would return home blind drunk every day, sometimes he'd be flat on Mum's bed, another time he'd find Mum had taken the sheets off and he'd go mad, they'd argue again and again and things went on like that. ... Well, they're still together but our father left ... I mean, if he stays even here at home, he goes back there to drink, comes back there's just shouting, he'll be arguing with Mum every day. You know if somebody is at home and drunk all the time, home needs to be safe, it's not good."

Chitundu, as seen later in this section of the report, was often punished by not being given food and would be fed by neighbours:

"If my father was drunk and heard that I had been to eat at another's house, this would mean the stick (for Chitundu). He would start to shout 'why had they given a naughty boy food'."

Where a child identified their father as frequently being drunk, physical abuse always accompanied the alcohol use:

Fredrik lived with his father, stepmother and siblings. After being thrown out of home because the rent had not been paid, Fredrik's father built a house for his family. However, at this time, his father began to drink and to become generally unruly. He spent all the money on alcohol and there was often no food and the children went to bed hungry. When Fredrik's father was drunk, he would beat his children if they made even the slightest mistake.

Matu is seven and has been on streets because his mother beat him when she was drunk, leaving scars on his back. Matu would like to return home but is too frightened to do so as he knows his mother will beat him as he once returned home to

be with his mother and the beatings started again. On one occasion, Matu's mother came to look for him but he was terrified when he saw her and hid in the sewers until he was convinced she had gone away.

After Franco's mother died, his father began to drink. After receiving his wage, Franco's father went out drinking and returned home demanding food, even though he had left no money for food or bought any food, and then beat Franco. Franco decided to leave home because of how his father's drinking affected him: no food in the home, his father refusing to spend money on Franco's schooling and beating Franco.

Sometimes violence was directed at others who tried to protect the child:

"As I was eating with my grandfather ... my father said 'finish your food and I will teach you discipline'. My grandfather told me to eat quickly so that we would go to bed. When I finished eating, my father started beating me. My grandfather tried to intervene but he was also beaten. So my father beat me and grandfather. ... So they fought; imagine, somebody fighting his father?"

Domestic violence

A few of the children who participated in the research described how their fathers or stepfathers were violent to their mother. Matatizo, for example, from being a very young child witnessed his father beating his mother:

"I realised that my father didn't love my mother. Sometimes he would bring my mother some money for food and other times he didn't but demanded food from my mother. If there was no food, he starts beating her, something which I didn't like and, you see, I wasn't able to change anything because ... I was still young and wasn't able to do anything apart from just watching."

Most of this domestic violence took place when the perpetrator was drunk. Samuel for example, after he had left home and was living on the streets heard that his stepfather, whilst drunk, had attacked his mother with a machete:

"I was in town and heard that my mother was admitted to hospital. When I went to see her, I found that she had been cut with a machete. ... He (stepfather) cut my mother with a machete."

4.3 Abuse and maltreatment at home by family members and others

Many of the children were abused and maltreated by their parents, extended family members who cared for them and others they lived with:

“Every day when I came home from school they used to give me fifteen minutes only to run home. ... I used to get tired so I walk slowly; then they (Leo’s parents) beat me up. ... They forbade me food. ... They beat me for nothing; they beat me all the time. ... When I go there (home) they chase me away they tell me to go back and sleep where I was. If I come from playing football, they tell me to go back and sleep in the football field. ... I always finish my chores before I go to play football; that is when they chased me away. ... I went home and they told me they will beat me senseless and burn me, so I left.”

“She (Daraja’s stepmother) started mistreating me. She denied me food ... ordered me to do the dishes ... lots of work ... she was mistreating us (Daraja) for nothing ... like food she denied me completely ... we would eat at the neighbours or came to town (to beg for food). ... Ordering that I do so many things.”

“You know I once stayed with my father somewhere for some time but he disregarded me. ... He would insult me seriously. I hate being insulted and I am not used to (it). ... He told me that I was a town woman, that I was a harlot and that I had husbands in town as well as insulting me with my mother. He also told me that I was sleeping with my mother, that I was doing it with my mother. ... My father beats me. ... You see all these wounds on my head (Matatizo shows the street interviewer his head), he is the cause of these.”

Physical abuse

Physical abuse in the home was commonly experienced by children and youths who participated in the research. Some of this abuse was experienced in the form of corporal punishment, which is the deliberate infliction of pain for the purpose of disciplining or deterring behaviour perceived as unacceptable of children. Corporal punishment has been identified by the UN as abusive practice and a UN global study on violence against children stated that every society should stop all violence against children be it violence in the form of discipline or that accepted as tradition⁷⁸. Corporal punishment is commonly used in both Tanzania and Kenya⁷⁹ as there are a number of beliefs that support its use. For example, Stipstad et al, writing about Tanzania, describe how:

“It is commonly feared that children will lose respect for their caregivers and elders if they are not beaten, and that children will become impossible to control. In addition disciplining by beating is often seen as positive for the child’s development.”
(Snipstad et al, 2006; 3.)⁸⁰

Nearly half of the children who participated in the research described experiencing physical abuse at the hands of family members:

Rashidi’s father was violent to all his family when he was drunk. After Rashidi’s mother’s left because of his father’s drinking, Rashidi remained living with his father and stepmother. Rashidi was beaten regularly, often with implements such as sticks and wire. Rashidi’s father has also tied Rashidi up and then beaten him. Rashidi has a number of scars on his head where he has been beaten.

The physical abuse experienced by children was often brutal:

“My uncle would tie me with a rope and put me up in the roof (when he beat David).”

“I lost one cow ... he (uncle) beat me up and the cow was found. ... He beat me with a stick on the head here and on my back. ... He hit me and my head swelled.”

“He hit me with a stick. (If) the stick broke, he can hit you even with his fists or with his legs.”

“I stayed with my brother from Class Three through to Class Six⁸¹. Then I saw that the beatings (from Omega’s brother) were even on the increase so I decided to leave.”

“My father beat me. ... There was a period he used to beat me a lot.”

Balozi resisted being beaten which led to his father tying him up so he could beat him:

“My father needed to lock me inside, tie me with a rope: that is when he could beat me. ... He used to tie my hands and legs with a rope.”

Hirizi was often beaten by his grandmother and described being beaten with wire:

“One night I had been locked out and the following day I went to the street. When I returned (home) that evening, I had to kneel down pleading but as I knelt there she (grandmother) came behind me and hit me with a wire. I was so seriously beaten that I will never forget it.”

78 Pinheiro P (2006) Rights of the child: Report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children New York: The United Nations Secretary-General.

79 As noted by Snipstad et al (2006), there are at least 106 countries in the world that allow corporal punishment in schools and in the penal system.

80 Snipstad M B Flakk G & Mfangavo L (2006) ‘Reviving children care practices: Can a child be disciplined without a stick?’ in E A Lothe M Daniel M B Snipstad & N Sveaass (eds) Strengths in Broken Places: Marginalisation and Empowerment Oslo: Unipub forlag.

81 In Tanzania children start primary school at the age of seven and continue for seven years, in Kenya they start at the age of six or seven and continue for eight years. Each year is referred to as a ‘class’ or a ‘standard’. Therefore a child that is in Class Three is likely to be nine or ten, a child in Standard Six is likely to be 12 or 13.

Children described being beaten with a range of 'instruments' such as wire or with sticks and cut with knives. One child described being hit with a cooking spoon which added insult as:

"You know, in our culture it is wrong to hit somebody with a cooking spoon."

Experiencing physical abuse was often a direct trigger for a child to run away to the streets:

When James lived at home, his father often beat him. For example, if his father told James to fetch water and James was a little late, his father would beat him. James ran away because his father beat him so severely and he could no longer bear to be beaten.

Sometimes fear of violence led a child to run away to the streets:

After Fredrik's parents separated, his mother left and married another man. After beating him, Fredrik's father threatened to send him to a remand home so Fredrik ran away and spent some time living on the streets. Fredrik left the streets and stayed with his mother. However, there was an incident when Fredrik was talking with a neighbour's child when the neighbour told Fredrik to stop talking to the children:

"My mum interfered and stopped me saying I should leave him alone. She then threatened me with a panga⁸², hitting hard (with the panga) on the floor to show her fury. It is then I excused myself by saying I was going to play outside; that is when I ran off."

It was made clear to some children that they were no longer welcome at home after being beaten:

After being beaten by his mother, Darweshi went for a walk, returned home to find the door locked, kicked it open. Darweshi decided that it was no longer possible for him to remain at home, boarded a bus and came to the streets of the nearest urban centre.

Waitimu's father left the family so Waitimu lived at home with his mother who was always angry with him and beat him regularly. Because he was not being fed at home and was hungry, he often fell asleep at school. To encourage Waitimu to keep attending school, a teacher suggested that Waitimu leave his school bag and books at school overnight so that Waitimu would return to school the next day. One day he returned to school to find this his bag had been burnt and his books stolen.

He told his mother who chased him and told him not to return home. The following day Waitimu saw his uncle who also told him not to return to live with his mother.

Research addressing the worries of children in Tanzania⁸³ describes how vulnerable, orphaned and poor children appear to experience the harshest treatment in schools and how children stop attending school because of fear of the physical punishment of schools. Children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya were also subject to violence at school which contributed to their decision to run away to the streets:

Samuel experienced problems at school, did not always attend because of these problems and, in turn, was beaten at home for failing to attend school. He was beaten by all the teachers and his mother in front of all the other children in the school:

"I didn't like the idea of making me repeat class at school. ... You know me, school, I'd go and could get real problems. The teachers love you if your mother's giving something or other. I didn't have any friends; even in class, I didn't have any friends. I used to hate it, even in break time. I'd just sleep maybe on the desk. If there was noise in the class, the monitor wrote down the names: he'd write down mine and I'd get beaten, I didn't like school at all, I'd go home and tell my mother what had happened but then even she would beat me again. I'd end up leaving home telling my mum I'd be going to school but not going. ... If she found out she'd take me to school. I've been beaten before now by every teacher in the school. ... I never used to go. I'd say goodbye to Mum and go and hang out in the market with other boys. ... One morning, my mum stopped me and asked me how many days it was since I'd been to school. I told her 'about a week I've not been to school'. So, the teachers beat me, all of them together with my mother ... in front of students. Those (students) they get them to hold you. ... They grab you, then your head; they put you inside the desk where you put your exercise books. Your head's there, somebody's holding you from above and your body's flat. Then they beat you ... every teacher ten times. ... Teachers were like eight. Together with my mum; she beat me as well. ... So when I saw (experienced) this, I went to town. ... I've not been back to school. I live my life here in town."

Sexual abuse

Whilst none of the children who participated in the research identified being sexually abused in the home, there were instances where a child or young person's circumstances could be affected by sexual abuse from fathers. For example, Turusifu, as described at the beginning of Section 4 experiences guilt and depression

82 A 'panga' is a machete.

83 Snipstad M B Lie G T & Winje D (2005) 'What do Tanzanian children worry about?' African Journal of AIDS Research 4 pg 183 – 193.

related to the role he played in his father's rape of Turusifu's sister. Hirizi, repeatedly rejected by his father, was told by his father that Hirizi had to allow his father to sodomise him to be his son:

When Hirizi was born, his father denied paternity and disowned his son. Hirizi's mother, who was certain of her son's paternity, left the infant Hirizi at his father's gate:

"I cried so my grandmother (Hirizi's father's mother) came to pick me up so from there I stayed with her for two years."

Hirizi's grandmother then took him back to his mother, who cared for Hirizi whilst she worked running a kiosk. Hirizi attended nursery and then school but then there was no money for him to continue attending school so his mother:

"showed me my father and said I could go to him and ask for something. So I approached my father and said, 'good morning father!' I just greeted him with respect but he said to me 'I am not your father and if you come home I will cut you into pieces with a bush knife'. I became so scared and ran away."

Hirizi ran away from home because he was beaten so often by his grandmother. Hirizi found living on the streets difficult and, when seeing his father, decided to approach his father and ask him for help:

"(I) said to him 'please father, forgive me I am suffering so much on the street'; then he replied 'stay away. You are not my child. If you are my child, you must first come so that I sodomise you then you will be my child.' I became so scared and ran away, I told him that I was going to report him to the police but he threatened me."

Neglect, rejection and abandonment

As the quotes and stories highlighted in this section of the report reveal, many children experienced neglect, rejection and abandonment. This could be at the hands of birth parents, step-parents and other relatives. When children lived with other family members, some felt that they were not cared for by their relatives and were rejected:

"I see like my relatives, especially my uncles, have no love. They love their own children but have no love for their brother's children. So you find that everything I do is wrong and nothing good I can do, according to them. ... I've got no relatives that are interested in us. I wish we (Aziza and her child) had someone who cared because it would be better."

Many children were driven out of home by family members:

Balozi lived with his younger siblings and mother and father until his father left in search of a better life. When Balozi was about five, his mother became very sick. His father was informed by phone of his wife's condition but did not return until after her death, when he took Balozi to live with his paternal grandfather. After a short period of time, Balozi's father remarried and took Balozi to live with him, his new wife and her child who was older than Balozi. After the birth of Balozi's father and stepmother's first child, his father began to change towards him, refusing to speak to him and then to chase him from the house. Balozi started to live on the streets but sometimes snuck into his father's house to get clothes. Balozi continued to attend school and then, when his father calmed down, he was able to return home. When Balozi was in Standard Seven, his father refused to pay for school fees and school uniform, so Balozi looked for scrap metal to sell or asked his aunt for help with money so he could continue with his schooling. Then, Balozi's father chased him away from home permanently.

Whilst other children were not actively driven away from home, it was made very difficult for them to remain in the home:

Alex's parents split up when he was five. His mother married another man and his father married another woman. Alex lived with his father and stepmother. He was made to work a lot, did not go to school and his stepmother was always telling him to go and live with his mother. But his mother could not afford to send Alex to school and he also had to do a lot of work at his mother's home since they could not afford to send him to school. Alex was beaten by both parents when he lived at home. He says he was beaten just because they wanted to beat him or for the most minor of mistakes. As a result of all the beatings, there was not peace at home.

"The first time I went back to my father, he asked me why I ran away from home and when he beat me I ran to my mother who beat me up as well so I ran away into the street straight away. It happened that if I went home they gave me a lot of work and they didn't take me to school so I decided to run away."

When Baraka was a young child his mother and father separated. His mother left and Baraka does not know where she is. Baraka continued to live with his father and said that he saw many problems from this time as his father was involved with many women and his father's behaviour with women caused many scandals. Sometimes Baraka and his father lived with these women and life could be hard for Baraka as he wasn't always given food. It was made difficult for him to attend school and sometimes he was told not to go to school but to herd the cows. Baraka ended up on the streets because life at home became too difficult. His father became abusive towards him when his stepmother said he had made a mistake that he had not made and so Baraka ran away.

Chitundu's stepmother worked in a greengrocers and Chitundu had to come home from school at lunchtime to cook lunch for his siblings and then return to school. Sometimes Chitundu arrived late at lunchtime and when his stepmother heard about this, she shouted at Chitundu and would not allow him supper or breakfast. His stepmother would also tell his father who would beat Chitundu.

When Dennis was a young child, he was left in charge of his siblings with fatal consequences:

"Many years ago, it was when I was very young, my younger siblings, I'd been left to look after them; Mum had gone to fetch water. ... So, when she'd gone to fetch water and left me with the baby, you see me, I was still small, I didn't have any sense. ... I was about five or six. Then my friends came and asked me to join them ... we were rolling inside sacks. I forgot that I was looking after the child and left him and went to play. When I returned I found him sleeping but when I tried to wake him up so that I could give him porridge, he didn't wake up, I tried opening his eyes but when I opened them they were white like paper. I tried waking him again and again but he didn't wake up. He had been playing with a bucket of water and fell in. A lady who was digging nearby had spotted him and taken him out of the bucket but by that time he was already dead, I started crying and more and more people gathered round. When my mother came back people knew that the child was already dead and she knew something was wrong, so my mother started crying. That bucket is still there even today; it has been there for many years; nobody has touched it."

As seen in a number of the children's quotes and stories, being denied food was a punishment inflicted upon children and could play a part in a child's decision to leave home and move to the streets. It is common practice within family life for children to be allocated specific responsibilities and chores to contribute to the maintenance of the household. However, the research reveals that being forced to work to what children considered exorbitant degrees and harassment could also force unwanted children away from home. Many children also explicitly and implicitly described how parents and carers preventing them from attending school could force the child to leave.

From children's accounts of how parents and carers behaved towards them, it can be seen that some parents and carers had good intentions towards the child in their care but their approach to rearing children sometimes had negative results:

"I used to be locked in the house so I decided to leave. ... She (aunt) wouldn't allow me to play with the other children lest they teach me street things and I escape into the street one day (and became deeply entrenched in street life never to return home)."

In a couple of cases, a child returned home after hearing that his or her mother was very ill and acted as a carer for their mother:

"When mother started falling sick, she persuaded me to return home. She got admitted in hospital so I was staying close to her for her care while in hospital. Then she was discharged so I returned home and I was like a normal child after returning home. Unfortunately she passed away so I remained at home."

4.4 Children caring for others in the family

In Tanzania and Kenya, taking care of others in the family whilst parents are out working or carrying out other activities to support the household is a task commonly undertaken by children. In addition, many children also care for aging relatives and parents who are ill. Caring responsibilities can be very stressful for children⁸⁴. It is also important to recognise that there can be positive effects of caring such as developing responsibility and self-worth⁸⁵.

Some of the children who participated in the research described how they cared for younger siblings whilst their parents worked or were carrying out chores:

4.5 Death of parents and carers

As described in the introduction section of the report, there are high numbers of orphans in both Tanzania and Kenya. As noted by Evans, experience of those working with orphans reveals that many are traumatised, poorly socialised, lacking in emotional support, receive little education and are generally poorly equipped for adult life⁸⁶. Nearly half of the children who participated in the research were orphans which could leave them in a range of particularly vulnerable circumstances:

84 Skodval M & Andreouli E (2011) 'Using Identity and Recognition as a Framework to Understand and Promote the Resilience of Caregiving Children in Western Kenya' Journal of Social Policy Vol 4 Issue 4.

85 Ibid.

86 Evans R (2005) 'Social Networks, Migration, and Care in Tanzania' Journal of Children and Poverty 11 pg 111 – 129.

Aluna does not know her father and was raised by her mother who struggled to provide for her because she earned very little money. Aluna's mother developed an illness related to blood pressure and died and Aluna was sent to live with her aunt. Aluna's aunt refused to pay Aluna's school fees and forced her to stay at home and carry out household chores whilst her cousins attended school. Aluna's aunt began to physically abuse Aluna, causing Aluna to leave and move to the streets.

Evie and her mother lived on their own until Evie was ten and her mother died after an illness. Evie did not have a place to stay and was taken in by a woman as a house girl. Evie was not allowed to go to school but spent all her time cooking, cleaning, washing clothes and looking after the woman's baby. Evie was beaten and generally mistreated by this woman. Evie has burn marks on her face from an iron that fell on her. At first, because she had nowhere to go, Evie remained in these circumstances but left one day to wander the streets.

Jirani is on the streets because both his parents died. His father died in a road accident and, after hearing of her husband's death, his mother collapsed and died in hospital with very high blood pressure. Relatives came for the funeral but left making no arrangements for Jirani and his brother. At first Jirani and his brother went back to their house and were fed by neighbours. They were unable to pay the rent and the house was taken from them and their belongings locked away.

Both Lily's parents died when she was a baby and she lived with her older sister and brother at home where a neighbour brought them food. Lily's sister ran away when Lily was three and her brother was six and the two young children remained at home on their own for a while. An aunt came to get the two children and they were placed in separate centres.

Masawe lived with his parents. After their deaths, he went to live with grandparents. An uncle lived nearby who often accused Masawe of stealing his property and beat him. His uncle often taunted Masawe about his parents being dead and told Masawe that he shouldn't be there with his grandparents. Masawe described how his grandmother also started to believe that he was a thief, even though it was not him but his cousins who stole, and to say that he should leave. Eventually Masawe decided that he had to leave and came to the streets.

When a mother who was a single parent or both parents died, some children went to live with relatives, for example an aunt or grandparent. In many cases, they were not treated well by their relatives:

Respick has never met his father and was his mother's only child. His mother died and he lived with his mother's sister, his aunt, who he described as harassing and torturing him. Because of this, and because he was fed only little amounts of food and made to work long hours, he ran away.

When children lived with an aunt after a parent's death, problems could occur when the aunt married and the aunt's husband did not want the aunt's nephews and nieces:

After his parents died, Peter and his older brother and sister went to live with an aunt. After some time, Peter's aunt married and bore a child. After this child's birth, the child's father told Peter and his siblings to leave. The children left, went their different ways and Peter ended up on the streets.

Sometimes elder siblings cared for younger children after the death of a parent or parents but, in all instances where this happened, the elder sibling left and the younger children were left to fend for themselves and were not able to, as described by Reuben at the beginning of the report.

Many of the children and youths who participated in the research did not describe the circumstances in which their parents died. This could be for a number of reasons such as children being too young to know the cause of their parents' or carers' deaths or, where HIV/AIDS is the cause of death, because of the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS. A couple of children described how their parents were murdered:

"My father was stabbed in the chest with a knife by a neighbour (at a party) and he died."

Whilst many others described sadness at the death of a parent and identified the death of either one or both parents as the point when their life changed, Evie was one of the few children who clearly expressed how she feels about her mother's death:

Whilst on the streets, Evie longed for her mother's spirit to come to her. Evie self-harms and thinks about suicide wherever she is, on the streets and in the centre, and thinks that how she feels is linked to her mother's death.

Children who experience the death of a parent, or parents, not only experience grief when a parent dies but also loss, suffering and sorrow before the death of the parent⁸⁷. When death is as a result of AIDS, loss and sadness is exacerbated by the stigma of AIDS resulting in children feeling shame, fear and rejection⁸⁸.

