

## Roles of Government and Other Stakeholders Addressing Street Children Problem in Tanzania

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### Abstract

### Original Research Article

Street children as the most problem facing many countries in the world, it remains unsolved challenge. There are some obstacles on addressing the problem since there is no clear data showing the actual number of children in the street. The total number of children available on the street differs from one sources to another as various research have done, there is unclear statistical estimated. Our study aimed at finding the roles of government and other stakeholders involving in managing street children in Tanzania. We used systematic review method on collecting and analyzing data to arrive at the finding planned. Our findings show that managing street is a part of stakeholders, and we found government, non-government organization, societal, and religions each have engaged very well in minimizing, and removing the problem of street children in Tanzania. Finally, our study provided some recommendations to government and other stakeholders in managing street children.

**Keywords:** Stakeholders, street children, Tanzania, management, urban.

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## INTRODUCTION

Street children are a global problem and are marginalized in most societies. They have no proper relationship with the major children's institutions in society such as family, education and health. These children face discrimination and doubt their health and social services. Street children live a short life and are vulnerable to under nutrition, bodily harm, and substance abuse and health problems including sexual and reproductive health problems.

Large number of children and young people in the world find themselves connected to the streets [1]. Because it is difficult to calculate and determine such a highly mobile population, it is not possible to accurately estimate most or most of the time of children and adolescents living on the streets; however, they are estimated to be between tens and hundreds of millions. Children and adolescents who are connected to the street rarely provide street involvement. They often identify violations based on their own circumstances and emphasize that poverty is a driving factor [2]. They need support and protection and call on governments around the world to reduce the socio-economic inequalities that cause children and youth around the world to take to the streets first. In addition [3], emphasis that children born to the mothers' family who

suffer greater abuse, neglect, violence, family dysfunction, poverty and lower education, and they are more likely to live on the streets.

Even though, the present focus on judgment concerning functioning with street children has moved from reliance support to youth protagonists, countless organizations overlook the part of children's families in interventions. Doing so will reproduce the obsolete welfare tradition and violate the rights guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and national legislation [4]. Children on the streets of Johannesburg face challenges related to survival. These challenges exist both internally and at the interpersonal level. Children living on the streets seem to have experienced the harsh reality of constant vigilance [5]. However, there are few studies on the life experiences of street children in Hilbury in Johannesburg. Most of these children are living on the streets for reasons related to social and economic deprivation or domestic abuse [6].

The number of street children in Tanzania has grown exponentially over the past decade. A group of children can find a living on the streets in almost every city and every major province. As the number of street children grows steadily, the issue of "how to deal with street children" becomes even more urgent. Sadly, the more surprising answer is to remove them from sight

when necessary [7]. Street children around the world have always been treated as harmful and ugly and need to be removed and treated. Usually, large numbers of street children are “expelled” through mass arrests (often called round-ups).

### Historical background of Street children

Street children are a global problem and are marginalized in most societies. They face discrimination and doubt their health and social services [8]. In recent years, the problem of the collapse of traditional family structures and values as a result of economic and social unrest has worsened globally [9]. These children live a short-lived lifestyle and are vulnerable to under nutrition, bodily harm, drug abuse and health issues including sexual and reproductive health issues [10].

In African countries, street children began to increase in the 1970s and early 1980s and intensified in the 1990s, during the Structural Adjustment Program (SAPS), due to the implementation of SAP by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IFM), many families in Africa Poverty is increasing. Cutting government spending and introducing cost-sharing and royalties have brought financial crises to many African families, causing many parents to abandon their families for job opportunities [11]. Many children start dropping out of school because their parents can't afford school fees. The number of street children in Africa has also increased due to war, harassment, parental abuse and the impact of HIV/AIDS. Lugalla and Kibassa, [12] emphasize that street children around the world come from very poor families. Before the transition to the African market economy in many countries, there are almost no large numbers of street children in African urban centers. The development of urban industry has forced most children to migrate to urban centers because they provide incentives to improve their lives [13]. The care and protection of children is primarily the responsibility of the family, usually with biological parents and other close relatives. Since the early 1990s, the number of street and working children in Tanzania has increased

significantly. There are about 3,000 to 5,000 street children in Dar es Salaam [14]. The breakdown of families in Tanzania has led to an emergency for street children. In addition, [15] explained that many families are increasingly represented by parental absences, alcohol abuse and domestic violence. Many children fled to the streets to avoid violence and abuse in the family. In addition, the increase in the number of street children indicates other trends, such as cuts in government social and educational budgets, and the collapse of traditional family and community structures that prevent children from being protected [16].