4.6 Poverty

As described in the introduction to the report, there are high levels of poverty in both Tanzania and Kenya. The majority of children and youths who participated in the research described conditions of poverty that played a part in them coming to the streets:

After Maxwell's father died, his mother struggled to find money to pay for food and rent to provide for her four children and herself. The children were expelled from school because they were not attending as their mother could not afford school clothes. Maxwell and his family were forced to stay with neighbours but these neighbours forced Maxwell to work hard. The neighbours then said they could only take his mother and the youngest child. Maxwell's mother said the three older children were old enough to fend for themselves. Maxwell, aged 11, was brought into the city by another boy who showed him how to live on the streets. He does not know what happened to his two other siblings.

In many cases, the parent or parents of children worked but were not able to earn enough money to provide for their family. Sometimes the reluctance for a father to provide for his family and the ensuing conditions of poverty experienced by the family led to parental separation. This, in turn, could lead to children living with other relatives as the mother was unable to provide for her children. A family could be plunged into poverty when the father left the home, as Salim describes:

"Life was good at home but my father and mother had a quarrel. My father left for X (name of the town) leaving me there (at home) which made life difficult: the father who should have been the breadwinner was nowhere to be seen."

Links between poverty, the ability of families to provide a nurturing environment and children's behaviour are well established⁸⁹. It has also been suggested that, in sub-Saharan Africa, the combination of poverty and social marginalisation leads to marriages and households of poor families being more unstable than those of rich families⁹⁰. Poverty is also recognised in literature addressing the experiences of children and youths who live on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya as a significant underlying factor in how children and youths find themselves living on the streets. Poverty hinders families from providing for their children and exerts significant pressure on relationships between children and adults⁹¹.

In a consultation with youths who experienced living on the streets in Kenya, youths were able to link poor living conditions in the home to an increase in various forms of violence that eventually contributed to the child running away permanently⁹².

Many of the children understood the pressures their parent or parents faced when living in poverty:

"How can I stay at home while ... Mum is not doing very well financially; depending upon her would be like disturbing her."

Financial pressures played a part in many of the children's decision to leave home and come to the streets. For example, Ouga did not return home because of the pressure it would cause his mother when he was sent home from school because his mother had not paid his school fees:

"I was sent home from school for fees; I feared going to disturb my mother. ... I just left home because of the school fees. Also the uniform contributed towards my leaving home. I had to cut my trousers to get a pair of shorts."

Poverty was the reason that many children were compelled to leave school because their parent or parents were unable to pay school fees and provide school uniform and books. Children were also taken out of school, or not allowed to attend school so that they would work to earn money.

Many of the children realised that, to survive, they had to leave home and to fend for themselves:

"My mother is already passed away and I never saw my father. ... I was living with my aunt who wasn't able to provide for me and all her children so I was compelled to leave."

"There are many things I lacked at home and that is why I decided to leave home and come to fend for myself."

It was common for a child to believe that there was a higher likelihood of surviving if they left home and came into a town or city as they believed they would find work:

"I thought if I came to town I could get a job somewhere but when I got here, I got no job."

As the process of urbanisation develops in Tanzania and Kenya, many children and youths migrate to urban centres seeking opportunities to work and earn money only to be disappointed and find that they continue to live in poverty on the streets.

As touched upon in Section 2, when a father dies, it is often the responsibility of the oldest male child to provide for his family. This is the role that Boniface took seriously after his father died to ensure his mother and younger siblings were cared for that, unintentionally, resulted in him living on the streets unable to return home to his family.

87 Evans R (2002) 'Poverty, HIV, and barriers to education: street children's experiences in Tanzania' Gender and Development Vol 10, No. 3. November 2002.

88 Ibid.

89 McAlpine K Mueller M Henley B & Misje T (forthcoming) Enhancing Resilience in Street Children in Tanzania Arusha: Mkombizi & Roho.

90 Lockwood M (1997) 'Reproduction and Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa. Tactics and Trade-offs: Revisiting the Links Between Gender and Poverty' IDS Bulletin 28 pg 91 – 100.

91 Evans E (2004) 'Tanzanian childhoods: Street children's narratives of home' Journal of Contemporary African Studies 22 (1) pg 69 - /92.

92 Cradle, The Undugu Society of Kenya in partnership with The Consortium of Street Children (2003) Street Children and Juvenile Justice in Kenya Unpublished Report.

Boniface lived happily with his parents and three younger siblings in a family. When he was 13, his father died. As the oldest male it became his responsibility to provide for his family so he left his small rural village an hour's travel from the city to start his employment looking after the house and garden of a man known to his family. An agreement was made that Boniface would receive accommodation and food and his wages would be sent home to his family. However, Boniface's employer did not keep to this agreement and, after five months without any wages being paid, Boniface decided to look for alternative employment as he was worried about how his family were surviving without his wages. Boniface thought that his uncle was working on a building site in a town at the other side of the country so decided to travel to find his uncle with the hope of being able to work with him. After many days' travel, Boniface arrived to be told that his uncle had left to an unknown destination. Having spent all his money on bus tickets, food and drink, Boniface found himself on the streets in a town he did not know. He met a group of boys who had been living on the streets for some time who showed him how to survive and offered him protection as they recognised that Boniface would find it hard on the streets. Boniface gets up early every morning to go to his job preparing potatoes for a local café. He earns just about enough money to feed himself but does not have enough left over to save for the long journey back to his mother. Tears came into Boniface's eyes as he described how his mother loves him so much. He also loves her and wants to return to his family to be with them and provide for them. He knows that his mother will be upset because she does not know where he is and will worry that he is dead.

4.7 Support from extended family and others in the community

Traditionally in Tanzania and Kenya there was no sense of individualism as perceived in many Western societies but twinning of people and the community:

"In the African world view ... the person and the community are defined in terms of each other. They are interdependent, merging beings who together form the meaningful reality."
(Yurugu, 1994; 352.)⁹³

Traditionally in Tanzanian and Kenyan society, responsibility for children was placed upon extended family and the community within which the child lives:

"The child was educated and socialised by the community for the membership into the community. A child in Africa used to be the responsibility of each individual member of society and therefore children had no need to fend for themselves. They were loved and cared for by society."
(Kopoka, 2000; 13.)⁹⁴

Whilst this tradition is still upheld, a number of commentators have argued that this community approach to children is breaking down⁹⁵. Before moving to the streets, some children received support from neighbours. For example, we have seen how neighbours fed children who were not being fed at home, either because there was no food or the child was denied food as a form of punishment. A few children described how their relatives tried to protect children from being beaten or provided them with somewhere to live, either permanently or temporarily:

"I used to go away from home to stay with my aunt because she loved me and bought me clothes."

"Even though my aunt could not provide for me, it was nicer to stay with my aunt than with my stepmother who hated me and a father who insults me."

A few children described how their neighbours offered food, shelter and support with attending school: Jimiyu survived until the age of eight because neighbours fed him; after his mother's death, Franco received help from neighbours and a teacher to remain at school and his neighbours also tried to protect him from his father.

4.8 Links with family and home whilst living on the streets

As described previously in this section of the report, some of the children retain contact with their family. Of these children, many provide support, often financial, to their parents and siblings. Dosee, who left home because he liked living with his parents together and did not want to live with either of them separately, describes how there is contact between his parents and himself and mutual support:

"And both of them know where I was living, if there is a problem at home my father knows where he can find me even at the moment ... so he can come and tell me. ... Or if I have problems I can follow my father or mother and tell him so that he can come and help me."

Whilst not living at home, some children described being concerned about what was happening to family members at home and thinking a lot about this whilst they were on the streets:

"I think about home a lot but there are problems at home: my mother can't even feed all the children; our father is a drunk."

When children reported maintaining a relationship with family members whilst living alone on the streets, the majority described how none of their family asked about their life on the streets or how they were surviving.

Previous literature has suggested that some form of parental guidance is of benefit to children and youths who live on the streets⁹⁶. Whilst it is recognised that this may be the case, the experiences of the children and youths who participated in this research study reveal that contact between parents and children also benefits parents as their children provide them with money. If parents and

93 Yurugu M A (1994) *An African Critique of European Cultural Thought and Behaviour* New York: African World Press.

94 Kopoka PA (2000) *The Problems of Street Children in Africa: An Ignored Tragedy* International Conference on Street Children and Street Children's Health in East Africa Dar-es-Salam Tanzania.

95 Ibid.

96 Ayuku D (2005) 'Family Networks of Street Children and School Children of Eldoret in Kenya' *East Africa Journal of Public Health* Vol 2 No 1.

other family members are not aware of their children's lives or of how they survive, it is also possible that their guidance may not be relevant to the child's circumstances. For example, Alex's mother's well intended advice to Alex to go to school ignores the circumstances of his life that hinder his ability to attend school.

A few children and youths received support from their parents whilst on the streets. For example, Aailyah's father paid for her to attend college to train as a hairdresser. A number of the children described how their parents, or other relatives, came to the streets looking for them. Omega's mother filed a missing person's report in an attempt to find Omega:

"The police and my mother were co-operating to look for me at night. My mother said she had up to 30,000 shillings⁹⁷ and she hadn't found me. She, however, found me herself."

Dennis described how his mother was overcome by happiness when she found him:

"She (mother) was looking for me. She gave money to some people and asked them to seize me and take me home in case they saw me. ... When my mother saw me, she fainted with joy ... and said I shouldn't run away but rather come to see her and leave (that is, visit her but remain living at home)."

Some parents did not find their children and then ceased looking for them:

"Mum used to look for me but we just passed by each other (missed each other) until she parted company with me."

In a couple of cases, family relatives came looking for children and tried to force them to return home:

"My father's relatives told me to go home but I would just refuse to go. They would hit me and argue with me but I would just refuse and told them I wasn't going."

4.9 Children's recommendations relating to family and home

Many children did not know what could be done to prevent children from coming to the streets but recognised that children often experienced many problems at home which led them to come to the streets:

"To prevent them from coming to the streets? ... I don't know what can help them because there are people with serious problems; ... they can't stay home."

However, others had a range of ideas that they recommended to improve the lives of children who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. When considering how best to help children, a number of children who offered recommendations stated the importance of recognising that children come to the streets for different reasons and have individual needs

that should be considered when providing support. Therefore it is important to ask a child about their life and needs as:

"A child like that (who lives alone on the streets) needs to be approached and asked what made him leave home. ... You see, some may have left home at war time; maybe their house was burnt down so the child, having nowhere to go, resorts to coming to town. Maybe another missed his mother; many stories. Maybe another one left home because of war or no food at home."

"The thing is, you may not know someone's life."

"Just talk to them because each person has his own problem. Each left home due to different reasons."

"They should be interviewed to find the reasons that made them leave their homes, then it will be possible to know how to help them."

"The solution is to talk to them (children who live alone on the streets), you know. There are those, really, they came because of a problem."

A couple of children who participated in the research identified that the government had a role to play in preventing children from living alone on the streets:

"The government should have plans to help the children and the youths before they reach the street."

"What I would like to be done is that the government brings down food prices because many children leave their home because of hunger: they have nothing to eat so they decide to come out and scavenge like others."

A number of children thought it was the parents' responsibility to prevent their children from coming to the streets and recommended that parents should treat their children well and care for them:

"Parents need to be told 'don't chase away children or just beat them just anyhow. If a child makes a mistake, just tell him; he will hear you'."

"Parents should watch their children carefully."

"They shouldn't reprimand them a lot but stay with their children nicely ... because if you are reprimanded and you are held and are angry or afraid because they may reprimand you or hit you, you will be able to run away from them for a while. If you are uncertain and go back, you will get beaten; you will find they (children) run away again."

"Parents should try to maintain their children by providing the basic needs like food, going to school. ... If children don't get these needs met at home, when they hear of street life, they would desire to go there."

"I would like to say, parents treat the children as everything which can be useful; don't treat them like their future is rubbish. A child is a child. ... If you throw away a child, how will he feel? And you, you brought a child into the world and now it is right that you take good care of him ... because our future will build the world."

"Parents ought to live with their children, like their children, not isolating or harassing them. If a child loses some bun money, you can't tell that child not to return home unless she finds and brings it."

"If you don't want other children to come to the streets, you would announce it to the parents; not to warn children only; you also need to warn parents. The parents need to understand that the child has all the rights, the right to rest and sleep. Sometimes a parent may think a child has no rights. ... Children have rights like education, to eat well, resting and sleep."

"Parents should give their children education and improve relations amongst them. ... (If) parents would treat their children well, this would not make them go to the streets."

One youth warned parents against failing to allow their child any freedom:

"If a child asks you to visit a place, allow the child to go. ... If you restrict children to just stay at home and never leave at all, sometimes the children may take it like harassment and it may make children run away and come to the streets. If they (children) are not harassed and there are no quarrels, they will stay well at home."

A couple of children recommended that children behave well towards their parents:

"For them (children) to be good-natured towards their parents."

"They (children) should stay with their parents nicely."

Some children and youths thought that children should be returned home by kind people and those who worked in centres:

"When you meet them (children who live alone on the streets), just ask them where their home is and you return them home."

One older youth was very clear about the importance of returning children back to the family home but stressed the need for continued support for both the child and parent:

"You should take children back home to their families, speak to the families so that they take care of the children and live peacefully; they (families) should not harass them (children) but love them. ... If you ... talk to their families, telling them to be considerate about the needs of the child ... you should continue visiting them from

time to time, maybe twice or three times a month or monthly to see how the child progresses. You build good relationships with their parents and get to know how they are doing. Maybe if the lifestyle at home is changed a little, it may help the child stay comfortably at home."

There was also recognition from a couple of children and youths that parents should be provided with support:

"Maybe you find that the babysitter⁹⁸ has left home because of problems; maybe the father passed away and the mother is not able to support the family financially, to feed and educate children; let's say she just begs. In this case, if the parent is supported she will be able (to) support her child. You see children run into the street because of parents. The mother has nothing and the child feels he can go to the street and find something for himself and his mother."

"And if the mother is not (financially) capable, then you help her to educate him (the child)."

Others acknowledged that it wasn't always possible to take a child back home:

"I know others have no home or there may be nobody at their home; so it's difficult to take them to their homes."

4.10 Section summary

- Children lived in a number of different family forms including single parent families and reconstituted families. Issues arising from different family forms could directly or indirectly lead to a child living alone on the streets.
- Some children did not know their mothers because their mothers left, or were forced to leave home. Mothers clearly experienced a range of difficult issues that were recognised by their children who, in some cases, supported their mothers financially whilst living on the streets.
- Many children did not know their father. Some fathers abandoned their family which led to poverty and difficult emotional circumstances.
- Issues relating to step-parents often played a role in children living alone on the streets. Whilst a small number of children had very positive relationships with a stepmother, problematic relations with stepmothers and stepfathers were commonly experienced as was maltreatment by step-parents.
- Children were often dependent upon older siblings after the death of a parent. Siblings could be separated after parental death. Some children and youths wished to see siblings whilst others returned home from the streets to visit them. Marriage of a sibling could result in a change of circumstances for children.

- Many children were cared for by grandparents, most frequently grandmothers, in circumstances with both positive and negative experiences. Other extended family relations also cared for children. Whilst children and youths reported positive experiences, their experiences also reveal how kinship care can be problematic.
- Parents and carers' alcohol misuse, domestic violence and mental health issues could impact negatively upon children and played a part in children moving to the streets.
- Abuse and maltreatment by parents and carers was frequently experienced by many. Brutal physical abuse included use of sticks, knives and wire. Physical abuse in the home and school often led to children running away. Many children experienced neglect, rejection and abandonment that made it impossible to remain at home. Being denied food or schooling often led to children leaving home.
- Some children acted as carers for younger siblings or ill parents. Sometimes a child or youth left the streets to care for an ill parent, returning to the streets after the parent died.
- Many children are orphans which renders them particularly vulnerable. Several orphaned children were placed in the care of relatives who did not treat them well.
- Poverty in the home plays a significant part in children living alone on the streets as living in poverty prevents provision of a nurturing environment, hinders parents and carers from providing for their children and exerts pressure on family relationships. Some children left home in order to survive and sought employment in urban centres only to find that they continued to experience poverty on the streets.
- Whilst living at home some children received support from others in the community in the form of food, the means to remain at school or to prevent others from beating them.
- Some children and youths retain some contact with their family whilst living alone on the streets, often retaining a strong sense of responsibility for their family and providing financial support when possible. A small number of children and youths received some support from parents or carers but many did not ask their children how they are surviving or enquire about their lives.
- Children and youths' recommendations relating to family and home focus upon: recognising the diversity of reasons that cause children and youths to live alone on the streets; the role of government in ensuring children remain living at home; providing support to parents to meet their needs; the necessity for children and parents to treat each other well; and returning children home to parents but ensuring that both child and parents are supported so that the child can remain in the home.

5. Experiences of Living Alone on the Streets

Turusifu

When Turusifu was aged ten, two older boys raped him whilst he was trying to sleep. After being raped, Turusifu felt terrible, found a tunnel and slept for two days, only leaving the tunnel when hunger forced him to do so. Turusifu describes himself as having lost all hope at this point in his life.

Continued on next page.

A short time later, Turusifu was given a small amount of money by a kind man. The boys who raped Turusifu saw that he had been given this money and followed him to the river where, after buying soap, he was washing his clothes. The two boys raped Turusifu again and stole his clothes, leaving only Turusifu's underpants. Dressed only in these, Turusifu went to the garbage dump to look for some clothes and found some trousers and a shirt. The two boys returned and tried to force Turusifu to accept what they wanted to do to him:

"The boys came back and tried to force me down to sodomise me. I refused; fought back. They took a knife and started stabbing me on my knees."

As a result of these injuries, Turusifu spent some time in hospital and was released once he could walk and returned to the streets.

Turusifu started to run away when he saw the two boys to avoid any confrontation with them but retaliated with violence to protect himself when they attacked him. Their usual strategy was for one of the boys to hold Turusifu down whilst the other hit him on the head with a stone so they could rape him whilst he was unconscious:

"They normally come two of them, one of them hits me with a stone, I start bleeding and lose consciousness; that is when they sodomise me."

The two boys who have raped Turusifu are still on the streets and have raped other boys known to Turusifu.

Turusifu has a younger sister who lived with their maternal uncle. One day Turusifu's father, who had returned to the town where Turusifu lived on the streets, approached Turusifu and asked him to go and get his sister who was 13. Turusifu told his father that he did not have the bus fare to get his sister and his father told him to beg on the streets until he had enough money to get his sister and return with her. Turusifu began to think about how he could raise this money:

"I met my friend who had a tendency of stealing side mirrors from the cars. On that day he persuaded me to go and steal. I told him 'I can't; I don't know how to steal'. He told me he would teach me. Since I had a problem (raising money to collect his sister), I agreed. ... I was lured into that business since I saw how fast my friend made money and since I had problems, I managed to steal three side mirrors. I then left and went to find my sister."

Turusifu lied to his sister, telling her that their father was in a good situation and able to care for her. As her life was difficult due to being mistreated and given lots of work, his sister was glad to leave. Turusifu took his sister to where his father was staying and was told by his father to return to the streets. Turusifu got a job working in a garden and

was happy to be working, viewing it as a means to ending his problems. One day he had a feeling that something wasn't right and decided not to work but to visit his father. When he arrived, Turusifu was told that his sister was at the ten-cell leader's⁹⁹ place and that his father was at the police station after raping Turusifu's sister. To provide evidence, Turusifu's sister had to have tests in hospital. After Turusifu's father raped his sister, Turusifu once again stole side mirrors so that he could pay for his sister to receive medical attention. Turusifu then realised that stealing was wrong and dangerous:

"So I stayed on the streets and realised if I continue stealing side mirrors, it's wrong and I would end up dead, I decided to involve myself in small businesses and the little I get I am satisfied with, like now I sell plastic bags and I pick up scrap metal which I sell."

The tests confirmed that Turusifu's sister had been raped so Turusifu and his sister went to the police. Turusifu and his sister were told to return the following day so that their father could be taken to court. As requested, Turusifu and his sister went to visit the ten-cell leader so he could further assist them. They did so and some elders came to see them to persuade them not to press charges against their father by describing how their father would not be granted bail, would go to prison which would mean that they would be left with no father because he may die in prison and they would be responsible for burying his corpse. Turusifu and his sister refused to go along with the elders' wishes but after visiting their father and finding him very thin thought he may die and decided to forgive him. Turusifu realised that neither he nor his sister could stay with their father and sought a sympathetic worker from the centre he had stayed in to help with finding somewhere for his sister to live. This worker agreed that his sister could live with her. This is where his sister lives to the present day and she attends school whilst Turusifu still lives on the streets. Turusifu described how the rape of his sister and the rape he has experienced makes him angry and not at peace. Sometimes Turusifu feels very low and cries.

In Tanzania and Kenya daily life takes place on the streets as the streets form an extension of the home¹⁰⁰ and space for both leisure and work. For children and youths who live alone on the streets, the streets become a 'fluid space'¹⁰¹ providing escape from abuse within the home, means of survival and a range of risks. Life is very dangerous for children living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. There is the constant presence of violence from the police, other adults and each other: from older boys and from friends. A few children and youths appear to navigate their way on the streets without experiencing violence whilst others are beaten regularly. Sexual assault is common and use of glue is widespread. Most of the survival strategies available to children alone

99 A 'ten-cell leader' is a person representing one of the political parties, elected by his or her neighbours as their representative regarding government issues alongside acting as a mediator in neighbourhood conflicts.

100 Van Blerk L (forthcoming) 'Street Children (Africa)' Susan J Smith (eds) Encyclopedia of Housing and Home Oxford: Elsevier.

101 Ibid.

on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya are inherently dangerous and many children and youths are forced by their circumstances to behave in ways that they know is wrong or accept what is done to them by others even if it causes them distress.

Some children came to the streets when they were very young such as four, five and six and have spent ten or more years living on the streets. Young children are particularly vulnerable and whilst older children often care for them to the best of their ability, they are often left unprotected. There are specific issues relating to females whose gender renders them exposed to danger.

For the children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya, daily life has a number of challenges:

"Life is hard. I must sweat to survive."

"We have no roof at the abode (where the children base themselves); if it rains you see people running away. Sometimes you run and take shade at somebody's veranda but you also get chased away (from there) so you pray to God that the day breaks sooner. You see; watchmen and dogs chase you; dogs can even bite you. Or maybe you are just asleep at the abode and watchmen or somebody comes by and starts chasing you so the police may also come; it's just trouble. It becomes trouble everywhere you go. You can get shot with arrows. Thank God you are not mistaken for thieves because that will be worse."

"Nothing is good, all things are bad."

Children and youths who participated in the research described how they often experienced hunger:

"In one week I may miss food for two days. ... I feel hungry. There is nothing to do so I am compelled to just be patient until I get food."

"I can even go without eating for three days."

The vast majority of children and youths who participated in the research described how there was nothing that was good about living alone on the streets in Tanzania or Kenya. Many of the difficulties are described in this section of the report. Whilst only one youth who participated in the research stated that he was happy with his life on the streets, others who had left the streets to live in centres described elements of their life on the streets that they missed:

"I used to eat on time and watch videos (in video shacks)¹⁰²."

"Begging for money so when I get some I can buy shoes and clothes."

A few children and youths, as well as outlining how difficult life was on the streets, identified some good things that were part of their life on the streets:

"Street life has expanded my life skills."

"I enjoy earning money ... because in the street you earn money; at home you don't get paid."

"The good thing here is taking a bath, sniffing glue and there is plenty of food when you want it."

"I like working,"

"Only getting clothes (was good about living on the streets). ... I would go beg for money and then buy clothes."

Some children and youths' descriptions of what was good about living on the streets reflected how they were grateful for or made the best of what was available to them on the streets:

"I don't have any good thing, only that I am not sick."

"Going to school at X (name of the centre)."

One child was able to acknowledge how the process of normalisation had taken place through living on the streets:

"Because I am already used to hard life, I see like everything is normal."

Some children and youths identified how the quality of their life on the streets had decreased over the time they have lived on the streets:

"I was attracted by the life in town. ... It was cool ... because nobody controls you here so you just feel free with everything. ... (Now) I just see that it (her life on the streets) is deteriorating ... this life has made me lose hope."

"When I saw my friends (children who Abiria got to know through staying on the streets) staying on the street I felt like it was luxurious to come here as I was coming but now I understand there is nothing like luxury or good ... now I have realized that nothing is good about staying here on the street."

For others there has been no change in the quality of their lives on the streets: it has been consistently difficult. Some see no possibility for their life to change once they are on the streets:

"Life ends here on the streets."

Others expressed how life could go in any direction once they are on the streets:

"You could either end up dead here (on the streets) or get assistance (to get off the streets)."

5.1 Arrival on the streets

Children's experiences when they arrived on the streets for the first time are diverse. Respick, for example, was very positive about his first days on the streets:

"It was good. I was nicely welcome ... by my friends (those made on the streets). I happened to meet them here and (we) began walking together."

Respick's comments echo those of others who described how other children and youths on the streets welcomed and were helpful to them, taking them to places where they would find or be given food, showing them where they could sleep or how to earn money and allowing them to stay with an established group of children and youths.

Life could be particularly difficult for a child when they first arrived on the streets. Being beaten upon arrival was commonly experienced by young males. For example, Ouga describes how, when he came to the streets, he was beaten by other boys who had lived on the streets for some time:

"When I entered the street here, I met some other youths who had been used of (to) street life so they asked me the place where I was sleeping ... They took my shoes by force, beat me up. They used to say (to) move away from the place where I slept. Sometimes you get hit with a rock ... (It was) just like that until I begin getting used to the street life so nobody could easily chase me away."

One child was caught by the police on his first day on the streets:

"I was taken (by the police) and I was beaten. I was told not to go back again to the streets."

Sammuel described how when he first lived on the streets, he worked and did not look like he lived on the streets which made him unpopular with some of the boys who also lived on the streets:

"I was someone who had the job of carrying parcels. ... Because they (other boys who lived on the streets) saw that I was a clean person, they said 'he's not a street child'. When I got money I was robbed just like that (by these boys). ... Then I started to get used to them a bit at a time. Then my blood and theirs became totally locked. ... Then I started to live with them."

Other children and youths were clearly confused and frightened when they first arrived on the streets, especially those who had no experience of providing for themselves and did not know how to survive on the streets. Unsurprisingly, the children and youths who appeared to find it easier to fend for themselves on the streets were those who had fended for themselves at home, or spent time on the streets whilst still living at home.

For some living on the streets was not much different from living at home:

"It is the same for me: here (living on the streets), home."

One child's expression of how he felt about living on the streets articulated how experiencing abuse at the hands of family members was so unbearable:

"Better to suffer here than to suffer in the hands of your family."

5.2 Survival strategies

Children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya employ a number of survival strategies, some legitimate and others illegal.

Deciding who to live with

Distinct street communities were found in locations in Tanzania and Kenya where the research took place. In some areas, groups of children and youths living on the streets are highly visible; in other places, they could only be found in particular locations at particular times of the day. Deciding who to live with was an important survival strategy. As described previously, many met other groups of children and youths living alone on the streets, or individual children or youths, with whom they became friends and who showed them how to survive on the streets. Sometimes children and youths stayed with these friends permanently whilst others left to form an alternative group or to be by themselves. Some of the boys around the ages of 12, 13 and 14 described keeping separate from older youths as an important survival strategy and tended to form a group with other children around the same age as them. It is possible to view some of these groups as 'gangs' and to refer to them in this way. However, in recognition that none of the children and youths who participated in the research referred to themselves as belonging to a gang, and to avoid certain conceptual difficulties involved in using the term 'gang', the term 'group' is used.

There are a number of reasons why children and youths on the streets form groups. Some of these are to ensure safety and a sense of security whilst living in chaotic and dangerous environments. Being part of a group also provides a sense of identity¹⁰³ which may be particularly important for children who are forced to leave their childhood behind and accept adult responsibilities such as economic survival with none of the agency of being an adult. Being part of a group also has a number of 'task-oriented functions'¹⁰⁴ relating to generating income and food. Children and youths who lived on the streets therefore often form communities and provide support for one another through this community approach.

In some places, there was a clear distinction between groups of boys on the street formed by age and with areas that they and other groups viewed as being their territory. There were also other groups that included children of all ages and older youths, some of whom could be described as young men. It was clear that in these groups there was both a protective and abusive element that formed the dynamics of relationships between older boys or young men and younger children, as discussed at a later point in this section of the report. Whilst most children were part of a large group or stayed with a small number of friends, as mentioned previously, some

103 Identity is considered in more depth in Section 6.

104 Ochole L Dzikus A & Vanderschueren F (2002) 'Street children and Gangs in African Cities: Guidelines for Local Authorities' Urban Management Programme Working Papers Series 18.

children and youths described how they decided to stay on the street on their own to ensure they stayed out of trouble:

"I just liked to stay alone. ... I avoided staying with friends lest I end up being taken to the police."

Characteristics required for street life

A few of the males made reference to characteristics that were needed when living on the streets such as shrewdness or cunning. Msela, for example noted the importance of being cunning whilst recognising that it was not virtuous:

"Because there is nobody I have that depends on me, I depend on me myself. ... Being cunning is how I live ... and that's not good."

A few children and youths identified how being good at fighting was a skill that served well whilst living on the streets, whilst acknowledging it wasn't a skill that they all had:

"And to be good at fighting; that is good on the streets."

Working

Many of the children and youths who participated in the research carried out some form of paid work or received payment in the form of food for work they carried out. Children and youths reveal different attitudes to working to earn money. Some worked immediately upon coming to the streets and have never begged, as discussed later in this section of the report, whilst others started life on the streets by begging and then decided to work:

"I had been begging for a while and then I thought since God has given me two hands, it's good to work. Then I started going to the businessmen to dust their houses, wash clothes ... to empty dustbins ... so I earned money."

Only a handful of youths had a regular job. Boniface, for example, worked in a restaurant:

Boniface got up early to arrive at the restaurant for six-o'clock in the morning where he cleans the kitchen floor and peels potatoes for three hours. Boniface is given breakfast by the restaurant owner and receives a small amount of money for this work which enables him to eat for the day. However, Boniface does not earn enough money to buy anything else or to save money for the bus ticket to return home.

There were a few young males who were able to consistently earn enough money to provide for themselves so that eventually they could stop living on the streets whilst remaining street-involved¹⁰⁵:

Elliott was given a job selling shoes. He made 200 Kenyan shillings¹⁰⁶ a day and saved money so that he could start his own business selling shoes:

"I sold many pairs because when I went around, I sold to the women. I used to buy a shoe for 50 (Kenyan) shillings¹⁰⁷ and then I repaired all the torn areas by using Superglue. The shoe then became good as new; I could even sell that shoe for 200 shillings¹⁰⁸."

When Elliott started to make around 2,000 shillings¹⁰⁹ a day, he was able to rent a room and stop living on the streets.

Children and youths described a number of ways in which they earn money to survive such as carrying luggage or other goods:

"I used to ... unload those big bunches of bananas from the car and I would be given 200 (Kenyan) shillings¹¹⁰."

"In the morning I helped to arrange (putting the bananas onto) the buses then he (the man selling the bananas) would give me some bananas to cook. ... I was used to doing this (which others saw) and they (the others) got me to get the goods and supply customers with oranges. ... They helped me with money; they bought my clothes and shoes."

Some children and youths buy plastic bags which they sell at the market; others collect and sell scrap metal, firewood, bottles or charcoal. Some children and youths collected what they could from rubbish dumps and other places, searching through litter to find anything that could be sold:

"I picked up boxes; other times I picked up charcoal. I went to weigh plastics; other times I went to sell ugali¹¹¹ (as chicken feed) to the people who sold chickens at the market."

One young female bought glue for others, being given a tiny amount of money for going to buy the glue and return it to the children who commissioned her. A couple of females described cleaning houses and washing clothes to earn some money. Children and youths are not always paid in cash but receive food in exchange for the work they have done, for example, fetching water or sweeping the floor. Sometimes starting to carry out small tasks such as these can lead to continuing supportive relationships between the child and others:

105 The term 'street-involved' refers to circumstances where a child or youth spends significant time on the street from where they find their sources of company, support and survival but does not sleep on the streets.

106 This is approximately £1.55.

107 This is approximately 39 pence.

108 This is approximately £1.55.

109 This is approximately £15.50.

110 This is approximately £1.55.

111 Ugali is made from maize or cassava flour, or a combination of both, and is a staple of Tanzanian and Kenyan diet.

"I met this woman. I helped her carry a bucket (of water); that is how we became friends. So I went there to eat (at the woman's home) and (now) help them with going to market. ... They often give me food and let me rest at their house."

Most of the work available to children and youths who live alone on the streets is unpredictable and involves putting in a lot of time and effort in exchange for very small amounts of money; sometimes no money is earned despite spending hours trying to do so. The majority of children carried out work of this nature. Some children began to realise that they could earn more money begging so stopped working and started to beg:

"I was working selling plastic bags but then I saw that I could earn more money by begging so I stopped working and started to beg."

Some have used initiative and hard work to provide for themselves whilst on the street. Simba, for example, collects firewood to sell, saves the money he makes from this to buy clothes and sweets which he then sells on to others:

"I go and look for a sack and I pick up firewood ... I go and sell it; when I sell it, I go and put the money somewhere then I go and combine it all and buy clothes and sweets ... then I sell them."

Few children and youths are able to save any money from the little that they earn. However, one older youth described how he saves as much money as possible from what he earns so that he can buy a plot of land to build his own house:

"I normally go to X (name of the market) where things are sold in bulk. I collect tomatoes, onions, potatoes and come to sell them here. ... (I have) 40,000 (Tanzanian shillings) by now. ... When it reaches 100,000, I will go to buy a plot and look for posts and build my own house."

In one location, children and youths described how it was made difficult for them to carry out work typically available to them such as carrying luggage. For example, Chitundu described how after the bus station was renovated:

"The supervisors for the bus stand came to think that if you want to be in the bus stand (to carry luggage) you had to pay. You had to have a uniform. They (the supervisors) wanted money. It became hard to get so I went back to going around with my sack (collecting litter). ... I went to talk to the leaders (the supervisors). I talked to them and I told them I would give them some money a bit at a time so I could continue to work at the bus stop. They agreed. ... Registration was 350 (Kenyan) shillings¹¹². The money you paid for the uniform 500. ... Then they (the supervisors) started to say they didn't want somebody who slept on the streets (because) they could run away with the passengers' bags."

Stealing

Stealing is a survival strategy employed by some of the males who participated in the research. Stealing is a particularly dangerous survival strategy in Tanzania and Kenya. If caught or suspected of stealing, children and youths, and others who steal, face considerable risk as a violent response from 'the mob' is possible and the suspected culprit can be beaten and even killed. The research revealed that it was common for children and youths to steal scrap metal, the side mirrors of cars, food and clothing. A few children and youths described mugging others and one child admitted that he had stolen two phones from people walking along the streets. For a couple of young males, stealing had become a profession:

"I stole. I stole a lot. It's my job; my job is as a thief."

As described in more depth in this section of the report, it was common for children and youths on the streets to steal from one another, particularly the older youths from the younger boys. Friends also stole from one another. Some children and youths described how becoming a thief was undesirable but inevitable when living on the streets:

"We have already become thieves. ... We normally sell scrap metal. ... We sell it (scrap metal) and steal in order to get food."

"How can I enter and stay on the street and avoid doing those things (stealing)?"

Of the males who steal regularly as a survival strategy, it was often described how stealing was the only option to survive on the streets:

"You rob somebody at night because it is difficult to find somebody who can help you."

"You have to steal because you can't say when you are going to get any (money)."

"I have been involved in such (stealing) and not very long ago, just recently, I snatched things from people but I never steal unless I am facing a big problem like my clothes are torn and I don't have any other (clothes) and I see someone with money, I will then steal from them."

"I don't feel good (when I steal) but I have to do it in order to get money for food."

Children and youths who live on the streets often know that they are taking a great risk when they steal because of what will happen to them if they are caught:

As Emmanuel said:

"We have a saying: whatever you take, a third is yours and the rest belongs to the mob."

Emmanuel gave the example of stealing food: when sitting there eating stolen food a child or youth knows that there is a strong possibility that the mob will know that they have stolen, will find the child or young person and beat them mercilessly and perhaps kill them. When a child or youth who lives on the streets steals, they believe that what is stolen does not really belong to them because of what the mob will do to them if they catch them. However, there are times when the need for food is so strong that children will risk being beaten to appease the cravings of hunger.

Msela was caught stealing from a garage and was badly beaten:

"Yes, I've been caught (stealing). ... I was caught robbing a certain garage here. ... The Masaai (guard) saw me ... he captured me. He had to punish me. ... I was called a thief and was beaten. ... He beat me with a stick and a large knife. He hit me here on my back. He cut me in lots of places."

After this experience, Msela stopped stealing and started to sell stolen goods:

"I became an in-between man. ... My friend steals then he don't know where to sell it. ... He stole jacks and big spanners. He gives them to me and I go and sell them. "

Other children and youths have also stopped stealing after being badly beaten:

"The way I was beaten, I have stopped (stealing)."

Others have stopped stealing for additional reasons:

"I used to be a thief and rob people ... but now I have changed: I even go to church and I have stopped robbing people. I just do jobs like carrying luggage."

Many of the males described how they have been wrongly accused of stealing when other youths who lived on the streets were the culprits:

Heri described how a group of older boys stole some side mirrors of a car and the guards charged some older boys who lived on the streets with looking for the children who had stolen the side mirrors. However, it was these older boys who had stolen the side mirrors:

"Somebody stole the side mirrors so we were looked for and we were arrested. They themselves that were looking for us were the thieves."

When caught by these older boys, Heri was beaten to such an extent that some of the bones in his body were broken.

Other children described how it was common for the youths to steal and then blame it on the younger boys:

"Those big boys can steal from a place and the small boys don't know. The smaller boys then go there the next day and they get caught. They (the older boys) say they know it's them (the younger boys)."

A couple of males described how other boys on the streets tried to force them into stealing:

"I went back to the streets and ... met a friend of mine; ... he was a thief. ... He tried to convince me to go and steal with him. ... I refused. ... He started to beat me."

However, there were occasions when boys who did not want to steal, and resisted stealing, stole because of circumstances where they felt they had no alternative.

A comment from Alex revealed how the boundaries of what constitutes theft can be blurred:

Alex stated that he has never stolen in the nine years he has lived on the streets but admits to taking the money that was dropped by friends:

"Some of my friends here dropped some money and I took (the money)."

Approximately a third of the males who participated in the research stated that they do not steal:

"I have never stolen."

"I have never stolen on the streets at all."

A few males described how they do not steal but they are interested in what others gain through stealing and sometimes benefit from what others have stolen:

"I don't have that habit (stealing) but if I see you stealing from somebody else, I take interest to see what you have stolen."

"I don't steal but X (name of friend) does and I eat (from the gains of) what he has stolen."

Some of the males who do not steal warned against stealing:

"And never be a thief. If you steal side mirrors from cars, that is the worst thing because if you get caught, you will be killed."

Amongst some of the males who do not presently steal, there is a sense of inevitability that they too may start to steal as they describe themselves as having 'not yet' stolen but recognise that the realities of living on the

streets may mean that they will steal at some point in the future.

Begging

Begging is a survival strategy for many children and youths in Tanzania and Kenya, not only those who live alone on the streets. Some children come into, or are sent into, urban centres to beg whilst still living at home because of poverty. Around half of children and youths describe how they have survived at some stage of their time living on the streets by begging for food or money. For some this is a full-time occupation whilst others only beg when they have been unable to raise any money through working. Alex, for example, described how he looks for scrap metal to sell but will resort to begging if he is unable to find any. Some resort to begging when they are having problems getting food:

"During times when I'm hungry, I go and beg from someone."

Begging is more often a survival strategy for young children:

"When I was young I used to beg from anybody."

Begging was recognised by some children and youths as the option for younger children who aren't capable of developing more sophisticated means of providing for themselves:

"I used to beg ... because I was still young and hadn't become shrewd."

Some children acknowledge that they will not be successful at begging as they become older:

"When I grow bigger, they (people) won't give me (when I beg)."

Some children and youths beg for food from those selling food, even offering to return the next day with money:

"If there is no money to eat ... you look for a woman, you tell them I don't have any money and so today I am begging you for food. I will bring you your money tomorrow."

Begging is not always a profitable survival strategy as those who solely rely upon begging described how there are often days when they do not eat. In addition, begging can be a dangerous activity as children can be beaten by others when they are out begging and they also risk being arrested by the police:

"If I saw a woman or man I would approach them and beg; some gave me and others beat me."

"They (the police) say we are disturbing people by begging."

There is also recognition by a few children that others may be frightened of them when they are begging:

"It becomes difficult when night falls since when I approach someone to beg, he would think that I want to rob him."

Some children described being frightened to beg so have to resort to looking for leftover food or going hungry:

"You fear begging from somebody so you are compelled to pick things (food from rubbish) or else you go hungry."

Some children and youths have never begged. A few expressed a strong conviction that they could not beg:

"I can't go begging. ... My soul can't beg. ... My father himself, when I was born, said 'when I go and beg for something, it is the day I die'."

Looking out for one another

As quotes in the beginning of this section of the report reveal, looking out for one another is an important survival strategy whilst living on the streets. This may take the form of showing someone who is new to the streets how to survive, sharing food, physically protecting or defending one another and caring for one another when they are ill. One of the males who participated in the research described how he and his friends encourage or try to force a younger child to leave the streets to return home and how they, in turn are encouraged by older boys to return home:

"We normally tell them (younger children who live alone on the streets) to go home; we force them to leave the streets and go home. ... Those bigger ones usually force us to go home. ... The good ones (amongst the older boys) are the older ones who persuade us to go home."

It should however be noted that often this encouragement or force is unsuccessful as many of the boys remain living on the streets.

Using substances

Studies have found that between 25 and 90 per cent of children and youths who live on the streets use some form of psychoactive substances¹¹³. There are a number of short-term and long-term effects of using substances, depending on the substance misused. Most long-term impacts relate to damage of body organs. As noted by the World Health Organisation, there are a number of vulnerability/protective factors that make substance misuse more or less likely¹¹⁴. These include: stress, normalisation of behaviour and situations, acceptance of substance use within the community, effects of behaviour and situations, attachments, skills and resources. These 'indicators' can increase risk factors and decrease protection factors. The experiences of the children and youths who participated in this research reveal the existence of risk factors that make substance misuse likely¹¹⁵.

In parts of Tanzania and Kenya the sight of a child or youth with a bottle of glue hidden up their sleeve or down their top from which the child takes subtle or unsubtle sniffs of glue is a common one; in some locations children do not even attempt to hide their glue but sniff openly in public. More than half of the children and youths who participated in the research identified using substances,

113 http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2000/WHO_MSD_MDP_00.14_Module3.pdf
17th November 2010

114 Ibid.

115 The World Health Organisation also applies this model to sexual and reproductive health.

both in the past and at the time of their participation in the research. Substances used included cannabis, petrol, cocaine, alcohol and glue. The most common substance used was glue, followed by alcohol and cannabis, with only a few children and youths identifying as using cocaine, heroin, paint thinner or petroleum¹⁶. In one case, a child described illicitly using a drug prescribed for those experiencing mental health issues whilst undergoing drug rehabilitation. Polydrug/substance use was identified in a few cases.

Substance use is often a survival strategy for children and youths on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. For example, many of those children and youths who have used glue, including those who have ceased their use, describe how using glue can help them manage living on the streets as it normalises their life on the streets, protects them from the cold and helps them to feel like they can manage being on the streets:

"I felt like my life was in danger but you know once you have sniffed glue you can't even (feel) anything bigger or serious; instead you see everything as normal. You just feel like you are on top of everything you know."