In 1996, Tanzania developed the Child Development Policy, which aims to provide children's rights to care for all children, including the most vulnerable children, including street children. This policy has made it possible for all ministries and departments to deal with youth, women and children. The policy creates a space for NGOs, religious organizations, individuals and other voluntary stakeholders to establish centers, schools and associations to provide services and maintenance for children, and to establish juvenile courts so that they do not violate the law. Handling those suspected of breaking the law. However, the 1996 Child Development Policy did not identify street children as a special category that required serious attention URT; Child Development Policy, 1996 [15].

### METHODOLOGY AND INSTRUMENTS

The study used a qualitative research to gather the data from various sources in order to acquire roles played by government and other stakeholders in managing street children. This approach was well thought-out important since it made it easily for the researcher to explore and cross-examine issues pertaining to the phenomenon under research. By means of this approach, it was probable to generate data from the following sources: web of science, Google scholars, Taylor & Francis and others. The data obtained through literature reviewed, analyzed and presented.

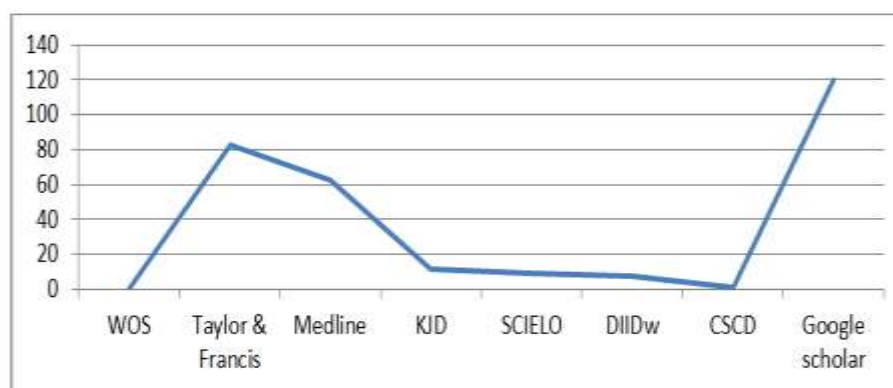


Fig-1: Different databases on which all data collected

## RESULTS

The involvement of government and other stakeholders is very important in reducing the problem of street children in Tanzania. Every stakeholder is critical to developing effective policies that protect and reduce the problem. Figure-2 below illustrates the total

number of street children on same provinces of Tanzania, it shows that Dar es salaam have large number of street children comparing with other provinces. This is the reason have made government and other participant to engage on addressing this problem nationwide.

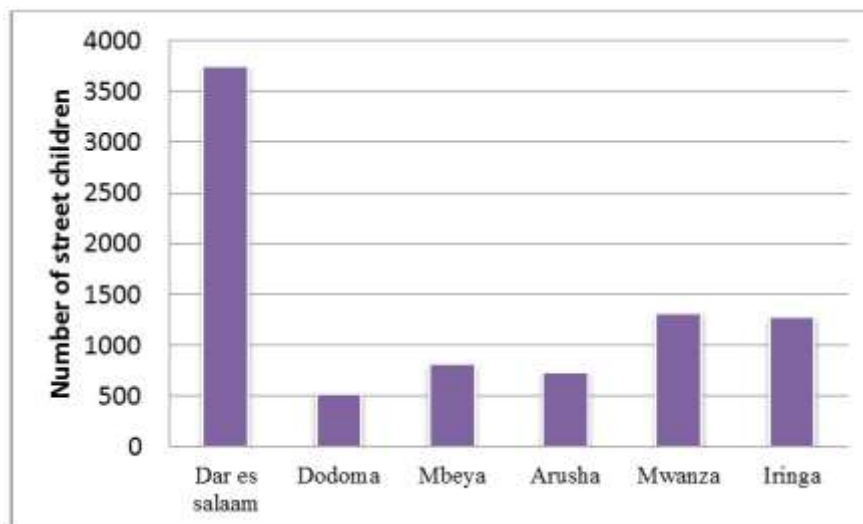


Fig-2: Statistics data on street children in some provinces of Tanzania

After conducting our research we have discovered that there are various functions performed by government institutions and Non government organization. More broadly these functions are described below as identified in our study.