"When I sniffed (glue) I became very bold and feared nothing."

"(When using glue) you don't feel hungry."

Whilst children and youths commonly use glue to relieve hunger and anxieties of being on the streets, inhaling glue can also hinder survival on the streets as it does not relieve malnutrition from not eating or remove the factors that cause a child or youth to feel anxious.

Alcohol similarly provided such an effect:

"(I) get drunk so as not to feel cold at night."

Some children and youths like the calming effect of cannabis:

"If I smoke bhanghi ... I am calm."

"Before I smoke ... I keep thinking about past things whereas when I smoke, I feel comfortable and happy."

Drugs were also used by children and youths to help them sleep:

"I used drugs to make me sleep."

"It was helping me fall asleep when I used it."

The descriptions of why children and youths use substances reveal that many of the possible effects of substances provide some relief of problems experienced on the streets. For example, it can often be difficult to sleep on the streets as the streets are noisy, it can be cold at night and mosquitoes bite. Some substances produce drowsiness which promotes sleep.

Many children and youths who use glue describe using glue as a negative of living on the streets:

"When I am on the street I sniff glue. ... I just sniff glue; that's why you can see me in this situation."

Some children and youths started to use glue after seeing others on the streets using glue:

"I saw them sniffing and so I started sniffing too ... I sniffed the first time, I then continued sniffing little by little until I got used to it completely (to sniffing glue)."

Some were introduced to substances by other children and youths on the streets when they were new to the streets:

"When I first came to the streets, I was a little boy and I found the children who were the same age as me were using glue and cigarettes and some others were using Bhanghi; they are the ones who convinced me to start using."

"I alighted from the car (bus) at the stage (bus station) down there and just started walking, not even knowing where I was heading on the first day ... then I met some girls ... who were all sniffing glue and they showed me how to sniff glue so I started sniffing."

Others found it hard not to use glue when with other children and youths who use glue:

"You are forced to because it's hard to stay with others at the base and when ... (you) don't use it, even if you try to stay away from it, you can't succeed."

"It only happens the way somebody influences you. You admire them when you see somebody else sniffing. I think of how it feels like so finally you decide to taste (try) it. When you taste it, you realise that it has some steam which intoxicates you and finally you say 'here, I have forty bob' which, at times, you can go without food but you make sure you spend it on glue."

Using substances holds a social element, as these quotes reveal, providing a sense of connection with other children and youths on the streets and avoidance of loneliness.

Only one child who participated in the research started to use substances whilst still living at home, being introduced to glue by a friend, and left home as a consequence of his substance use as he was able to access and use glue more freely on the streets. Some children described how using glue can become very addictive and led children and youths to run away from centres or home back to the streets:

"You know, there's those that have already used gum (glue). Some go home, they think about gum, they come back to the streets."

Some children and youths have stopped using substances or have reduced their substance use:

"I stopped taking those drugs because I saw people getting out of control and, since that time, I have never used drugs except cigarettes and thinner."

Whilst some children and youths found it quite easy to stop using glue, others did not and experienced withdrawal symptoms or liked how using the substance made them feel:

"When I stopped using drugs, for sometime I began shaking . . . Even at the moment I feel like resuming sniffing glue."

"I found it difficult to refrain because I was feeling cool."

"There is nothing good about it (using glue) but it is difficult to refrain once you sniff; that is, if somebody confiscates it from you, you can even kill that person or yourself."

Some children and youths stopped using glue because they found that they were more vulnerable to others who wished to harm them whilst they were under the influence of glue or experienced health problems:

"(Dennis stopped using glue) just because of being beaten by adults. If they find you (under the influence of glue) with money, they rob you or take it and if they find you with scrap metal, they also take it so I thought it was better to stop sniffing."

"I fell sick and that is why I refrained from using. I used to cough seriously in the morning when I woke up and felt pains this side (of Aluna's chest) and I couldn't run . . . I would breathe with difficulty because of the pains here (in her chest). . . . I was admitted to one of the (hospital) wards and when I was discharged, they warned me about sniffing gum (glue). From that time, I have never sniffed again."

"When I sniffed glue and used marijuana I used to feel at risk because I didn't know the effects: that marijuana endangers life and that cigarettes destroy lungs."

"The thing that sent me bad was glue. . . . It did what it wanted, not me. . . .(If) I met with somebody . . . I had to fight with them."

A few children and youths took seriously the warnings from others about the dangers of using glue and stopped once they became aware of these dangers:

"I was advised by people that it was not good so I refrained from using it."

Some children and youths are unable to stop using glue and identify themselves as being addicted to glue and cite 'using glue as an addiction' to be that which prevents them from being happy and moving on with their life. Others recognise that using substances have negative effects and state that they will never use substances:

"It makes you weak and your health deteriorates."

"(Even though all Musa's friends use substances) I don't use any of those (substances). I don't smoke, sniff and I will never try to use those (substances)."

"I have never smoked (drugs) and don't even wish to see that happen."

"It's smoking marijuana which is very bad for children . . . all drugs are harmful."

Some children and youths who had never used substances at the time of their participation in the research recognised substance use as one of the dangers of living on the streets and problematic in their own right:

"You know that gum (glue) isn't good; it can harm your spirit and even other things."

"They (other children who use glue) should stop sniffing glue completely; glue is bad for your life."

Some children and youths prefer to stay alone on the streets to avoid using substances:

"They (other children) sniff glue and I don't want them to teach me."

However, some expressed an inevitability that if they continue to live on the streets, they are likely to use substances. For example, Salim answered 'not yet' when asked if he used any substances and others answered in a similar vein:

"(If you continue with) life here . . . you drink, use glue, smoke cigarettes; you will lose your head and you will stay there (on the streets) until you become older and then you won't know anything."

Faith, fatalism and beliefs

Some of the children and youths who participated in the research expressed how their faith and beliefs played a part in how they survived living on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. The role of faith as a strong protective factor has been identified in other research¹¹⁷ and in a study addressing enhancing resilience with children and youths who spend time on the streets in Tanzania¹¹⁸.

Some of the children and youths prayed to God to help them survive or to provide the means to move away from the streets:

"I go to church to pray to God for assistance."

Fatalism was common amongst many of the children and youths. Some children and youths identified how they could not know what each day would bring and expressed the belief that the future of their lives was in the hands of God:

"When I am on the streets like this, I may not even know what will happen because you may say that tomorrow will go somewhere but unfortunately maybe God takes you and so you depart. Therefore you can plan, but God determines your"

117 For example in Grotberg E (1995) A Guide to Promoting Resilience in Children: Strengthening the Human Spirit <http://resilnet.uluc.edu/library/grotb95b.html> 20th November 2010 and Gunnestad A (2006) 'Resilience in a Cross Cultural Perspective: How Resilience is generated in different cultures' Journal of Intercultural Communication No 11 .
118 McAlpine K Mueller M Henley b & Misje T (forthcoming) Enhancing Resilience in Street Children in Tanzania Arusha: Mkombozi & Roho.

course because you don't know what will happen tomorrow; you don't even know if you will wake up or anything."

"I would like to be living in my own place with my own job. But, now if you look to the future, yet it's only God's providence: you might perish because you don't even know if you will live to see tomorrow."

"I feel that life is very bad. I was praying to God that to get a place where I can stay and get support because I don't like the street life and I am not happy at all with it."

Children and youths' belief in God was also that which they relied upon to meet their needs. For example, one youth wanted a particular pair of shoes and requested that the shoe-seller keep the shoes for him until he found money to pay for the shoes:

"If God cares about me, then I can pay for them. ... If God cares, I will get 1,000 (Tanzanian shillings)¹¹⁹. I will take it to him (the shoe-seller) and take my shoes."

A second child described being very ill whilst living on the streets and that his recovery was aided by friends praying to God for him. Another child who lived in a centre at the time of participation in the research described how praying to God helped her to leave the streets:

"I was suffering (whilst living alone on the streets). I was afraid. There were so many problems. I used to wish someone would come and help me. I prayed to God and he helped me."

One youth who has managed to move away from the streets, find somewhere more permanent to live and changed his life so that it is very different from when he lived on the streets described how he relies upon God to ensure that he does not return to living on the streets:

"Now I am praying to God my life continues to change and I don't go back to the streets."

This fatalism was also echoed by others in the local community who, whilst sympathetic to the plight of children and youths living alone on the streets, cited that nothing could be done to change their circumstances as it was God's will that the children and youths' lives were as they are¹²⁰.

When asked about what could be done to support children and youths who live alone on the streets, a few children and youths replied that praying to God was all that could be done:

"Only to pray to God so that God can help them (children and youths who live alone on the streets)."

"I am just praying that God helps me to get out of this street life."

"God himself is the planner of all that."

"Pray for the boys on the streets."

Some children and youths received great comfort from their faith, describing how belief in God helps them to feel positive about themselves and their situation:

"I said to myself that I am an important and useful person because God loves me and has sustained me to this moment."

"I pray to God always so that I may be happy in my heart."

Some children and youths expressed beliefs in witchcraft and described how witchcraft and bewitchment of others had led to them living alone on the streets:

"My father used to love me a lot before my mother's death and even after he got married to another wife, he still continued showing great love to me. My stepmother was not happy with that; she hated it and started going to witch doctors. It then reached a time when my father could even stay for two weeks without talking to me (after being bewitched)."

5.3 Receiving support from others whilst living alone on the streets

Whilst some children and youths stated that they had never received any support from organisations established to provide services for children who live alone on the streets¹²¹, there were descriptions of support from others in the community:

"Many people usually volunteer to help, like Good Samaritans may volunteer to buy us bed sheets."

"I was bought some clothes and flour ... because I explained to them about my problems."

"Maybe you meet a very compassionate person; he can give you 500 (Tanzanian Shillings)¹²²."

Some children and youths are provided with something to eat by people who have a place that serves food:

"They give me food; I eat and leave."

Rashidi described how a local person provides a range of support:

"Sometimes he invites us to a party; we go and eat and he gives us some clothes. If somebody falls sick, he goes to him. If he can't treat you, there is a hospital there; he gives you money so you can go to a big hospital."

One child explained how he has been provided with somewhere to sleep:

119 This equates to approximately 42 pence.

120 For example, this fatalism was echoed by others in the community who stopped the lead researcher, whilst working with children and youths on the streets, to praise the work with children and young people but claimed that ultimately the fate of children and youths who live on the streets is in the hands of God.

121 Support received from organisations established to help children who live alone on the streets is addressed in Section 5 of the report.

122 This is approximately 21 pence.

Heri was beaten and was lying in the cold. A man who was a local councillor came over and, seeing that Heri was hurt and cold, suggested that he sleep in his office. Heri has been sleeping in the councillor's office for the past month, leaving early in the morning for the streets and returning to sleep at night.

Some children and youths clearly built positive relationships based on mutual trust with others who lived and worked in the local community. For example, a number of children and youths who participated in the research relied upon informal systems of keeping their money safe and described how they gave their money to local shopkeepers as they were able to provide a safe place for their money to be kept and would return the money to the child¹²³.

Offers of support that do not result in help or offered under false pretences

Some of the children and youths are offered help that does not materialise:

Leo feels very unhappy that his friends go to school while he does not because he lives on the streets. One day Leo met a woman whom Leo believed to be wealthy because she had a car. This woman told Leo that her three children were at school in England, that she would look for a local school for Leo and that he could live with her whilst he attended school. This woman gave Leo a phone number and told him to call her which Leo did. During this telephone conversation, Leo was told that he would be provided with money for food, to be left with a particular guard and that the woman would come in her car for Leo. She has not come for Leo and he has never received any money from her.

Baraka was offered some work by a man selling fish and spent the day with him. When it was time for the man to leave, he gave Baraka his phone number:

"He told me, any day I should phone him. If he is ready, he can come to take me to his home to live with his children. ... If he sent me to school there, I could help him with a bit of work."

This offer of help has never materialised. Baraka wishes that it had:

"I would have liked that person to take me and send me to school."

Some children and youths have received offers of help from individuals who presented themselves as religious men or women but did not provide any help that the children or youths required:

"The (only) one who has ever asked me my problems is a pastor but I doubt if he is genuinely a pastor; I think he is a fake pastor. ... One day he took me and three other boys ... he locked us up in this place. ... We just sat down and he then told us from that day henceforth we should get saved."

Another youth and his friends were given a room by the owner of a property without being charged rent. James and his two friends received some help from a man who rented a room for them and promised further assistance which did not materialise which resulted in James and his friends returning to the streets:

Whilst living on the streets, James began talking with a businessman who asked how James came to live on the streets and about his life on the streets:

"He found us a place to stay."

This man paid four months' rent for a room where James and his friends lived for five months. He also made plans to assist James and his friends in the future:

"He said he could build a house ... and said when he returned (from the place he was travelling to) he would have taught us how to drive so we could be taking tourists to the national parks."

The businessman did not return and the three boys were forced to leave the room and return to the streets because there was no money for rent:

"We were later surprised to see the way he abandoned us. ... I felt very bad (when James had to return to the streets after being promised that he would be assisted to have a better future that involved having somewhere to live and work)."

Support from Wazungu¹²⁴

Some of the children and youths who participated in the research specified how white men and women offered support to themselves and other children and youths who live alone on the streets. In tourist areas, targeted begging from white tourists was mentioned as a survival strategy. The support provided by an individual Mzungu could relate to an isolated incident:

"I asked for him to help me. He bought me clothes and food. ... (He helped) to take away my nakedness and when I was hungry, he fed me."

123 This system was utilised by the lead researcher. As mentioned in Section 4.4, a young boy was taken to hospital as his foot had been slashed by an older youth who the young boy owed a small amount of money. This older youth was known in the local area as being very violent and had threatened the young boy that he would be back to harm him further if he did not pay in a short timescale the money he owed. The young boy was understandably frightened by this and it was agreed that rather than paying the boy a small amount of money as a token gesture to say thank you for his participation in the research, the money would be used to pay the young boy's debt to the older youth. After much discussion between the lead researcher, a street interviewer and four boys who live on the streets including the boy who owed the money, it was agreed that the most appropriate way for the money to be handed to the older youth was for the money to be left by the lead researcher with a local shopkeeper who many of the boys on the streets in the local area trusted and for the boy who owed the money to tell the older youth that his money was with the shopkeeper. The shopkeeper agreed to keep the money safe and to pass the money on to the older youth.

124 'Wazungu' (plural) and 'Mzungu' (singular) are the terms used in both Tanzania and Kenya to describe a white person or people.

Others received some support from the same Mzungu on a few occasions:

"We normally meet this Mzungu around here; he's normally around. ... We normally meet during the evening."

"There came a white man from America. ... One day he was telling me (the dangers of sniffing glue). ... When I heard that, I became so scared I never sniffed again. Then this one white man used to pay bills for milk and so I was drinking milk instead (of sniffing glue). I have never sniffed glue since that time."

Others described how they received help in the form of being fed from Wazungu on a number of occasions when they first came to the streets:

"It was a time when these white men were taking them (boys who live alone on the streets) and they welcomed me. We were taken (to a place where) they gave us food and returned us here (to the streets)."

Some children and youths were very negative about the support they received from Wazungu. In one instance, a child described how he felt a white woman used her money to endear the children to her so that she could preach from the bible but she was not receptive to hear the children's views of what help they would like. As a consequence, the children tried to steal from this woman:

"Support came from a certain white woman from a big church. ... She took our pictures and gave us bread. ... It seemed like that lady was joining us together using money ... because when she came she used to speak well with us. ... She would come with a bible and preach to us and make us feel well ... so we got used to her as she continued coming. ... I just thought that her money could be enough for food but now she was only taking our photos. ... When we explained what we had planned (what help the boys wanted) she didn't see that. ... So we jumped at them (the white woman and another person who was with her) trying to snatch the bag."

In three locations where the research took place in both Tanzania and Kenya, it became very evident that the actions of Wazungu had caused distress to individual children and youths and problems for others seeking to work with children and youths living on the streets. For example:

Emmanuel described how some time after he had been living on the streets he met a white man from America who, in Emmanuel's eyes, was particularly wealthy as he was staying in what was commonly regarded as the most expensive hotel in town. The American man frequently took Emmanuel to his hotel where he bought him food and soft drinks and told Emmanuel how he would like to adopt him and take him back with him to America so Emmanuel could live with him and attend school. Emmanuel became very excited by

this idea and began to look forward to his future living a very different life in America. One day, the American did not come to meet Emmanuel as arranged. Emmanuel waited for a few hours, returned to the meeting point the next day and for a number of days. Emmanuel described how he was very hurt and upset that the American did not come to meet him and did not keep the promises he made.

Evie lives in a centre where she is very unhappy, describes feeling suicidal and self-harms. A white woman came to visit the centre and said she would return to collect Evie and take her somewhere else to live. Evie waited for this woman to return but she has not done so. Evie feels very let down by this woman and wonders why she did not return.

In one location where the research took place, there were many children and youths who lived on the streets. As the research team walked round introducing themselves to the children and youths and explaining about the research, a number of children and youths mentioned a blonde white woman who talks with children and youths who live alone on the streets and says that she will help them. Some of the children and youths who mentioned this woman had met her; others had not but had been told by others what she had said she would do to help children and youths living on the streets. This woman had not been seen for some time. It became clear that a number of children and youths thought that the lead researcher was this woman and expected the lead researcher to provide what the white woman had said she would do. It was explained that the lead researcher's role was to carry out research and not what this other white woman had said she would do. Some of the children and youths' hopes had been raised and they were initially angry that they were not going to be receiving from the lead researcher what another white female had promised but not delivered. After some discussion, the children and youths stated that they understood the situation and the limits of the lead researcher's role with her work.

Whilst a few children and youths expressed dissatisfaction with the failure of the offers of help made by Wazungu to materialise, one youth recognised that it may not always be the case that children and youths on the streets are informed correctly of what an Mzungu has said when there has been no direct communication between children and youths on the streets and the Mzungu because of a lack of shared language:

"Others tell you this is what the Mzungu has said but you don't really know."

5.4 Violence on the streets

Violence is ever-present for children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya and experienced by the vast majority of children who participated in the research; a significant number were also perpetrators of violence, often in defence of themselves or others.

Violence from others living on the streets

At the time of participating in the research, children and youths presented a range of injuries such as a nostril slashed with a knife by a friend, a foot sole cut in retaliation for an unpaid fine of 2,000 Tanzanian shillings¹²⁵ and damaged eyes resulting from being beaten by the police with a stick. Whilst it was mostly males who faced violence on the streets, violence was also experienced by some of the females. For example, Aluna described getting into a fight with a woman. Many of the males who participated in the research described how the violence on the streets could be fatal and one of the most significant dangers they faced:

“You may be sleeping and somebody can come and set you on fire at night ... sometimes they can set your feet on fire. ... Others kill one another. ... There was one (boy) who was killed sometimes back ... he was hit by his friend with a stone and he died.”

Sometimes children and youths experience violence from those they live with on the streets as part of a group and describe as friends or colleagues:

“One day I was given 5,000 (shillings)¹²⁶ as I was begging. Then my friends saw me (with the money) so they chased me and caught me. They started beating me and another one cut me with a piece of iron sheet.”

“Sometimes I am beaten like when I am sleeping (with his friends); I might be hit with a stone.”

“My colleague took a sharp piece of metal and stabbed me with it as we fought.”

Sometimes children and youths do not know who it is out of the group they stay with who has attacked them:

“You won’t know who beat you because you will be asleep; ... you just get dumbfounded to be hit with a stone. You see, when you look around ... that your friends are asleep; you won’t know who hit you.”

Many of the males who participated in the research described how other males search them for money and beat them whilst they are sleeping:

“There are people who search others for money ... at night they came to search me; they could not find money ... when they didn’t find money they beat me up. ... After beating me, they poured water on me.”

“The worst thing is if you are sleeping and you only have ten shillings¹²⁷ in your pocket which you have

kept for when the morning arrives to go and drink tea, you will get somebody who will fight and take it.”

“There is nothing good (living on the streets) because if someone (another boy on the street) asks you for money and you refuse, they come at you at night and search you and nobody helps you out and if you meet them during the day, they threaten you that they will come at night; they beat you up mercilessly.”

“There was a day when somebody came started beating me when I was asleep. Of course I didn’t owe him any money but he was demanding money from me. He tried to force me to go and get him some money from elsewhere but I had to plead with him promising that I would give him some day when I get money.”

Much of the violence experienced by males on the streets is at the hands of older youths who also live on the streets:

“They beat us; they torture us. ... These big guys, you know, they send us out to beg. So if you resist, they hit you. Then you are forced to go out to beg; they ask you to bring the money back to them. If you resist, they check up on you. When you relax, go slack, they beat you, grab the money and give you a hard time, include mocking you.”

“If you stay with those big boys, they harass you every time because they want you to give them money. If they see somebody give you money, they call you and take it by force.”

It was very common for males to describe being beaten by others on the streets after borrowing money as owing money can result in a child being the victim of, or at risk of, violent attack:

“There was a time I owed one boy (money). The time he wanted it back I didn’t have it, and I had fever, so he seized me, beat me up; he lurked at me when I was still asleep and cut me with a knife though I still didn’t have the money.”

“In case you owe somebody, you have to pay early otherwise if he loses his temper, he can stab you or even kill you.”

Owing others on the street money for glue or marijuana can also lead to children and youths being beaten:

“Those who smoke marijuana share with you; they give you (marijuana) in little amounts until you probably owe then 50,000 shillings¹²⁸ and if you can’t pay for that, they begin beating you.”

Children and youths described how violent outbursts could break out over issues relating to places to stay:

126 This is approximately £2.07.

127 This is approximately seven pence.

128 This is approximately £20.70.

Dennis, his friends and older boys who live on the streets used to sleep on a veranda. The owner of the veranda suggested that instead of sleeping outside on the veranda, in return for cleaning out a number of rooms, the boys could have one of the rooms as somewhere to stay. The older boys have claimed the room. One boy has a room to himself as he has the role of reporting any problems with the rooms to the owner:

“He started harassing and beating me. One day he grabbed me by the throat and started throttling me. ... They (this boy and other boys) don’t want us to stay there.”

Some children and youths described how they will retaliate with violence when anyone, even a friend, poses a threat to them:

“If your friend does something to you ... you also take a razor blade and cut him; it is just a matter of being smarter. ... I have cut many people.”

Whilst admitting that he isn’t very good at fighting and often gets beaten, Alex stated that the only way to avoid being beaten was to fight.

Violence from others in the community

In both Tanzania and Kenya, children and youths described being beaten by guards and sustaining injuries such as broken bones. In Tanzania it is common for guards to be Maasai and many children and youths who participated in the research described being attacked by Maasai guards:

“You know, the Maasai engage us in running battles and when they catch you, they can easily kill you; they have a lot of anger.”

One child described being beaten by Maasai guards on his way to collect scrap metal because some older boys on the streets had stolen:

“So that morning the Maasai grabbed me even though I had nothing to do with it (the theft). They cut me and threw me around and left me for dead. They beat me with an iron bar ... and called me a thief. ... There were two of them hitting me. They tied a fan belt round my neck and tried to strangle me three times.”

Children and youths also experienced threats of violence from others seeking to exploit them:

“There was a young man who once told me that he would kill me if he found me asleep at night: he was forcing me to give him the money which I earn.”

Children and youths could also receive violence from others in the local community:

“There is a day I went to a food vendor to beg for food but she called some youths to beat me and said to me ‘I don’t take care of street children or hooligans’. So they seriously beat me.”

Violence from the police

Along with being beaten by older boys who live on the streets, one of the most frequent dangers of living on the streets identified by research participants was being beaten by the police¹²⁹:

“During the night the police and city council people beat us.”

“The bad thing (about living on the streets) is to be beaten. During the night the police and city council people beat us.”

It was common for children and youths to experience violence from the police:

“Life on the streets is dangerous; the police beat up children at night.”

“They (the police) harass, beat us and give us heavy punishments, even if you haven’t done anything.”

“If the police meet you and you have not stolen anything, they arrest and beat you ... then they can let you go after they have beat you so those are bad things.”

“If they (the police) spot us, they chase us and arrest us. ... They take us to the city park, they beat us first, they torture you, and then they take us to the jail.”

“They (the police) seize you and beat you a lot. One youth ... was once beaten until this bone on the neck protruded outside.”

A few children and youths described how the police take money from them:

“The police find us, they beat us. ... Sometimes they want money so if they are given money, they just leave you alone or they search and take any money they find on you.”

Children and youths showed scars on their bodies resulting from beating by the police, describing how the police use their sticks to beat them or kick them.

In one location, a number of research participants described how the police murder children who live on the streets and a couple of children and youths described how they feared being shot by the police. It was common for the police to surround children and youths who live on the streets at night whilst they are asleep, blocking escape routes and beat them whilst they are sleeping and as they try to run away. In a second location, children and youths

129 The lead researcher and the person acting as her translator had an encounter with the police whilst interviewing a child on a veranda in a quiet street late one evening. With no warning, two vehicles appeared and blocked the two exits to the veranda and four adult males in civilian clothing surrounded the child, lead researcher and interpreter. Without introducing themselves as police, a number of demands were made in an aggressive and menacing manner that left the lead researcher wondering if they were about to be mugged or attacked in other ways. It wasn’t until after the lead researcher was asked in English to provide her papers and she requested being told who she was dealing with that they were informed that the four males were from the police. This experience enabled the lead researcher to be empathic to how frightening it must be for children who quickly find themselves surrounded by the police who, as reported by research participants, often beat them with sticks.

who participated in the research described how there have been a number of round-ups by the police of children and youths who live on the streets¹³⁰:

"You know, the police disturb us a lot these days."

"There was a round up for street children recently and those who were caught stayed there (in a remand home) for about one month."

Some children described being afraid of the police:

"We are afraid of the police very much."

Whilst negative experiences of the police were common, a few young males and one female have had some positive experiences of the police. For example, one male was helped by a policeman after being knocked over by a car; another described how a policeman prevented another boy on the street from beating him up; and a third was defended by the police when wrongly accused of stealing:

"One day when we were asleep where a shop had been broken into and things got stolen, later it was claimed that we were responsible. That day we were seriously beaten but the policemen defended us saying 'release them; maybe they are not the ones' (who broke into the shop and stole)."

Fadhili has continuously received support from one policeman after reporting a crime to the police:

"We reported it (the theft) to a policeman. Later we learned that the policeman is good; sometimes he gives us money for lunch or buys us tea in the morning. Even today, he gives us (Fadhili and his friend) 20 (Kenyan Shillings)¹³¹ each."

5.5 Sexual assault on the streets

Historically, there are very high incidences of sexual violence towards female adults and children¹³² in Tanzania and Kenya. Whilst there is a problem in gaining accurate data, it is recognised that gender-based violence is a significant problem in Tanzania. Research suggests that, in Tanzania, nearly one in four women may experience sexual violence by an intimate partner and up to one third of adolescent girls report their first sexual experience as being forced¹³³. In Kenya rape of women appears to have risen significantly. For example, since the post-election violence after the 2007 election in Kenya, there has been:

"a huge increase in incidences of sexual violence in the post election period."¹³⁴

In a Crime Scene Investigation Nairobi report¹³⁵, it is identified that rape of females is rarely reported to the police and using sources of national incidence data from hospitals in a six month period in 2008, rape is estimated to have increased by 5,200 per cent compared to 2007 and that there were at least 40,500 estimated rape cases of females in Kenya¹³⁶. This figure, whilst shocking,

appears to be conservative and it is estimated that the true figure could be three times higher than the given estimate¹³⁷.

Whilst there are no recorded figures relating to rape of males, in 2006 a Kenyan newspaper identified that a small number of men had been treated for rape and that it was thought that many others have been raped but are too embarrassed to seek help¹³⁸. Given present attitudes to homosexuality¹³⁹ in Tanzania and Kenya, it is not surprising that many males do not seek help after experiencing rape.

Rape is commonly experienced by children and youths on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. Before carrying out interviews, the lead researcher was told that because of the taboo nature of sex between males in Tanzania and Kenya, young males would not admit to being raped. This did not turn out to be the case. One female and approximately a tenth of males who participated in the research described being raped on the streets. Other females and males have experienced attempted sexual assault. Some of the males used the word 'rape' to describe circumstances where one boy is forced by another but some males used the term 'sodomise' both to describe rape and circumstances when anal sex takes place between consenting males and others. However, as words of many of the males reveal, there is sometimes a fine line between consensual sex and rape. For example, Erik describes how the sexual behaviour of some of the older youths he stayed with on the streets led him and his friends to part company with these youths:

"Those (the older boys) we part company with ... because of bad behaviour. ... They copulate. ... They sodomise."

Erik then moved on to say:

"If he (any of the older boys who have sex with one another) finds you sleeping, he starts to copulate with you."

There are a number of factors relating to the lives of children and youths who live on the streets that make them particularly vulnerable including a reliance on others for survival and a lack of knowledge of sexual matters and sexual health. Some of the males who participated in the research identified how men have sexual relationships with males who live on the streets:

"Some other men treat boys like their wives which is very bad. ... I saw people doing it just like a man and wife."

Some of the males expressed an acceptance that rape by the older youths on the streets was inevitable: these older youths had been raped when they were younger and they, in turn, when they were older, raped the younger boys. One male, during a particularly frank interview, after being asked if he had been raped shrugged his shoulders and replied that of course he had. This suggests that many of the males do not explicitly consent or welcome the sexual

130 Mkombozi have carried out legal analysis of police round-ups of street children in Tanzania, finding them unconstitutional and contravening international and national standards for child protection.

131 This is approximately 15 pence.

132 Sexual assault against males in Tanzania and Kenya does not appear to be recorded.

133 Matasha E (1998) 'Sexual and reproductive health among primary and secondary school pupils in Mwanza, Tanzania: need for intervention' AIDS Care, 1998, 10:571-582.

134 (2008) 'Rape used as weapon in Kenya's ethnic clashes' <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23153090> 28th July 2010.

135 This report addresses the rape of females aged nine months and upwards.

136 Murigi K (2008) Quantitative Research Findings on Rape in Kenya Between Dec 30th 2007 to June 30th 2008 Nairobi: Crime Scene Investigation Nairobi.

137 Ibid.

138 Ngesa P K M M (2006) 'Rape of Men by Gangs Alarms Doctors as Crime Rate Shoots Up' Daily Nation <http://allafrica.com/stories/200609290965.html> 27th July 2010.

139 Homosexuality is illegal in Tanzania and Kenya and often regarded with disgust, criticised and thought of as an indicator of mental illness.

advances of others, but accept that they are powerless to resist the advances of older and stronger males. The World Health Organisation touches upon the inevitability of this in the presentation of one possible meaning of sexual experiences amongst children and young people who live on the streets is 'initiation sex' with newcomers to the streets who are coerced with threats of violence and view this experience as something inevitable¹⁴⁰.

Many of the children and youths, both male and females, described how sexual assault was a danger on the streets:

"A friend of mine (who lived on the streets) was sexually abused right here at the base (where the children sleep and spend time when not working to provide for themselves)."

Many of the males who participated in the research described as a negative of being on the streets the older boys raping the younger boys. As Mzee, himself raped by older youths on the streets, explains:

"The ones who are big come to our base at night and have sex with people, especially the small children."

This danger was commonly from older youths who lived on the streets but could also come from other adults:

"If you slept in open places, you might be caught by some watchmen who have bad behaviour ... a watchman may come and sodomise you whilst you are asleep."

"An adult followed me. I was there (at the bus stand) then I felt hungry. ... I told him (the adult) 'I will carry your bags and you give me money'. He told me to carry them and took me to a certain place. When we got to that certain place he told me 'not here'. ... He told me 'let's go to another place there at X' (name of the place) so when we arrived there, he held me here (Msela shows the street interviewer how the man held him). He say then 'I have just been there for you and now you are there for me' ... and he hit me hard. I ran until I became lost. I appeared on the street and I saw a car. I stopped it and told them there (the people in the car) and they gave me a lift. They took me back to the bus stand."

Some children and youths described in depth their experiences of being raped. Turusifu, for example, told the lead researcher and her interpreter about his experiences of being raped when he first came to the streets, having previously never spoken about this. As previously mentioned, younger children were particularly at risk of rape from older boys as Matu's experiences reveal:

Matu is seven years old, a tiny child with a big smile who wears a t-shirt so large it hangs off both shoulders and trousers that have been cut with a razor at the rear so many times by older boys that want to rape him that his buttocks are showing and the trousers hang together by a thread. Matu has been raped countless times by older boys on the

streets who take him down to the sewer to gang-rape him or force themselves upon him whilst he is sleeping. Matu describes himself as being forced to do homo sex.

A few of the youths who participated in the research described how they did not like to witness older males raping smaller boys and this often led them to quarrel and break with the older youths. As Matatizo described:

"In those groups (which Matatizo used to be a part of) the big boys didn't like the small boys and they could come and abuse them as they slept at night. ... It (the abuse) is like sodomy; you find that the big boys may sodomise a small (boy) ... But we used to quarrel with them and that is why I separated from them and lived alone in my own ways."

Some of the youths who participated in the research described how they try to protect smaller boys from being raped:

"I even used to protect my friends, all the small boys ... so I protect them. ... If anything happens to them ... I am called and sometimes I have to stone those who harass them. ... I don't like to see a child ... being sodomised."

Emmanuel tried to prevent Matu from being raped and has fought with other males when he has found them raping Matu:

"When Matu is sleeping, sometimes he has got some deep sleep, then you find a big person (older boy) hanging on him (raping Matu) ... so we fight with those people."

Most of the females who participated in the research described how rape was a particular risk to them, both by males who live on the streets and others. For example:

Evie was on the streets when she was 11 and shared her fears of being raped with her female friends. One day, whilst still aged 11, she was approached by a young adult male who told her that he wanted to be a brother to her and provide her with somewhere to live. When she went with him to see where they would live, he attempted to rape her but Evie managed to escape.

Phoebie described how many girls she was with on the streets were raped:

"Girls were being raped. Luckily I was never raped."

Phoebie described an incident where she witnessed her friend being raped:

"I screamed for help. People came to assist me and the men (who raped her friend) ran away. I

picked up my friend who was bleeding. I had a cloth which I wiped her with. A man and woman emerged and took her (Phoebie's friend) to assist her. That was the last I saw of her."

Phoebie did not know where her friend was taken or what happened to her.

Abiria experienced being raped on her first night on the streets by a group of boys who lived on the streets:

"Those boys there (on the streets where Abiria was on her first night on the streets), they began arresting me because I am a dame. When it was night time, those boys arrested me; they seized me. Then I went to hospital to be treated and I got healed."

One of the females who participated in the research described positive experiences of living with boys on the streets. Whilst experiencing an attempted sexual assault from a non-street person, Evie was well-cared for and protected by a group of boys who lived on the streets who did nothing to harm her. She slept with these boys and none of them ever tried to have consensual or non-consensual sex.

Children's accounts of sexual assault illustrate how sexual assault is:

"an act of violence in which sex is used as a weapon."
(Warsaw, 1998; 11.)¹⁴¹

Groth and others¹⁴² argue that power, anger and sexuality are present in rapists' behaviour with power or anger being dominant; sexuality is never dominant. The experiences of some of the children who participated in the research are particularly humiliating: being raped in a sewer as suffered by Matu or being left with only underpants to wear after being raped as experienced by Turusifu. The humiliation and demoralisation of young boys by older children or youths on the streets echoes descriptions of male rape carried out by armed groups in Congo¹⁴³ who use rape as a weapon of war. However, this pattern of sexual assault experienced by children on the streets had resulted in some normalisation of experiencing rape and perpetrating rape as expressions of power and anger. As noted by the World Health Organisation:

*"If the street child's earlier sexual experience were positive, he or she is more likely to seek those experiences. If sexual activity brings feelings of power or control to someone who otherwise feels powerless, such feelings may be sought through aggressive sexual demands or violence against others."*¹⁴⁴

Patterns of sexual assault and sexual behaviours also raise concerns in relation to the transmission of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). There are also consequences for mental well-being and future development of sexuality and sexual relationships. Children and youths are likely to experience immense distress at being a victim of sexual assault. In addition, they are not likely to receive support to address this distress caused by sexual assault or support to address issues relating to sexual identity, what constitutes appropriate sexual behaviour and forming intimate and trusting relationships.

5.6 Health problems whilst living on the streets

Previous research reveals that children and youths who live on the streets have twice as many health problems compared to other children¹⁴⁵. Many of the children and youths who participated in the research experienced health problems whilst living on the streets. As some of the children's stories and quotes indicate, injuries and health problems can result from assaults. Many children and youths showed scars that tell of the violence of the streets. Children and youths also described experiencing malaria, cholera, tuberculosis, other chest problems, worms, boils, stomach ulcers, scabies and infections of the feet.

In one location, a child was seen who had just been circumcised and was lying down in a tunnel on a pile of rags dependent upon other children who lived with him on the streets to care for him¹⁴⁶. Some children and youths have experienced many health problems since they began living on the streets:

"I normally fall sick. Even at this moment I am sick."

"I have suffered many health problems since I started living on the streets."

Some of the children and youths were sick or injured at the time of their participation in the research. For example, some children and youths had chest problems or malaria¹⁴⁷. As previously mentioned, one child had part of the sole of his foot sliced with a knife by an older boy whom he owed a small amount of money to and had to be carried to the local hospital by the lead researcher, a street interviewer and another youth who lived on the streets¹⁴⁸.

Children and youths described and were seen searching in large rubbish dumps for litter that they could eat. For many of the children who participated in the research this was a last resort when it had not been possible to earn money through working or begging and could result in health problems:

"You go through the (rubbish) dump finding something to eat ... and suffer from serious stomach complications like stomach ache,

141 Warsaw R (1998) I Never Called it Rape: The MS. Report on Recognising, Fighting and Surviving Date and Acquaintance Rape W A: University Press.

142 Groth A Burgess W & Holmstrom L (1977) 'Power, Anger and Sexuality' in American Journal of Psychiatry 134 1239 – 1243.

143 J Gettleman (2009) 'Symbol of Unhealed Congo: Male Rape Victims' in The New York Times Aug 5 A1.

144 http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2000/WHO_MSD_MDP_00.14_Module4.pdf
17th November 2010.

145 Mkombozi (2006) Census 2006: The rhetoric and reality of Tanzania's street children Moshi: Mkombozi.

146 The research team provided some food and water for this child.

147 Where possible and appropriate, the research team facilitated the child receiving some medical attention.

148 This child was able to access medical attention free of charge because a local NGO were able to refer him to the hospital.

diarrhoea and sometime that can make you lie down struggling with pain.”

As well as general health problems resulting from a poor diet and sleeping outdoors in the cold, many of the children and youths are very thin. It is common for children and youths to have stunted growth and appear physically much younger than their age.

Some children and youths described how children on the streets can die from health problems and that whilst they are ill, they do not receive sympathy from others:

“Nobody would look at you like a human being.”

“There is a time when I was sick and no-one cared.”

Many children and youths living on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya depend upon their friends to care for them when they are ill:

“When I am sick ... then it is friends who assist me; nobody else.”

Mental health issues

Only a handful of the children and youths who participated in the research mentioned any aspects of their life that related to mental health issues. For example, as mentioned previously, Turusifu described feeling very low and Evie identified as feeling suicidal and self-harming. Given the likelihood of many children and young people who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya experiencing trauma from, for example, early life experiences whilst still living with family and the extent of violence and sexual assault in their lives alongside substance misuse, it is likely that many of the children and youths who participated in the research do have mental health issues.

5.7 Life trajectories on the streets

It became apparent children and youths' lives can develop in a number of directions when living on the streets. Some of this can be down to luck: who one meets when first arriving upon the streets and who one doesn't meet; the support that is offered by others, both informal and formal; who one becomes friends with and their ability to provide. Some children and youths are beaten severely after being caught the first time they steal whilst others are never caught despite taking a number of risks. Physical characteristics can also play a role in determining some of the extent of vulnerability: the age of the child, the size of the child, the sex of the child. However, the experiences of the children and youths who participated in the research reveal that there is no guarantee as to the direction that their life will take. A few children and youths such as Matatizo appear to survive better than others on the streets:

Matatizo started to live on the streets when he was five. He collected tins, bottles and charcoal to sell to earn money for food but, when he wasn't able to

earn money, was fed by women who sold food who took to Matatizo so he never went hungry. He stayed with a group of older boys who took care of him and he was never harmed. Now Matatizo is an older youth who others come to when they have troubles and he protects the younger boys, especially from those attempting to rape them. Matatizo spends his life moving from the streets, to a centre and back to the streets as well as visiting his family at festivals. He is adept at providing for himself, never goes hungry and is able to provide for his other needs.

Some children and youths experience problems whilst living on the streets for a number of years and then become more resilient and better able to manage their lives on the streets:

Turusifu has often been beaten and raped whilst living on the streets since the age of ten and it is very clear from his description of his early life on the streets that he found it very difficult to adjust to street life and was a victim to the attacks of others. After a brief foray into stealing, Turusifu recognised that this was not something that he wanted to continue to do. By the time of his participation in the research, Turusifu's life on the streets had changed in a number of ways as he is a leader of a group of boys who live on the streets and other children listen to him and do as he asks. Turusifu is clearly respected by others in the community such as vendors and the family who feed him and allow him to rest in their house in return for the help he provides to them carrying out chores and caring for their children.

As well as carrying out a long and insightful interview, Turusifu acted as a guide for the lead researcher, helping her when taking a younger child to hospital and taking two young boys to a centre late one night by finding a taxi driver he knew could be trusted. After hearing the plans of an older boy to attack the lead researcher, Turusifu made it clear that she was to be left alone and this was adhered to.

For these children and youths, the shift from really struggling with their lives on the streets to better managing living on the streets appears to take place when they have come to terms with accepting that the world they inhabit differs from that they have known previously or would like and they accept the reality of their lives. Whilst this may make living alone on the streets more manageable in some ways, the process of normalisation and acceptance can also be problematic.

Other children and youths continue to experience violence and abuse as their life continues:

Dennis' life has been a catalogue of sadness and violence. Many of his experiences have been reflected in this report. A young sibling died whilst in his care when Dennis was himself a young child; his mother attacked his father with a machete; he was humiliated and beaten by his mother and all the teachers at his school in front of all the other pupils; he is beaten regularly by other boys on the streets including a boy he classes as a friend and was hospitalised when mistakenly identified as stealing scrap metal and adult males tried to strangle him with a fan belt and hit him repeatedly with an iron bar.

Some children experience traumatic incidents at a very young age that potentially have devastating impacts upon them:

Matu, aged seven, has already experienced physical abuse from his mother and repeated sexual and physical abuse from older boys on the streets in the two years he has been living on the streets. After participating in the research, with his consent, he was taken to a centre for children from the streets where it was agreed he would have an HIV/AIDS test, and start attending school and receive some form of counselling. Matu ran away from this centre and attempts by centre staff to locate Matu have not been successful.

Some children and youths hold ambitions to become a businessman, or have a home and family of their own. Others do not consider their future or the direction of their life just living a day at a time. Others stated ambitions that were far removed from their present circumstances:

"Perhaps I will be the next Barack Obama and be a president."

"I hope to become a businessman, to become rich and have a big car."

Life has not changed for some children and youths despite spending a number of years on the streets. Alex, for example, has been on the streets for nine years since the age of six. During this time, he describes his life as every day being the same. A couple of the females who participated in the research have given birth to their children whilst on the streets and are now raising their children on the streets.