### Roles of governmental organizations on street children

Tanzania government involve in organizing the committee of street children which acts on managing and playing great role on implementation of committee policies. Also local government and other Tanzanian government agencies remove street children in different cities of Tanzania by reuniting with their families and other children sent to rehabilitation centers. Moreover, government establishing some centers for taking cares of street children and educating them in a good manner that can reduces some problems facing street children in Tanzania [17]. Establishing centers to intervene crisis in Dar es salaam and other cities facing with street children as another role played by government on managing them. Government holds conferences regarding street children and the way of giving training people on how street children can be managed and cared to reduce some challenges.

Tanzanian government is improving conditions at home, and putting a focus on community development through provisions of subsidies on production activities done by the people for instance agriculture and livestock keeping subsidies, enacting various policies to allow poor people to get small amounts of loans from financial institutions like banks. Also Tanzanian government provide education on

health and risk issues that children living and working in the street face, to raise awareness of the numerous risks accompanying street life. This results on minimization of negative issues facing street [18]. Another role played by Tanzanian government is a provision of basic needs such as food, shelter and a place of safety through drop-in centers and outreach programmes.

Also Tanzanian government interact with non-governmental and international organizations ( United Nations international children emergencies fund) and planning programs in managing and implementing different strategies that can minimize the number of street children in various cities. Provisional o some intact services to street children, Many children living and working in the street require professional counseling and emotional support. Tanzanian Government makes sure that all service providers should adhere to inter-sectoral protocols at all levels of government and organizations for children living and working on the streets. Lastly Tanzanian government Provide suitable education and skills development programmes for children living and working on the street.

### Non-governmental organizations involvement on street children

Non-governmental organizations in all countries are important in ensuring human rights and their lives are protected. In Tanzania UNISEF has set up various street children's centers to provide education and make street children in contact with their families, these organizations are also involved in organizing

various meetings which aim to raise awareness of the disadvantages of having street children and how to live with them which will reduce the pain these children face. They are also involved in mobilizing and establishing partnerships with government agencies in setting a single goal to eradicate or alleviate the problem of street children [19].

World health organization is another organization that does a lot of work on reducing the problems of street children in Tanzania. If it does a lot of activities that improve the lives of street children one of their tasks is to create a positive environment by looking at the causes of children. Interventions Environmental factors that may affect street children include: attachments, such as a caring family, friends, and other adults; social norms, such as attitudes towards street children, attitudes towards sexual activity among young people; resources, such as opportunities for street children to go to school, to have a place to play, and to develop livelihood skills and get paid work [20].

They are too involved in integrating children with their families or facilitating family-based groups for helping children meet their needs. It can also enhance good communication in families with children which leads to building a positive parental system. It also offers interactive activities on various groups on how to protect themselves from HIV and drug addiction as good ways to keep children in a healthy environment at home and in their community.

The World health organization also prides itself on developing a broader policy of street children, including education, health, shelters, housing and employment that do not make street children feel differently [21]. They are also involved in developing national programs that focus more on the child's social, economic, and health costs. It also ensures guidelines are followed and ensures that all abusers in the street are prosecuted, not only does it also introduce alternative ways of promoting their children's rights and making laws protecting children from access to education and other services. Building skills are practiced for children to ensure that people have expertise in various fields. It is done through a variety of tasks to enable them to cope with their daily lives, life skills, practical skills, performance skills, vocational and livelihood skills [22]. The agency as well specializes in providing child counseling to street children so they know where they are and how to deal with different situations.

World Bank is involved in one way or another in dealing with the problems of street children as follows. Children in need, although not a traditional concern of the World Bank, have recently become the focus of some of the Bank's innovative activities. The World Bank also supports some research and dissemination of ideas on this topic, such as the Child

Labor Initiative launched in 1998, the Street Children Initiative launched in the same year, and the international community as proof of this. The Street Children's Conference in Washington, D.C., April 9-14, 2000, brought together NGOs and experts from around the world to exchange their views and intervention models, and discussed what the World Bank could do in this area.

### **Societal roles in caring the street children**

Finally, the participants stated that the society has not yet taken the necessary measures to take care of street children. The root of the problem lies in the individual's ignorance of children's rights, which may gradually become a danger to society itself. Therefore, one participant warned:

Street children lack social love and they are hungry and live in cold places. If we don't care about them, they may become enemies in the future [23]. Another participant emphasized that giving children more value was that "the realization of children's rights is not only a humanitarian task, but also the primary responsibility of all stakeholders". The articles further argued that traditional parenting methods are not applicable in the 21st century that resembles. The assumption that "children grow up by luck" should be overturned. Participants also advised parents to pay attention to a better and realistic future.

### **Religions on Street children management**

Various religions in Tanzania are actively involved in reducing and assisting in the problems of street children. There are mosques and various churches that provide education on how to raise children so that they can have a good morale that effectively reduces the number of children fleeing the streets. Families can live well with their children and make them feel comfortable in their own homes. Religion also enables to establish schools and health centers that reduce the cost of living and various social services.

## **DISCUSSION**

Our research shows that a great deal of work is being done by the government in this disaster that is affecting Tanzania and the world on a regular basis. This study suggests that the decline in street children's vulnerability will be caused by good cooperation by government and other organizations in developing policies and strategies that reduce the problem of street children. Our research also shows that the Tanzanian government is making a concerted effort to reduce the number of street children by enacting legislation and increasing efforts to make people live a healthier life that will result declining in children leaving their families and fleeing the streets. Various records show that the number of street children has dropped by a significant percentage in Tanzania. Develop their talents by participating in various activities. We also found government and other organizations set up

various centers to raise children living in the streets and send them to different schools for education that would benefit them as adults. Our research also found that the cooperation of governments and all organizations in investing in a single force would be the key to eliminating or reducing the number of street children. In our research we found that the following functions are performed by the government and various institutions as mentioned below.

- Identify street children and their types based on lifestyles to meet their specific needs.
- Connect with these children's families to support them financially, legally, educationally, medically, negotiate by providing necessary services
- Establish appropriate open support centers and provide comprehensive training programs to provide open centers for voluntary street children arranged by NGOs, unlike government centers because they facilitate the process of identifying street children.
- Hire social workers at all stages of the organizational process to voluntarily attract them to support centers, rather than using police to arrest them.
- Provide shelter for homeless children's lives and workplaces so that those who do not live with their families and have various service needs can voluntarily turn to them for help.
- Prevent the worst forms of child labor on the street and elsewhere through ILO Convention No. 132 and labor laws. Working long hours on the street, various abuses against children, such as searching in trash cans, are inconsistent with this Convention and child labor laws.
- Social insurance for street children

## CONCLUSION

The problem of street children is best addressed through prevention programmes and policies that will combat their social and economic causes. The results of our research indicate that special protection measures are also needed to increase development opportunities for young people who are currently suffering from street life. As mentioned before, goodwill alone cannot guarantee a positive and lasting impact on children's lives. Focusing on aid alone is equally ineffective and may even make the problem worse by increasing a child's dependence on charity and undermining his motivation to take to the streets. The right plan is one that helps young participants strengthen their connections with families, schools, and communities. Primary prevention interventions for families of street children will help families escape poverty and ultimately prevent the next generation of children from wandering. Governments can work with parents, communities, non-governmental organizations / community organizations to contribute to alleviating the causes and stereotypes of today's street children

becoming more productive citizens. Emphasis should be placed on advocacy networks and direct services to non-governmental organizations. This contribution will not be achieved through reactive schemes and methods that improve warning signs for street children alone. Instead, it is the most durable method that focuses on avoiding the causes of symptoms, namely family discord, rural poverty, alcoholism and human immunity Defective virus / acquired immunodeficiency syndrome stigma and disease. Good will, sound decision-making, and attention to long-term prevention strategies will have a positive impact not only on street children who inspire specific projects, but also on the society they come from and return to. The root cause of street children is better than rehabilitation. Finally, not all donors and stakeholders have the mandate and experience to directly support street children's activities. However, some of them have an important role to play in promoting policies and legislation that encourage the positive development of all children in need of special protection and help governments eliminate some of the social and economic causes of child vulnerability.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should repeat laws protecting children and enact new laws to address the current state of science and technology. There should be an adequate budget to meet the needs of children and direct support should be given to organizations that help children. Improve social services, especially in rural areas. Governments should design poverty reduction strategies at the household level to reduce poverty rates among families and / or families. Governments should raise awareness of children's rights across families and communities. Community members should change their attitude towards street children and treat them as their children. A more comprehensive approach to community development is needed, with a focus on community and family support, which will address most of the causes of street children. Services that need to be provided to marginalized children should be brought back to families and communities, rather than left in residential centers. It should also focus on the following aspects:

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