And then there is the one exception, an exception both because he is not representative of the majority of the children who participated in the research and because he has not experienced abuse or harm. He was provided with a place in a centre for children who live on the streets shortly after arriving on the streets and has remained in the centre for a number of years, receives an education and is doing well:

Robert spent just over four weeks on the streets after leaving home because, whilst there was no abuse, he was unhappy living with his father and stepmother. Robert was offered a place in a centre where he has lived for a number of years. He goes to visit for his family once a year whilst living in the centre and is doing very well at school. Robert hopes to continue with his education.

A few of the older youths who participated in the research no longer lived on the streets but shared a room where they slept but were otherwise still involved in the same lifestyle, survival strategies and violence as when they were living on the streets. Only one older youth described how his life had changed significantly whilst still being street-involved:

After being told that boys who lived alone on the streets were not wanted to work at the bus station because they may steal luggage, Chitundu realised that he had to cease living on the streets. At first he was only able to afford a room that was in bad shape and flooded regularly. After living in these conditions for three months, Chitundu was able to afford a new home where he is very happy. Chitundu still spends time with his friends who live on the streets, plays football regularly with them and is a regular attendee at church. He hopes to one day soon have his own family and be a good father to his children.

Despite there being some identifiable risk factors that have emerged from the experiences of children who live on the streets, it is important not to assume that some children are more likely than others to be more capable of survival on the streets. The experiences of life on the streets show that all children who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya are at risk, that many experience grave harm and assumptions cannot be made about their chance of survival as both luck and the intentions of others, over which they have no control, play a part in how their life develops.

5.8 Children's recommendations relating to living on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya

Many children and youths who participated in the research were adamant that children who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya were in need of help and support. As touched upon in the recommendations offered by children and youths in Section 3, a couple of children and youths identified the importance of understanding the individual needs of a child to ensure that the right support is set in place for them:

"They should be interviewed to find the reasons that made them leave their homes; then it will be possible to know how to help them."

A couple of recommendations highlighted how some children and youths did not know where to go for established support and implicitly acknowledged the need for awareness-raising:

"I just think these children (who live alone on the streets) should go to orphanages and let it be announced on TV or radio so that those who don't know where orphanages are may get to know."

A few children and youths' recommendations related to proving support services for children who live alone on the streets:

"They should build children's centres for bringing up children and educating them."

"I would like to ask them (the government) that they build for us a safe place where we can live."

"You can help us to be able to get food, for example, when we get sick and are not able to buy."

Rashidi believes that it is many people's responsibility to help children and youths who live alone on the streets:

"They just need to volunteer to help those children because some other time you may find that a child has neither a father nor a mother and if you leave him there, you will not have done the right thing."

Aziza believes that finding a sponsor for children can make a lot of difference:

"Others have managed through sponsors and have succeeded. Even when you are told this one was a hooligan (even children who were hooligans prior to being sponsored)."

One child, when asked what would help, requested that help should begin by preventing the police from beating children who live on the streets:

"I would like for you to start to help us to tell the police to stop beating us."

Some children and youths believe that the best way to change their lives on the street is to return to education or to get a job that will last some time:

"Go back to school or work in a garage or any other job. ... Best thing is to get a job and hold on to it so that you can get a place to sleep."

"To send them to school so that their future life becomes good."

"Help them with school, for them to go and study. ... Come ... to collect the children and the youths and take them to boarding school. If it's studying, they will be very happy."

Echoing recommendations by a number of children and youths who participated in the research, Mosi stressed the need for training so that children and youths who live alone on the streets can work and provide for themselves in a legitimate manner:

"To provide technical skills which will help somebody in his life but not giving somebody money so that he goes to start a business: he can't help spending the capital because he is jobless. For instance, (if you train children/youths to be) mechanics, if you know how to drive cars and repair it, it is easier to work anywhere."

Some of the children and youths differentiated between younger children and older youths:

"It's needed for them (younger children) to go back home and go to school. ... Those older ones ... those older ones, I don't know."

Some of the recommendations highlighted the importance of offering choice:

"I think those children who like going to school should be taken; those who like vocational training should also be taken for training."

"The small ones should be sent to school – even the others. It depends on what one wants. The others (older children) may want jobs set up for them. The ones who don't want (an education or a job) go on with their life (on the streets) as usual"

"Those who are using intoxicating drugs should be sent to a rehabilitation school."

Those younger children who participated in the research and responded to questions about what would help them and what support they would like often focused upon receiving kindness from someone:

"The kind of help I want is to get somebody whom I stay with and take me to school, give me food and stay somewhere where I sleep on a bed. Then I will live comfortably."

The above quote comes from Reuben, whose story is found at the beginning of the report, who then goes on to say that in return for this kindness and support, when he is older he will provide for this person:

"Then, when I am in a good job, I will care for the Good Samaritan who took me off the streets."

Some children and youths stressed the importance of centres for children and youths who live on the streets being able to provide for children in an appropriate manner:

"After children are brought (to a centre) I would make sure that they eat, get clothes, study and get all the comfortable life."

Aziza noted that young females on the streets are particularly vulnerable and recommended that support is required that meets their specific vulnerability:

"For girls like us, it is very dangerous to our lives because we girls are weak; we don't have any ability to contend (with an attack). Therefore follow-up is needed when a girl is on the streets. And educated people like you (the street interviewer), when you find me in a messy life, it is important to

save me because I am weak and sleep outside. ... There are many bad people ... who are inhuman. He can take you and do it to (rape) you. ... Therefore this is a serious issue to take care and control girls on the street."

A couple of children and youths' comments touched upon how it is difficult to help some children:

"To help those on the streets? You know, it depends on your character. If you are somebody with a hard head, you can't be helped."

Issah's recommendation subtly recognises the reality that many children are likely to remain living on the streets whilst advising that they should cease fighting amongst themselves and live together in a more mutually caring and peaceful fashion:

"I want to educate those that fight so that if we stay (living on the streets), we can live peacefully; to live with love."

Some of the children and youths' recommendations stressed the importance of investing in children as they are the future and play an important role in the development of a country. For example, Theo makes this observation in his recommendation to the government:

"My opinion would be for the government to build more schools (for) children and youth to go back to school. It does not mean that the government has not built schools: they have employed guards in these schools. If you go to that school, it looks like a prison; these children and youth would not like (to attend a school that looks like a prison). What I would say is that they should build schools and homes and help all the children and young (who live alone on the streets). ... Children and youth you see around, majority of them are very hard-working and energetic; they make our country a success."

Ila's recommendation to educate children and youths who live on the streets also simply highlights that these children will one day become adults who become more powerful actors in Tanzanian and Kenyan society:

"These children on the streets need to be educated because they will be adults."

5.9 Section summary

- Experiences of arrival upon the streets are diverse. Some children were welcomed by other children and youths who advised how to survive whilst others were met with violence.
- Some children and youths found little difference from living alone on the streets to being at home.
- Deciding who to live with is an important survival strategy and some children and youths formed groups to support safety, security, identity and economic survival.
- Being shrewd, cunning and able to fight are characteristics that serve children and youths well whilst living alone on the streets.
- Many undertake work not guaranteed to result in any income such as carrying luggage or other goods or collecting and selling scrap metal, firewood, charcoal or bottles. A few children and youths are able to consistently earn small amounts of money through more regular work.
- Stealing is a dangerous survival strategy that can have grave consequences if a child or youth is caught or wrongly accused of stealing. Children and youths also steal from one another. Some do not steal but there is a sense of inevitability that they will start to steal if they remain living on the streets.
- Begging is a common survival strategy for younger children who sometimes solely relied upon it as a means of gaining money or food but also as a last resort for older children and youths when attempts to earn money have failed. Those who rely upon begging often go without food for periods of time.
- Children and youths often look out for one another and encourage, often unsuccessfully, younger children to return home.
- Many children and youths use substances, particularly glue, as a coping strategy to manage living alone on the streets and relieve some of the difficulties they experience on the streets. Children and youths are often introduced to substances by others using substances. After becoming aware of the dangers of using glue, some have ceased using whilst others are unable to stop despite a desire to do so. Using glue is also viewed as inevitable if a child or youth remains on the streets for long periods of time.
- Fatalism is common and a child or youth's faith can be important to managing living on the streets and maintaining a positive outlook about themselves and their circumstances. Witchcraft and bewitchment is also offered as an explanation of how they found themselves living alone on the streets.
- Children and youths described receiving support from others in the community. Some support is offered under false pretences or does not materialise. Support from Wazungu was also offered to some children and youths. There were consequences where offers of support from Wazungu did not materialise as this caused individual children and youths distress and resulted in problems for those seeking to work with children and youths.
- Violence is ever-present on the streets and children and youths can be both victims and perpetrators. Children and youths can experience violence from others who live with them on the streets; older males are often perpetrators of violence against younger children. Violence was also experienced from the police, other officials and guards.
- Young males described being raped and females experienced rape or attempted sexual assault. There is often a fine line between consensual sex and rape amongst males. Being sexually assaulted was often very humiliating and traumatic. Certain older youths attempted to protect younger children from being sexually assaulted. There was some normalisation of sexual assault. Patterns of sexual behaviour and

assault raise concern for the transmission of HIV/AIDS and other STDs, mental well-being and development of sexuality and sexual relationships.

- Many children and youths experience health problems resulting from injuries, illness and assault. Health problems also arose from poor diet and living conditions.
- Children and youths' lives can develop in a number of directions when living alone on the streets. Some children and youths appear to survive better than others. Some children and youths appear to become more resilient and better manage their life on the streets as time moves on whilst others continually experience violence and abuse. For some, there is no change in their life on the streets over a number of years. A few older youths no longer sleep on the streets but remain street involved.
- Recommendations from children and youths focused upon: awareness-raising of support services for children and youths who live alone on the streets; providing services to meet their needs; that support should be provided by a range of individuals and the government; providing training and employment opportunities; treating children and youths with kindness; ensuring centres are able to adequately provide for the children and youths in their care; providing support specifically for females; recognising that it is not possible to help all children and youths who live alone on the streets; and to educate children and youths who live on the streets to live peacefully with love towards one another instead of fighting.

6. Children and Youths' Experiences of Agencies

Turusifu

After being on the streets for a couple of years and not receiving any support to enable him to move away from the streets, Turusifu decided to go to a centre for children living on the streets. Whilst living in the centre, Turusifu experienced some problems with an older boy who also lived there:

Continued on next page.

“One of them really liked to mistreat me. Anytime we were given chores, he always pushed everything to me: to clean the floors and do the dishes. I felt like I was being exploited.”

Children attended martial arts classes that were taught in the centre. Turusifu did not like these lessons as the martial arts teacher used to hurt the children:

“I was not satisfied with it because the teacher used to slap anyone who got the moves wrong. One day I had a splitting headache he hit me so hard. I was so mad that I left and went back to the streets.”

Turusifu has not sought access to a centre since being back on the streets but would like to receive support so that he can train to develop a skill, get a job and be able to leave the streets by earning a wage and being able to provide for himself.

Children and youths shared their perceptions and experiences of schools and agencies established to support them whilst living alone on the streets and in residential centres. It is important to address these perceptions as they inform how children and youths who live alone on the streets for four weeks or more in Tanzania and Kenya interact with providers of support and offer some explanation of why these children and youths are not able to access support services or do not have their needs met by the support services available to them.

In all of the four locations in Tanzania and Kenya where the research took place there were support services for children and young people who live alone on the streets. However there was no consistency of available support and services as different approaches were taken by different organisations. For example, whilst some organisations ensure that services are provided by professionals with appropriate qualifications, skills and training, other providers do not. In some areas it was apparent that there was very little co-ordination between services providers. In two locations no work was undertaken on the streets in the evening as this was deemed as being too dangerous despite this being the time when most children and youths living on the street can be accessed. In other areas food, educational and medical services, for example, were provided for children and youths by organisations working with children and youths living on the streets.

There were a range of reasons why children and youths did not access existing services in the local area. Some children and young people were not aware of existing services from which they can receive help:

“I don't know where they are. ... I would go if I knew.”

Other children and youths have accessed services but either did not like how they were treated by service providers or found that the services did not meet their needs. Some said that whilst they have come into contact with organisations that work to support children who live

on the streets, they have not received any support from them:

“X (name of the organisation)? They have done nothing for me.”

There were also instances where residential centres ceased operating and children and youths had no option but to return to the streets. A few children and youths who participated in the research had been told, after exhibiting behaviour that was deemed unacceptable, that they could no longer access a service. And of course, because of the numbers of children and youths living alone on the streets in all locations, service provision is not able to meet the needs of all of them. There is also a lack of services to meet specific needs of children and youths who live alone on the streets. Services for females are particularly scarce. Many projects do not have the resources to adequately meet the needs of children and youths who access their services and are therefore not able to implement interventions that meet individual children and youths' needs and ensure that they are able to permanently leave the streets.

As mentioned in the previous section of the report, some children and youths who participated in the research said that they have never come into contact with any agencies who offer support to children who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. Some children had no experiences of agencies working with children at all as some research participants had never attended school or received any other form of educational support. Other children reported receiving one-off incidents of support from agencies established to support children who live alone on the streets or have witnessed support being given to other children:

“I have seen no support. They (an organisation who works with children on the streets) once came. They bought a sack of potatoes to those who were jobless but were in pairs ... and the way they (the organisation) picked people was more of a favour because some were picked but others left.”

6.1 Schooling

As mentioned in the introduction to the report it is free to attend school in Tanzania and Kenya but there are a number of costs that must be met if a child is allowed to remain in school. The barriers to attending school set by these costs were identified by some of the children and youths who participated in the research:

“You need to appear like primary school children so you need uniform. You see, you need exercise books and, again, you need to provide everything for yourself (to receive an education).”

“I was also studying. ... My elder brother and I were expelled ... we didn't have a pair of trousers for school.”

Most of the children who participated in the research received some education, if only for a short period in their life. A few children attended school until Standard Eight, with a couple clearly achieving high standards at school.

James, for example, had reached Standard Six when he came to the streets. He was fifth in a class of 107 with very high marks.

Some of the older males who participated in the research from Kenya attended school at a time when their schooling had to be paid for. When their families could not afford to pay for children's schooling, this often had consequences for their schooling such as not being able to sit exams:

"You know, at that time, people paid for school. You know that if you haven't finished paying your school fees, you can't finish your exams, they will stop you from many things (at school) and you will be sent away (from school)."

Another child also described how he was not able to take his exams because his father refused to pay:

"My father refused to pay money for exams. ... I went to school okay and the day of the exams arrived. ... They (the school) asked my father for money. He refused ... and told me 'I will beat you!' Then, the day of the exams, I stayed outside (the school) with other children who couldn't pay."

Some of the children have never attended school because their parents cannot afford to send them to school. There can be consequences of not attending school such as being made to work or being thought of as a thief:

"It was like when everybody had left home and you alone remaining there, so you are sent for things and there won't be anybody else to assist you because all are there at school."

"If neighbours see you on the streets, they say you are a thief."

Some of the children who receive their education in a centre for children who live on the streets not only receive education similar to that provided in schools but are educated about other issues:

"I get taught; it is educative. ... We are taught about HIV/AIDS, sexuality, reproduction."

It was very apparent that the majority of children and youths who participated in the research value education, regard gaining an education as crucial to their future and stressed how they would like to attend school:

"I like to go to schools that later I can get my life. I can become a guard or ... I could become like Obama."

"Getting education is what would help me."

"I would like to go to school."

"(Life) will not be good if I am not educated."

"What I personally like (for support) is only studying."

6.2 Health care

Some children never seek professional medical attention when they are ill whilst others do if they have money at the time they are ill. In some areas, children are given free access to medical treatments in hospitals but this was not consistent across all areas of Tanzania and Kenya where the research took place. One child described how he was given inadequate medical attention for a deep cut on his head after being in a fight because he did not have money:

"There at the hospital, they didn't treat me very well. They just washed me and put on a bandage. ... They wanted money and I didn't have any money."

A couple of females who participated in the research have their own children and received medical attention when they gave birth:

Ailyah has given birth to two children whilst living on the streets but her first child died when he was a young baby and Ailyah lives with her second son on the streets. The only time she spent time in hospital whilst living on the streets was when she gave birth to her son. The costs of her medical care were paid by someone Ailyah described as a social worker. However, Ailyah describes herself as running away from the hospital and returned to the streets just after giving birth because she felt that she was not being well cared for:

"I can't say they were treating me well because I had to run away after seeing that they weren't really helping me except giving me medicine, no check-up on my son. I was compelled to run away and come here (back to the streets)."

In some areas children have to receive a referral from a charitable organisation if they require medical attention or from the police if they sustain injuries from an assault. A few of the children and youths who participated in the research were only able to receive medical attention at a hospital because they were taken there and referred by staff from a centre or organisation for children who live on the streets. In one location, youths described how staff from a centre came to the streets with a doctor to provide medical care for children and youths who did not stay in centres. Because of negative experiences and perceptions of the police, some children do not seek medical help that can only be accessed via the police. Children also reported that they do not always seek medical attention at hospitals because they are frightened of being arrested whilst they are in the hospital.

6.3 Spending time in police cells and remand centres

Many of the boys and one female who participated in the research have been arrested by the police on one or more occasions. Sometimes children do not know why they are arrested. Others are given rather vague reasons as to why they are being arrested:

"You are a street boy; you have been a headache to your mother and father."

"They (the police) harass, beat us and give us heavy punishment even if you haven't done anything."

Other boys have been arrested for and charged with touting, begging, loitering, dumping or littering. Some children and youths are kept in cells at the police station whilst others are taken to a prison or remand centre whilst their case comes to court and, if found to be guilty, are sent to reform schools or prisons. Sometimes children and youths find they are released just as quickly as they were arrested by the police without being charged:

When Maxwell was ten, he was caught by the police and charged with dumping:

"We were taken to X (name of a town) where there is a mini-prison."

Maxwell was kept in a cell with adult men:

"We were put in a cell and stayed there for a while. Then there was no food in the cell and people started fighting. Then they released us."

One of the young females who participated in the research was arrested and kept in a cell whilst her case came to court but unofficially released by a police officer:

When Aluna was arrested, she was pregnant. A policeman expressed sympathy for Aluna's condition and circumstances. She explained to the policeman that she had not been involved in the crime for which she had been arrested. On hearing her explanation, the policeman agreed to help Aluna escape and advised her to change her clothes as soon as possible so she would not be recognised and arrested a second time.

It was common for children to be kept with adults:

"I was jailed together with adults."

When this was the case, adults ranged in their temperament and behaviour:

"They (adults) are cool but others are not cool; others are sick."

After being arrested and charged with an offence, some children were taken to a remand home. Children described having to live in difficult circumstances whilst in remand homes:

"It's very bad; you are harassed and there is lice. ... The big boys beat you up. ... They (the people who work in remand homes) are not good at all ... because they are cold-hearted."

"And of course, you get a lot of beatings ... by the foremen who supervise there (in the remand home); they harass a lot."

"That place (the remand home) is bad: very little food, too much work."

"If you were found smoking cigarette you get beaten. ... There is serious torture there (in the remand home). ... They say you are naughty to your parents and so we used to get beaten like that. ... You may find that the supervisors there, the big ones, may cheat you with a cigarette so that they sodomise you later (in return for having been given the cigarette) ... so if you are smart, you can't accept that (the cigarette). But when I was there (in the remand home), I saw many people who were given cigarettes, food and were sodomised."

"We used to take only one meal ... and then you wait to the following day."

Some boys described running away from remand homes because the conditions they lived in were so difficult:

"There was a lot beating there (in the remand home). I ran away."

6.4 Experiences of centres for children and youths

In Tanzania and Kenya there are a number of residential centres for children and youths who live alone on the streets. Centres for children can be run by the government, missions or individuals. Formal centres are registered and have a license from social welfare but there are many centres without the correct registration or license from social welfare. Centres for children in both Tanzania and Kenya provide for a range of children including orphans, children from very poor backgrounds or specifically for children and youths who live alone on the streets. There is a significant diversity in the support offered in centres. For example, some centres provide schooling and access to health care whilst others do not. Some centres do not possess the resources to ensure every child has eating utensils or is adequately dressed. Some centres keep children and youths in the premises by locking all entry and exit points whilst others allow children and youths to come and go in a free manner.

Some children stay but leave after a short amount of time ranging from a few days to a couple of months. Many children and youths were not positive about their experience of staying in a centre; this was the case for both children who were living at a centre at the time of

their participation in the research and those who had stayed in a centre in the past. However there were a couple of youths who were very happy with their life in a centre and lived in the same centre for a number of years. A small number of children and youths liked living in a centre but disliked some aspects of their lives there, mostly related to experiences of violence from other youths and staff, and a few others who cited some positive elements of their stay in a centre.

Many children and youths ran away from centres. This could be for a range of reasons. Lusala left because his expectations were not being met:

"I stayed there until I found out that I wasn't getting my life expectation; then I decided to escape."

Fredrik wanted to return home but was told by staff at the centre he stayed in that this wasn't possible:

"I ran away from X (name of the centre) because we were talking about going home but when we asked for permission, we were denied so I ran off with X (name of Fredrik's friend)."

Some children experience problems from other children whilst living in centres. One young child who participated in the research whilst living in a centre described how older boys often hurt him and how he does not like this:

"The older boys hit me every day. ... They hit me on my head and push me. ... I do not like it. ... I want them to stop."

As noted in Section 4, missing glue can be a reason that children leave a centre, as was the case with Heri who left a centre after three days of being there because he needed to use glue.

A few children and youths were critical of the centre they had stayed in because they felt that there was not enough discipline or enough to do to provide a good upbringing:

"At X (name of the centre), you are pampered instead of being given a good upbringing. You see, when you wake up in the morning, you may just sweep the ground and then stay just like that 'til evening when you sleep."

In a few cases, children and youths who participated in the research alleged that staff who worked at the centre abused their position in a range of ways such as selling goods donated to the centre for the use of the children and youths who lived there and keeping the money for themselves and generally misusing centre funds for their own interests. Whilst there is no way of knowing if, in these cases, centre staff were or were not misusing resources for children living in the centre, the perception that they did is likely to play some part in some children and youths' reluctance to seek or accept assistance from centres. Some children and youths also described being abused by staff.

As previously explained, receiving an education is very important to many of the children and youths who participated in the research. Some children were relatively advanced in their education before coming to the streets

and did not like being put in a class that was below their standard of education. Joseph, for example, left the centre he was staying in because of this:

"They (staff at the centre) had called me to attend school but I realised ... I was staying in starter class where lessons taught (are) at a level are like those taught in Chekechekea (Kindergarten). ... It is like Class One. So how come I sit in Class One whilst I was in Class Six? And, of course, I had learnt everything in Class One so I left X (name of the centre) and came here (back to the streets)."

Ouga made similar comments about the education provided at another centre:

"So there (at the centre) we were learning. We (Ouga and his friends who went to the centre with him) were writing nicely, doing well and leading in the class but it was like a nursery."

Ouga also saw that there were similar problems at the centre as there were at home:

"There were problems there (at the centre). ... I like cleanliness ... but I couldn't change clothes (at the centre) even after three weeks since I didn't have enough clothes to exchange."

One of the females who participated in the research was positive about the education she received whilst living in a centre:

"(I) continued studying 'till Standard Eight and from there I was enrolled in a course. They (the centre) gave us freedom to continue studying or work. I decided to get some vocational skills so that I can begin working early."

A couple of children cited the food given to them as one of the reasons that they left the centre:

"They cook only one type of food every day ... then they don't want to take us to school."

"I ran away from that centre because there wasn't enough food there."

Aluna left a centre because of the hard work she was forced to undertake and being beaten:

"One thing that made me not to stay there (at the centre) was that we used to wake up in the morning and dig in the farm when schools were closed. We had to dig seriously and you could be beaten if you were left behind others as you were digging. ... You see, because I was brought up in the town where I wasn't used to such tough work, I felt like that was torturing."

Sometimes children and youths left a centre even though they thought the centre was a good place but were unable to articulate why they chose to leave the centre:

“X (name of the centre) was nice ... and the food was nice. ... I ran away after one month of staying there. ... I do not know why I ran away.”

“There were games and sports. ... We were trained according to different courses of our choice. ... Nothing was bad there; X (name of the centre) was a good centre. It was my own decision (to leave the centre).”

From comments made by a number of children and youths who participated in the research, it became apparent that they had become so used to living on the streets in a town and ‘town life’ that they found it difficult to remain living in a centre with its rules and left to return to a life they were more familiar and comfortable with.

Some children and youths have never stayed in centres for children who live on the streets but have accessed them for various forms of support such as medical care, clothing, education, bathing and food or to play football:

“They assisted when we wanted to take a bath and with food when we were hungry.”

Whilst being appreciative of the support they receive from the centre, some children do not want to stay in a centre:

“I like to study but I don’t like to stay at X (name of the centre). I don’t want to stay at any centre. ... I don’t want.”

Some of the boys who do not stay in a centre but have attended the schooling provided by a centre to children who live on the streets also found that the education offered to them was well below their educational attainment and this acted as a deterrent from attending:

“In (name of the centre) they teach you Standard One. ... You will find that somebody was in Class Five and he comes (to the centre) and (is) taken to Class One ... and he doesn’t want that.”

Some children stayed in informal centres established by well-meaning individuals:

“It is a certain pastor. ... That pastor used to come and preach to people here, for those who seem to be obedient and co-operative. ... He took us to school where we learnt ... it was like a centre. ... What was good is the education we used to get. We were treated nicely like we were at home; we get assisted there. We bathe, we eat well, we sleep on beds. ... There was nothing bad because if you want to be helped, you must be ready to help yourself first. If someone gives you somewhere to stay, you also need to work so everyone had duties to perform. ... His (the pastor’s) money got finished. He told all of us that he has no more money and that everyone (had) to take a bus and go back to (name of the place the boys had come from when they lived on the streets). ... I don’t understand how his money got finished.”

Some children expressed a desire to be accommodated in a local centre:

“How I would love it! I would like to be going to X (name of the centre) to learn ... and become knowledgeable.”

Issues relating to young females who stayed in centres

As noted at the beginning of the report, some of the females who participated in the research were staying in a centre at the time of their participation in the research. In two of the three centres where research interviews were undertaken, females accounted for a small proportion of all the children who lived in the centre. For example, in one centre that accommodated a relatively large number of children, at the time of the research, females accounted for fewer than six per cent of all the children who lived in the centre. All of these females who lived in the centres and participated in the research reported either, or both, physical and sexual abuse at the hands of staff working in the centre and from boys living with them in the centre¹⁴⁹. Some of the females described how they found it difficult living with so many boys and that they cause a problem for the females living in the centre:

“I don’t feel good (living with so many boys). They provoke, beat their fellows and insult; I am not used to that. ... I ran away (from the centre) after being troubled by some of the boys.”

Lily, for example, was very upset at the time of her interview and was threatening to run away after threats from a member of staff of what he was going to do to her than night. Lily had been both sexually and physically abused by this member of staff whilst living in the centre.

Phoebie and Lily both reported how they and their female friends fought off sexual assault from boys living with them in the centre:

“The boys held me down on the ground but a friend came and helped me push them off me.”

“A boy grabbed my breast but I pushed him away and ran away.”

A couple of males who have stayed in centres reported how female children were sexually abused by staff working in the centre:

“They used to take the female children (for sex).”

6.5 Issues relating to experiences of support provided by organisations working with children and youths living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya

In three of the locations where the research took place, children and youths who participated in the research described how they felt that support agencies did not always maintain their commitments to them or did not undertake work that achieved any change. In one location, at the time that the research was being carried out, a number of children told street interviewers how they were holding a ‘strike’¹⁵⁰ and boycotting the school for children who live on the streets as, from the boy’s perspective, the organisation had not kept to a

commitment and the boys were expressing their unhappiness with this by refusing to attend the school.

A couple of youths were critical of the actions of some of the workers from organisations who provided support for children and youths who live alone on the streets:

"I have never seen any results. Somebody just comes and says 'give me your life history' but I have never seen any results. I have already given my story to X (name of worker) from X (name of the organisation). X (the worker) came to the streets to listen to our stories so that she could help us, even if you just wanted to study, a job, you just needed to explain that to her so she could help you. ... Other teachers ... like a lot. They don't teach anything but a e i o u; so will you teach a e i o u to a grown up person like me? Sometimes they don't come by to teach us, they just pass by as (if) they are on their own business and they give us a ball just to play and pass time."

In one location, children and youths described two organisations that provide support for children who lived on the streets but that only one of these organisations came to the streets regularly to make contact with children and youths. In a second location, a number of children commented upon how organisations that provided for children who live alone on the streets did not come to the streets and make themselves known to children and youths living there. Whilst a number of centres provided food and washing facilities for children and youths living alone on the streets, this was the limit of the support they were able to provide which meant that no longer-term change was achieved. Other children and youths described how a service to support children and youths who live on the streets could disappear with serious consequences for those in need of this support:

"When I made a follow-up (to seek the organisation who had previously provided Fadhili with support), I was told these people are no longer in town; they had moved and would be found around near this road but I couldn't find them. I just had to leave it like that. ... I no longer have morale; I am just like this (feeling dejected and that there is no hope of support)."

6.6 Children and youths' recommendations addressing support provided by agencies

A constant theme throughout the report has been the importance of education and attending school and this, unsurprisingly, is represented in many of the children and youths' recommendations to provide effective support for children who live on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. As Baraka replied when asked what could be done to help children living alone on the streets:

"To send them to school so that their future life becomes good. School (education) is the foundation for human beings."

Whilst the importance of having an education was stressed by the majority of children and youths who participated in the research, some commented that

providing an education becomes less important as they get older:

"Initially we used to say an education (would help them whilst living on the streets) but that time has now passed and ... I am already a grown up person now; I can't say education will help me."

Some recommendations stressed the importance of providing children with an education when they are placed in a centre:

"I would pick children from the street, bring them here (to the centre where the child lives) and educate them."

"They should build a children's centre for bringing up children and for educating them as well."

"Take them (children and youths who live on the streets) to a centre so that they can study."

"Maybe you need to go round and see the children who live in difficult environments. ... They should be developed educationally."

As seen previously in Sections 3 and 4 of the report, a number of recommendations made by children and youths who participated in the research are directed at the government. Theo, for example, calls upon the government to, amongst other things, reduce opportunities for exploitation within centres for children and youths who live on the streets:

"They should not keep exploiters in those institutions (schools and centres for children who live on the streets)."

To ensure that children and youths in centres and on the streets receive what is meant for them, one youth suggested how a system of guardianship could support with cross-checking:

"Guardians should look for us once something is sent ... they should come and hand it over to the particular child who is the recipient of aid. If the children are asked, they will acknowledge receipt or not if there is cross-checking."

6.7 Section summary

- In all four locations where the research took place there was support specifically for children and youths who lived on the streets. However, the nature of this support differed between the four locations.
- Children and youths did not access support because they were unaware of existing support in their area, the support offered did not meet their needs, they did not like how the support was offered or support had not been offered to them.
- When residential services ceased operating, children and youths had to return to the streets.
- Some children and youths were not able to access services after presenting unacceptable behaviour.
- Some support services do not possess the resources to meet the needs of children and youths in their care.
- Costs of schooling are prohibitive to some children and youths attending school and can cause conflict between children and their parents or carers.
- Some children and youths have never attended school but many have experienced limited schooling.
- Education is highly valued by children and youths who live alone on the streets.
- Lack of access to free health care can prevent some children and youths from seeking health care when they are ill or injured. Referral from support agencies working with children and youths on the streets can enable access to health care, although the quality of some of this healthcare was reported as being low.
- Many children and youths are arrested and spend time in police cells and remand centres. Children and youths are often kept with adults. Violence and sexual abuse are experienced in remand homes.
- Whilst some positive experiences of staying in centres were described, many children and young people were not positive about living in a centre because their needs or expectations were not met, they were forced to undertake hard work, they experienced abuse from staff and violence from other children and youths or they perceived that staff were misusing resources. Children and youths also described how they were provided with education in centres pitched at a level far below their capabilities.
- Some children and youths clearly find it difficult to live within centres with rules and boundaries after living with relative freedom on the streets.
- Children and youths were not always happy with the support services by organisations developed to meet their needs as they did not perceive that service always maintained their commitment to them or that any longer-term change was forthcoming as a result of their interventions.
- Children and youths' recommendations addressed ensuring children and youths living alone on the streets received an education and that staff working in centres were unable to engage in forms of exploitation.

7. Attachment, Identity and Resilience

Section 7 focuses upon the key issues of attachment, identity and resilience as these are relevant to children and young people who live alone on the streets. Whilst it is beyond the scope of this report to address these issues in depth, it is important to address attachment, identity and resilience as they are significant, firstly, to understand the experiences and behaviours of children and young people who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya and, secondly, to inform responses to meet their needs.

7.1 Attachment, insecure attachment and disorganised attachment

Attachment is the deep emotional bond formed between children and one or more parent or carers providing a sense of security to children allowing them to explore their environment and return to the parent or carer at times of distress. The mutual responsiveness of the attached relationship creates the secure base for children's development:

“As children and their preferred caregivers interact over time, the child internalises the relationship between himself and the caregiver and develops an internal working model. The internal model includes the child's perceptions about him/herself and expectations of the attachment figure. It affects how the child interprets events, stores information in memory and perceives social situations. Internal working models act as templates in the brain for future relationships.”¹⁵¹

Research carried out across the world supports the claim that all infants develop attachment relationships, both secure and insecure, with primary carers and that the prevalence of children who develop secure attachment is proportionately similar across cultures:

“In African, Chinese, Israeli, Japanese, Western European and American cultures alike, most children, about two thirds, are securely attached to their caregivers.”¹⁵²

Although the attachment relationship is universal, it is important to firstly recognise that parental attachments, values, beliefs and practice may differ in different cultures and, secondly, to acknowledge both the impact of cultural frameworks and challenges to dominant cultural practices that can result in shifts in cultural practices.

The experiences of the children and youths who participated in this research suggest significant consequences relating to forming insecure attachments and developing disorganised attachment as many experienced abuse and other forms of maltreatment by parents and carers.

When children experience danger and psychological abandonment from their attachment figures – those from whom they seek affirmation, care and protection – there can be a number of damaging consequences¹⁵³. When a child is abused by a parent or carer, experiencing fear without protection, or is cared for by a parent or carer who is emotionally unavailable to them¹⁵⁴, they behave in a disorganised way and develop disorganised attachment, which can also occur when a child is frightened for their parent, such as when witnessing domestic violence. The impact of a parent or carer causing high levels of fear and distress in their child can cause psychological harm:

“children have few insights into the nature of their distress and arousal, and even less ability to contain and regulate their feeling. This means that the demands of social relationships can easily

become confusing and upsetting, leading to behaviour that is either inappropriate or aggressive.”
(Howe, 2005; 162.)¹⁵⁵

The research findings presented in previous sections of the report highlight how children and youths have often experienced abuse by familial carers and how violent behaviour is common amongst children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. Being abused may be a factor in children and youths' violent behaviour as experiencing abuse can predispose a child to violent behaviour:

“both lack of critical nurturing experiences and excessive exposure to traumatic violence will alter the developing nervous system, predisposing to a more impulsive, reactive and violent individual.”
(Perry, 1997; 74.)¹⁵⁶

Many children and youths who participated in the research experienced neglect which can result in severe psychological damage:

“Having been deprived of the necessary ingredients in their normal development, children never seem to access the loss of a childhood that could have been. They keep searching as adolescents and adults, only to find that those they search amongst are usually themselves deprived people who not only cannot provide them with what they needed as children, but also tend to abuse them, partly out of their own frustrations in encountering somebody who they thought would give to them when they are so hungry.”
(Ney et al, 1994; 711.)¹⁵⁷

Developing disorganised attachment can impair social and emotional development, physical and motor development and cognitive and academic development. Children can become withdrawn, unable to trust and develop an uneven identity¹⁵⁸.

The consequences of the lack or loss of an adequate relationship with an adult caregiver for children who live on the streets is highlighted in other research¹⁵⁹. In a study researching family networks of children who live on the streets and school children in Eldoret in Kenya, Ayuku found that the greatest emotional risk to children who live on the streets is the loss or lack of an adequate relationship with a caregiver:

“In terms of attachment theory and the developmental effects of basic emotional security, trust identification and psychological nurturance, this loss/lack of an adequate relationship has profound implications.”
(Ayuku, 2005; 9.)¹⁶⁰

The profound implications for those children with insecure attachments and those who develop disorganised attachment not only affect individual children but also impact upon others in society.

151 <http://www.attachmentacrosscultures.org/about/about1.5.htm> 27th July 2010

152 <http://social.jrank.org/pages/52/Attachment-Cross-Cultural-Research.html> 27th July 2010.

153 Smeaton E (2009) *Off the Radar: Children and Young People on the Streets in the UK* Sandbach: Railway Children.

154 Parental issues such as domestic violence, mental health issues or substance misuse can lead parents to be unable to provide the nurture and care for their children.

155 Howe D (2005) *Child Abuse and Neglect: Attachment, Development and Intervention* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

156 Perry B (1997) *Incubated in error: neurodevelopmental factors in the 'cycle of violence'* in J Osofsky (ed) *Children in a Violent Society* New York: Guilford Press.

157 Ney P Fung T & Wickett A (1994) 'The worst combination of child abuse and neglect' *Child Abuse and Neglect* 18 pg 705-714.

158 Smeaton E (2009) *Off the Radar: Children and Young People on the Streets in the UK* Sandbach: Railway Children.

159 Le Roux J & Smith C S (1998) 'Psychological Characteristics of South African Street Children' *Adolescence* 33 pg 891 – 899.

160 Ayuku D (2005) 'Family Networks of Street Children and School Children of Eldoret, Kenya' *East African Journal of Public Health* Vol 2 No 1 pg 6 – 9.

7.2 Identity

Identity is of vital importance to each person's sense of individuality and place in society, allowing individuals to conceptualise themselves as different from others and to form group identities with those who are similar to themselves. The development and formation of identity is important for the process of becoming an adult. Middle childhood and adolescence is a time of important developmental advances that establish children's sense of identity when children experience biological, psychological and social changes¹⁶¹. Children and youths who live alone on the streets are often forced to face some of these changes at an earlier stage than other children as becoming autonomous and self-reliant forces children and youths to respond to their changing circumstances. It is important that children and youths are supported when experiencing change through, for example, puberty, significant life events and transitions to enable them to manage these changes. Children and youths who live alone on the streets are often left to deal with significant change on their own which may lead to issues with identity. For example, young children who are consistently used for sexual purposes by others may experience specific issues relating to identity. Providing children and youths with support that relates to development of identity can support with mental well-being and enabling children and youths to make sense of their lives and experiences.

The nature of relationships with carers, siblings and others can impact upon children's internal sense of identity. Section 3 of the report highlights how many children and youths who live on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya have problematic relationships with family members and experience conflict or, where parental or carer death has occurred, do not have any relationship with parents or carers. A sense of belonging is also important for beneficial development of identity. Social processes such as education can support this but, as seen, many of the children and young people who participated in this research did not attend school or experienced limited attendance.

It is important to consider the impact of children and youths' environment upon development of identity as research has explored how children's everyday spaces and identities influence how each are formed¹⁶². The impact of living on the streets both informs identity alongside causing difficulties with self-identity for children and youths who are told by family and others in the community that they are worthless, degenerates or aberrations. How children and young people are treated by others therefore influences their sense of identity and development of the self as a person's identity is interwoven with their place in the community. The wider communities' often negative perception of children and youths who live alone on the streets could therefore be problematic and confusing for children and youths' sense

of identity. In addition, their circumstances can influence a child or youth to develop a negative sense of identity. For example, one youth presented himself as a thief rather than as a child who has experienced abuse, had been forced to move to the streets and, because there were no other options for survival and he did not receive support, was forced to steal to ensure he survived.

7.3 Resilience

Previous research carried out in Kenya examining the interaction of temperament and environment and its impact upon both children who live on the streets and children who do not live on the streets, found that children who live on the streets were resilient, adaptable and flexible when dealing with adversity and remained well-adjusted as individuals¹⁶³. The experiences of the children and youths who participated in this research reveal how children and youths who live alone on the streets can show remarkable resilience in managing to survive in harsh and difficult circumstances. Resilience is defined as:

“positive adaption in circumstances where difficulties –personal, familial or environmental – are so extreme that we would expect a person's cognitive or functional abilities to be impaired.”
(Newman, 2002; 2.)¹⁶⁴

It is of course important to consider the impact of culture upon resilience. Research addressing how resilience is generated in different cultures¹⁶⁵ identifies that protective factors are universal but there may be significant difference across cultures¹⁶⁶ in their relative importance, how they are expressed and how they work to create resilience. Cultural practices can also lead to children, and adults, being more vulnerable and act as a risk factor.

Resilience is not static but shifts as different risks may be met with different responses:

“Certain characteristics, experiences and attributes may help you cope well with a particular risk, but that same trait may not always confer a benefit when a different kind of risk is met.”
(Howe in Gilligan, 2009; v.)¹⁶⁷

Protective factors have sometimes been identified as being within the child, the family and the community¹⁶⁸. As noted in previous research¹⁶⁹ resilience theorists, such as Masten and Powell¹⁷⁰, suggest three categories of protective factors¹⁷¹ relating to an individual's attributes and contexts:

1. The first category relates to the individual's attributes and includes individual cognitive ability, levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem, temperament and personality, self regulation skills, affect and arousal

161 Eccles J (1999) 'The Future of Children' When School is out Vol 9 No 2
http://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/09_02-1_02.pdf
21st November 2010

162 For example: Ansell N van Blerk L Panelli R Punch S & Robson E (eds) (2007) 'Doing and belonging: towards a more-than-representational account of young migrant identities in Lesotho and Malawi' Global Perspectives on Rural Childhood and Youth: Young Rural Lives London: Routledge; Beazley H (2003) 'The construction and protection of individuals and collective identities by street children and youth in Indonesia' Children, Youth and Environments 13 unpaginated Horton J & Krafft P (2006) 'Not just growing up, but going on: children's geographies as becomings: materials, spacings, bodies, situations' Children's Geographies 4 pg 259 – 276.

163 Ayuku D O Devries M W Mengech H A & Kaplan C D (2004) 'Temperament characteristics of street and non-streets children in Eldoret, Kenya' African Health Science 4 (1) pg 24 – 30.

164 Newman T (2002) Promoting Resilience: A Review of Effective Strategies for Child-Care Services Prepared for the Centre of Evidence-Based Social Services, University of Exeter.

165 Gunnestad A (2006) 'Resilience in a Cross Cultural Perspective: How Resilience is generated in different cultures' Journal of Intercultural Communication
<http://www.immi.se/intercultural/nr11/gunnestad.htm> 26th November 2010.

166 Cultures are recognised as dynamic and shifting over time.

167 Gilligan R (2009) Promoting Resilience: Serving Children and Young People who are in Care, Adopted or in Need London: British Association for Adoption and Fostering.

regulation. In addition, a positive outlook also supports resilience.

2. The second category relates to relationships with others as they are also key to promoting resilience. Parenting quality can affect resilience. It is important for children to have close relationships with parents, relatives and mentors and to have connections to pro-social and rule abiding peers and older children and youths.
3. The availability of community resources and opportunities also promote resilience.

The experiences of the children and youths who participated in the research revealed that many did not have most of the protective factors present in their lives relating to close relationships with families or other adults and community resources and opportunities. Children and youths were forced to rely upon personal attributes, attitudes and resources. As highlighted in Section 4, many of the children and youths' faith appears to create resilience and support with managing difficult circumstances and events.

7.4 Section Summary

- Experiences of children and youths who live alone on the streets, both prior to living alone on the streets and whilst living on the streets, suggest that there are significant consequences relating to forming insecure and disorganised attachments which can predispose a child or youth to violent behaviour, result in psychological damage and impair development in general and negatively affect future relationships.
- The importance of development of identity is noted. Middle childhood and adolescence is a time of developmental advancement that establishes children and youths' sense of identity at a time of change. Children and youths who live alone on the streets often have to face changes at an earlier stage than others and often do not receive support to manage these changes.
- Development of internal identity can be problematic due to difficult relationships with carers and siblings, parental death and the lack of belonging experienced by many children and youths who live alone on the streets.
- The streets, as the environment where children and youths live, impacts upon identity development as does the way that children and youths are treated by others.
- Children and youths who live alone on the streets often show remarkable resilience despite the lack of protective factors in their lives.

168 Werner E & Smith (1992) *Overcoming the odds: High-risk Children from birth to adulthood* New York: Cornell University Press.

169 Smeaton E (2009) *Off the Radar: Children and Young People on the Streets in the UK* Sandbach: Railway Children.

170 Masten A & Powell J (2003) *A Resilience Framework for Research Policy and Practice* in S Suniya (ed) *Resilience and Vulnerability: Adaption in the Context of Childhood Adversities* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

171 It should also be noted that these protective factors can also constitute risk factors.

8. Concluding Comments and Recommendations

This final section of the report draws together some of the key themes and issues relating to children and young people who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya and offers some recommendations to meet their needs.

8.1 General Comments and Recommendations

The role of a range of social factors in children and youths living alone on the streets

This report highlights how a number of factors can shape how children find themselves living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. These factors include poverty, conflict with parents or carers, parental or carer death and issues relating to school, or to a lack of opportunities to attend school. The impact of poverty on children, families, communities and societies has been well documented and reduction of poverty is the target of many international programmes and national goals. It is clear that poverty alone will not necessarily lead to a child or young person taking to the streets given the considerable numbers of children living in poverty in both Tanzania and Kenya that do not migrate to the street. However, due to the insidious impact of poverty on relationships between family members and between children and youths who live together on the streets, there is need to further identify the impact of poverty upon children and youths and their families and its contribution to children and youths moving to the streets and their experiences living alone on the streets.

In order to address issues facing children and youths on the streets international development agencies and national governments need to recognise that the range of factors that lead children and youths to take to the streets are complex and are unlikely to be met through mainstream programmes designed to meet the Millennium Development Goals. This research report clearly highlights how children and youths on the streets exist on the margins of mainstream societal institutions, including schools and the family. Any programmes which have these institutions central to the delivery of the programme will not reach out to children and youths on the streets. Both the Tanzanian and Kenyan governments need to increase their allocations on livelihoods and social protection programmes that target vulnerable children and to make particular provision within these programmes for children and youths on the streets. These programmes can be implemented within the context of the already existing development policy frameworks in the two countries, notably the Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children in Tanzania and the National Plan of Action on Children in Kenya.

Perceptions and treatment of children and youths

Perceptions and treatment of children in Tanzania and Kenya also play a part in how children find themselves living alone on the streets and how they are treated once on the streets. Many children are vulnerable whilst living at home with family through, for example, poverty, maltreatment and abuse, acting as young carers and becoming orphaned with consequences for insecure or disorganised attachment and development of identity and resilience. Many children are not able to attend school because their families cannot afford fees or equipment or because their families do not wish them to attend school. Whilst acknowledging that children within families are required to contribute to household and family tasks, it is also important to give children the opportunity to attend

school alongside time and space to play. The experiences of children and youths who live alone on the streets reveal that both Tanzania and Kenya are some way from ensuring that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child or the African Children's Charter are implemented and work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, while valuable, does not afford this particular group of children and youths the rights and protection they are entitled to.

The process of carrying out fieldwork in Tanzania and Kenya and the research findings revealed that children and youths who live alone on the streets are viewed and treated in different ways by officials and others in the community. Some of the treatment of children and youths living alone on the streets is dehumanising; this can be seen in presentations of them as a 'problem' and in the charges that can be brought against them such as 'dumping' and 'littering' which treats them as objects rather than as human beings. Children and youths who live alone on the streets occupy difficult territory: they are neither children who are protected by childhood, in its cultural form, and home and family nor are they treated as adults despite having adult responsibilities. Children and youths who live alone on the streets are forced by their circumstances to operate like poor working adults whilst simultaneously being excluded from adult organisations and social control¹⁷². They find themselves in a transition from childhood to adulthood that is unaccounted for and unsupported. The experiences and treatment of children and youths living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya contradicts the law in both countries where it is clearly stated that all children must be under the care and protection of a responsible adult, either within a family unit or an alternative authorised by the state, until they reach the age of 18.

The perception of children and youths who live alone on the streets often results in these children and youths being treated as an aberration which justifies violence and sexual assault that is unlikely to be tolerated in the same way against other children and youths. Viewing children and youths who live alone on the streets as an aberration perpetuates the process of dehumanising them and justifies the failure to show regard and respect for their rights that are outlined, for example, in the International Bill of Human Rights, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution on Street Children 2011, the Kenyan draft National Children Policy and the Tanzanian Law of the Child Act 2009. There is a need to undertake awareness raising activities within those institutions mandated to protect children that remind them of their obligations under national and international law, but also, inform their understanding of the circumstances that lead children and youths to live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya. Police should be provided with guidance, and training, to be clear about appropriate responses to children and youths who live alone on the streets, and identify the benefits of more constructive relationships between children and youths who live alone on the streets and the police¹⁷³. Such action would ensure the Kenyan government meets the recommendations from the Committee on the Rights of the Child to change stigma and negative attitudes amongst law enforcement

172 Ayuku D (2005) 'Family Networks of Street Children and School Children of Eldoret, Kenya' East African Journal of Public Health Vol 2 No 1 pg 6 – 9.

173 Work carried out in Nairobi to address the impact of The Undugu Society of Kenya's work to form associations of groups of children and youths living on the streets reveals that there are benefits to developing more positive relationships between children and youths who live alone on the streets and the police as this can result in lower crime rates, reduced police brutality and collaboration between children and youths and the police to prevent crime.

officers. Work to reduce violence amongst children and youths who live alone on the streets will also enable Tanzania and Kenya to ensure the human rights of children are met in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There is also a need to provide awareness raising activities within the communities from which children and youths leave, and the communities they enter in to, when they migrate to the streets. Some of the research findings presented in this report suggest outcomes for children and youths once they become adults. However, it is important not to view children only as future adults but as children who are social agents in their own right¹⁷⁴ and to address their needs to improve their present life as a child as well as their future as an adult and the benefits this brings to the wider community and society. Where there is social recognition of children as social actors within their communities, there is scope for the community being able to act as a source of support for children to manage their circumstances¹⁷⁵.

It is critical to reconsider general perceptions towards children who are involved in criminal activity. In accordance with the United Nations Human Rights Resolution on Street Children 2011, survival behaviours carried out by children and youths on the street should generate a child protection response from the state as opposed to a penal response. More effort needs to be made to ensure that laws that prohibit children to be locked up with adults are implemented and that cases involving children should be heard in juvenile courts. In the absence of sufficient resources to create child focused institutions across the region, innovative solutions should be encouraged by government that utilise existing resources by, for example, identifying a local NGO that can provide a safe space for children in conflict with the law as an alternative to adult cells, or specific sessions in adult courts for cases involving children that are heard by a specialist magistrate trained in child protection. When children and youths on the streets have been victims of crime, these crimes need to be taken seriously and legal aid provided for their cases to be heard in court. Consideration should also be given to increasing the age of criminal responsibility of children in Tanzania and Kenya so that young children living on the streets would not be criminalised.

Normalisation of violence

The normalisation of violence towards children and youths is a significant factor in the children and young people moving to the streets and in their experiences on the streets. Harsh and brutal violence pervades all areas of their lives and has a problematic impact upon individual children and youths, future parenting and the wider community. Violence in the home that is experienced by many children can lead to insecure or disorganised attachment. The descriptions of some of the children and youths who participated in the research create a palpable sense of the fear some children must have felt, for example, whilst being tied up, knowing that they were

about to be beaten and could not escape. Many children also experience violence in schools. Once on the streets, the cycle of violence continues. Children and youths experience violence at the hands of the police, in police custody, in remand centres and in centres for children. Authority figures treating others with violence offers some form of legitimisation¹⁷⁶ and children and youths also experience violence from others in the community. Sexual violence is also experienced with its traumas and consequences for mental and physical well-being and future sexual relationships.

For so many reasons, it is important that children in Tanzania and Kenya are free from a life of violence and fear and that measures are taken at macro and micro, political and social, public and private levels to create safer environments where violence ceases to be normalised and children can flourish in accordance with international law. Children and youths who have experienced levels of violence to the extent that many have within this research are likely to find it difficult to engage constructively in society's institutions. Targeted interventions are required that address the trauma that exposure to violence can create before children and youths can engage meaningfully in mainstream programming¹⁷⁷. It is accepted that to change attitudes towards violent treatment of children requires a change in mindset without jeopardising local systems of care and socialisation¹⁷⁸. However, it is important to acknowledge that interventions to reduce violence against children have to address dominant problems relating to child development and socialisation as experienced and interpreted locally¹⁷⁹. This is a complex matter to address as where there is significant rapid social and cultural change, and increases in stress, there are more abusive patterns of child care¹⁸⁰. Alongside rapid social and cultural change in Tanzania and Kenya, there are also high levels of poverty and deaths from HIV/AIDS resulting in an increase in children's needs for care and protection and the simultaneous decrease in carers' and communities' ability to meet children's needs¹⁸¹. Despite these significant challenges to reducing violence towards children and youths, the reduction of violence is a crucial step to increase children and youths' well-being and to prevent children and youths from experiencing harm that both leads them to take to the streets and is a feature of daily life on the streets.

There is a need for increased awareness and acknowledgement of the impact of violence upon children: of the distress it causes, its impact upon development of insecure and disorganised attachment which is problematic for individual children, upon their future parenting of children and for the wider community. This acknowledgement should start with the state and any state sanctioned violence towards children including corporal punishment must cease. Alternative ways of punishing children need to be developed within social institutions, residential care institutions, the local community, schools and family.

174 Barker J Krafft P Horton J & Tucker F (2009) The Road Less Travelled – New Directions in Children and Young People's Mobility' *Mobilities* Vol 4 Issue 1 pg 1 – 10.

175 Skodval M & Andreouli E (2011) 'Using Identity and Recognition as a Framework to Understand and Promote the Resilience of Caregiving Children in Western Kenya' *Journal of Social Policy* Vol 4 Issue 4.

176 Bauman Z (1995) *Modernity and the Holocaust* Oxford: Polity Press.

177 Safe Families, Safe Children Coalition. (2011) *Breaking the cycle of violence – Building a Future for the Most Excluded* London.

178 Snipstad M B Flakk G & Mfangavo L (2006) 'Reviving children care practices: Can a child be disciplined without a stick?' in E A Lothe M Daniel M B Snipstad & N Sveaass (eds) *Strengths in Broken Places: Marginalisation and Empowerment* Oslo: Unipub forlag.

179 Ibid.

180 Hundeide K (2001) 'Reactivation of Cultural Mediation Practices' *Psychology and Developing Societies* 13.

181 Snipstad M B Flakk G & Mfangavo L (2006) 'Reviving children care practices: Can a child be disciplined without a stick?' in E A Lothe M Daniel M B Snipstad & N Sveaass (eds) *Strengths in Broken Places: Marginalisation and Empowerment* Oslo: Unipub forlag.

Sexual violence had become a routine part of life for some of the children and youths who took part in the research. Given the extent of sexual assault and the perceived presence of cultural factors influencing children and youths' unwillingness to discuss sexual issues, sexual assault and meaning generated towards sex, it is important to work to gain children and youths' trust and ensure that they feel comfortable to disclose male rape and seek support. To support this process, there is some worth in considering measures to address attitudes towards homosexuality and male rape. Awareness-raising activities also need to take place with children and youths who live alone on the streets to support children and youths with keeping themselves as safe as possible from sexual assault and engaging in safe sexual practices.

Strengths of children and youths living alone on the streets

Children and youths who live alone on the streets reveal many remarkable survival strategies as they develop skills to cope with very dangerous and chaotic circumstances. There are a number of incongruities that children and youths have to negotiate that can make their lives difficult. Despite being viewed as an aberration, thieves and generally as undesirables on the margins of society, many children and youths aspire to maintain, or do maintain, norms and values in their culture, such as a commitment to family. For some, the potential to achieve this has been removed through, for example, death of family members, rejection from family or becoming permanently detached from family.

To ensure survival, children and youths who live alone on the streets are often required to effectively engage with strangers and other adults but also to maintain some distance. Children and youths who live on the streets often work hard for long periods of time for little financial gain. Life on the streets acts as a treadmill as all energy and resources are needed to ensure daily survival and most children and youths do not earn enough money, or are not provided with support, to cease living on the streets or plan for the future. Whilst many children and youths do not engage in what they present as negative behaviours, in many cases their circumstances force them to carry out these negatively perceived actions and activities such as sniffing glue and stealing. Children and youths also present many positive attributes such as caring for those more vulnerable than themselves, preventing others from carrying out actions that would harm others and working hard so that they are not only able to feed themselves that day but can provide their families at home with food or money.

Children and youths who participated in the research were often able to recognise that the relationship between child and parents or carers is a dynamic one in which the parent or carer should care appropriately for the child and the child should behave well and treat their parents and carers with respect. Some children and youths acknowledged that their parents and carers also required support as they were living in difficult circumstances.

Factors to be considered when implementing interventions with children and youths living alone on the streets

The findings presented in the report indicate a range of factors that should be taken into consideration when implementing interventions with children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya.

1. Approaches to Education

Education is clearly very important to children and youths. Prevention of attending school, as previously described, can act as a contributing factor to a child or youth leaving home and coming to the streets, education is desired by children and youths on the streets and identified as important to enabling a child or youth to leave the streets. Issues relating to education, such as access, treatment of children in schools and, specifically, corporal punishment, have to be addressed to prevent children and youths from moving to the streets. The inability to pay for a uniform or school books is a barrier to education for many of the children in this research. Work being undertaken on a macro level to support the Millennium Development Goal to achieve universal primary education needs to continue and be strengthened to ensure that support systems put in place are accessible to children and youths living alone on the streets.

The strong thirst for education that is evident from many children who participated in this research can be a means to engage with children and youths. However, it is important for agencies to consider that if a child or youth is presented with educational support of a standard far below the level of education attained, the child or youth is likely to disengage. It is therefore necessary to ensure that any educational support provided corresponds with children and youths' abilities and previously attained levels of education.

2. Service Providers

The descriptions of children and youths' lives both prior to coming to the streets and whilst living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya reveal that there is some diversity as well as shared experiences. It is important for service providers to consider the differences between children and youths who live alone on the streets for short lengths of time and those who live alone on the streets long-term. For example, those who have lived alone on the streets long-term may find it more difficult to adhere to the rules and rhythms of living in a centre and other forms of intervention than children and youths who live alone on the streets for short periods of time. Female children and youths face particular risks when living alone on the streets, staying in centres for children or working as house girls or in other employment to avoid spending time on the streets. It is therefore critical to develop specific services that meet females' needs and protect them.

Current services provide a variety of interventions to varying degrees in different cities in the region; more resources need to be allocated to agencies working with children and youths on the streets to allow for a greater variety of interventions to be available in all cities in which there are children and youths living alone on the streets. Where lacking, a targeted and co-ordinated approach to service delivery in a local area should be developed with

the inclusion of all organisations who seek to support children and youths who live alone on the streets. All agencies need to engage proactively with the relevant local government and social welfare/children's department to ensure that they are aware of the services they provide and seek to measure and share the outcomes of their work across agencies within the cities in which they work.

Service provision should focus upon interventions meeting physical needs such as a place to live, food, health care and clothing, providing support in the form of education, training or work experience that supports a child or youth to be able to provide for themselves. Equally, it is important to accept that previous incidents of, for example, rejection, abandonment, neglect, physical and sexual abuse can reduce a child or young person's ability to trust. There is a need to recognise the tendency for children and youths to be self-reliant or dependent upon each other for support and survival and acknowledge the potential impacts of this, particularly upon engaging children and youths with services. Therefore those working with children and youths who live alone on the streets should allow time and develop rapport for relationship-building based upon listening to children and youths and gaining their trust to allow support to be received. It is also important to work with children and youths to understand why they have the attitudes they do, perceive themselves in the way they do and behave as they do. Therapeutic support to address past traumas that can potentially hinder development or lead to mental health issues needs to be considered a priority amongst service providers.

Work which takes place on the streets with children and youths who live alone on the streets can hold certain dangers. Given these dangers and children and youths' issues and experiences, it is very important that those working with children and youths who live alone on the streets are appropriately supported to ensure both their physical and mental well-being. Workers need to be adequately supported and trained professionals. It is understood that there may be difficulties resourcing this but international NGOs should work to capacity build professionals and organisations. In particular, professionals working with children and youths who live alone on the streets, both on the streets and in centres, should receive training to ensure that they do not operate in any manner that can be perceived as abusive and refrain from discipline based on corporal punishment.

The findings of this research also reveal how well-intended attempts to provide support for children and youths who live alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya that do not materialise can result in damage and heartbreak for children and youths whose hopes are raised, as they are led to believe that they will shortly be leading very different lives, only to be dashed by yet another rejection or abandonment. Local government agencies mandated by law to provide and or to regulate services for children and youths alone on the streets need to ensure that any support offered within their jurisdiction is co-ordinated across CSOs and only offered by officially registered and regulated organisations or individuals working in collaboration with these agencies.

3. Belief Systems

It is important to respect children and youths' faith in God and belief in witchcraft as beliefs can serve children and youths well to both make sense of their life experiences and act as a protective factor in managing to live alone on the streets. However, whilst simultaneously respecting the faith beliefs of the local community, fatalism can prevent, or absolve, others from engaging with children and youths who live alone on the streets and seeking to change their circumstances and improve both their lives and that of the surrounding community.

8.2 Key Actions for policy, practice and research

The findings of this report indicate that children and youths living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya do not receive many of the rights enshrined in Tanzanian and Kenyan policy and law, both domestic and international. At a general level, for example, the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 and the Kenya Vision 2030 focus on giving all its citizens a 'high quality of life' through the relevant government Ministries and Departments. To ensure that children and youths living on the streets are included within this vision it is imperative that the following actions are taken:

International Policy and Law

- Specific indicators should be included in the measurement of the Millennium Development Goals that relate to children and youths living on the streets.
- Specific funding streams that relate to children and youths on the streets must be included within any development assistance that targets children.
- Specific funding streams must be made available within international development agencies that recognise the need for therapeutic interventions for children affected by violence.

National Policy

- Processes outlined in law for children's homes to be registered should be reviewed and enforced and an independent inspectorate appointed to monitor compliance.
- As per recommendations made by the United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution on Street Children 2011, both governments should adopt policies and promote practice that recognises that 'survival behaviours such as begging, loitering, vagrancy, truancy, running away and other acts, be dealt with as a child protection issue and guarantee that laws on such behaviours do not constitute an obstacle to effective assistance.'
- All national policies that relate to children, such as those addressing barriers to universal education, orphans and HIV/AIDS, must include particular reference to the specific needs of children and youths on the streets and outline clearly how their needs will be met.

Specifically in Tanzania:

- In the Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children, Most Vulnerable Children Committees (MVCCs) in Tanzania need to be given the remit of identifying missing children from their communities and supporting CSOs and Social Welfare in their efforts to return them. Equally, in defining at risk children in their communities that can access support available within the Plan of Action, MVCCs must broaden the indicators that they use to identify at risk children to include children living within particularly violent and or neglectful homes.
- The national plan of action to prevent and respond to violence against children should ensure the experiences of children and youths who live alone on the streets are addressed and multi-sectoral preventative and responsive measures adopted that meet their needs.
- The Strategic Plan for Street Children in Tanzania should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it matches the experiences and realities of children on the streets and meets their needs.

Specifically in Kenya:

- Children and youths who live alone on the streets should be recognised and treated in accordance with the National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children.

Practice

- Protocols must be developed between the police, social welfare/children's departments and local CSOs that clearly define appropriate responses to children and youths living on the streets and how each agency will work together to best understand and meet their needs. Street based workers must be an integral part of this response.
- Therapeutic interventions that are relevant in the context of Kenya and Tanzania must be developed for children and their families that recognise the traumatic impact of violence and reduce the impact on insecure and disorganised attachment.
- Practice responses should be set in place to meet parents' needs and support offered to both parents and extended family members to enable kinship care to take place.
- Amongst children of an appropriate age there is need for general awareness-raising and promotion of positive sexual activities and relationships, the right to say no to unwanted sexual attention and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STDs. This should be delivered in schools and children's centres by trained staff.
- There is also a need to engage with children and youths who live alone on the streets to raise awareness of the dangers of substance misuse.

Research

- There is a gap in knowledge about the experiences of young females who live alone on the streets which highlights the need to commission research based upon the words and realities of females living alone on the streets in Tanzania and Kenya.

8.3 Conclusion

Finally, it is acknowledged that both the Tanzanian and Kenyan governments have made significant steps to improve the lives of children in their respective countries. However, there is more to be done to ensure that children and youths, who are important social actors as children and future adults, are able to reach their potential and flourish to positively contribute to the economy, parent the future generation and form sustainable communities. In conclusion, a co-ordinated response is required to meet the needs of all vulnerable children and ensure interventions are set in place at the individual, family and community level that tackle macro issues such as poverty, health issues and access to education alongside addressing personal issues and circumstances of individual families and children. This can only be achieved through working in partnership with national government, civil society, local communities, families and children.

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